



A G E N D A

65th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of the Murray Darling Association Inc

**To be held at the Playford Civic Centre,
Elizabeth, South Australia**

**FRIDAY 4 SEPTEMBER 2009
starting at 8.30 am**

**Ray Najar
GENERAL MANAGER**

August 2009

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AGENDA

1. WELCOME

National President, Murray Darling Association

2. OFFICIAL OPENING OF THE 2009 AGM

3. PRESENT

4. OPENING

National President, Murray Darling Association

5. STANDING ORDERS

The meeting's Standing Orders follow current meeting procedure and practice.

5.1 *Standing Orders:*

Movers of resolutions will be allowed three minutes to introduce their subject unless by consent of AGM, the time for introducing their subjects is extended, and three minutes for reply - no new subject matter shall be introduced in the reply.

Other speakers will be allowed three minutes, unless by consent of the AGM their time is extended. A mover shall have the right to speak to his/her motion before a seconder is called for.

In the event of any motion dissenting from the ruling of the Chairman being moved, such motion shall be put without discussion.

When an amendment is before the AGM, no further amendment shall be discussed until such first amendment has been disposed of.

No more than one amendment for any motion shall be considered unless notice of further amendments is given before the amendment then under discussion has been disposed of.

The resolution shall not be put until at least two members of the AGM in addition to the mover and seconder, have had the opportunity to speak on the issue before the AGM.

Unless by consent of the AGM, all resolutions shall be taken in the order they appear in the agenda.

When a resolution or amendment has been moved and seconded, no more than two speakers in support of such resolution shall be heard until someone shall have spoken in opposition to such resolution. Thereafter, speakers shall only be entitled to speak for or against the resolution in rotation.

The National President will chair the AGM - in his/her absence; the chair shall be taken by the Vice President, or with the consent of AGM, by any other delegate.

Late motions moved from the floor of the AGM will be allowed, but must be in writing to the Administration and referred to the Agenda Committee 24 hours prior to consideration by the meeting.

If possible, late motions should be given to the Administration prior to the lunch break on Day One and dealt with as Late Resolutions.

An Agenda Committee, including the President and Vice President, may make minor changes to any proposed late resolution to clarify the intent of the motion.

Late motions from the floor of the AGM will require approval to be brought forward by the meeting before being considered by that meeting.

Unless it is agreed by the meeting that the matter is urgent, all late motions shall be referred to the Board of Management prior to being actioned.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Standing Orders be agreed to.

6. APOLOGIES

RECOMMENDATION: That the apologies be received and noted.

7. CONDOLENCES

8. MINUTES OF THE 64th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

RECOMMENDATION: That the minutes of the 64th AGM held at Leeton, NSW, on Friday 29 August 2008 be accepted as a true and accurate record.

9. BUSINESS ARISING

9.1 Actions reported in the Annual Report

Actions on the previous year's resolutions are reported in the 2007/08 Annual Report.

RECOMMENDATION: That the actions be noted.

10. FORMAL MATTERS

10.1 Life Membership

To be advised.

10.2 Office Bearers – Mr Ray Najjar

The elections for 2009-10 Office Bearers took place at the Board meeting at Elizabeth on Wednesday 2 September 2009 and will be announced at the AGM.

RECOMMENDATION: That the election outcome be noted and the successful office bearers for 2009-10 be congratulated.

10.3 Amendment to the Constitution

Last year, certain proposed amendments were withdrawn at the AGM, causing an anomaly with the definition of 'Delegate'. 'Delegate' means any person or persons appointed to represent Local Government municipalities, Local Government-based organisations and Regions at the General Council meetings and to vote at such meetings.

Delegates should note that this definition does not cover Financial Members or Life Members.

Under Clause 8.8 of the Constitution, each delegate present shall have one vote on matters before the meeting. To correct the anomaly, the following amendment of clause 4.1 is proposed:

RECOMMENDATION: That Clause 4.1 of the Constitution be amended to read:

DELEGATE – means any person or persons appointed to represent Local Government municipalities, Local Government-based organisations and Regions at the General Council meetings and to vote at such meetings, which includes Financial Members and Life Members.

