



Murray Darling Association Inc.

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Ordinary Meeting of the Board
Murray Darling Basin Authority Meeting Room,
Monday 29 July 2019
Via Zoom Calendar
<https://zoom.us/j/835369572>

Minutes - MEETING No. 388

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present

Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	Region 1
Cr Dennis Patterson	City of Greater Shepparton	Region 2
Cr Jane MacAllister	Wentworth Shire Council	Region 4
Cr Peter Hunter	Renmark Paringa Council	Region 5
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrina Council	Region 6
Cr Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council	Region 9
Cr John Campbell	Gunnedah Shire Council	Region 11
Cr Richard Marsh	Balonne Shire Council	Region 12
Pete George	M&S Group	Treasurer
Emma Bradbury	MDA	CEO

1.2 Apologies

Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham	Region 7
Mayor Denis Clark	Northern Areas	Region 8
Cr Phyllis Miller	Forbes	Region 10

Motion: That apologies be accepted and noted

P Hunter / D Patterson

Carried

1.3 Declarations

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 [Meeting 387](#) held via Zoom and in Canberra

Motion: That the minutes of meeting 387 be adopted as an accurate account of the meeting.

P Hunter / J MacAllister

Carried

J MacAllister asked for an update on the NFF annual report (item 5.4 of Meeting 387). E Bradbury spoke to the NFF, made the request, looked on website & there doesn't appear to be an annual report since 2015/2016.

3. REPORTS

3.1 Chairman's report

In addition the report, D Thurley raised his attendance at the upcoming Basin Community Committee in Canberra, and encouraged Board members to contact him if there are issues to raise. D Thurley also noted that the Environmental Water Holder reported that they had been unable to deliver water in 2018/2019 due to higher demands.

3.2 Finance reports

P George explained the finance reports and answered questions from the Board.

3.3 Chief Executive Officer's report

E Bradbury added to the report that,

"The national conference is a really exciting agenda that is somewhat different from before. The last few conferences have had a similar theme and flavor (reviewed performance of responsible agencies and stayed one step ahead of the narrative each year). This year is quite different. We're looking at Toowoomba, which is an area that operates a really dynamic model for its region and communities. Their business enterprise and productivity focus, in partnership with their council, has really stimulated a program that is looking at local government's opportunity to engage in Australia's growth and progress. Australia has recently articulated an aspiration to increase our agricultural productivity. We're looking at local government's response and responsibility to that aspiration, and how does it look at it sustainably as part of the process."

3.4 Region reports

3.4.1 Regions are now being asked to submit 2 distinct items to the MDA each month,

a) Report to the board

b) Items for the Newsletter

Plus items for the Annual report

E Bradbury briefed the board on progress for Regional Secretariat toolkit, and items required for Board meetings and newsletter. E Bradbury suggested a template to facilitate the process. D Thurley, D Patterson agreed.

ACTION: MDA Executive will develop a template for region report to be sent out to Board each month on a specific date before meetings.

J MacAllister asked for a clear distinction to be provided between Board Report and Newsletter items, as well as their audience and distribution.

P Hunter flagged that not all regions have the same secretarial support.

3.4.2 Region chairs to speak to this month's report – will be attached and reflected in minutes.

Region 4 – J MacAllister

Recently, Region 4 had its AGM and I am pleased to be returned as Chair with full complement of executive and ordinary committee with lots of interest, ideas and unity in moving forward. Myself and Cr Modica were fortunate to attend NCCP workshop with CEO Emma Bradbury and Jess. Excellent opportunity from MDA perspective to further cement the importance of local government and MDA to continue communications as the NCCP moves and changes. Cr Modica has written a comprehensive report to be presented at Region 4, and sent through to Board.

Region 4 has also had some interesting visits including from Member for Shepparton Suzanna Sheed, and Member for Mildura Ali Cupper who came through Wentworth Shire and Central Darling Shire. Both went back to Lisa Neville to have further conversations around the Lower Darling in particular, and why Victoria should be interested.

Consultation roadshows have been held in the region through July to discuss Menindee SDL Project, Water Metering and Darling Alluvium Water Resource Plan. At what level those consultations happen, may be an in-road for MDA to potentially step in.

Region 5 – P Hunter

Next Region 5 meeting is September 9. We've received some really positive feedback regarding ALGA, would also like to note that Neil Martinson (Renmark Paringa Council Mayor) is back from leave and is on the Basin Community Committee. Cr Andrew Kassebaum has been selected to join Robbie Sefton on the socio-economic impacts panel.

Region 6 – M Rebbeck

M Rebbeck noted new membership from a couple of new Councils, and discussed attendance at Natural Resource Management meeting, where members of the Murray Darling Regional Advisory committee talked about the dairy industry and their lack of uptake of the water infrastructure program. M Rebbeck expressed concern and is seeking advice from the board on how to respond/advise on that.

E Bradbury advised M Rebbeck to send an email to MDA Executive with further details. D Patterson spoke to the challenges of farmers in Region 2. D Thurley spoke about this issue being raised at the Basin Communities Committee.

Region 9 – P Maytom

Cr Maytom spoke about attending the Australian Cotton Collective on 24 July in Griffith last week and found it to be a very important event with a number of speakers there that we all need to be aware of. I attended as part of my role as a region 9 chair. Cr Maytom will provide a summary of the event and his thoughts to E Brabdry to distribute to the board for their perusal.

Motion: That the reports be received and noted.

J MacAllister / P Hunter

Carried.

4. BUSINESS ARISING

4.1 Flying Minute – Open letter from Minister Littleproud

Background: Minister Littleproud's office contacted the MDA indicating they are seeking our support for a general statement of unity and progress in the wake of growing media coverage from a range of sources escalating existing biases. You will note from the email below that the Ministers office has

- a) approached the MDA and a range of other influential peaks representing a range of interests and perspective including local govt, environmental and land care interests, farmers, irrigators, small business, seeking a 'coalition of the constructive', and
- b) been open to input from the MDA to ensure a balanced statement that invites responsibility and respect from and for all interests under the Plan.

Motion: That the MDA provide its support of an open letter from the Office of Minister Littleproud stating the following:

With the recent amplification in the media of issues around the Murray-Darling Basin Plan it is more important than ever that the voices of moderation and progress continue to be heard.

The Murray-Darling Basin Plan was adopted as a bipartisan plan to provide certainty and reliability for the river system and the communities it supports.

The historic agreement signed in December on the delivery between the Commonwealth and states and territories is further evidence of the bipartisan commitment to unite our communities and restore the health and productive capacity of the river system.

The signatories to this letter recognise that, while it may not be perfect the Basin Plan is the result of many years of negotiation and compromise on all sides. It is legislation which other countries have looked to as they have designed their own. The Plan was designed to deliver certainty for our communities, stability for business and industry, sustainability for our agricultural sector, and a healthy working Basin.

We remain committed to work with stakeholders and with each other to ensure that the implementation of the Plan is flexible and adaptive, and that it delivers strong reliable outcomes now and for future generations.

The motion was resolved 11/12 in the affirmative, with advice sent to the Minister's office on the 18th July.

Robust discussion from the Board. P Maytom requested more information, and a more thorough understanding of the Minister's position with the ACC inquiry. D Thurley clarified that this letter is in support of the Plan and of unity, and those other are still issues that need to be raised with Minister Littleproud but this is a statement of support the plan.

D Patterson voiced his views against the letter.

J MacAllister noted that she was heartened that Minister Littleproud had contacted the MDA as it expresses recognition at a very high level of the Murray Darling Association.

Motion: That the board note the resolution by Flying Minute.

4.2 Independent Social and Economic Conditions assessment panel

The Australian Government has appointed an independent panel undertake an assessment of social and economic conditions in irrigated communities across the Basin.

The assessment will be undertaken by an independent panel chaired by Robbie Sefton and completed by the end of December 2019.

