

2022-23 ANNUAL REPORT





79th annual report of the Murray Darling Association Inc: 2022-23

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INTRODUCTION

Following the adversity of recent droughts, bushfires, predicted El Nino, and flooding, communities across the Basin are continuing to emerge stronger and more resilient than ever.

With a strong focus on partnerships across the Murray-Darling Basin, local government and the communities of the Murray-Darling Basin are well placed to adapt and forge ahead in 2023 and beyond!

To support our members and the wider Basin community to thrive in the face of adversity, the Murray Darling Association continues to work alongside members and stakeholders, science and education partners, communities, governments, and First Nations, collaborating on a daily basis to tackle the big issues of the Murray-Darling Basin.

The following report reflects a successful and active year, including the implementation of year three of the Murray Darling Association's Strategic Plan Vision 2025.



NATIONAL PRESIDENT REPORT

While floods were a key issue in the past year, there is no doubt that our planning must look at the likelihood of severe droughts as well and what this will mean to communities and ecosystems.

Once again we have had a year with a mix of highs and lows but in general terms the Murray Darling Association is moving forward steadily and playing an important role as a community voice across the length and breadth of the Basin.

Our CEO Mark Lamb, ably assisted by Tim Phillips, have ensured that the Association has had a productive year.

Membership is always one of the indicators that shows how the MDA is going and on this front there is good news with some new Councils joining and others having serious discussions with Mark.

In 2022-23 many parts of the Basin experienced significant flood events which have caused significant damage and economic losses in many towns throughout the Basin.

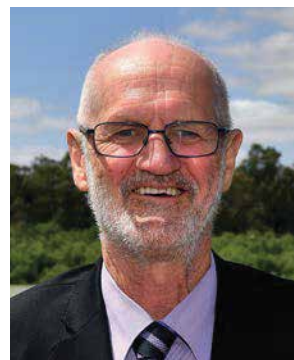
Water storages across the Basin are high at the moment and the possibility of further flooding can't be ruled out.

With climate change playing a major role in such events, it is clear that long term planning is required with respect to infrastructure such as dams and levees in many parts of the Basin.

While floods were a key issue in the past year there is no doubt that our planning must look at the likelihood of severe droughts as well and what this will mean to communities and ecosystems.

Fish kills in many of the Basin's rivers will become a frequent occurrence unless proper planning and management of the Basin's water resources is carried out.

The 78th annual conference held in Albury was a great success and I encourage member and non-member Councils to send delegates to the annual conferences, where we can hear from regulators, bureaucrats and our politicians and learn more about this complex system, and gain a better understanding of the different challenges we face in our own part of the system.



As we meet this year we are aware that the Murray-Darling Basin Plan is rapidly approaching the date where it was intended to be complete but we know that, with issues such as constraints, water resource plans, as well as water recovery, there are still huge problems to be dealt with.

We need to work together to ensure that the Plan can be delivered as completely as possible and to look at what will occur after June 2024.

Of particular note this year has been the invitation for the MDA to participate in the Productivity Commission's review of the Plan implementation and the NSW DPE's Reconnecting Country Rivers Programme.

We were also invited to be involved in some research conducted by IPSOS to provide feedback to the Department of Climate Change, Energy the Environment and Water. This is a very positive point but it highlights how governments seek our views but do not make a financial contribution to the MDA.

This is an ongoing issue for me and the CEO to pursue in the months ahead.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. Thurley". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

David Thurley
National President

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

2022 / 2023 presented many challenges, however, in retrospect, much was achieved. The MDA has continued to work hard to ensure that we communicate with all Basin communities, both members and non-members.

We continue to engage with non-members to ensure that they are aware of the benefits of membership and the work that the MDA does, acknowledging the challenge of meeting with approximately 170 LGA's!

Pleasingly, we have seen some LGA's return to membership and we will continue to drive membership wherever possible.

We have worked hard to ensure that our organisation is financially sustainable. Improving the financials has been a real challenge last year, however, we have been working diligently to secure funding from different sources. Thus far, we have significantly improved our position, although there is always more work to be done.

Early in the year, Basin communities have had the opportunity to engage with the MDA via the Basin Communities Leadership Program (BCLP).

By personally delivering workshops across the Basin, I was afforded the opportunity to meet with Basin communities and councils along the way.