10.4 Addition to the Constitution

At the Board meeting at Broken Hill in June 2009, a discussion was held on how to address the issue of a member who deliberately and/or publicly criticises the Association; misconstrues MDA policies; uses their position contrary to MDA policies; or represents the Association without approval of a Region or the Board. The Board resolved that the following amendment be inserted in the Constitution as a new clause 5.4:

RECOMMENDATION: That the following be inserted into the Murray Darling Association's Constitution as a new clause 5.4:

A member who deliberately and/or publicly criticises the Association; misconstrues MDA policies; uses their position contrary to MDA policies; represents the Association without approval of a Region, Board or the National President; or brings the Association into disrepute, should show cause why his/her membership of the Association should not be revoked, and, if requested, return any materials, documents or information provided by the MDA.

11. REPORTS

11.1 President's and General Manager's Report - as in the 2008/09 Annual Report.

11.2 Treasurer's Report - as in 2008/09 Annual Report

RECOMMENDATION: That the above reports including the Murray Darling Association's 2008-09 Annual Report, be received and noted

12. MURRAY DARLING ENVIRONMENTAL FOUNDATION

12.1 Chairman's Report: Mr Brian J Grogan OAM – as set out in the 2008/09 Murray Darling Environmental Foundation Annual Report.

12.2 Financial Report - as set out in the 2008/09 MDEF Annual Report.

RECOMMENDATION: That the above reports including the Murray Darling Environmental Foundation's 2008-09 Annual Report, be received and noted.

12.3 Election of Murray Darling Environmental Foundation Committee (information only)
Two positions expire at the end of 2008/09, Mr Brian J Grogan of Mildura, VIC, and Mr Jim Hullick of Port Willunga, SA.

RECOMMENDATION: That the AGM notes that Mr Brian J Grogan OAM of Mildura, VIC, and Mr Jim Hullick OAM of Port Willunga, SA, have been reappointed to the Murray Darling Environmental Foundation for a further period of three years commencing September 2009.

12.4 Vacant position on the Foundation Committee

The Murray Darling Environmental Foundation Committee is looking to fill one vacant position. The applicant must fulfil the committee member requirements as laid down by the Commonwealth Government's Public Fund Management Committee membership guidelines, eg. has honours, minister, JP, public servant, councillor, mayor, MP, doctor, accountant, etc.

Anyone wishing to be considered as a member of the Environmental Foundation Committee is asked to make contact with the Chair of the Foundation to register their interest.

12.5 General Business

12.6 Close of Murray Darling Environmental Foundation AGM

13. MDA MOTIONS

13.1 Loss of Local Government rates

Region 2

When a government, government agency, CMA or natural resources council buys a property for conservation purposes, the property no longer pays rates to Local Government, even though the council provides access roads and other services. There is a strong view by Region 2 that council's should be reimbursed for this loss of rates for at least two to five years.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Murray Darling Association writes to both state and federal environment ministers requesting that when a government, government agency, CMA or natural resources council buys a property for conservation purposes, the relevant council should be reimbursed for this loss of rates for at least two to five years on the basis that the council still provides roads and other services to the property.

13.2 Clarence River

Region 2

For many years, Region 2 has been raising the issue of a feasibility study to dam part of the Clarence River and divert some of the water inland to the Murray-Darling Basin to help alleviate water shortages. The Federal Government has made it quite clear that it will not support any such project but the NSW Government has not been as clear on the issue. Some years ago, the Association supported a feasibility study into the idea.

RECOMMENDATION: That the NSW Government be asked to respond directly to community requests over the years that part of the Clarence River be dammed to minimise flood damage and to divert some of the water inland to the Murray-Darling Basin.

13.3 Clarence River diversion

Region 6

This proposed diversion of the Clarence River was first discussed in the 1930s. The Fraser Government allocated \$4 million to fund a feasibility study into the scheme. The Hawke Government discontinued this. The proposal, if feasible, would involve the construction of a headwater dam on the Clarence River, with a 22km tunnel under the Gibraltar Ranges in Northern NSW. This tunnel would emerge on the Murray-Darling Basin side of the ranges and feed into the Beardy River, then the McIntyre River and, ultimately into the Basin. The Gibraltar Ranges are situated in one of the highest rainfall areas in Australia. Benefits of the scheme include:

- The dams would have storage capacity approaching that of the Snowy Mountains Scheme.
- The capacity of the headwater storage would provide flood control to the Clarence Valley.
- The diversion would only require 24% of the total maximum storage volumes of water to provide similar volumes of water to the Basin as the Snowy Mountains Scheme.
- The generation of hydro-electricity is another major benefit.