This project will be an important part of the longer-term efforts to monitor the social and economic conditions in the Basin, and to evaluate the outcomes of the Basin Plan. It may consider:

- the effect of changing patterns in water use and trade and trends in the temporary water market that may be having an effect on water prices including the role of water market participants (including speculators)
- water availability and the effects of state water allocation policies and regulations on irrigators and communities
- the effects of water sharing and river management (including operational rules), on communities, irrigators and the health of the Basin rivers
- changes in the location, size and mix of irrigated agriculture

- environmental water recovery under the Basin Plan, including the impacts of buybacks, and government investments in on-farm and off-farm irrigation infrastructure, community development
- the social and economic outcomes for communities and industries from the use of held environmental water.

[View the Independent Socioeconomic Panel website](#)

Motion: That the board invite the Chair of the Panel Robbie Sefton to

- a) brief the board on the panels work and objectives (See also item 5.3)
- b) present at the 2019 National Conference

J MacAllister / D Patterson

Carried

D Thurley suggested regions to deliver submissions to the panel if relevant.

J MacAllister encouraged Board Members to register their interest via website to keep up to date with panel activities.

E Bradbury updated the Board on attendance at briefing with the panel last week, and while commending the panel, it's members and its purpose, expressed some reservation as to process. E Bradbury noted that feedback at the consultation had been provided, and that the draft ToR would be released for public comment in the coming days.

4.3 Water sales

At the May board meeting 386 Item 4.1 Resolved that the Murray Darling Association sell all water entitlements currently held by the MDA and hold the proceeds in a fixed term deposit pending determination of any alternative investment strategy.

That has been completed, with \$168,876.41 received 25/07/2019, with a further \$100,000 (approx.) to be received in the coming weeks.

E Bradbury requested some discussion around contractual arrangements remain confidential.

Motion: That the discussion about contractual arrangements remain confidential

M Rebbeck / P Hunter

Carried

Proposed Strategy: Invest in 1.5 positions, CRM and a vehicle.

Position 1 – Leadership Training Officer. This position at .5FTE will leverage the funding for the Basin Communities Leadership Development Program. By employing an appropriately qualified in-house facilitator, the MDA will save up to \$180,000 in external contracting fees, strengthen the delivery of the product, and bring forward the MDA's ability to offer the program on a fee for service basis alongside the program roll out funded by the MDBEDP. Investment: \$40,000 p/a Return: \$180,000 enhanced value in funding, and an ongoing funding stream through fee for service leadership training delivery.

Position 2 – Regional Engagement Director. This full-time position aligns with the MDA's current financial and philosophical strategic objective to develop the strength and capacity of the regions and will support the increasing time commitment in the co-ordination of regional events. Will also support the bid for funding for the Municipal Community Engagement Program.

Investment: \$80,000 p/a

Return: Increased membership and regional engagement, and support for the regions. Enhanced recurrent funding of up to \$380,000 p/a.

CRM – Implementation of Customer Relationship Management System \$10,000

Vehicle and equipment: Office space and workstation 2x \$5,000. Vehicle Lease: \$20,000p/a

Motion: That the proposed reinvestments strategy be adopted.

J MacAllister / P Maytom

Carried

5. GENERAL BUSINESS

5.1 Municipal Community Engagement Program

The MDA has sought Commonwealth funding to deliver a municipal and community engagement program connecting Basin communities with responsible agencies through local government. Funding proposal attached.

The funding will be used to develop and deliver a program to educate, raise capacity and build engagement with the Plan across the Regions, through the recruitment of six Municipal Engagement Officers, employed by the MDA and hosted by key leading Basin MDA-member councils. We will deliver key community and stakeholder events, create and support strategic working groups, monitor and record feedback, and provide an effective two-way conduit of accurate, concise, relevant and timely information between community and government.

The Municipal in Community Engagement program will work to recognize, collaborate with, and enhance existing engagement teams including the Commonwealth Environment Water Holder's Local Engagement Officers and the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's Regional Engagement Officers to establish a rich and valuable network of community engagement expertise.

The program will deliver strong social performance and economic confidence outcomes, leveraging existing Commonwealth investments in regional engagement.

As the peak body for local government across the Basin, we are positioned, capable and willing to take an active role over the final 4 years of implementation, ensuring that;

- Communities are well informed, building trust in our agencies and confidence in the Basin Plan
- stakeholder engagement is coordinated, genuine and effective
- communications on supply projects and efficiency measures are delivered efficiently, effectively at the local government and community level to generate community support and participation
- the Basin Plan is implemented in the most cohesive, timely and effective manner.

The project proposal and funding application has been presented Minister Littleproud's office. Letters of support and meetings have been sought from Minister Ley, Deputy Prime Minister McCormack, Department of Agriculture, MDBA, CEWO, Dr Jacki Schirmer with positive responses received.

Motion: That the Municipal Community Engagement Program funding proposal be noted.

P Maytom / P Hunter

Carried

5.2 National Conference and AGM

See [Program](#) soft launch

Planning for the National Conference is progressing well.

- Draft program released online 25/07/2019
- Final program due for release 05/08/2019
- Registration invitation mailout Monday 29/07/2019

Board members are encouraged to review the [program](#) and target 25 registrations per region.

Action: That the region chairs target 25 registrations per region.

5.3 External Briefings

Board meetings at the MDA are a combination of strategy and information sharing. We have been approached by several organizations seeking to engage with the MDA at the peak level. The ability for organizations to address the board will build engagement across the basin; enhance shared understanding of key issues at board level; and build our 'product offering' value for both region and external stakeholders.

Recommendation: That the MDA include a 20-minute presentation for external stakeholders by invitation on all future MDA Board meeting agendas.

J MacAllister noted her concern over ensuring that presentations are concise and informative, and a two-way conversation that is of benefit to the Board.

D Thurley would like to add, "where possible" to recommendation, as presentations would not be useful at every meeting. P Hunter endorses this, and emphasizes that presentations need to abide by time constraints.

P Hunter left at 12:13pm.

5.4 Board Member conduct and the Role of the Regions

With increasing activity and leadership emerging at the region level, there has been several questions raised about how the MDA finds the balance between ensuring the regions have the latitude to engage on local and regional issues, and how we ensure that we are upholding the values, standards and fundamental positions of the MDA. As a national peak body, it is important that the conduct of the regions is not ***inconsistent with*** the position of the national organization.

There are no specific rules within the constitution that address the ability of individual regions of the MDA to liaise with or invite politicians to regional meetings. It is more an issue of defining how the regions, and indeed the national executive operate within an appropriate governance framework to achieve the objectives of the association.

Many of the decisions made by regional chairs rely upon judgement, experience, and personal knowledge of the rules, values and objectives of the MDA, as well as detailed knowledge of local government accountabilities. If in doubt, refer to section 5 of the constitution.

We are working on the development of an explicit MDA governance framework for the board to consider, which when included with the suite of documents below may provide some further guidance for the regions on these areas. (see CEOs report)

- [Constitution](#)
- [Code of Conduct](#)
- [Board Members Duty Statement](#)
- [Strategic Plan](#)

It was proposed by several board members that further training and induction of board members may be beneficial.

Board members also discussed that as with their role as councilors, their conduct both in person and online should always uphold the standards and values of the communities they represent. The MDA is currently developing a social media policy for the board to consider in due course that may provide some guidance.

M Rebbeck voiced the importance of developing a process for regions to run events.

D Patterson also reflected on the challenges of balancing the role of the region chair, and involvement in other community groups.

D Thurley suggests that a regional event process comes under the development and delivery of a board member training and induction program.

J MacAllister suggested this would be a great workshop topic for the next strategic planning.

E Bradbury advised that there may be greater flexibility for the chairs to pursue community objectives in their capacity as councilors, while then bringing the value of those activities to the MDA in their role as regional chair, rather than seeking to act as MDA Chair in activities outside of scope.

Motion: That the MDA

- a) develop and deliver a board member training and induction program, and
- b) seek opportunities for funding to support development of face to face workshop and training opportunities
- c) encourage all board members to ensure they have a detailed understanding of the
 - a. Constitution
 - b. Code of Conduct
 - c. Board Members Duty Statement
 - d. Strategic Plan

J MacAllister / P Maytom

Carried

5.5 Re-election of the Executive

Part 4 s8. (2) of the Constitution requires

On an annual basis, at a Board Meeting, the Board will elect:

- (a) a President;
- (b) a Vice President; and
- (c) a Treasurer (as provided in clause 8(3));

to serve for the financial year.