The participants at these workshops were all deeply committed to the future of their communities and to developing their leadership skills. The course is designed to provide local leaders in the Basin community with the skills to be part of the solution and able to achieve results through collaboration.

Our commitment to science continues to strengthen through strategic partnerships.

In particular, we have been working closely with CSIRO – most notably on the Circular Economy. This project tasked us with engaging with LGAs and Local Governments across the Basin to understand their limitations, opportunities, and views of the Circular Economy. We look forward to further developing this and other relationships with our partners.

One of the key highlights of the year is the annual conference.

Following on from a wonderful conference in Albury in 2022, which saw delegates and attendees come together from across the Basin, the MDA is looking forward to delivering our 2023 79th National Conference and AGM this year in the Rural City Murray Bridge.



With a great list of speakers, sponsors, and contributors, we are confident it will be a success!

Whilst the conference is a highlight of the year, engagement throughout the Basin itself never stops, with Regional Chairs coordinating regular meetings, Inter-Regional meetings, and Regional AGM's.

Of course, all this work leads to developing key Motions, upon which, the MDA can then act. This is where the MDA really makes a difference – improving the Basin!

13 Motions from our last AGM have been followed up and real outcomes have been achieved as a result.

I would like to thank our National President, Cr David Thurley OAM, and the entire Board for their passion and leadership of the MDA.

I would also like to thank our Communications and Engagement Officer, Tim Phillips, for his significant contribution.

Most importantly, I want to express our appreciation to the members of the MDA for their ongoing commitment and passion for the MDA and Murray-Darling Basin!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark D. Lamb". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

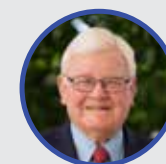
Mark D. Lamb
Chief Executive Officer

OUR ORGANISATION: BOARD PERFORMANCE

Board	Hosting Council	Region	Commenced	Finished
● Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	Chair Region 1 - President		
● Cr Geoff Dobson	Greater Shepparton City Council	Chair Region 2		
● Cr Marion Browne	Broken Hill Council	Chair Region 4 (Interim)	16/03/2023	3/07/2023
● Cr Jason Modica	Mildura Rural City Council	Chair Region 4		
● Cr Andrew Kassebaum	Berri-Barmera Council	Chair Region 5		
● Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrina Shire Council	Chair Region 6		24/02/2023
● Cr Airlie Keen	Rural City of Murray Bridge	Chair Region 6	24/02/2023	
● Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham	Chair Region 7		
● Cr Glen Andreazza	Griffith City Council	Chair Region 9		
● Mayor Phyllis Miller	Forbes Shire Council	Chair Region 10		23/02/2023
● Mayor Craig Davies	Narromine Shire Council	Chair Region 10 - Vice President		
● Mayor Jamie Chaffey	Gunnedah Shire Council	Chair Region 11		
● Mayor Samantha O'Toole	Balonne Shire Council	Chair Region 12		
● Pete George	M&S Group	<i>Treasurer</i>		
● Mark Lamb	Murray Darling Association	<i>Chief Executive and Public Officer</i>		



