



# Murray Darling Association Inc.

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## Region 9 Ordinary Meeting

### MINUTES

**Location:** Leeton Shire Council Chambers  
23-25 Chelmsford Place Leeton NSW 2705  
**Date/time:** 17 September 2020 - 10.00am commencement  
**Zoom link:** <https://zoom.us/j/98310394905?pwd=VzhMemE2MIRORGZHeE9vZU5RdWRQdz09>

#### 1. ATTENDANCE

##### 1.1 Present

Mayor Paul Maytom – Leeton Shire Council (Chairman)  
Emma Bradbury – CEO MDA  
Cr Barbara Bryon- Narrandera Shire Council  
Cr Russell Campbell – Carrathool Shire Council  
Wendy Cox – Senior Regional Water Strategy Officer, Water Group, Department of Environment Infrastructure and Planning (DPIE)  
Mayor John Dal Broi - Griffith City Council  
Mandy Rogers – Leeton Shire Council (Secretary)  
Mayor Ruth McRae – Murrumbidgee Council  
Joe Burns – private member  
Mayor Greg Conkey – Wagga Wagga City Council  
Bede Spannangle - Riverina Water County Council  
Cr Dino Zappacosta – Griffith City Council  
Stefanie Schulte - Acting Director Regional Water Strategies, Water Group, DPIE  
Brett Stonestreet - Griffith City Council

##### 1.2 Apologies

Jackie Kruger – General Manager, Leeton Shire Council  
John Scarce - Murrumbidgee Council  
Rick Warren - Carrathool Shire Council  
Share Wilson – Acting General Manager, Narrandera Shire Council  
Peter Veneris - General Manager, Lockhardt Shire Council  
Greg Verdon- Riverina Water County Council

## 2. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed all to the meeting both in person and via videolink.

The Chairman advised that, for the next Meeting, he would be seeking for a representative of WaterNSW to present on the Water Allocation Statement, including the resource distribution pie chart, conveyance entitlements and the calculation of the estimates of river losses.

## 3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

No interests were declared.

## 4. MINUTES

Minutes of the previous meeting – 26 June 2020

The minutes were taken as read and accepted.

## 5. CEO's REPORT

### 5.1 CEO's Reports July 2020 [online](#)

The CEO's Report was taken as read and noted.

The following further points were raised by the CEO:-

- The number of high profile speakers at the MDA Conference, and the cohesiveness in passing the motions at the MDA AGM, exemplified the increasing influence of local government
- The strategy of the MDA includes to grow its services to members, having "a seat at the table" and being a trusted adviser to influence government policy and to be identified as an advocate for local government
- In accordance with the resolution at the AGM, consultation would commence on affirming the MDA identity as a representative of local government by incorporating the words local government into its name
- The CEO and MDA Chair would be travelling to Canberra to meet with various Ministers and and the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment to progress resolutions from the Conference and AGM and other objectives of the MDA (including the name change).

Region 9 congratulated the CEO and MDA Chairman on the success of the recent MDA Conference and AGM, including the leadership and level of cohesion.

Further discussion took place regarding the benefits of incorporating the words local government into the MDA's name.

**Agreed** that the CEO would prepare and circulate a briefing paper and survey regarding the name change consultation process.

The CEO left the Meeting.

### 5.2 MDA Board Meeting (No. 400) [Minutes](#)

The minutes were taken as read and noted.

## 6. PRESENTATION – REGIONAL WATER STRATEGIES

Stefanie Schulte - Acting Director Regional Water Strategies, Water Group, Department of Environment Infrastructure and Planning (DPIE) and Wendy Cox - Senior Regional Water Strategy Officer, Water Group, DPIE attended the Meeting and presented the document titled “Regional water strategies”.

The presentation covered the following key topics:

- Regional water strategy program
- Southern regional water strategies
- Engagement
- Vision, opportunities and challenges
- Next steps

In discussion the following points were raised:-

- DPIE consultation will take place in early 2021 and implementation would commence after consultation
- While the strategy for the Hunter Region has been completed, others are still “work in progress”
- The strategies will be subject to a regular review process to ensure that they remain relevant and up to date
- The outcomes of recent water infrastructure reviews will be incorporated into the strategies
- Consultation will include a six week review period, engagement with councils, written submissions and surveys. Documents such as the RAMJO Water Policy are important for the consultation
- The timeline for any real results from the strategy will depend on the options that are adopted in the strategy, following consultation

**Agreed** that the strategy and Stefanie Schulte’s and Wendy Cox’s details would be circulated to attendees.

On behalf of Region 9, the Chairman thanked Stefanie Schulte and Wendy Cox and stated that, although the number of reports that relate to water can be frustrating, the preparation of the strategy is a further step towards achieving certainty and the desired outcomes.

Stefanie Schulte and Wendy Cox left the meeting.

## 7. GENERAL BUSINESS

### *Region 9 Climate Ready Statement*

- The draft Region 9 Climate Ready Statement was taken as read and noted.

In discussion it was agreed that:-

- The draft Region 9 statement, along with the draft Region 6 and Region 11 statements, would be circulated to attendees; and
- Attendees would provide feedback to Mandy Rogers on the Region 9 statement.

*Wentworth Group Report - <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-03/the-mystery-of-the-murray-darlings-vanishing-flows/12612166?nw=0>*

- The article on the Wentworth Group Report was taken as read and noted. In discussion the Chairman noted that the report warrants a thorough investigation.

*Minister Keith Pitt's Media Release - <https://minister.ave.gov.au/pitt/media-release/new-chapter-mdbp>*

- The media release was taken as read and noted. In discussion the Chairman noted that the commitment to no further water buybacks.

*Deputy Prime Minister Michael McCormick's Media Release – <https://minister.infrastructure.gov.au/mccormack/media-release/national-water-grid-authority-future>*

- The media release was tabled and noted. Region 9 expressed their support for the appointment of Liz Stott to the Advisory Committee of the Authority.

*MDA Conference*

- Region 9 formally acknowledged the organizational effort and the success of the MDA CEO and Chairman with the MDA Conference and the ability to attract such a prestigious line up of speakers to the Conference.

## **8. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS**

Next Meeting: 2 December 2020 - Ordinary Meeting

## **9. CLOSE**

Meeting closed at 11.30am.

*The Murray Darling Association acknowledges and thanks Leeton Shire Council for its support in hosting this meeting of Region 9.*