This is usually done in February but was not done in 2019.

With the proposed move to amend the constitution to change the financial year from July-June to Jan-

Dec or April-March, it is possible to conduct the re-election of the executive to cover the upcoming 15-18-month period rather than the upcoming 12-month period.

Motion: That the board conduct the re-election of the executive at board meeting 389 in August to

- a) serve for the remainder of financial year 2019, and
- b) serve for the financial year 2020.

P Maytom / J Campbell

Carried

6. MEMBERSHIP and ENGAGEMENT

6.1 Membership Correspondence

25/06/2019	Email	Barossa Council	Withdrawal of Membership
7/07/2019	Email	Mr Geoff Lucas	Membership Renewal
8/07/2019	Phone Call	Southern Mallee District Council	Phone conversation requesting invoice for payment.
12/07/2019	Email	Lockyer Valley Regional Council	Declining membership quote
15/07/2019	Post	Michael McCormack MP	Membership Payment
15/07/2019	Post	Adrian Pederick	Membership Payment
15/07/2019	Post	Iann and Bobby Mann	Membership Payment
15/07/2019	Email	Pyrenees Shire Council	Declining membership quote
15/07/2019	Post	Macedon Ranges Shire Council	Declining membership quote
16/07/2019	Email	Mr Alec Luke	Declining membership
22/07/2019	Post	Loddon Shire Council	Letter to notify about termination of Membership
24/07/2019	Post	City of victor harbour	consideration of taking up membership
25/07/2019	Email	City of victor harbour	Monday 12th August - elected Member workshop
25/07/2019	Email	District Council of Orroroo Carrieton	Accepting Membership

Noted by the board.

6.2 Allan David Miller Membership application – member at large

Allan Miller of Wauchope NSW has applied for membership to the MDA.

While Wauchope is not in the Murray Darling Basin, it is within 300km of Gunnedah, Region 11. Mr Millers application has been referred to the Chair of R11, Cr Campbell for comment.

Mr Miller's application was assessed in accordance with the MDA membership [policy](#) and [procedure](#).

Motion: That the MDA write to Mr Miller and

- a) Thank him for his application for membership
- b) Respectfully decline his application for membership for the time being
- c) Offer support for Mr Miller to engage with his council to seek membership via his local government representative.

D Thurley / J Mac Allister

Carried

7 STRATEGY

7.1 Strategic Advisory Committee

Minutes Meeting 0006

Motion: That the Strategic Advisory Committee Minutes (Meeting 0006) be noted
J MacAllister/ P Maytom Carried

J Campbell left the meeting at 12.33pm

J MacAllister raised that one member of the SAC has taken up a position acting for a political party as a water adviser.

Motion: That the MDA review the position of the qualified external specialist as part of the SAC
J MacAllister / M Rebbeck Carried

Recommendations from the SAC to the Board

7.1.1 There is continuing uncertainty about the MDA's position on the SARC, and any position on calls for a federal RC. The board minutes are silent on both these matters.

Recommendation of the SAC: That the board resolve and articulate its position on the SA Royal Commission, and the possibility of a federal RC.

M Rebbeck asked that the Board note that Region 6 made a submission by the MDA, which was sent to Minister Littleproud and state environmental minister.

Due to time constraints, it was resolved that 7.1.2 onwards be moved to the next Board meeting.

7 **CLOSE** – Meeting closed 12.43pm

Murray Darling Association Delegate's report

Murray Darling Basin Authority MOU signing and Peak Bodies Briefing

On Tuesday 2nd July I went to Shepparton where the MDBA was holding a Board meeting. At the conclusion of that meeting the Acting Chair Joanna Hewitt and I signed a Memorandum of Understanding between the MDA and the MDBA to allow for our continued cooperation and collaboration for another 5 years. The CEO's of the two organisations, Phillip Glyde and Emma Bradbury were also present.

On Thursday 4th July I attended the MDBA's peak bodies briefing in Canberra. There were more than 30 representatives in attendance.

Phillip Glyde Opened the briefing by presenting the mid-year report card and forward agenda. The full report can be found at www.mdba.gov.au/publications/mdba-reports/basin-plan-report-card

At the moment we are 7 years into the 12 year implementation of the Plan (2012 – 2024) and many aspects of the Plan are behind schedule. All 33 water resource plans were due for completion by 30th June 2019 and the MDBA has 60 people working on accreditation of plans submitted. The hold up has been caused by the states not submitting plans and in this context NSW is well behind schedule and has been granted an extension until December 2019.

At the time of the determination, the Basin-wide sustainable diversion limit was 10,873 GL and this could be adjusted up or down by 5 per cent (approx. 543 GL). The assessment of supply projects has determined sustainable diversion limits can be adjusted up, so that 605 GL of water can remain available for communities. To ensure this water remains available for communities, a minimum of 62 GL of additional water savings through efficiency projects is required to pass the 5 per cent rule. At the moment less than 2GL has been recovered by efficiency measures.

The other major issue in the report card was compliance and a significant improvement was reported as a result of the appointment of Mick Keelty as the Northern Basin Commissioner and the actions taken by NRAR. Further work is required in Queensland and northern NSW. It was acknowledged that there is a low level of trust with government agencies. It should be noted that state governments are responsible for policing individual water use and the MDBA reports on collective water use by the states.

Floodplain harvesting is an important and a great deal of effort is going into estimating what level of floodplain harvesting was occurring when the baseline diversion limit was established. New tools and techniques will be used to monitor and license this additional use of water which has been largely unregulated to date.

Jody Swirepik gave an update on environmental watering and explained that the CEWO was squeezed out in 2018 – 2019 by other demands and could not deliver environmental. The CEWO will deliver water earlier in 2019 – 2020 and will therefore pay the costs and losses of delivery. A particular success mentioned was a fish flow from the Meehi River a Collarenebri. The NSW Government placed a protection order on this flow enabling it to reach Walgett and Brewarrina.

A summary of the work being done to understand the effects of climate on the Basin and the implementation of the Plan was given and the full report can be found at www.mdba.gov.au/publications/mdba-reports/climate-change-murray-darling-basin-plan-discussion-paper

The final presentation by MDBA staff was by Dr Joe Davis who explained the issues of capacity shortfall and drought management. The lack of water coming down the Darling River means that all water must be delivered via the Murray and this causes problems because of the limited capacity of the Barmah Choke which can only deliver about 9,600ML/d whereas up to 15,000ML/D has been necessary to deliver sufficient water to Lake Victoria to meet downstream requirements. It was also stressed that the climatic outlook is poor with a southern frontal influence pushing any fronts south of the continent and unless there is high winter and spring rainfall, general security allocations will again be zero for the next irrigation season.

David Littleproud, the Minister for Water Resources, Drought, Rural Finance, Natural Disaster and Emergency Management, has convened an independent panel to undertake an assessment of the social and economic conditions in the Basin. A panel of 7 people led by Robbie Sefton has been established. The terms of reference given by the Minister have been considered and it is expected that the final terms will be approved before the end of July. The panel will issue an interim report in early December 2019 and the final report on 30th April 2020. The MDA is happy that this step has been taken but disappointed by the fact that we have been advocating for such an assessment for about 2 years.

The details of the terms of reference and other matters can be found at www.basin-socio-economic.com.au

David Thurley

Aged Payables

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED June 2019

	Current	May	April	March	Older	Total
Payables						
Echuca Printers	925	-	-	-	-	925
Office Choice Echuca	128	-	-	-	-	128
Omega Warehousing & Distribution	946	-	-	-	-	946
Peat's Office Equipment	466	-	-	-	-	466
Photomapping	33	-	-	-	-	33
Telstra	347	-	-	-	-	347
Telstra Corporation Limited	82	-	-	-	-	82
The Edge Catering	445	-	-	-	-	445
Tilt Design	891	-	-	-	-	891
Water NSW	170	-	-	-	-	170
Total Payables	4,433	-	-	-	-	4,433
	Current	May	April	March	Older	Total
Total Expense Claims	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	4,433	-	-	-	-	4,433
	100.0% ¹	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	

Notes

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All since paid.