Cr David Thurley



Cr Geoff Dobson



Cr Jason Modica



Cr Andrew Kassebaum



Cr Airlie Keen



Cr Andrew Tilley



Cr Glen Andreazza



Mayor Craig Davies



Mayor Jamie Chaffey



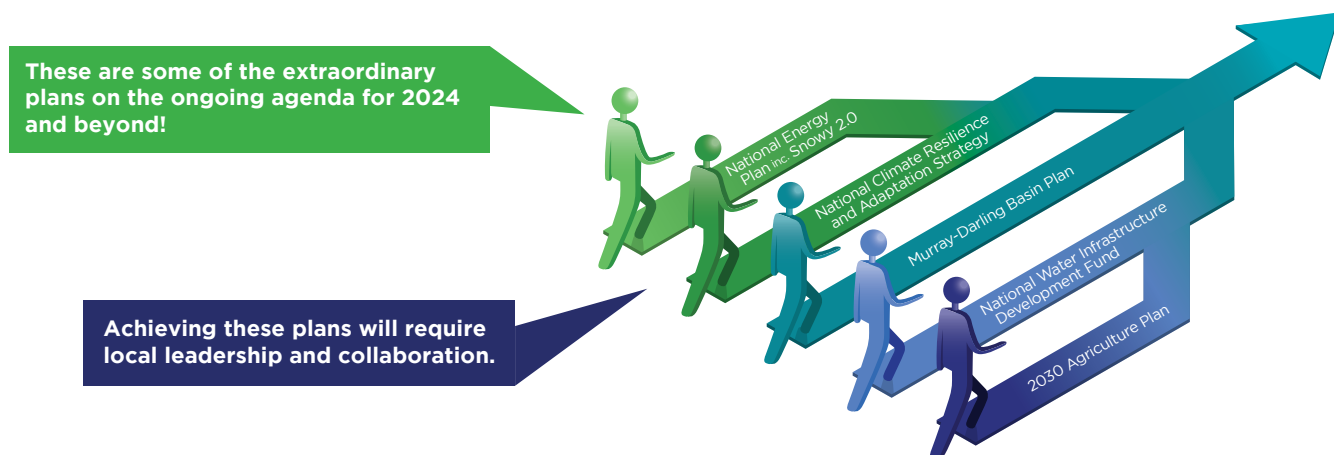
Mayor Samantha O'Toole



Pete George



Mark Lamb



APPRECIATING THE DEDICATED SERVICE OF:



Cr Marion Browne
Region 4



Melissa Rebbeck
Region 6



Mayor Phyllis Miller
Region 10

OUR ORGANISATION: MEETINGS RECORD

BOARD MEETINGS		78th AGM 21 Sept 2022	Meeting 418 5 Dec 2022	Meeting 419 10 Feb 2023	Meeting 420 3 Apr 2023	Meeting 421 5 Jun 2023	Meeting 422 21 Aug 2023	79th AGM 28 Sept 2023
	Cr David Thurley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Cr Geoff Dobson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Cr Jason Modica	✓	✓	A/P			✓	✓
	Cr Marion Browne			✓	✓	✓		
	Cr Andrew Kassebaum	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
	Cr Melissa Rebbeck	✓	✓	✓				
	Cr Airlie Keen				✓	A	A	✓
	Cr Andrew Tilley	✓	✓	✓	A	A	✓	✓
	Cr Glen Andreazza	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mayor Phyllis Miller	A	A	A					
Mayor Craig Davies	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	
Mayor Jamie Chaffey	✓	A	A/P	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mayor Samantha O'Toole	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	
Pete George	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Mark Lamb	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

Attendance key: ✓ Attendance registered A Apology received P Attendance by Proxy X Non-attendance

REGION MEETINGS	REGION	09-22	10-22	11-22	12-22	01-23	02-23	03-23	04-23	05-23	06-23	07-23	08-23	09-23
	1			Red				Red			Red		Red	
	2						Blue		Blue			Blue		
	3													
	4	Pink			Pink			Pink		Pink		Pink		
	5						Purple			Purple			Purple	
	6					Orange					Orange		Orange	
	7	Yellow					Yellow			Yellow			Yellow	
	8													
	9			Yellow				Yellow		Yellow		Yellow		
	10													
	11			Green						Green			Green	
	12													



! Region meetings play an important role in initiating and facilitating discussion on regional and Basin issues, providing members, executive and guests to exchange information and identify priorities, and develop strategies and solutions.

REGION 1 REPORT



Region 1 comprises total of 13 councils, of which 4 are members of the MDA. Region 1 has 1 individual member and 1 life member. The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council
Committee members	
Cr Bernard Gaffney	Indigo Shire Council
Cr David Wortmann	Towong Shire Council

Members
Albury City Council
Indigo Shire Council
Snowy Valleys Council
Towong Shire Council
Individual Members
Geoff Lucas
Terry Hillman (Life Member)

Other Eligible Councils
Alpine Shire Council
Baw Baw Shire Council
Benalla Rural City Council
East Gippsland Shire Council
Mansfield Shire Council
Snowy Monaro Regional Council
Rural City of Wangaratta
Wodonga City Council
Greater Hume Shire Council

Four region meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
Friday 5 August 2022	Councillor Meeting Room, Albury City Council
Friday 18 November 2022	Councillor Meeting Room, Albury City Council
Friday 10 March 2023	Councillor Meeting Room, Albury City Council
Friday 2 June 2023	Councillor Meeting Room, Albury City Council
Friday 11 August 2023	Councillor Meeting Room, Albury City Council

Membership is vital to the ongoing success of the MDA and in this context, Region 1 does not perform well with only 5 of the eligible Councils (Albury, Indigo, Towong, Federation and snowy Valleys) being members.

