



Chief Executive Officer's Report

November 2019

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1. Appointments

Date	Event/meeting	Location
01/10/2019	Mildura Rural City Council – CEO Sarah Philpott	Zoom
03/10/2019	Round Table – Social and Economic Conditions in the MDB	Shepparton
07/10/2019	Michael Peart Discover Learning Designs	Zoom
07/10/2019	Rebecca Thompson DELWP	Zoom
08/10/2019	Recruitment Interviews	Echuca & Zoom
09/10/2019	National Committee Planning Meeting	Zoom
10/10/2019	MDA Board Meeting 390	Zoom
11/10/2019	MDBEDP Project Alignments – Roger Knight	Echuca
16/10/2019	Southern Cross Austereo	Phone
21/10/2019	National Conference	Toowoomba
22/10/2019	National Conference	Toowoomba
23/10/2019	National Conference	Toowoomba
24/10/2019	National Conference	Toowoomba
25/10/2019	Cubbie Station	Dirranbandi
30/10/2019	Sara Hales – The Bold Effect – Basin Community Leadership	Zoom
31/10/2019	Recruitment Interview – Tony Banks	Echuca
07/11/2019	Region 11 – Ordinary Meeting	Zoom
11/11/2019	Presentation to Cowra Council	Cowra
13/11/2019	MDA Energy Project – Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund Microgrids 2019-20	Zoom
13/11/2019	Sara Hales – The Bold Effect – Basin Community Leadership	Zoom
14/11/2019	Destined/Salesforce CRM	Zoom
14/11/2019	Region 8 AGM discussions and preparations	Zoom
19/11/2019	One Basin COOPERATIVE Research Centre – University of Southern Queensland	
19/11/2019	Nicole Emara - CSIRO	Zoom
19/11/2019	Stirling East Primary School – MDA Curriculum discussions	Zoom
20/11/2019	Discover Learning Design – Basin Community Leadership	Zoom
21/11/2019	ILWS-SEGRA-Murry Darling Association (MDA) Research Collaboration Planning Meeting	Echuca
21/11/2019	Region 7 Meeting	Zoom
22/11/2019	Region 1 AGM and Ordinary Meeting	

2 National Conference

This month, the MDA's 75th National Conference and Annual General Meeting was held in Toowoomba, Queensland, from the 22nd-24th of October. The conference was extremely well-attended, with more than 140 local government representatives, and community leaders, industry groups and agencies from across the Basin. The program included some of the Basin's leading experts from the CSIRO, Murray-Darling Basin Authority, Commonwealth Environmental Water Office, the Basin Socio Economic Panel and more.

The conference was also an opportunity to award the 2019 Murray Darling Foundation bursary to representatives from the Stirling East Primary School, for their work in enhancing water literacy in the school curriculum. These passionate students (pictured right) participated in the conference and gave a fantastic presentation about their research at the gala dinner. These students are such an inspiration and the Basin's future leaders – we look forward to working with them to continue to enhance water literacy in the Australian school curriculum.



Following the conference, delegates were invited to participate in a fully guided tour of Region 12 through innovative farm enterprises and experience the regional connectivity and engagement across one of the most connected regions in the nation, followed by an optional tour to Cubbie Ag cotton farm, Australia's largest cotton farm, with a stay in Dirranbandi.

A post-event feedback survey has been circulated via email to participants. Early feedback indicates the conference was a huge success, with participants noting the calibre of the program and presentations, as well as the opportunities to learn about the Basin's current issues.

MDA National Conference – [Initial - Post-event Feedback Survey](#)

The initial results, are VERY positive, with some highlights below:

- The most popular reason delegates attended the conference was for education – to learn about the Murray Darling basin
- When asked about their favourite presentations, the answers were very diverse, and there seemed to be something for everyone!
- Most respondents thought the conference length was about right, and most indicated that they'd like a 2 to 3-day conference in the future
- 10 of the 19 participants indicated that increased networking opportunities would be an important feature of the next MDA conference