Balance Sheet

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED As at 30 June 2019

30 Jun 2019 30 Jun 2018

Assets

	30 Jun 2019	30 Jun 2018
Bank		
ANZ Business Extra ...6893	51,392	26,188
ANZ Commercial Credit Card 359	(1,903)	1,548
ANZ MDF Gift #9052	1,756	1,616
ANZ MDF Ops #7503	4	4
Total Bank	51,248	29,355
Current Assets		
LGFA 01 Account	-	45,610
Prepayments	-	1,250
Trade Debtors	2,066	7,962
Total Current Assets	2,066	54,823
Fixed Assets		
Art Work at Valuation	5,000	5,000
Computers	4,115	2,280
Computers Accumulated Depreciation	(1,470)	(560)
Low Value Pool	1,761	1,761
Low Value Pool Accumulated Depreciation	(1,469)	(1,294)
Motor Vehicles	-	34,718
Motor Vehicles Accumulated Depreciation	-	(22,207)
Office Equipment	4,798	4,798
Office Equipment Accumulated Depreciation	(2,603)	(2,357)
Software At Cost	23,300	16,550
Software at Cost Accumulated Depreciation	(12,180)	(4,951)
Total Fixed Assets	21,251	33,738
Non-current Assets		
Bond Paid - Echuca Office (Ray White Echuca)	1,100	-
Future MV Benefit Reserve (CEO)	15,500	-
High Security Water Shares MDA	93,068	156,025
High Security Water Shares MDF	70,200	70,200
Sundry Debtor	-	170
Total Non-current Assets	179,868	226,395
Total Assets	254,434	344,311

Liabilities

	30 Jun 2019	30 Jun 2018
Current Liabilities		
GST	(5,471)	(209)
Membership received in advance	-	10,437
Prepaid Conference Income	-	45,866
Rounding	-	115
Trade Creditors	4,433	6,568

Balance Sheet

	30 Jun 2019	30 Jun 2018
Total Current Liabilities	(1,038)	62,776
Non-Current Liabilities		
Annual Leave Benefit	30,370	15,072
Debenture Loan	1,500	1,500
Hire Purchase Liability	-	1,696
Hire Purchase Unexpired Charges	-	(195)
Month-end accruals	-	7,500
PAYG Withholding Payable	15,662	3,750
Superannuation payable	11,728	1,066
Total Non-Current Liabilities	59,260	30,388
Total Liabilities	58,222	93,164
Net Assets	196,212	251,147
Equity		
Asset Revaluation Reserve	82,175	82,175
Current Year Earnings	(54,936)	(24,627)
Retained Earnings	168,972	193,599
Total Equity	196,212	251,147

Invoices

Temora Shire Council
To 28 February 2019
Showing payments to 30 June 2019

Date	Number	Due Date		Total	Paid	Credited	Due
1 Jul 2016	70990	30 Aug 2016		1,747	1,747	-	-
1 Jul 2017	71217	30 Aug 2017		1,804	1,804	-	-
1 Jul 2018	INV-71404	30 Jul 2018	361 days overdue	1,850	-	-	1,850 ¹
Total				5,401	3,552	-	1,850

Notes

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Reversed 11/07/2019

Profit and Loss

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED 1 Jun 2019 to 30 Jun 2019

	Actual	Budget	Var AUD	Var %	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Var AUD	Var %
Income								
Conference Income	929	-	929▲	0.0%	98,604	75,000	23,604▲	31.5%▲
Donation/Gift Income	15	5	10▲	200.0%▲	200	60	140▲	233.3%▲
Income - Memberships	(713)	-	(713)▼	0.0%	213,360	249,900	(36,540)▼	-14.6%▼
Income - Projects	705	-	705▲	0.0%	2,805	-	2,805▲	0.0%
Income - Water Temporary Sales	-	-	-	0.0%	23,618	10,000	13,618▲	136.2%▲
Interest Income	-	-	-	0.0%	680	1,600	(920)▼	-57.5%▼
Profit on Sale of Assets	-	-	-	0.0%	2,925	-	2,925▲	0.0%
Total Income	936	5	931	18610.4%	342,192	336,560	5,632	1.7%
Gross Profit	936	5	931	18610.0%	342,192	336,560	5,632	2.0%
Less Operating Expenses								
Accounting/Bookeeping Fees	-	35	(35)▼	-100.0%▼	-	420	(420)▼	-100.0%▼
Administration Assistance	-	-	-	0.0%	1,737	-	1,737▲	0.0%
Advertising & Marketing	1,681	-	1,681▲	0.0%	14,839	7,000	7,839▲	112.0%▲
Bank Fees	61	50	11▲	22.0%▲	1,039	600	439▲	73.1%▲
Business Insurance	-	-	-	0.0%	976	408	568▲	139.3%▲
Computer Expenses	454	100	354▲	353.6%▲	11,673	1,200	10,473▲	872.8%▲
Conference Expenses	-	-	-	0.0%	36,072	26,000	10,072▲	38.7%▲
Depreciation - Computer	129	-	129▲	0.0%	910	-	910▲	0.0%
Depreciation - Low Value Pool	14	-	14▲	0.0%	175	-	175▲	0.0%

Profit and Loss

	Actual	Budget	Var AUD	Var %	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Var AUD	Var %
Depreciation - Motor Vehicle	-	-	-	0.0%	1,345	-	1,345▲	0.0%
Depreciation - Office Equipment	20	-	20▲	0.0%	247	-	247▲	0.0%
Depreciation - Software	603	-	603▲	0.0%	7,228	-	7,228▲	0.0%
Engagement and Communications	-	300	(300)▼	-100.0%▼	4,784	3,600	1,184▲	32.9%▲
Events Expenses	-	-	-	0.0%	4,971	-	4,971▲	0.0%
Fees and Fines	-	-	-	0.0%	345	-	345▲	0.0%
Freight Expense	-	-	-	0.0%	1,780	-	1,780▲	0.0%
General Repairs & Maintenance	-	50	(50)▼	-100.0%▼	217	600	(383)▼	-63.9%▼
Licences and Subscriptions	-	100	(100)▼	-100.0%▼	2,604	1,200	1,404▲	117.0%▲
Management Consulting Fees	-	-	-	0.0%	2,271	-	2,271▲	0.0%
Meeting Expense	405	-	405▲	0.0%	405	-	405▲	0.0%
Motor Vehicle Fuel/Oil	(7)	320	(327)▼	-102.2%▼	2,618	3,840	(1,222)▼	-31.8%▼
Motor Vehicle Insurance	-	-	-	0.0%	743	865	(122)▼	-14.1%▼
Motor Vehicle Interest Expense	-	-	-	0.0%	499	195	304▲	155.7%▲
Motor Vehicle Maintenance	-	380	(380)▼	-100.0%▼	858	760	98▲	13.0%▲
Motor Vehicle Registration	-	-	-	0.0%	162	690	(528)▼	-76.5%▼
Other Expense	(276)	-	(276)▼	0.0%	592	-	592▲	0.0%
Other Payroll Expenses	15,299	-	15,299▲	0.0%	12,299	-	12,299▲	0.0%
Parking/Tolls Expenses	53	-	53▲	0.0%	494	-	494▲	0.0%
Postage	126	120	6▲	5.2%▲	1,383	1,440	(57)▼	-3.9%▼
Premises Rent - Echuca	1,682	1,000	682▲	68.2%▲	14,614	12,000	2,614▲	21.8%▲
Printing	13	150	(137)▼	-91.6%▼	425	1,800	(1,375)▼	-76.4%▼
Pro Indemnity Insurance	-	-	-	0.0%	-	811	(811)▼	-100.0%▼
Professional Fees	-	-	-	0.0%	12,882	5,500	7,382▲	134.2%▲
Public Liability Insurance	-	-	-	0.0%	700	650	50▲	7.7%▲