It is intended to meet with the non-member Councils in the months ahead to encourage them to join.

The work that the MDA has been doing with CSIRO as well as our advocacy in the water space should be strong selling points.

Four region 1 meetings were held in the Councillor Meeting Room and Albury City during the 2022/23 year and these occurred on 5th August 2022, 18th November 2022, 10th March 2023 and 2nd June 2023.

5th August 2022: Kade Small, Senior Environment Officer of the NSW Soil Conservation Service spoke about the causes of erosion in the upper reaches of the Murray and tributaries and what measures and river management practices were being put in place to minimise erosion.

This is a serious issue given the significant decrease in flow capacity at the Barmah Choke.

18th November 2022: Dale McWhinney, Project Manager Goulburn Murray Water spoke on the Sunday Creek project.

The Project will provide a more water efficient and cost-effective irrigation system by delivering water directly to Sunday Creek.

Currently, irrigation water is delivered from the Murray River via Lake Moodemere.

Approximately 40 per cent of this diverted water is lost to seepage and evaporation before it is extracted by irrigators. This Project will reduce these water losses, improve water security for the future, and better support the ecological values of Lake Moodemere.

10th March 2023: Julian Martin of Watertech talked about design arrangements in projects to prevent erosion in the banks of the Murray and tributaries. This is particularly important given the variation in river flows and heights and the ongoing silting up of the Barmah Choke.

2nd June 2023: Bree Chambeyron, Field Officer for the Inspector General of Water Compliance spoke about the roles and responsibilities of employees of the IGWC and provided an update on recent activities of the Inspector General and his team. The lack of NSW water resource plans was noted as an impediment to the proper functioning of the office.

High water storages have been experienced in Lakes Hume and Dartmouth for the past 12 month and significant flooding downstream of Lake Hume occurred for a period of more than 3 months when Dartmouth began spilling in September and there were releases from Lake Hume and significant inflows from the Kiewa.

Cr David Thurley, OAM
Chair, Region 1



REGION 2 REPORT

Region 2 comprises a total of 14 councils, of which 5 are members of the MDA. Region 2 has three individual members. The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr Geoff Dobson	Greater Shepparton City Council

Members
Greater Shepparton City Council
Moira Shire Council
Federation Council
Individual Members
Murray Irrigation
Ken Pattison

Other Eligible Councils
Berrigan Shire Council
Edward River Council
Campaspe Shire Council
City of Greater Bendigo
Macedon Ranges Shire Council
Mitchell Shire Council
Murray Shire Council
Murrindindi Shire Council
Strathbogie Shire Council
Whittlesea City Council
Yarra Ranges Shire Council

Four region meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
7 December 2022	Greater Shepparton City Council, Virtual
15 February 2023	Greater Shepparton City Council, Virtual
18 May 2023	Corowa, Virtual
August 2023	Greater Shepparton City Council, Virtual



Picture courtesy: www.greatershepparton.com.au

Region 2 have conducted a number of regional meetings over the last 12 months.

Our meeting in Corowa included a presentation from the Murray Group of Irrigators who gave an insightful view of water requirements and usage from the upper reaches of the Murray River.

We also had a presentation from the CEO of the Mildura City Council around flood recovery measures from the 2022 floods in the Mildura area.

The Goulburn Valley was also hit with widespread flooding mainly from tributaries below the Eildon Weir spillway which resulted in urban inundation, levy bank spillage and district farming communities effected.

The total damage bill to local government was in the millions of dollars, with the final costs still being tallied.

Of course, the biggest challenge that is facing Region 2 is the impending decision by the Federal Government in their desire to recover an additional 450 GL for their promise to South Australia for environmental usage.

Whilst Region 2 acknowledges that the environment requires a healthy dose of water, we recommend that water savings by way of upgrades to infrastructure and efficient water delivery rather than buy backs from water users is the correct way forward.