3 Membership

20219	16/09/2019	Post	Campaspe Shire Council	Declining Membership
20220	16/09/2019	Post	District Council of Yankalilla	Declining Membership
20221	16/09/2019	Post	Orange City Council	Declining Membership
20221	1/10/2019	Email	City of Wodonga	Ceasing Membership
20222	8/10/2019	Email	City of Ballarat	Declining Membership
20223	22/10/2019	Email	Town of Walkerville	Ceasing Membership
20224	23/10/2019	Email	Coonamble Shire Council	Ceasing Membership
20225	23/10/2019	Email	Mid-Western Council	Ceasing Membership
20226	30/10/2019	Email	City of Onkaparinga	Ceasing Membership
20227	8/11/2019	Email	Wakefield Regional Council	Oversite of Membership payment

4. Marketing update

The Basin Bulletin, the MDA's monthly newsletter, continues to provide an effective platform for communication and engagement with MDA members and stakeholders. A report from the latest edition ([Basin Bulletin, Issue 27](#)) indicates:

- Open rate was very good at 33.7%, which is higher than our audience average (29.9%), and significantly higher than the industry average (21.6%)
- The click rates in this newsletter (7.8%) was also significantly higher than our audience average (4.4%) and industry average (1.9%).
- The most popular links that people have clicked on include conference links (AGM minutes, event website, Stirling East report, etc), and several Basin news articles.
- Also, of note, we've had about 12 new subscriptions in the past month, including representatives from media, Department of Infrastructure, Department of Environment, the ACCC, member councils, university (USQ), and industry.

5. Recruitment

The MDA welcomes Tony Banks as the Training & Leadership Coordinator for the Basin Communities Leadership project. Tony brings to the MDA a wealth of experience coming from a strong Military and Local Government background. Tony has hit the ground running with the leadership project and we look forward to launching it in early 2020 with his expertise on board.

6. Basin Community Leadership Program

Project Stages - Four (4) / Current status:

- Stage 1) Program Design and Development [Underway – Progressing]
- Stage 1a Participant / Candidate Recruitment [Underway – Progressing]
- Stage 2) Leadership Program Delivery [Awaiting completion of stage 1 / 1a]
- Stage 3) Community Project Delivery Support [Awaiting completion of stage 2]
- Stage 4) Consolidation / Refurbishment / OILLS [Awaiting completion of stage 3]

Progress Comments:

- Three (3) x external agencies specialising in training design, development and learning management systems have been engaged for scoping / quotation / modelling.
- Two (2) of the parties have presented very promising and viable solutions – with selection and engagement of said parties likely to occur within the next 14 days.
- Program content, materials and pathways development will progress soon after the engagements have been finalised.
- A mature advertising and recruitment campaign, seeking suitable target audience / candidates is planned to occur early January 2020.

Guidance / Decisions Pending:

- Nil.

Risks / Opportunities:

- Opportunity – reviewing feasibility to trial the program materials and content with Board Members at the MDAs March 2020 Strategic Planning workshop.
- Opportunity – looking to engage Community Consultation Committee representatives to ‘piggy-back’ off each of the BCLP workshops.
- Risks – successfully getting all the key stakeholders and support networks to be able synchronise dates across the 15 x locations and program schedule (noting project is aimed for completion DEC 2020).

7. Micro Grids Project

The Murray Darling Association (MDA), in partnership with CSIRO, University of Canberra and Constructive Energy, is in the process of applying for funding from the Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund.

The Regional and Remote Communities Reliability Fund is funding community organisations, electricity distribution businesses and other interested entities to undertake feasibility studies on the viability of microgrid solutions in off-grid and fringe-of-grid locations. Applications for round 1 close on Thursday 21 November 2019. Further information can be found at www.grants.gov.au

This project will investigate the potential of micro-grids within the Murray Darling Basin. The project will operate across the footprint of the Murray Darling Basin with the findings scalable to rural and regional communities Australia-wide.

8. Motions

Responses and actions to the 2019 MDA [Annual General Meeting motions](#) are currently underway and progressing well.

Outcomes from MDA resolutions will be recorded and shared with members and stakeholders throughout the coming year (see p. 31 of the [2018/2019 MDA Annual Report](#)).



Emma Bradbury

Chief Executive Officer