



# Murray Darling Association Inc.

admin@mda.asn.au  
www.mda.asn.au  
T (03) 5480 3805  
ABN: 64 636 490 493

463 High Street  
P.O. Box 1268  
Echuca, Vic 3564

## Region 6 Ordinary Meeting

### Minutes

**Location:** Mobilong Suite, Rural City of Murray Bridge  
Local Government Centre, 2 Seventh Street  
MURRAY BRIDGE SA 5253

**Time/date:** 9.30am – 1.30pm, Friday, 6 November 2020

**To join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89778322686?pwd=UUkxOFFE0UdZeGhnUkFnMFJmYmtuUT09>

Meeting ID: 897 7832 2686

Passcode: 382810

#### Welcome & Acknowledgement of Country

MDA Region 6 and its communities acknowledge the Ngarrindjeri people as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters of the Lower Murray, Lower Lakes and Coorong region.

#### 1. ATTENDANCE

##### 1.1 In Attendance

Mayor Brenton Lewis, Stephen Packer (Rural City of Murray Bridge)  
Cr. Melissa Rebbeck (Chair), Cr. Michael Scott (Alexandrina)  
Cr. Brenton Qualmann (Coorong District)  
Adrian Pederick, MP JP (Member for Hammond) (individual member)

##### 1.2 Guests

Deana Mildren (Senior Engagement Officer MDBA)  
Tim Smythe (CEO Murraylands and Riverland LGA)  
Monika Rhodes (Outgoing Secretariat, Nathan Bicknell (Executive Officer) (Alexandrina)  
Richard Reedy (SA Murray Irrigators)

##### Via Zoom:

Emma Bradbury (CEO MDA)  
Tony McLeod (GM– SDL Accounting and Aboriginal Partnerships), David Cook (Assistant Director, Surface Water, SDL Accounting, Basin Plan Regulation (MDBA)

##### 1.3 Apologies

Cr. Marilyn Henderson (Victor Harbor)

Cr. Vern Leng and Bridget Mather (CEO) (Coorong District)  
CEO Glenn Rappensberg (CEO, Alexandrina)  
Heather Barclay (Rural City of Murray Bridge)  
CEO Jason Taylor (Southern Mallee)  
Cr. Miles Hannemann (Tatiara District)  
Keith Loeser (leave of absence) Frank Tuckwell, Bruce Brooks (Individual members)

**2. WELCOME TO REGION 6's NEW EXECUTIVE OFFICER**

- The Chair introduced the Nathan Bicknell as the successful candidate for the part time EO position; and
- Nathan provide the members with a short overview of his experience in natural resource monument (fisheries) in addition to his biography previously provided by email.

**3. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Nil

**4. MINUTES**

Minutes and attachments of the 7 August 2020 meeting were circulated to the members on 31 August 2020. The minutes are also available on the MDA website – Region 6 under “Meetings”: <https://www.mda.asn.au/regions/region-6.aspx>. Note, that attachments have not been published to ensure privacy, especially concerning correspondence between members.

**Motion:** That the minutes of the MDA Region 6 committee meeting held on 7 August 2020, as circulated to members on 31 August 2020, be received as a true and correct record.

Moved: Mayor Lewis

Seconded: Cr Qualmann

**CARRIED**

**5. REPORTS**

**5.1 CEO's Report – Emma Bradbury**

Verbal Report Provided: please see MDA website for latest newsletter.

- Welcome to Nathan as the EO for Region 6 and thank you to Monika for all her hard work;
- Extend model of R6; governance to be assessed; good model for across the basin;
- Reflected upon a positive trip to Canberra (Consultation Policy, Strategic Plan 2025 and National conference outcomes), and
- Praise for the Tim Smythe's progress with the MRLGA Water Position Paper and Working Group TOR

**Clarifications:** No less than **1/3 of member councils** for quorum as per the **16.6(d)** of MDA Constitution 2019;

**Discussion:**

- Regional engagements: R6 stakeholder symposium in collaboration with MDA National; maybe combining it with the MDA leadership program and barrage tour; working on healthy flows and listen to community.
- MDA Setting dates for next year when coming down to SA; planning 2021 MDA National Conference (Wentworth; meeting of the waters); theme: connectivity. Planned to be virtually and physically.