Whilst Region 2 acknowledges that the environment requires a healthy dose of water, we recommend that water savings by way of upgrades to infrastructure and efficient water delivery rather than buy backs from water users is the correct way forward.

Region 2, like many regions within the Basin is looking to increase membership from both river side communities as well as non riparian water users. We all depend on our Murray Darling River system to survive and prosper and accordingly, we continue to advocate to additional municipalities to join the Association.

Region 2 acknowledges our association with groups such as the Murray Goulburn Irrigation District members, Our Water Leadership Group and of course our municipal partners in our region.



Cr Geoff Dobson
Chair, Region 2.

REGION 4 REPORT

Region 4 comprises a total of 8 councils, of which 5 are members of the MDA. Region 4 has 1 life member, Mr Brian Grogan OAM. The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr Jason Modica	Mildura Rural City Council
Cr Marion Brown (Interim)	Broken Hill City Council
Committee members	
Mr Greg Hill	Central Darling Shire Council
Cr Marion Browne	Broken Hill City Council
Cr Stephen Heywood	Wentworth Shire Council
Cr Daniel Linklater	Wentworth Shire Council

Members
Balranald Shire Council
Broken Hill City Council
Central Darling Shire Council
Mildura Rural City Council
Wentworth Shire Council
Individual Members
Mr Brian Grogan OAM

Other Eligible Councils
Hindmarsh Shire Council
West Wimmera Shire Council
Yarriambiack Shire Council

Four region meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
Thursday 29 September 2022	Ordinary Meeting
Thursday 8 December 2022	Ordinary Meeting
Wednesday 15 March 2023	Ordinary Meeting
Wednesday 31 May 2023	AGM
Thursday 31 August 2023	Ordinary Meeting

I would like to thank Mark Lamb and Tim Phillips of the Murray Darling Association (MDA) for their ongoing commitment to the MDA and its implied complexity.

I would also like to thank the MDA Executive Members for their insights, knowledge, and ongoing communications through all regions of the Basin as this gives all Executives a chance to experience and empathise with the challenges of each region.

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to Cr Marion Browne of Broken Hill City Council for stepping in as Interim Chair for Region 4 while I was unable to undertake those duties for a short time. A huge thanks to Penny Robinson from Mildura Rural City Council for her steady influence and hard work in providing secretariat support to Region 4.

Looking back on the recent flood I wonder how it will be dealt with historically. With a clear line of sight and science back to the Water Act and the Basin Plan. All the data and scientific reports pointed to over extraction and over development.

This was known when Prime Minister Howard and Water Minister Turnbull ceased dragging their feet and instigated a change for environmental benefit. This is a change that has been systematically deconstructed by very loud voices with vested interests at the centre of their decision making.

The complexity of our three-tiered political system has added to the challenges of working through structural change and the environmental requirements of the Murray Darling Basin.

I question, how a first world Nation can destroy one river system and overdevelop another? By politicizing the scientific facts, letting commodification and political intimacy permeate its way through governments and industry which should work to uphold the integrity of a healthy Murray Darling Basin.

The litany of investigations, papers and reports by experts detailing the environmental malaise of the Basin keeps rolling out. But we continue to ignore the science proving how insular, thin skinned and captured by surface level engagement debate on water is in Australia. Leaving all stakeholders with the existential crisis of how water is viewed used managed and discussed in this country.

There are a multitude of contradictions around water management, many have been explored and somehow ignored or politically deconstructed at the expense of the Murray Darling Basin itself. How can a river system we are in supervision of not sufficiently purchase water for its own health via the science of hydrology. While multinationals can game an opaque market for profits and strategic advantage, an advantage the Water Act and Basin Plan were supposed to give to our waterways.

How have we accepted the promotion of unsustainable growth through commodification while ignoring the variability of intake into the Murray Darling Basin System whilst endlessly rolling out the abstract Neo Conservative platform of market supremacy. Hectare upon hectare of permanent plantings put pressure on availability and deliverability diminishing the viability of farmers, particularly through drought. Applying a choke hold on small family farmers who cannot compete with the get big or get out reality of an unregulated market. Who will own the majority of water after a mega drought?

REGION 4 REPORT (continued)

The next drought will test the Murray Darling Basin like no other drought - the unbridled growth within the Basin has delivered remarkable economic benefit but the variability of intake we already know exists within the Basin will have more crops to water than water available. This a known fact and should be central in moving forward on how the Murray Darling Basin is managed.