Profit and Loss

	Actual	Budget	Var AUD	Var %	YTD Actual	YTD Budget	Var AUD	Var %
Staff Amenities	-	50	(50)▼	-100.0%▼	323	600	(277)▼	-46.2%▼
Staff Training Expenses	-	-	-	0.0%	99	-	99▲	0.0%
Stationery	174	75	99▲	132.5%▲	1,198	900	298▲	33.1%▲
Storage	860	-	860▲	0.0%	860	-	860▲	0.0%
Superannuation	2,036	1,579	457▲	28.9%▲	19,172	20,526	(1,354)▼	-6.6%▼
Telephone Expenses	195	450	(255)▼	-56.7%▼	6,023	5,400	623▲	11.5%▲
Travel & Accom. Expenses	235	670	(435)▼	-64.9%▼	9,091	8,040	1,051▲	13.1%▲
Travel Allowance (CEO)	-	-	-	0.0%	3,330	-	3,330▲	0.0%
Wages & Salaries Expenses	21,431	16,620	4,811▲	28.9%▲	210,015	216,060	(6,045)▼	-2.8%▼
Water Expenses	170	-	170▲	0.0%	971	640	331▲	51.8%▲
Work Cover Premiums	-	-	-	0.0%	4,159	2,500	1,659▲	66.4%▲
Total Operating Expenses	45,357	22,049	23,308	105.7%	397,128	324,245	72,883	22.5%
Net Profit	(44,422)	(22,044)	(22,378)	-102.0%	(54,936)	12,315	(67,251)	-546.0%



Chief Executive Officer's Report

June 2019

Emma Bradbury
ceo@mda.asn.au

1. Appointments

Date	Event/meeting	Location
20/06/2019	Steve Whan – National Irrigators Council	Canberra
20/06/2019	Jackie Sherman – University of Canberra	Canberra
27/06/2019	Campaspe Shire – Governance	Echuca
28/06/2019	Region 6 Ordinary Meeting CEO Update	Zoom Video
28/06/2019	Region 4 AGM CEO report	Zoom Video
01/07/2019	Strategic Advisory Committee	Zoom Video
01/07/2019	Project Development discussion Katrina Tehan – Tender Right	Echuca
02/07/2019	MDA/MDBA MOU Signing	Shepparton
03/07/2019	Department of Infrastructure NSW – Stakeholder Consultation	Zoom Video
04/07/2019	MDBA Peaks Briefing (Full day)	Zoom Video
12/07/2019	EMFM Radio Interview	Echuca
12/07/2019	Region 8 Ordinary Meeting CEO Update	Zoom Video
16/07/2019	CSIRO – National Conference discussion	Zoom Video
16/07/2019	National Conference committee meeting	Zoom Video
17/07/2019	Information Session 19-20 Murray Flows	Deniliquin
18/07/2019	GBCMA Long term Intervention Monitoring project	Shepparton
19/07/2019	Independent Panel for the Assessment of Social and Economic Conditions in the MDB	Zoom Video
19/07/2019	Meeting with the Hon Minister Sussan Ley	Albury
24/07/2019	National Conference Committee meeting	Zoom Video
24/07/2019	Meet and Greet new CEO Mr Ray Burton Campaspe Shire Council	Echuca
26/07/2019	Region 6 Executive Meeting	Zoom Video
26/07/2019	GMID Resilience Project Meeting – Claire Flanagan-Smith	Zoom Video

2. Engagements

- 2.1 Steve Whan – National Irrigators Council
- 2.2 Jackie Sherman – University of Canberra
- 2.3 MDBA and MDA – MOU Signing
- 2.4 19-20 Murray Flows
- 2.4 GBCMA Long term Intervention Monitoring Project
- 2.5 Hon Minister Sussan Ley
- 2.7 Ray Burton – CEO – Campaspe Shire
- 2.8 Claire Flanagan – Smith GMID Resilience Project Meeting

3. End of Financial Year audit

The end of financial year audit is on track with all data submitted to the auditor mid-July. This is the first year we have undertaken the audit entirely via remote making strong use of the efficiencies of the digital record keeping systems of Xero. Early results are very positive, with final finance statements and letter of audit expected by early August.

4. National Conference

National Conference draft program has been launched, with invitations sent to begin the attendance and registration campaign. This is an incredibly strong program under the theme of Regeneration for a healthy Basin, with a subtheme of local government's role in harnessing the challenges and opportunities intensifying Australia's agricultural productivity – sustainably! Several key note speakers have yet to be locked in. These are expected to be complete by 25 August.

5. MDA Governance Framework

The good governance of the MDA is key to maintaining its credibility, authority and performance. It is equally true that the governance arrangements that enable uniquely local and regional perspectives to be identified and explored while maintaining authority of both the member councils and the National body with integrity and authenticity is equally challenging.

Work has commenced on the development of a governance framework for the MDA. The draft will be released to the board in the coming weeks for comment and consultation with the regions.

6. MDBA/MDA MOU

The MDA and the Murray Darling Basin Authority have strengthened their relationship with the signing of a renewed Memorandum of Understanding in Shepparton.

MDBA A/Chair Joanna Hewitt and CEO Phillip Glyde met with MDA National President David Thurley and CEO, this MOU heralds a new era in collaboration and information exchange between the authority and communities.

7. Membership Drive

93 Councils were provided with quotations and resource packs for their consideration to join the MDA

96 Councils including Individual members were issued with their 2019/2020 invoices for membership

The Membership drive is resulting in good engagement with all Regions.

8. Projects

MDA Basin Communities Leadership Program

Exchange of documentation between the department and the MDA was finalised 25/07/2019. Signing of the contracts and commencement of the project is anticipated for the first week in August.

Municipal and Community Engagement Program

Connecting Catchments & Communities Moira – Mildura

The second CCC event is due to be held in Euston on Tuesday 30th July.

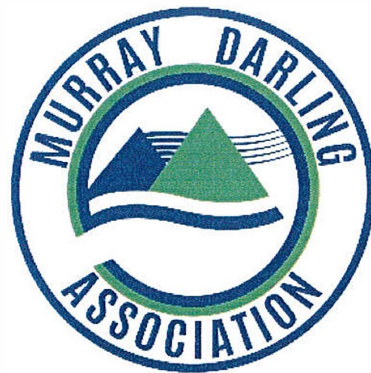
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Emma Bradbury', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emma Bradbury

Chief Executive Officer



Australian Government



Memorandum of Understanding

between the

Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA)

and the

Murray Darling Association (MDA)

This Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aims to maintain and enhance the positive relationship currently shared and builds on the success of the preceding MoU (2013-2018).

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) and the Murray Darling Association (MDA) share a common interest in the sustainable management of the Murray-Darling Basin and the diligent implementation of the Basin Plan. The importance of both parties working closely remains crucial as the MDBA continues to advance water reform activities in the basin and implement the Basin Plan. As a result, this MoU focusses on mutual cooperation, consultation and knowledge sharing.

The **MDBA** is an independent, expertise-based statutory agency. The MDBA is a constructive leader and facilitator of effective water use and management in the Murray-Darling Basin including leadership of evidence-based policy, planning and strategy.

The **MDA** is a peak body representing local government and communities in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria, ensuring local government has an active role in informing decisions on the management of Basin resources. Established in 1944, the Murray-Darling Association is committed to ensure the Murray-Darling Basin continues as a viable and valuable asset for all Australians.

Shared Objectives

Both parties agree:

- 1) That local government and community issues within the Murray-Darling Basin should be given due consideration in the development and implementation of basin policies and programs.

In the term of this MoU there is a particular focus on engagement and information sharing regarding the implementation of the SDLAM projects. However the parties acknowledge that Basin States are the proponents of these projects.

- 2) To proactively engage with each other to improve knowledge and awareness of basin issues as well as providing opportunity for inclusive decision making.
- 3) For the CEO and/or Chair of each organisation to attend a meeting of the other party annually
- 4) To share information and advice between the parties as it relates to community and water management issues.
- 5) To identify opportunities to attend or disseminate information at each party's respective meetings, forums and conferences.
- 6) To consider opportunities to collaborate as they arise.
- 7) To develop an annual plan and summary report for activities and projects to be undertaken in the spirit of this MOU.

Resourcing and Financial Arrangements

This document does not create binding or legal obligations on either party. Neither party has any authority to act on behalf of other party. Where financial, funding or other resourcing is required for an activity this will be contained in the specific project and/or contract arrangements.