**Actions:** to make a time to making a time to meet Emma while in SA.

## **5.2 Chair's Report – Cr Melissa Rebeck**

Verbal report provided:

- Acknowledgement and special thanks to outgoing EO Monika Rhodes for her service as R6 secretariat;
- Meetings with CCLMM to celebrated 10 years of flow (DEW and Indigenous representation);
- Would like bring community engagement into the member reports – prepare for meetings as it is important to bring collective information back to MDA;
  - Collective knowledge/imput is important for water position statement;
- Regon 6 motions were accepted at the MDA National Conference (September);
- Water Buy-backs: abolished, difficult discussions with state, concerns of advocates moving to abolish 450GL downwater;
- The R6 individual membership applicants for concideration today have great local experience and expertise will be an asset to R6;
- New Chair Of MDBA - Air Chief Marshal Sir Angus Houston AK, AFC (ret) – regional tour coming up;
- Alexandrina Coastal Adaptation Study (underway) – looking at climate change risk on Alexandrina's coastline; parts of low lying Hindmarsh Island is expected to be impacted; including private and public assets and ecology.

**Action:** The secretariat to send members links to the Coastal Adaption Study via the EO

Minutes to be confirmed

### 5.3 Strategic Advisory Group Report – Mayor Lewis

Verbal report provided:

- No meeting since August MDA R6 meeting;
- The Ngarrindjeri Aboriginal Corporation (**NAC**);
  - Have developed an MOU with five Councils regarding working together;
  - William Wilson (Bill) Tim Hartmann (CEO); Clyde Rigney (Senior) as main contacts;
- NAC Responsible for their native title claim including water – important stakeholder in R6 and MDA; and
- No better time to extend an invitation to work with R6 directly or at any regional events.

**Note:** NRA (pre NAC) voice until NAC was appointed due to native title declared within our area; still operating; NAC to advise on involvement with NRA.

#### Comments:

- Emma Bradbury: Stirling East School presentation at 2019 National Conference; prepared factsheet on engagement with first nation voice; forwarded to Grant Rigney (on NAC Board);
- MDA Strategic Plan (2025): Vision 20205, structured and personal engagement with first Nations and custodians; great opportunity to organise meeting with NAC (Action to organise);
- Previous discussion of the committee to seek a NAC representative for R6.

#### Actions:

- Cr Qualmann: to arrange for deputation to meet with NAC; and
- Chair to extend an invitation to NAC to attend the next R6 meeting (5 February 2021).

Verbal report provided:

- Meeting with stakeholders on ground: Sir Angus Houston (Chair of MBBA) to come and meet community members with CEO Glyde; Cth Ag and Water office; talking to people across the Lower Murray Basin; regional chairs invited;
- Meeting Lock 1 to Murray Bridge
- Webinar in early Dec re evaluation of 2020 or broader overview.

#### Comments:

- With recent rain events on the East Coast (La Nina) what is the status of the storage facilities of northern basin are comparatively better to last year; but some parts still struggling.

**Action:** MDBA representative to provide members links to the MDBA storage report per R6 meeting via the EO.

### 5.4 Secretariat Report – Monika Rhodes

Verbal report provided:

- Finalised Region 6 motions for the MDA National Conference;
- Advertised the EO position; held job interviews, induction, hand-over, etc.
- Communications for and with the MDA; supporting Chair, executives and MDA R6
- Discussed the merits of regular media updates and if it is still warranted;
- Thanked the Chair, Tania for their work; R6 members, MDBA, MDA National (Emma, Cathy and Jess) for their support in the past 14 months;
- Back-up support for Nathan;
- Continued advocacy for Alexandrina...

**Note:**

- That members be aware that the EO's Position is 0.5 FTE to the end of the financial year.
- Councils are reminded to consider their budgets for 2020/2021; and
- It took two years to get this position up.

**Discussion:**

- The value of media communiques to the members was mixed members can subscribe to pertinent publications; and
- Seen as the role of EO to be across breaking news.

Action: EO to monitor media and send out to members as sees fit (subscribe).

**Motion:** that the MDA Region 6 Committee formally acknowledge and thank Monika Rhodes for her contribution as secretariat.

Moved: Cr Qualmann

Seconded: Mayor Lewis

**CARRIED**

**Motion:** That reports 5.1 to 5.5 be received.

Moved: Mayor Lewis

Seconded: Cr Qualman

**CARRIED**

**6. GUEST PRESENTER: Dr Tony McLeod (MDBA) on Floodwater Harvesting**

Dr Tony McLeod (General Manager of the SDL Accounting & Aboriginal Partnerships Program) and David Cook (Assistant Director, Surface Water, SDL Accounting, Basin Plan Regulation (MDBA) joined the meeting by video link to provide an overview of **Flood Plain Harvesting** and to answer any questions from the members.

