



# Murray Darling Association Inc.

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## Region 7 Ordinary Meeting No. 101

Date: Thur 29<sup>th</sup> June 2017, Time: 6pm for 6.30pm

Location: Mitcham Council

Address: City of Mitcham Civic Centre, 131 Belair Rd, Torrens Park SA 5062

**Refreshments will be available from 6pm. Meeting commences at 6.30pm.**

## AGENDA

1. **ATTENDANCE**
  - 1.1 Present:
  - 1.2 Apologies:
2. **WELCOME**
  - 2.1 Mayor of Mitcham Glenn Spear
  - 2.2 Cr David Shetliffe, Chair, Region 7
3. **MINUTES**
  - 3.1 Minutes of the previous meeting on 2 March at Adelaide City Council.
4. **BUSINESS ARISING**
5. **PRESENTATION**
  - 5.1 Presentation by Mr Russell King, Principal Engineer – Stormwater Engineering, City of Mitcham on 'Mitcham – The Water Sensitive City'.
6. **REPORTS**
  - 6.1 Report from CEO, Emma Bradbury (attached)
  - 6.2 Report from Chair of Region 7, Cr David Shetliffe (attached)
7. **GENERAL BUSINESS**
  - 7.1 Future meetings – timing, topics
  - 7.2 Membership growth
  - 7.3 Regional Plan Framework
  - 7.4 SA Regional forum with LGA
  - 7.5 National Conference Renmark 11-13 October
  - 7.6 Motions for National Conference
8. **NEXT MEETING**

TBA.
9. **CLOSE**

*The Murray Darling Association acknowledges and thanks  
Mitcham Council for their support in hosting this meeting of Region 7.*



## 6.1

# Chief Executive Officer's Report to the Regions March/April 2017

Prepared by: Emma Bradbury

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## 1. Diary/Engagements

02/03/17	Murray River Group of Councils w/ Cr Thurley	Swan Hill
06/03/17	Region 5 AGM	Skype
07/03/17	Bruce Male, Office of the Prime Minister	Canberra
07/03/17	Address Board Murray-Darling Basin Authority w/ Cr Thruley	Canberra
07/03/17	Meet senior dept directors, Dept Ag & Water Res w/ Cr Thurley	Canberra
08/03/17	Meeting Hon Sussan Ley MP, Member for Farrer	Albury
09/03/17	Attend inaug Murray Central Regional Boating Advisory Group	Moama
10/03/17	104.3 EMFM Radio – monthly program	Echuca
10/03/17	Interim financial audit – MDA - MRG Auditors	Echuca
16/03/17	Meeting with RAMROC and MRGC – LG collaboration	Mildura
16/03/17	Ministerial Council roundtable address and function	Mildura
17/03/17	MDBA Monitoring and Evaluation Pre-briefing	Mildura
20/03/17	Meeting – Murray Regional Tourism CEO Mark Francis	Echuca
21/03/17	Membership presentation – Campaspe Shire w/ Cr Thurley	Echuca
23/03/17	Meeting – long term sponsor McArthur Group	Melbourne
24/03/17	Meeting w/ Peter Gray - Peter George M&S Accounting	Kyabram
28/03/17	Meeting – Phillip Glyde MDBA re engagement	Phone
29/03/17	Region 2 Meeting – Chaired Cr Thurley	Echuca
10/04/17	Region 5 Meeting	Skype
19/04/17	Conference Planning Meeting	Skype
21/04/17	Board Meeting 364	Skype
26/04/17	Goulburn Valley Grammar School – presentation	Echuca
27/04/17	MDA Finance Committee meeting	Kyabram

## 2. Projects

2.1 Social and Economic Impacts Evaluation Framework – We are continuing to persue funding options for this project. While the concept has been well received, no firm commitments have been secured.