We cannot keep telling ourselves that water can somehow be conjured in drought years or controlled in the Basins biggest floods. Our colonial expectations are blinkered and, we are sitting on the precipice of the next drought fuelled by climate change. It is time to ask ourselves what our collective legacy will be.

I want historians to look back and say these people acted, these people saw the precarious situation the commodification of water and a challenging political land scape delivered. I would like it to been seen that we, as a collective group of the Murray Darling Association were strong enough to change for the benefit of the Murray Darling Basin.

This is our challenge to identify the looming problem and systematically work through the data and change direction for the longevity of the Murray Darling Basin and its associated industries.



Cr Marion Browne
Interim Chair, Region 4.



Cr Jason Modica
Chair, Region 4.



Are you a
member?



REGION 5 REPORT

Region 5 comprises a total of 5 councils, of which 5 are members of the MDA.

Region 5 has 2 individual members. The committee is made up of:

Chair

Cr Andrew Kassebaum Berri-Barmera Council

Members

Berri-Barmera Council

Mid-Murray Council

Renmark-Paringa Council

District Council of Karoonda East Murray

District Council of Loxton Waikerie

Ian and Bobby Mann (Individual)

Malcolm Wilksch (Individual)

Four region meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
Monday 6 September 2022	LGA House
Monday 12 September 2022	Berri Barmera Council
Monday 13 February 2023	Berri Barmera Council
Monday 8 May 2023	Mid Murray Council

Region 5 comprises a total of 6 councils, of which 5 are members of the MDA. Geographically Region 5 spans the area from the South Australian border to below Lock 1. Horticulture and Agricultural activities underpin our region's economy.

During the year that was, Region 5 has engaged with MDBA, IGWC, CEWH, MRLGA and other government agencies. Much was learnt through these interactions.

The high flow event of 2022/23 has necessitated the pausing of the Water Advocacy paper consultation/drafting as resources of the MRLGA were used to plan and coordinated Region 5 councils defence against the might of mother nature's high flows.

The majestic waters and the natural gifts this water brings to our communities injects enormous wealth and prosperity. Coupled with this is the need to be responsible custodians of the precious gift.

Mother nature flexed her might again and provided a basin wide high flow event which has brought life back to the basin and all its associated tributary's. Region 5 councils were semi prepared for the higher-than-normal flows, however as the river continued to surpass predictions it became obvious that property along the river corridor was in danger of being inundated. Thousands of holiday shacks and permanent residencies were damaged/lost to the rising waters.

With the recovery well underway, communities are taking stock of the damage to private and public infrastructure. Region 5 councils will need to dig deep to restore/rebuild their communities to be better prepared for the next high flow event. Legacy levee banks are now in place to remind us all that we mortals can not predict what mother nature will do and to when the next event will occur.

Water is the lifeblood of our communities. Its security of delivery to SA is the region's biggest challenge. With the basin plan review looming, many hard decisions will need to be contemplated and decided upon to ensure the basin can sustain both the environment and its communities.



Cr Andrew Kassebaum
Incoming Chair, Region 5

REGION 6 REPORT



Region 6 comprises 7 Councils, of which 6 are Members of the MDA. Kingston District Council is currently not a financial member of Region 6.

Chair

Cr Airlie Keen Rural City of Murray Bridge

Chair (outgoing)

Cr Melissa Rebbeck Alexandrina Council

Committee members

GM Heather Barclay Rural City of Murray Bridge

CEO Bridget Mather Coorong District Council

CEO Nigel Morris Alexandrina Council

Members

Alexandrina Council

Coorong District Council

City of Victor Harbor

Rural City of Murray Bridge

Southern Mallee District Council

Tatiara District Council

Individual Members

Adrian Pederick, MP JP

Colin Grundy

Warren Jacobs

Graham Camac

Phillip Moore

Barry Featherstone

Other Eligible Councils

Kingston District Council

Ten region meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
25 February 2022 (AGM)	Alexandrina Council
20 May 2022	Virtual
14 August 2022	Virtual
14 October 2022 (executive)	Virtual
13 January 2023	Rural City of Murray Bridge, Virtual
24 February 2023 (OM)	Rural City of Murray Bridge, Virtual
24 February 2023 (AGM)	Rural City of Murray Bridge, Virtual
20 April 2023 (executive)	Virtual
23 June 2023	Coorong District Council, Virtual
11 August 2023	Alexandrina Council, Virtual

Region 6 comprises the Lower Murray, Lakes and Coorong Region, spanning from North of Murray Bridge into the Lower Lakes (Lake Alexandrina and Lake Albert) where it then weaves through a series of channels to the Murray Mouth and Coorong National Park. The fresh water/sea water interaction makes this region iconic and its health is vitally important to the ecology of the entire basin.