Intellectual Property

Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding amounts to a licence or transfer of any intellectual property or information disclosed. Each of the parties agrees to keep as commercial -in-confidence information disclosed by the other party on a confidential basis.

Marketing and Publicity

Both parties agree to consult each other and gain consent before publicly promoting any joint collaboration that may arise from this Memorandum of Understanding.

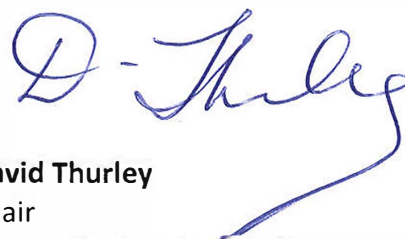
Review and Evaluation

This MoU will be reviewed after five years of its date of signing.

Signed on 2 July 2019 by



Joanna Hewitt AO
Acting Chair
Murray-Darling Basin Authority



David Thurley
Chair
Murray Darling Association



Municipal Community Engagement (MCE) Program

Delivering confidence and trust in the Basin Plan

The Murray Darling Association (MDA), Australia's peak body representing local government and communities across the Murray-Darling Basin, is seeking a grant of \$600,000 per annum for the next 4 years to deliver a Municipal Community Engagement (MCE) program connecting Basin communities with responsible agencies through local government.

The program will deliver community engagement via local government through education, capacity building and leadership. Providing support for local government and communities to engage more productively in Basin Plan implementation, this program will build confidence in the Basin Plan, trust in government and agencies, and provide a more effective conduit for stakeholder engagement through targeted engagement of local government networks.

A network of six Municipal Engagement Officers (MEO), employed directly by the MDA and strategically located within host councils in key locations across the Basin will deliver community and stakeholder events, create and support strategic working groups, monitor and record feedback, and provide Basin governments, the MDBA and responsible agencies with real-time, reliable insight and data.

The program will enhance the value of the existing Murray-Darling Basin Authority's (MDBA) Regional Engagement Officers (REO) and the Common Environment Water Holder's (CEWO) Local Engagement Officers (LEO) network, to build on the valuable, but stretched network of community engagement expertise across the Basin. The MEO network will provide an effective tri-angulation of trusted community engagement by harnessing the value of municipal capability across the Basin and bringing local government to the table.

As the national peak body for local government, the MDA is ready, willing and able to take an active role over the final 4 years of implementation, ensuring that:

- All three levels of government are working together, both at sector and local level to support communities in transition.
- Communities are well informed, building trust in our agencies and confidence in the Basin Plan
- Economic and social growth for our regional towns is supported with jobs located in the regions, building local leadership and enhanced water literacy.
- Stakeholder engagement is coordinated, genuine and effective.
- Engagement on supply projects and efficiency measures are coordinated, efficient, and effective.
- The Basin Plan is implemented in the most timely and effective manner.

This funding will deliver strong social performance and economic development opportunities, leveraging existing Commonwealth investments in regional engagement, and adding the distinct and essential element of municipal community engagement .

For more information, contact Murray Darling Association Chief Executive Officer, Emma Bradbury on 0429 905 017.



PROGRAM PROPOSAL

Municipal Community Engagement (MCE) Program

**Delivering confidence and trust in the
Murray-Darling Basin Plan**

July 2019

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Murray Darling Association (MDA), Australia's peak body representing local government and communities across the Murray-Darling Basin, is seeking a grant of \$600,000 per annum for the next 4 years to deliver a Municipal Community Engagement (MCE) program connecting Basin communities with responsible agencies through local government.

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As the national peak body for local government, the MDA is ready, willing and able to take an active role over the final 4 years of implementation. The MCE program will ensure

- All three levels of government are working together, both at sector and local level to support communities in transition.
- Communities are well informed, building trust in our agencies and confidence in the Basin Plan
- Economic and social growth for our regional towns is supported with jobs located in the regions, building local leadership and enhanced water literacy.
- Stakeholder engagement is coordinated, genuine and effective, supporting the work of the Minister's social and economic impacts assessment panel.
- Engagement on WRPs, supply projects and efficiency measures are coordinated, efficient, and effective.
- The Basin Plan is implemented in the most timely and effective manner.

This funding will deliver strong social performance and economic confidence outcomes, leveraging existing Commonwealth investments in regional engagement.

1.1 Introduction

In the coming 4 years, Basin governments and responsible agencies are tasked to complete the development and accreditation of the Water Resource Plans and to develop and deliver a complex suite of interdependent supply projects, efficiency and toolkit measures.

These objectives are both complex and ambitious. They require extensive inter-regional and inter-jurisdictional consultation and community input.

With likely continuing low inflows, opportunities presented by growth in the agricultural sector, and community leaders keenly focused on the role of water their local, regional, and national futures we are currently presented with a unique opportunity to engage our communities through the local government sector.

1.2 Why the MDA?

Local government and the communities we serve play a significant role in leading confidence and stability across our communities. We are the level of government closest to the communities, and with the corporate knowledge and experience to work cost-effectively on-ground.

As the peak body of local governments throughout the Basin, the MDA provide balance and high-level leadership.

The 2018 Productivity Commission report perhaps said it best;

Communities are uncertain about who is responsible, and this has made it difficult for them to navigate the institutional landscape for implementing the Plan.

...the community has often had little sense that decision makers have listened to their concerns.

Productivity Commission 2018
Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Five-year assessment, Final Report

The Municipal Community Engagement program will directly address that challenge by providing a dedicated pathway to assist communities navigate the institutional landscape for implementing the Plan. Further, the scope and activities of the MDA go well beyond the Basin Plan, and enable coordinated and interconnected community engagement. We are united in our view that implementation of the Basin Plan, in a way that provides the strongest possible outcomes for our councils and communities is essential to a long term, healthy, working Basin.

The following pages outline in detail our proposal. Funding will provide Basin governments with a cost-effective solution to meet key recommendations of the *South Australian Murray-Darling Basin Royal Commission Report* (2019), the *Productivity Commission Murray-Darling Basin Plan: Five-year assessment Report* (2018), and Ken Matthews' *Independent Investigation into NSW Water Management and Compliance* (2017) by providing informed, constructive collaboration and consultation.

2. PROJECT OVERVIEW

Community participation, trust and confidence in the Basin Plan is essential in ensuring a healthy, productive and sustainable Murray-Darling Basin.

A network of skilled and experienced Municipal Engagement Officers (MEOs) will be employed by the MDA and embedded within strategically selected hosting councils across the Basin.

MEOs will work alongside Councils, stakeholders and agencies to:

- Be a valued source of accountable, concise, timely information
- Utilize local government expertise
- Be a two-way conduit of information between community and authorities
- Add value to the existing network of commonwealth engagement officers on the ground.

Leveraging the existing investments regional engagement teams – MEOs will strengthen existing community understandings of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and develop stronger connections between local leaders, communities and economic development initiatives with a distinctly municipal perspective,

bringing local government to the table.

As part of their regional engagement responsibilities, MEOs will facilitate workshops providing education about the Basin Plan, economic sustainability for local communities, managing business under changing water availability, and regional economic development initiatives.

The MDA's extensive network provides a valuable framework for MEOs to engage Basin communities, industry peaks, indigenous community leaders and governments to ensure coordinated and integrated consultation of Basin Plan investments at the local government and community level.

2.1 Project Description

MEOs will, over four years, assist in the facilitation, education, innovation and implementation of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan across Basin communities.

MEOs will be embedded within 6 selected Councils across the Basin, providing unique access to local knowledge and resources.

The MDA has a significant network of contacts and influential reach across all 172 Basin LGA's and will have specific connectivity with the 6 host councils. A range of local community leaders with relevant expertise will be identified and invited to apply. MEOs will be selected through a recruitment and application process and mentored throughout the funding period.

Participants will be selected according to a comprehensive list of criteria including a demonstrated capacity for leadership, active engagement in

water reform, local government, community or economic development and community engagement experience.

The MDA is seeking funding from 2019-24, to align with the timeframe for the remaining implementation of the Basin Plan.

2.2 An Inter-agency Approach – with a point of difference

This project will leverage existing investments by the Commonwealth through the MDBA and CEWO supporting community engagement in relation to the Basin Plan, and will contribute an essential missing component through the establishment of the MCE program.