Tony provided a definition of Flood Plain Harvesting, as well as the historical and current context and where it is heading under the Basin Plan and State Water Resource Plans and accounting under the Cap, in particular NSW.

**Definition:**

- It is called different things in different States for example **Overland Flow** in QLD;
- Essentially, the typography of parts of the Northern basin are conducive to this activity;
- Infrastructure is used to impound water during Flood Events that is generally water that has spilled over the bank;
- The NSW approach uses the concept of a "flood event" and one must be declared before water can be diverted under this method;

**Context:**

- In 2012 the estimates of Flood Plain Harvesting were made of the volumes associated with the **baseline diversion limits** (i.e., arrangements at, generally, 2009). The legal definition of these limits in the Basin Plan is a description, and this allows for improved estimates of these limits to be used.
- There is acknowledgement by the NSW Government that current infrastructure and use may be

higher than these limits in some parts of NSW.

- Under the Water Act and the Basin Plan there is a requirement for States to effectively account for it and bring it back in line with the limits (if this is required)
- NSW Healthy Flood plains Project has been preparing to move toward licencing FPH infrastructure and issuing (permanently tradable) entitlements by 1 July 2021.

#### **Water Accounting (NSW):**

- Discussion s about relevance to the 5 main valleys for this form of take in northern (NSW);
- Carry over up to 500% is being considered by NSW (= 5 years of flow; due to access for this form of take being 'boom and bust');
- Extraction upstream impacts downstream that's why it must be accounted for appropriately under the WRPs; and
- NSW Webinars go into much more detail if of interest.

**Action:** Deana to send members the links to NSW Healthy Floodplain Project – webinars via the EO

#### **Discussion:**

- Regarding the disallowance and rescindment of NSW legislation (a first in 30 years);
- The legislation was designed to give certainty (maintain status quo) during the transition between the 1912 and 2000 regulations;
- Ultimately, it is a side issue and MDBA is pleased with NSW progress on the issue;
- Modelling of the 5 major valleys will be available early next year; and
- This is a positive example of a single Basin policy in action
  - Address effort creep since 2009; and
  - Account for this sector under WRP moving forward.

## **7. GENERAL BUSINESS**

### **7.1 New Region 6 membership applications (Chair Melissa Rebbeck)**

Region 6 received two applications for Individual members:

#### **1. Warren Jacobs:**

- "Learn more and help have some understanding of the concerns of council areas right along the Murray Darling.
- Contribute to input so that we have balanced opinion of irrigator, social and environment, knowing that without a healthy environment, all will suffer especially at the end of the river. I am a dairy farmer who irrigates and see the results first hand."

#### **2. Colin Grundy:**

- "I have lived on Mundoo Island Station, in the heart of the Coorong, all my life and I am a 5<sup>th</sup> generation farmer in the region.
- My family have owned Mundoo Island since before the barrages were built and I have a vast knowledge of the area.
- I have witnessed many changes in my 6 decades on the land and believe that more can be done to bring a better solution to the table to ensure the Murray mouth and Lower Lakes receive the life-giving flows that are required to ensure the survival of the ecosystem."

**Note:** As per item (3) of the MDA Membership Procedure (**Attachment 1**), where a person applying to join a region of the MDA in the category of Individual Member:

*“The Chair will bring the application before the next general meeting of the Region, and the region must either resolve to recommend to the Board that the application be accepted or resolve to recommend to the Board that the application be refused”.*

**Discussion:**

- New members would be subject to the same declaration of interest; and
- The location of both members in relation to Region 6.

**Motion:** That the members of Region 6 recommend to the MDA Board that applications for Individual Members; Warren Jacobs and Colin Grundy of Region 6 be accepted.