We have held regular meetings with the support of speakers from the MDBA, CEWH and OIGWC and I would like to take this opportunity to sincerely thank those regular guests for their support of Region 6 and for always providing relevant and comprehensive updates.

They include (but are not limited to) Monique White and Kate Bartlett (MDBA), Richard Mintern (Office of the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder) and Greg Burns from the Office of the Inspector General of Water Compliance.

An Inter-Regional meeting was held on Tuesday, 6 September 2022 at the LG House and virtually. The Interregional Meeting was held for South Australian Regions to meet and discuss matters relevant for South Australia and the Basin as a whole.

A number of speakers presented on the day including:

- Susan Close - Current advocacy for SA and 450GL
- Peter Dillon (CSIRO) - Recharging aquifers
- Brent Williams and Neil Andrew (MDBA) - Updates around the Basin
- Prof Mike Young (Adelaide Uni) - Cultural water, cultural integration
- Stephen Smith (LGA) - Working together with the MDA
- Stephen Campbell (on behalf of Minister Sharkie) - Current advocacy for SA
- Cr Andrew Kassebaum (Region 5 MDA) - MRLGA water position paper
- Mark Lamb - National Conference

Outside of our Inter-regional Meeting, our Ordinary Meetings & Executive Meetings have focussed on;

- Preparedness for the 2023 and 79th MDA National Conference and AGM in Murray Bridge on 25-28 September 2023
- Preparing Region 6 Motions for the 79th MDA AGM
- Understanding and sharing knowledge and experience as it relates to the Murray River Flood Response and Recovery

In response to Minister Plibersek's letter of 9th June 2023 which invited innovative ideas on how the Basin Plan could be delivered, Region 6 responded in a letter dated 3rd July 2023 expressing support for the MDA's submission as well as highlighting successful water saving initiatives such as the Rural City of Murray Bridge's Stormwater Harvesting and Reuse Scheme, Treated Wastewater Reuse Scheme and our Water Sensitive Urban Design (WSUD) program. Region 7 programs such as stormwater capture and aquifer recharge were also highlighted.

Taking on the role of Chairperson of Region 6 has been both challenging and rewarding and I am grateful for the strong support and guidance of outgoing Chair Melissa Rebbeck who indeed left big shoes to fill. I would also like to acknowledge the Executive and support team, including Heather Barclay, Stephen Packer, Carol Muzyk and Kelley Jaensch and to all the Members who have contributed to Region 6's successful year.

I was fortunate to attend the 2022 MDA Conference in Albury as an observer. This year's 79th MDA Conference and AGM will be my first as Chair of Region 6. Region 6 is honoured to be hosting the Conference and we look forward to showcasing our amazing and diverse region. We trust those who attend can join us for the Study Tour to the Barrages and Murray Mouth. It is our hope that Conference participants also take the time to explore our region and enjoy their stay in the Lower Murray Region.

I was fortunate to attend the 2022 MDA Conference in Albury as an observer. This year's 79th MDA Conference and AGM will be my first as Chair of Region 6. Region 6 is honoured to be hosting the Conference and we look forward to showcasing our amazing and diverse region. We trust those who attend can join us for the Study Tour to the Barrages and Murray Mouth. It is our hope that Conference participants also take the time to explore our region and enjoy their stay in the Lower Murray Region.



Cr Airlie Keen
Chair, Region 6.