The MDA's MEOs will provide a unique entry point into Basin communities via local government, building upon existing social license. MEOs, supported by the Basin -scale perspectives and experience of the MDA will engage, inform and educate communities on the Basin Plan, and feed this information back to the Basin Governments.

The MDBA's REOs help the MDBA to build a presence in regional areas and develop relationships with stakeholders. The main focus of the REOs is Basin Plan implementation, and information gathering.

The CEWO's LEOs work alongside State and local land and water management officers, providing outreach to local communities throughout the Basin. The main focus of the LEO's are to provide communities with environmental water / natural resource management information.

Working independently with the unique objectives and priorities of local government, MEOs will work collaboratively with the REOs and LEOs to develop an inter-agency approach to engage stakeholders, share information and build confidence in the Plan.

2.3 Goals and Objectives

Strong, vibrant and sustainable communities need great leaders and contributors to build the resilience required to manage current and future economic challenges and changes required.

As regional engagement leaders, MEOs will become key points of contact within each region, helping local governments to collaborate, pool resources and increase community understandings of key issues driving the implementation of the Basin Plan.

Funding of the MDA MCE program will provide Basin Governments and communities with the following outcomes:

Goal/Objective	Description
Build trust in Basin Governments and confidence in the Plan	Participation in the process at community level will invest responsibility and ownership in the decisions among those who are making them.

Strengthen alignment between community needs and Basin Plan investment	Tap into local governments' and communities detailed understanding of investment delivery and access current local knowledge to verify need.
Co-ordinated framework for consultation and assessment of the SDL projects.	Coordinated consultations through the peak body will result in timely, meaningful and reliable community consultation.
Regional Employment	Regional engagement and information pathways will promote a healthy, vibrant economic future for communities impacted by changing water availability
Provide communities with clarity about roles and responsibilities of Basin governments and agencies	More effective processes for collaboration on implementation, generating among all parties a genuine commitment to shared goals and cooperative working arrangements.
Stabilise debate and depoliticise the commentary	Informed discussion inclusive of all levels and parties will minimize costly political distraction.
Amplify enhanced social infrastructure and contribute to rigorous socio-economic modelling	Access to authoritative and consistent data-sets will provide communities with the confidence that their circumstances and perspectives are understood and considered.
Transparency and enhanced accountability for decisions and actions, and costs and benefits of decisions are clearly articulated	Consistent and collaborative communication and education forums, targeting key stakeholders and community leaders will stimulate networks and enable more efficient information exchange.
Coordinated community engagement processes that provide stakeholders with information, analysis and time to validate local community input.	Structured distillation and reporting on local engagement will enable issues and concerns to be understood and properly considered by decision makers.
Enhance value of existing Commonwealth investment in community engagement	Regional engagement through local government will leverage investment into existing regional engagement teams to provide a rich and valuable network of local knowledge.
Strengthen the relationship and value between MDBA, CEWO and MDA	Collaboration between community engagement teams will build upon strong relationships between government, agency and community through local government.
Create Basin Champions	The Murray-Darling Basin Plan is world-leading legislation that was adopted as a bipartisan plan to provide certainty and reliability for the river system and the communities it supports. We need to celebrate the wins, and harness positive stories through Basin champions.

Support economic and social growth for our regional towns.	Jobs will be located in the regions, building local leadership and enhanced water literacy.
Support the work of the Minister's Social and Economic Impacts Assessment Panel.	The appointment of the Minister's Social and Economic Impacts Assessment Panel brings to life a vital piece of work. The MCE network will provide structured local government input.
Local government and community engagement on WRPs, supply projects and efficiency measures	Perhaps most importantly, consultation and municipal community engagement will facilitate a structured pathway to engagement on these essential measures.

3. DELIVERABLES

Funding for this initiative will provide a clear and accountable framework enabling local government as a sector to work with Basin governments by enhancing water literacy at the community level, providing local knowledge and meaningful community engagement on the development of projects, building confidence in the Murray-Darling Basin Plan and trust in the agencies tasked to deliver it.

We will:

- Build community support, confidence and trust for the next stages of water reform through education, detailed consultation and facilitating meaningful community participation.
- Gather and assess information from local knowledge in a structured, rigorous and repeatable way, clearly identifying where changes within communities are attributable to non- Basin Plan related factors.
- Deliver data and findings of this local knowledge in a consistent format across diverse communities and circumstances, free of any perception of bias.
- Provide a reliable and functional mechanism to deliver future programs and funding for complex and interconnected initiatives and response packages such as drought relief, land management and planning referrals.
- Strengthen regional communities through locally initiated economic development strategies and provide sound contribution to inform more timely and efficient investment in the supply projects and efficiency measures.
- Provide evidence-based data upon which communities and the responsible authorities can build shared understandings and face the next phase of the Basin Plan implementation with confidence and stability.
- Increase perception of fairness, equity, independence and rigour of assessment.
- Demonstrate the commitment by government at all levels to work together to deliver
 - coordinated community and stakeholder engagement
 - integrated plans for delivering supply projects
 - effective processes for collaboration on Basin Plan implementation.
- Develop enduring capacity to deliver services to members and stakeholders on a self-funded basis, providing benefit to all levels of government in the development of sound policy and locally informed projects beyond the implementation of the Basin Plan.
- Increase the opportunities for employment through:
 - Development of leadership skills to lead communities through challenges and change
 - Create a community capacity to adapt to changing conditions
 - Design a framework and consultation platform for communities to connect with Government to help stimulate economic transition

4. BUDGET

4.1 Project Funding

The MDA is seeking a grant of \$600,000 per annum for the next 4 years to deliver a Municipal Community Engagement (MCE) program

Project funding

Project Budget (per annum)	Australian government Funding \$ (GST exclusive)	Co-contribution \$ (GST exclusive)	Total Amount \$ (GST exclusive)
Project Design	\$10,000.00	\$10,000.00	\$20,000.00
Municipal engagement program delivery	\$450,000.00	\$90,000.00	\$540,000.00
Vehicle Lease @ 6x\$12k pa	\$72,000.00	\$-	\$72,000.00
Office facilities and equipment	\$18,000.00	\$70,000.00	\$88,000.00
Project management and administration	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00
TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$600,000.00	\$220,000.00	\$820,000.00

Under the proposed funding request, local government would continue to contribute over 20% of the project cost, and deliver exceptional value to state and Commonwealth Basin governments by delivering disciplined local and regional community consultation, community lead confidence in the Basin Plan, building trust in governments to deliver better policy and regional economic development and structural adjustment initiatives under the implementation process

5. JUSTIFICATION

5.1 Strategic Alignment

The implementation of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan is a collaborative endeavor between community, government and agencies. The Municipal Engagement Officers represent community through local government, while the MDBA's Regional Engagement Officers and the Commonwealth Environment Water Holder are both government and agency. The timely and successful implementation of the Basin Plan is dependent upon all three disciplines and perspective working together with the Basin communities.

In 2013 the Commonwealth and Basin State Governments undertook to build upon existing achievement and

to ensure that the Commonwealth led Basin water reforms, including the Basin Plan, are implemented in a cost effective manner to support the national interest of improving river and eland health, putting water use on a sustainable footing, enhancing irrigation productivity, providing water for critical human needs, and providing farmers and communities with more confidence to plan for a future with less water¹

¹ Intergovernmental Agreement on Implementing Water Reform in the Murray Darling Basin.

Coordinated community engagement through local government at the local and regional level will ensure an integrated approach, with local government meeting filling the role and meeting the responsibilities currently deficit in the Basin Plan implementation framework.

The MCE initiative aligns with key recommendation by a range of reports, including:

- **Ken Matthews Report 2017**
The MCE program addresses Matthews' recommendation for consultation to be broad-based, and ensures future consultation processes are experienced by stakeholders as authentic and satisfactory. By settling consultation plans now, interested groups will be able to know, in advance, their opportunities for involvement.
- **Productivity Commission 2018**
The MCE initiative will address recommendations by the Productivity Commission 2018 and community concerns by ensuring that communities are certain about Plan, agency and community responsibilities, and how to navigate the institutional landscape for implementing the Plan. The MEOs will provide an effective conduit for the communities to raise their concerns with relevant agencies and government.
- **SA Royal Commission Report 2019**
By engaging Basin communities through local government, the MCE program will address concerns raised in the SA Royal Commission by creating meaningful public consultation, fully informed public and genuine and transparent consultation.