Moved: Cr Scott

Seconded: Cr Qualmann

**CARRIED**

**Action:** The Chair to table the nominations with the MDA Inc. Board for their approval.

**Lunch: 11.57am-12.15pm**

**7.2 Tim Smythe (CEO Murraylands and Riverland LGA): Water Position Paper – Working Group (Refer to TOR in Attachment 2)**

- Tim Smythe, CEO MRLGA, join the meeting to discuss the value of the MRLGA working in partnership with MDA Region 5 and 6 to develop a water position paper:
- “The Murraylands and Riverland Local Government recently endorsed a new Strategic Plan. The strategy brings a focus to delivering outcomes that support an attractive, liveable region with prosperous communities.
- Underpinning the efforts of the association is a mission that a commits to working as unified local government sector in the best interest of the region and its communities.
- Water and the health of the Murray River system are critically important to the prosperity of the Murraylands and Riverland. T
- The conundrum for local government is that it has limited direct control over water matters and becoming a technical expert is beyond the core responsibilities and resources of most councils.
- The key to how the sector responds to issues such as the Murray Darling Basin Plan is via connection to place and connection to community speaking with one voice and ensuring it is an informed voice.
- To help facilitate the process of becoming an informed voice and advocating on behalf of our communities, MRLGA is keen to develop a water position paper.
- Development of the paper provides an opportunity to capture a history of water stewardship in the state, analyse the progress of the Murray Darling Basin Plan and develop policies initiatives to help secure a prosperous future”.

**Note:** Item 8.2 of the [MRLGA Board Minutes](#) states *“That MRLGA Board approves the formation of the Water Position Paper Working Group and that the Terms of Reference be amended to allow one member, plus a proxy (in addition to the Chair) from MDA Region 5 and 6 to be nominated as a representative”*

**Recommendation:** That the Chair of MDA Region 6, one (1) representative and one (1) proxy with connection to the constituent councils of MRLGA from MDA Region 6, will be nominated to become members of the MRLGA Water Position Working Group to oversee the development of a water position paper for the MRLGA.

**Note:** Heather Barclay and Bridget Mather were recommended as they have direct connection to the Riverland Murrayland LGA

**Motion:** That the members endorse: MDA Region 6 Chair; and Executives, with a preference for Heather Barclay; and Bridget Mather (as proxy) to represent Region 6 on the MRLGA Water Position - Working Group.

**Moved: Cr Scott**

**Seconded: Cr Qualmann**

**CARRIED**

**Action:** The Chair to inform the MLGA of the region 6 representatives and proxy for the Water Position Paper Working Group.

**Cr Scott departed 12:43pm**

**Discussion:**

- To have water position statement at the symposium – to harness information from region members/communities.
- Representatives to represent the region without too much regional consultation to make decisions; use MDA R6 meetings to discuss certain topics and provide reports to the members.
- Life of project: Ideally next 6 months most work undertaken.

## **8. OTHER BUSINESS**

**8.1** MDA asked for a photo for the MDA Region 6 delegates of today's meeting that they can share it on their social media/newsletter.

### **8.2 For noting**

**1. Virtual National MDA Conference & AGM (14-16 September 2020)**

The recorded sessions of the National MDA Conference, the AGM, as well as the study tour, are found here: <https://www.mda.asn.au/events/2020-shepparton-virtual-.aspx>; and

**2. ACCC enquiry – Interim report** – Water Markets Inquiry - published in July 2020. Submissions on the Interim report closed 31 October 2020.

### **8.3 Correspondence**

- 1.** The Basin Communities Leadership Program – Lower Lakes Workshop: postponed

### **8.4 AGM and Strategic Directions 2021**

**AGM procedures** (to be held 5 February 2020):

- 1.** The notice of AGM and call for nominations will be sent out by the MDA no less than 6 weeks (and no more than 9 weeks) ahead of the AGM to allow adequate time for councils to prepare and endorse their nominations;
- 2.** Information will be provided by the MDA but usually contains that the nominations must include:
  - A **completed Nomination Form**;
  - A copy of the extract **of council minutes** including the resolution of council acknowledging their commitment to and endorsement of their delegate's nomination;



- A brief **biography or CV** of the nominating delegate;
- A statement of **commitment from council acknowledging the obligations of the Region Chair** under Part 5, 16 (5) of the MDA Constitution (for nominations to Regional Chair).
- Documents will need to be sent **to the Returning Officer** by the required **due date**.

**Noting:** That the *'MDA Region 6 Strategic Directions & Work Plan 2020'*, adopted at the Ordinary Meeting held in Murray Bridge in February 2020, will need to be reviewed at the next meeting (5 February 2020).

**Discussion:**

- Symposium to drive strategic direction;
- Good to focus on healthy plan and how do we drive and implement the change;
- Ideas and recommendation to send to EO and Chair;
- Review of where MDBA plan is at?
  - 2020 evaluation released – things to consider
  - Climate change position;
- Health Coorong: update; and
- Alexandrina's Coastal Adaptation Study – Murray Estuary Settlement report and results.