Actions to date include

- Meetings in Canberra pitching this strongly to the Director of Water Division, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources in Canberra on 7th March.
- Presentation and strong sell directly to all Ministers and advisers at Ministerial Council, Mildura.
- Letter of request sent to all Ministers
- Direct engagement with all ministers and advisors as follow up.
- No one has said no – but no firm commitments yet.
- Meeting with Ben Bruce of Minister Hunter’s Office of the Group Executive Director | Water
- Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources | South Australian Government on 24th April.

## 2.2 National Conference and AGM

Conference theme – “Our Plan, Our Future”. Information on the conference format is now available and registrations are open at <http://www.mda.asn.au/major-events/2017-national-conference-agm.aspx>. A full marketing campaign will be launched as soon as the program is confirmed. This will be one of the most exciting programs I have seen yet for local government’s role in Basin matters, and I would urge you to book early.

### 3. Board and Regions

At its April meeting 364, the board endorsed the following appointments

Mayor Darriea Turley	Broken Hill City Council	Region 4
Cr Peter Hunter	Renmark Paringa Council	Region 5
Cr David Shetliffe	Walkerville Town Council	Region 7
Mayor Denis Clark	Northern Areas Council	Region 8
Mayor Richard Marsh	Balonne Shire Council	Region 12
Peter George	M&S Accounting	Treasurer

This see’s all regions, with the exception of 2 and 11 now constitutional, with chairing councils committed to empowering their regions to represent the interests of local government on Basin relate issues clearly and articulately at the state and federal level.

Discussions are continuing with lead councils in regions 2 and 11, and it is expected that these regions will also appoint chairing councils in the coming months.

I would like to warmly welcome these appointments. All chairs, and their councils have already demonstrated an active level of engagement, and a real commitment to the role. With consistent practices and protocols now in place, the MDA is looking forward to a dynamic year ahead with strong and consistent representation of local government across all regions, ensuring local government has a genuinely representative voice in the development of Basin policy.

I would particularly like to welcome [Peter George](#) of [M&S Group](#) to the position of Treasurer. Pete is Senior Accountant & Partner of M+S Group Accounting Pty Ltd, the largest accounting firms in country Victoria. Pete's appointment is the first specifically skills based appointment to the MDA Board, as allowed under Part 4 s8(3) of the 2016 Constitution.

Peter brings with him a wealth of energy and experience, and a commitment to the principles and purpose of the MDA. His contribution at board level will be key to the development of a strong and sustainable financial strategy for the association. As with so much of the incredibly valuable professional and technical expertise that is contributed to the MDA, Peter's time and skills are generously provided on a pro-bono basis.

#### 4. In brief – updates

- The MDBA are seeking to engage with the MDA via the regions' regular meeting schedule to enhance their engagement of across the Basin in the conduct of their 2017 Review of the Basin Plan. This represents a significant financial, membership, engagement and purpose opportunity for the MDA.

Likewise, Tom Chesson of the National Carp Control Plan has commenced presentations across the regions.

- Meeting in July with MDBA and the CEWH to discuss strategies to better manage river flows during peak visitation periods to the river regions in order to mitigate adverse social and economic impacts. Significant achievement for the MDA, this year and potentially for future.
- Discussion with the regions regarding the name of the MDA, considering a shift from Murray Darling Association to Murray-Darling LGA.

In 2016 the MDA adopted a Constitution and a Strategic Plan, both of which firmly articulated its commitment to the primacy of local government as our core constituency, and our key purpose being to provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources.

At its last board meeting, the board resolved to lay any decision on the table pending some discussion at regional level to gauge opinion on the matter.

The rationale behind the proposal is that the name Murray Darling Association carries with it great history and pride, but also some reputational ambiguity, and legacy issues.