This motion is not a request to build the scheme, but to revisit it in the context of recent climatic events and over-allocations in the Murray Darling Basin.

RECOMMENDATION: That the MDA requests the Federal Government, as a matter of urgency, to commission a report on the Clarence River Diversion Proposal relative to water flows through the Murray-Darling system and to make that report widely available.

13.4 Research

Murrumbidgee Region

In its recent budget, the NSW Government announced that six DPI agricultural research stations would close. Due to pressure from the communities involved, the Minister has reversed his decision and has announced that five will remain open in some form or other. Research has kept our farmers abreast with the world, and in some instances, ahead. Research centres are needed if we are to keep our knowledge and experience in place.

RECOMMENDATION: That the MDA lobbies the relevant federal and state bodies to support continuation of research institutions in order to provide the data and information available to support innovation, planning and directions in sustainability across economic, social and environmental sectors for the Murray-Darling Basin.

13.5 Food security

Murrumbidgee Region

All of Australia has or is experiencing significant water shortages – for human consumption, food production and industrial purposes. Almost 100 years ago, a scheme was considered to bring water from far north Queensland to the south – even though achievable, this was considered “too costly” at the time. Now, more than ever before this project is considered “too costly” to ignore – the cost on all Australia in NOT doing this project, far outweighs the financial cost of funding it.

RECOMMENDATION: That the MDA:

- lobbies the Federal Government to urgently provide a series of ecological sustainable measures to provide water supply certainty for food security;
- asks the federal and state governments to consider the transfer of water from plentiful areas to those areas that constantly face water shortage - ie. from far north Australia to the south, and that state borders be ignored with any such scheme; and
- lobbies the Federal Government to consider the capture of water, including the use of rain water tanks and re-injection of water to aquifers and reservoirs, and that that this Australia-wide project be given a high priority in this time of financial downturn and the Federal Government stimulus packages discussions.

13.6 Great Artesian Basin

Murrumbidgee Region

The Great Artesian Basin is one of the largest underground sources of water in the world and underlies one-fifth of Australia (across 1.7 million square kilometres). Farmers have helped save more than 47,000 megalitres a year since the NSW Government introduced the hugely successful Cap and Pipe the Bores program in 1990. The NSW Government intends to auction off 1200 megalitres of the savings, and while this is only 2.5% of the savings, we believe that it sends the wrong message to farmers when the Federal Government is involved with the Water Buyback.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Association register its concern with NSW Minister Costa regarding the selling of savings from the capping of the bores. Also that the NSW Government source funds from the Federal Government to expedite the capping of the remaining bores in the basin to save water.

13.7 NSW Groundwater

Region 6

With the predictions of climate change, the value of groundwater will be, and is, totally unknown. To allow this resource to be sold off without taking into consideration the future requirements/needs for human consumption is not in the best interests of the Murray-Darling Basin. Half of the Basin is within the boundaries of the Great Artesian Basin and, only recently, it was reported that the equivalent of over 400 Sydney Harbours of groundwater has been removed from the Basin.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Murray Darling Association views with alarm the intention of the New South Wales Government’s plan to sell water licences for the extraction of water from the Great Artesian Basin.

13.8 Intergovernmental Agreement

Region 6

There is growing concern across the Basin about the ability of the new Murray-Darling Basin Authority to operate independently without political interference by the States in its decision-making processes. Given that the primary focus of the Inter-government Agreement was to create an independent authority to govern the Basin, Region 6 is very concerned that the agreement's current failure to deliver on the promise of independence, proof of which is reflected in the states being able to veto certain conditions of that Agreement, making a farce of the independence of that Agreement and a mockery of governments original intent for that Agreement'.