**Action:** EO to prepare draft AGM Notice a review Strategic Directions and work pan for February.

## 8.5 Individual Member Reports

### 1. Hon. Adrian Pederick MP JP:

- Member since 2006: freshwater recovery since millennium drought;
- Opinion that water recovery – can be done with infrastructure upgrades; more work can be done to improve;
- Fur seal management in the lower lakes is still a priority for constituents;
- Advocating for infrastructure upgrades to maintain a managed system (automatic gates, road access);
- Increasing water literacy is an issue in SA also;
- Healthy Coorong; SE drains (interconnector);
- Shack policy: freehold (e.g. Milang; Glenelg River);
- Maintains opposition to the current National Carp Control Plan and Wellington Weir upgrade; and
- Happy to promote joint policy positions, etc. to put forward to colleagues.

### 2. Cr Brenton Qualmann:

- Coorong Health visit: update on progress, development of wetlands;
- Barrages: need of upgrade and or replacement;
- Fur seals: impacts on fishing is a major issue;
- Like to see minutes to local papers (free papers)? EO to investigate;
- Lake Albert: connector;
- Climate change and how it affects community; and
- Negotiations with indigenous owners / first nation;

### 3. Stephen Packer:

- Environmental management plan in progress; and
- River bank slumping: no issues currently with river levels up; risks to LG and insurance.

**9. NEXT MEETING**

**1. 5 February 2021: Taillem Bend (Coorong District Council)**

- Executive meeting: 9.30 – 10.30 am
- AGM: 11:00 am – 12:00 pm
- Ordinary meeting: 12.30 – 3.30 pm.

**10. CLOSE @ 1.25pm**

*The Murray Darling Association acknowledges Rural City of Murray Bridge for its support in hosting this virtual meeting of Region 6 – Lower Murray, Lakes and Coorong.*

Minutes to be confirmed

**2020/2021 REGION 6 MEMBERSHIP  
As of 29 October 2020**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Council</b>	<b>Member of Executive</b>	<b>Voting Member</b>
<b>Chair</b>	Councillor Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrina		
<b>Executive Officer</b>	Nathan Bicknell	Alexandrina (Murray Bridge, Coorong)		
<b>Council Representatives</b>	Mayor Brenton Lewis	Murray Bridge		
	Heather Barclay	Murray Bridge		
	Stephen Packer	Murray Bridge		
	CEO Bridget Mather	Coorong District		
	Councillor Vern Leng	Coorong District		
	Councillor Brenton Qualmann	Coorong District		
	CEO Glenn Rappensberg	Alexandrina		
	Councillor Michael Scott	Alexandrina		
	Councillor Marilyn Henderson	Victor Harbor		
	Councillor Miles Hannemann	Tatiara District		
	CEO Jason Taylor	Southern Mallee		
<b>Individual Members</b>	Keith Loeser	Note: Leave of absence		
	Frank Tuckwell			
	Bruce Brooks			
	Adrian Pederick, MP JP			

Minutes to be confirmed

## The 2020/21 calendar for MDA-Region 6

Updated 29 October 2020

DATE	EVENT	NOTES
14 February 2020	R6 AGM & Ordinary Meeting	Topic: set region direction for 2020
12-13 March	MDA Strategic Planning Workshop	R6 attendance
15 May 2020	R6 Ordinary Meeting	Topic: Drought Preparedness Member councils to share info re use of Federal drought funds Seek relevant guest speaker *Forward planning for National Conference motions
7 August 2020	R6 Ordinary Meeting	Topic: Consider National Conference motions
14 -16 September	MDA National Conference & AGM	Via video conferencing.
6 November 2020	R6 Ordinary Meeting	Topics: Water position paper and floodplain harvesting
5 February 2021	R6 AGM & Ordinary Meeting	Topic: Set region direction for 2021
TBC	Annual R6 Stakeholder Symposium	Lead: Murray Bridge, Coorong & EO Outcomes of Lower Lakes Independent Science Review + Shared Vision Statement + Drought Preparedness
TBC	EM & Inter-Regional Tour of CLLMM	Lead: Alexandrina & EO, liaise with MDA Primary audience = Members & EMs of R6 member councils; Secondary audience = Members of upstream regions; BCLP Cohort
TBC	Basin Communities Leadership Program (BCLP) – Lower Lakes	Lead: Alexandrina Venue: TBD

R6 Meetings
R6 Events
MDA Meetings/Events