The name Murray-Darling LGA

- a) is infinitely respectful of the name of the Murray Darling Association, carrying forward a proud tradition and bringing with it all three words;
- b) may bring the associations naming protocol into greater alignment with state and federal LGA's, providing a greater emphasis on our role as the representative of local government as the third level of government in Australia;

- c) may elevate the association's status consistent with other LGA's of geographical context – ie: state and national LGAs;
- d) may provide a point of distinction from the MDBA's acronym. MDA/MDBA confuses many;
- e) may provide better alignment with the widely accepted and more inclusive hyphenated place reference Murray-Darling, in refereeing to the Murray-Darling Basin;
- f) may be timely and consistent with the commencement of the MDA's 'new era' following the adoption of the new constitution, and the strong and clear direction of the organization.

Any official change of name would require an amendment of the Constitution, which under section 38 requires special resolution of delegates at an AGM, and needs to be passed by 2/3 majority. It is therefore something that needs to be discussed and considered at the regional level before the board could resolve to take steps to commence a formal consultation process.

- See attached media release for report on Ministerial Council
- See attached media release for report on MDA's engagement to ensure regular flows over the Easter period.

Emma Bradbury  
Chief Executive Officer

## **6.2 Chairman Region 7 Report**

### **Murray Darling Association Region 7 Meeting 101**

#### **Chairman's Report**

This is my first chairman's report since I was elected to the position of chairman of Region 7 at the AGM in March. It is my intention to include a written report to accompany the agenda for each meeting. I will also write to members if I feel there is something significant arising from the monthly MDA board meetings that you need to be informed of.

On 10<sup>th</sup> of April we held our first Region 7 committee meeting. This was an informal occasion during which we discussed some ideas for future meetings, some issues arising from the recent election process and membership issues. I have recently attended an MDA Board meeting and workshop in Melbourne and it is the outcomes of this meeting that I wish to share with you.

The financial position of the organisation is quite sound with a YTD operating surplus of \$76,275 at the end of April. The forecast for the financial year is a surplus of around \$36,000.

The Board agreed to make some changes to the financial management structure. The position of Finance Manager, held by Peter Grey, will be phased out. A Treasurer from an external accounting firm has been appointed – Peter George of M&S Accounting – has been appointed. These services are being provided on a pro-bono basis.

A budget was set for 2017-18. Membership fees are to be increased by around 3%. Additional resources are to be provided in the MDA office as it is believed the organisation has more than reached capacity yet has a clear capacity to grow its membership and its role in representing local government across the basin. The organisation will run at a small deficit for the year with additional cash flow being provided by the sale of some water shares owned by the organisation. A new cloud based accounting system, Xero, is to be introduced and M&S Accounting are providing two additional computers.

My impression from the discussions around these issues is that the organisation has greatly improved its governance and financial management arrangements. The next objective therefore is to place our energies into effectively representing all communities in the basin to Governments, the MDBA and other relevant stakeholders. The key to this is the reestablishment of the central position of local government entities as the organisation's membership base.

There are around 160 local government authorities across the basin or drawing water from it. This represents considerable political influence and this now seems to be increasingly recognised by governments – particularly the Federal Government and the MDBA who are now willing to invite us to the table for serious policy discussions.

There is considerable capacity for increasing our membership but to do this we must develop and deliver clear value propositions. Your committee gave some thought to this for Adelaide metropolitan councils and the CEO and I are further developing these ideas. I will canvas these thoughts at this meeting.

The Board also discussed our communications policies and, in keeping with our aim of reinforcing our local government membership, agendas and minutes will only go to members (all categories) and other local government authorities in the particular region. Meeting times, minutes and agendas will be uploaded to the MDA website. Other communications such as media releases will be circulated as widely as possible and appropriate.

Another aim of the Board is to encourage the involvement of relevant senior officers from our member councils to attend our meetings and contribute to our discussions. This should improve the knowledge base around the table, provide continuity of involvement as delegates change and further emphasise that it is the council itself that is the member, not the delegate. There have been issues around this across a number of regions.

I look forward to having an ongoing dialogue with members about how we can all benefit from our ongoing commitment to the security and quality of water from the Murray River.