RECOMMENDATION: That the MDA expresses its dismay at the outcome of the Intergovernmental Agreement on the governance of the Basin, and calls upon the Federal Government to intervene and take over the governance arrangements to create a truly independent Murray-Darling Basin Authority

13.9 Evaporation and infrastructure

Region 6

There is a need to examine all natural and built infrastructure that impacts on evaporation losses within the Murray-Darling Basin with a view to restructuring the system to enable more efficient use of the available water. This would include all storages and weir pools in order to facilitate their more efficient management. The study should examine the ways and means to facilitate more efficient delivery of environmental outcomes throughout the Basin by, for example, issuing regional trusts with permanent entitlements and investing in control structures that enable more efficient delivery of environmental water to selected areas.

RECOMMENDATION: That the MDA calls for an independent review of the Murray-Darling Basin's natural and built infrastructure from top to bottom, weir-by-weir, lake-by-lake and backwater-by-backwater with a view to facilitating the more effective use of available water for environmental, social and economic purposes with special attention to the various icon sites.

13.10 Water for critical human need

Region 6

The MDBA and the Federal Government need to set a trigger point for action that ensures that the provision of critical human needs water and transmission water are not put at risk and that water is not expended from the storages at the risk of providing water for human critical needs.

RECOMMENDATION: That the MDA urges the Federal Government and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to set a trigger point for when the major storages are at water levels before critical needs are to be considered.

13.11 Water course boundaries

Region 6

It is important that all rivers and waterways impacting on the Murray-Darling Basin come under the control of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority to facilitate the control of the basin wide resources.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Murray Darling Association seeks inclusion within the boundaries of the Murray Darling Basin of all water courses that either begin or end within the defined boundaries of the Murray-Darling Basin.

13.12 Climate change committee

Region 6

The predicted rise in global average temperature between now and 2020 of 2 to 3 degrees will have catastrophic consequences within the Murray-Darling Basin, such as up to a 50% reduction in the usual inflows by 2020. This will ensure that inefficiencies will be multiplied by up to 200%. It is imperative that all irrigation practices are 85% + efficient to be able to survive. It is also imperative that we, as an association, investigate as much as possible, the use of fossil fuelled energy within our communities.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Murray Darling Association establish a Climate Change Committee as soon as possible.

13.13 Murray-Darling Basin Authority

Region 7

RECOMMENDATION: That the Federal Government accelerate the process to ensure that the Murray-Darling Basin Authority which is responsible for the Murray-Darling Basin, is given every resource to bring about positive actions pertaining to the management of the system.

13.14 Public confidence

Region 7

RECOMMENDATION: That the Murray Darling Association stands ready to carry out whatever action is requested of it to bring on board public confidence in the matter of water security for all users of the Murray-Darling Basin.

13.15 Murray Darling Association Policy manual

Region 6

Problems will continue to arise while the Murray Darling Association's Policy Manual remains out-dated. The policies of the Association must be in the best interest of the Murray-Darling Basin and those that rely on the Basin for water. The policies must be relevant to all regions and not to any one region's detriment. All regions within the Association need to have a policy manual and the policies need to be taken into consideration when setting new policies. The policy manual needs to be widely distributed.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Murray Darling Association updates its Policy Manual that the manual be a living document revised immediately; and maintained up to date after each AGM or any other meeting at which Association policy is altered or amended.

13.16 Menindee Lakes

Region 1

Material on the Menindee Lakes was included in the MDA's submission to the Senate enquiry. The Senate Committee has handed down its recommendations but as the committee had a major of Coalition Senators, the recommendations will fall on deaf ears. The federal Government has a program of water buybacks. At the same time, why not take action on Menindee Lakes to save water by minimising the evaporation losses. The work on these lakes is long overdue.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Association make representations to Minister Costa and to the Chief Executive of the MDBA to immediately commence works on the Menindee Lakes to minimise the evaporation losses. These works to be consistent with the Maunsell Report, which might need updating to consider climate change.

13.17 New dams

Goondiwindi Water Forum

In March 2009, the Murray Darling Association conducted a water forum on the theme of 'water for the future'. The forum agreed that there were three main issues that needed urgent attention by

the Federal Government if the water for the future program was to achieve the outcomes from it's objectives.