6. ABOUT THE MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION

6.1 Who is the MDA?

Established in 1944, the MDA serves as an effective conduit, completing the circle between local and Commonwealth governments, ensuring all three levels of government work together on what has always been the highly complex matter of inter-jurisdictional water sharing. The management of water is a matter of significant interest to local government.

172 councils sit within the Basin, and whose communities rely on the water within it.

The MDA is the only inter-jurisdictional Association of Local Government, covering all 4 states. Offering membership councils representation, support and expertise on Murray-Darling Basin related issues.

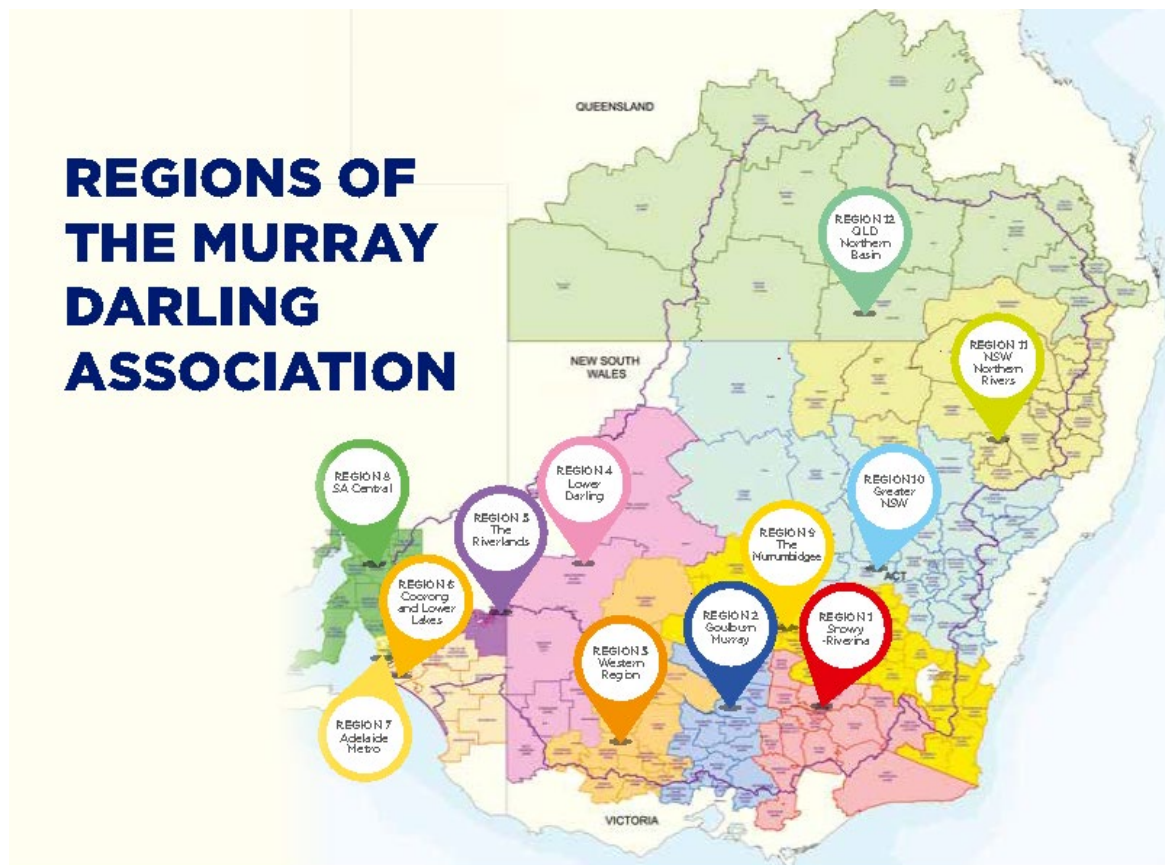
Non-partisan, the operation of the MDA is parliamentary in nature, having the executive power vested in a board composed of members of the regions, individually and collectively responsible to the membership, and each of whom are democratically elected.

6.2 Structure and Governance

The MDA is built on strong foundations of good governance with high standards of accountability and integrity. Performance of the MDA is well regarded and compares favorably with our LGA peers across the sector, and with other levels of government.

MDA is Incorporated under the Association's Incorporation Act 1984 NSW, is currently listed on the Register of Environmental Organisations, and operates under the provisions of its Constitution.

The executive leadership of the MDA is strong and stable. The National President Cr David Thurley has been in the role since 2015. The Chief Executive Officer Emma Bradbury has served over 5 years in the role.



Together with their board this team has overseen the elevation of the MDA to a trusted leader on Basin issues.

The following individuals and their councils comprise the regional leadership of association. They are responsible for the coordination of communications, activities and lead engagement across their region. Each regional chair holds a seat on the national board of the MDA.

Name	Description	Name/Title
Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	Region 1
Cr Dennis Patterson	Greater Shepparton City Council	Region 2
Vacant		Region 3
Cr Jane MacAllister	Wentworth Shire Council	Region 4
Cr Peter Hunter	Renmark Paringa Council	Region 5
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrian Council	Region 6
Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham	Region 7
Cr Denis Clark	Northern Areas Council	Region 8
Cr Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council	Region 9
Cr Phyllis Miller	Forbes Shire Council	Region 10
Cr John Campbell	Gunnedah Shire Council	Region 11
Cr Richard Marsh	Balonne Shire Council	Region 12
Pete George	M&S Group	Treasurer
Emma Bradbury	Murray Darling Association	Chief Executive and Public Officer

6.3 Existing Resources

The following existing capacity will enhance the investment.

- Modern and capable office facilities
- Strong relationship with host councils
- Extensive stakeholder network
- Strong, cohesive board and management
- Organisational structure – Inter-regional, cross border, non-partisan and with direct accountability to its members
- Social license – local government is intimately connected with local communities
- Strong governance and processes
- Unified and unifying mission and vision
- Strong, credible relationships with governments, agencies and stakeholders
- Legacy – 75 years’ worth of history, knowledge, purpose

- Local knowledge and trust
- Support from other levels of government, and sector agencies

This project has executive-level support and the backing of councils, groups and regions across the Basin.

The MDA national office in Echuca/Moama is the ideal co-ordination hub with ample space for the additional personnel and room for expansion if required.

MDA Member Councils have the resources to embed Municipal Engagement Officers within their offices across Basin Committees.

Existing human resources include Chief Executive Officer Emma Bradbury (B.Soc.Sci, Grad Dip Ed, GAICD, Dip Fin.Svc) who will lead the project supported by a strong and cohesive Board of Management under the leadership of Cr David Thurley.

MDA treasurer Pete George (B Bus (Acc), ASA) is Senior Accountant & Partner at M&S Group, one of the largest accounting firms in country Victoria and works closely with the board and executive to ensure the MDA adheres to meticulous financial management and reporting standards.

7. Support

7.1 Letters of Support

The MDA has received support and endorsement for this initiative from many councils and agencies, many of whom already contribute financially to the valuable work already undertaken by the MDA on their behalf.

- Murrayland Riverlands Local Government Association
- Tenterfield Council
- Mid Murray Council
- Berri Barmera Council
- Murray Bridge
- Tony Pasin MP
- Albury City Council
- Gunnedah Shire Council
- And more

Tacit support for the program has been expressed following discussions on with

- The Hon Sussan Ley – Minister for the Environment (letter pending)
- Hilton Taylor - Commonwealth Environmental Water Office
- And others

8. KEY SUCCESS FACTORS

In order for all parties to remain committed and for the Basin Plan to be delivered on time and in full, all three levels of government must work together, commit the necessary financial and other required resources to achieve our shared objectives.

As Ken Matthews² noted –

“reforms go nowhere without the resources to complete the work.”

² *Ken Matthew's Independent Investigate into NSW water management and compliance (2017)*