David Shetliffe  
Chairman, Region 7 Murray Darling Association  
June 2017

Murray Darling Association Goals:

- To be a valued source of accurate, concise, valid and timely information
- To facilitate informed and constructive debate
- To influence the policies of government
- To be a strong, viable, self-sustaining organisation

“It’s in the balance”



## **7.1 Future Meetings**

It has been customary to hold Region 7 meetings in the evening on the third Thursday of the month. All other regions hold meetings during the day. The constitution requires that each region hold at least 4 meetings per year.

Because of the distances involved in getting to meetings in regional areas it is not surprising meetings are held during the day. However if Region 7 is to encourage member council officers to attend meetings and to facilitate speakers from government, MDBA and other stakeholder groups to meet with us to discuss important issues affecting water supply and the health of the Murray, it might be helpful to hold our meetings during the day.

The purpose of this item is to canvass the views of members.

It has also been recent practice to restrict our speakers at our meetings to appropriate representatives from our membership discussing water management in their council area. Whilst that has been extremely valuable in helping promote the efficient use of water across councils in Adelaide, we perhaps should look to engage other stakeholders in presenting information for our information and input.

This could include MDBA, the carp eradication program, other regions and their issues, State government water policy officers, Water management experts, environmental experts etc.

The purpose of this item is to develop a range of possible future speakers.

## **7.2 Membership Growth**

There is an opportunity for significant growth in membership across the Basin as well as within Region 7. To this end work is being done

To this end work is underway to develop a clear outline of the value proposition for councils in Region 7 to either continue as members or to join as members.

As part of this process, work is also being undertaken to ensure that the official records of the Association are accurate in terms of official delegates and individual members.

## **7.3 Regional Plan Framework**

Local government across the Basin shares the vision of a healthy Murray Darling Basin, supporting vibrant local communities.

How we achieve that aspiration will vary from council to council, region to region, state to state. We recognise that our regions represent the interests, issues and circumstances of a wide array of communities across a vast tract of the Australian continent.

The councils of the MDA work together to better understand the unique issues that define, challenge and shape our regions.

At the 2016 National Conference and AGM the membership of the MDA resolved that

The Murray Darling Association

- a) notes an undertaking by the 12 regions of the Basin to develop Regional Strategies reports to address local issues as noted at item 2.6 of the Murray Darling Association Strategic Plan 2016-19,
- b) will, through its region meetings support the contribution of informed content to identify and define regional issues.

This resolution commits the MDA to a significant and very important body of work. It will require active co-ordination by the Region Chairs and their chairing councils, quality input from member councils, and substantial work in sculpting the final draft, consulting with members and producing the final document. It will also provide an opportunity for Chairs to engage with and attract non-member councils.

It will be important that there is an element of consistency of format across the regions in the final product.

The following framework or contents is proposed as a starting point. The content framework will need to reflect the purpose of the document

### **Regional Plan Framework**

What is this Document About

A bit about our Region #

- Ø Boundaries
- Ø Local government areas in the region
- Ø Regional Profile
- Ø Member Councils

Our Partners and Stakeholders

The Basin Plan – Impacts to date

- Ø Positive
- Ø Adverse

The Role of Local Government

Current Issues impacting our region

- Ø Strengths
- Ø Opportunities

Themes

- Ø Healthy Local Communities
- Ø A Prosperous Region
- Ø Connected Communities

∅ A Healthy Natural Environment

Targeted Advocacy Campaigns

∅ .

∅ .

∅ .

Beyond the Basin Plan...

#### **7.4 SA Regional forum with LGA**

Last year a very successful forum was held in Adelaide involving representatives from all of the MDA regions in South Australia. It involved presentations from the Chair of the MDBA and representatives of relevant government agencies. It is planned to hold another later this year.

#### **7.5 AGM and National Conference**

The AGM and National conference of the MDA will be held in Renmark from 11 to 13 October. A draft program has been prepared and will be tabled at the meeting.

#### **7.6 Region 7 Motions for National Conference**

These need to be prepared in an appropriate format and brought to the next meeting of Region 7 for discussion and endorsement.