The first focussed on the need to investigate and undertake major water infrastructure programs in and adjacent to the Murray Darling Basin, including new dams for capturing peak events to increase flow in the system while delivering infrastructure upgrades. Participants felt that this activity will create immediate social and economic benefits and provide an essential catalyst to improve our nation's water security and provide our future generations with a more secure future.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Federal Government as a matter of urgency investigate and undertake major water infrastructure programs in and adjacent to the Murray Darling Basin. This includes new dams for capturing peak events to increase flow in the system while delivering infrastructure upgrades.

13.18 Stakeholder consultation Goondiwindi Water Forum

In March 2009, the Murray Darling Association conducted a water forum on the theme of 'water for the future'. The forum agreed that there were three main issues that needed urgent attention by the Federal Government if the water for the future program was to achieve the outcomes from it's objectives.

RECOMMENDATION: That there needs to be a more concerted effort in effective stakeholder consultation by the Federal Government in developing its many wide and differing policies around its Water for the Future program, particularly on how to stimulate the economy.

13.19 Farm water use efficiency Goondiwindi Water Forum

RECOMMENDATION: That there needs a concerted effort regarding funding for on-farm water use efficiency, along.

13.20 Socio-economic impacts Goondiwindi Water Forum

RECOMMENDATION: That is an urgent need for an understanding/study of the socio-economic effects of water trading and the acceleration of the water buy-back program.

14. MDA VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT

Several years ago, the Board approved a vision and mission statement for the Murray Darling Association. In 2008, some Regions reviewed the vision and mission statement. Region 2 and 3 members wanted to include reference to more 'sustainable community' issues, the protection of water for sustainable irrigated agriculture; something on population management; and something on sustaining communities. Over the past four months, the Board has developed a revised statement – this draft is set out below.

RECOMMENDATION: That the draft revised vision statement set out below be endorsed by the 2009 AGM.



MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION

The Murray Darling Association was founded in August 1944 as the Murray Valley Development League. It is an association of Local Government municipalities in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria, as well as community groups, businesses, individuals and agencies with an interest in ensuring that the Murray-Darling Basin continues as a viable and valuable asset for all Australians.

VISION

To consistently and courageously represent Local Government and community views in the major natural resource management issues of the Murray-Darling Basin, and to influence the policies of governments as they relate to conservation and sustainable development within the Basin.

MISSION

To ensure that the natural resources of the Murray-Darling Basin continue as viable and valuable assets for all Australians. The Association will achieve this by providing natural resource management information; facilitating debate and community engagement; identifying needs and priorities; initiating and undertaking projects and education initiatives; promoting research; and working to influence natural resource management policies of governments as they relate to the Murray-Darling Basin.

VALUES

The Murray Darling Association is committed to best practice in management, community engagement and representation, service delivery and accountability. The Association values honesty, respect, diversity, understanding, inclusion and equity.

THE ASSOCIATION

The Murray Darling Association is a grass-roots, non-political and community-based organisation, able to interact with communities, governments and authorities on behalf of, and for the benefit of, Local Government and the community of the Murray-Darling Basin. The Association:

- seeks to ensure that the environmental integrity of the Murray-Darling Basin is conserved and protected,
- believes that Local Government is central to the orderly management of the Basin,
- encourages responsible and sustainable development within the Murray-Darling Basin while ensuring that the environment is protected,
- fosters the involvement of Local Government in natural resource management and decision-making processes within the Basin,
- supports integrated catchment management,
- supports the protection of water for sustainable irrigated agriculture,
- believes that the engagement, participation and involvement of communities are crucial to the future management of the Basin's land and water resources,
- supports balanced social, economic and environmental approaches for Basin communities,
- provides leadership and helps to resolve conflict, and
- facilitates, and provides a forum for, community participation in the decision-making processes that affect the Murray-Darling Basin.

15. LATE BUSINESS

16. NEXT AGM MEETING

15.1 2010 Conference

The 2010 National Conference and AGM will be held at Beechworth, Victoria in Region One.

15.2 2011 Conference

RECOMMENDATION: That given the northward expansion of the Murray Darling Association in recent years, that the 2011 National Conference and AGM be held in Queensland in a place appropriate to the new member councils and determined by the Board.

17 CLOSE