REGION 7 REPORT



Region 7 comprises a total of 21 councils, of which 3 are members of the MDA. Region 7 has 3 individual members. The Executive Committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham
Committee members	
Cr Therese Britton-La Salle	Campbelltown City Council
Mr John Kennedy	Life Member
Mr Robin Coleman	Individual Member
Mr Ray Najar	Individual Member
Mr Peter Shepherd	Individual Member

Members	
City of Mitcham	
City of Tea Tree Gully	
Campbelltown City Council	
Pauline Frost (Life Member)	
Frank Verrall (Individual)	
Rex Adams (Individual)	
Other Eligible Councils	
Adelaide Hills Council	
City of Adelaide	
City of Holdfast Bay	
City of Charles Sturt	
City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters	
City of Playford	
City of Prospect	
City of Marion	
City of Onkaparinga	
City of Port Adelaide Enfield	
City of Salisbury	
City of Unley	
City of West Torrens	
City of Burnside	
District Council of Yankalilla	
Mount Barker District Council	
Town of Walkerville	
Town of Gawler	

Four region meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
23 June 2022	Campbelltown City Council
29 September 2022	Adelaide Hills Council
16 February 2023	City of Mitcham
11 May 2023	Campbelltown City Council

Speakers addressed members at each meeting. Topics covered were updates from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, SDL Accounting Groundwater and Trade.

Speakers included:

Name	Position	Organisation
Julianne Tanner	Senior Director	MDBA
Monique White	Assistant Director Engagement	MDBA
Heather Barclay & Stephen Packer	General Manager Senior Environment Officer	Rural City of Murray Bridge

2022/2023 Was a difficult year for the Region with membership become a critical issue – this is being address by myself and Mark Lamb to meet with eligible Councils to try to get them to reconnect to the Association.

It was also a troubling year for South Australia in regards to the floods, this caused devastation across the river land and many towns are still recovering from the damage and will be for the years to come.

Our region continues to meet to share, discuss and debate the matters of importance to the Murray Darling Association. I am hopeful that the new year will bring new member Council's onboard as we move past the 2022 Periodic Election we can reach out to fresh faced Councillors who understand the importance this organisation plays on Adelaide as a whole.

We are also saddened by the loss of one of our Life Members Jim Hullick OAM and recognise the important role he played both in the Murray Darling Association and Local Government Association.



Cr Andrew Tilley
Chair, Region 7.



PHOTO: Permeable Paving at City of Mitcham



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REGION 9 REPORT



Region 9 comprises a total of 16 councils, of which 8 are members of the MDA. Region 9 has 1 life member, Mr J Bede Mecham.

The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr Glen Andrezza	Griffith City Council

Members	
Leeton Shire Council	
Griffith Shire Council	
Murrumbidge Shire Council	
Wagga Wagga City Council	
Hay Shire Council	
Narrandera Shire Council	
Carrathool Shire Council	
Lockhart Shire Council	
Riverina Water County Council (Individual)	
J Bede Mecham (Life Member)	
Michael McCormack MP (Individual)	
Joe Burns (Individual)	

Other Eligible Councils	
Temora Shire Council	
Coolamon Shire Council	
Hilltops Shire Council	
Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council	
Junee Shire Council	
Weddin Shire Council	
Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council	
Yass Valley Council	

Four Region 9 meetings have been held over the past year:

Date	Location
Thursday 8 September 2022	Griffith Council Chambers
Thursday 24 November 2022	Griffith Council Chambers
Wednesday 29 March 2023	Griffith Council Chambers
Friday 5 May 2023	Griffith Council Chambers

Our invited presenters/guest speakers over the past 12 months:

- Matt Woodward, Senior Engagement Officer, MDBA (28/7/22)
- Emily Ford, Senior Community & Stakeholder Engagement Officer, Water Infrastructure, Department of Planning & Environment (8/9/22)
- Mark Lamb, CEO Murray Darling Association (24/11/22)
- Matt Woodward, Senior Engagement Officer, MDBA (29/3/23)
- Karen Hutchinson, A/CEO Murrumbidgee Irrigation Ltd and Jenny McLeod, Policy & Communication Manager Coleambally Irrigation Ltd (5/5/23)

Presentations and Summary topics included

- NSW Water Resources Plans
- Pathway to the Basin Plan Review
- Murray -Darling Basin Outlook
- Status of the environmental impact statements
- Yanco Creek Modernisation Project progress
- The Circular Economy, effect and relationship to MDA Regions
- Optimisation projects in our region

The Region 9 Members in July 2022 resolved that the matter of the Yanco Creek Modernisation Project will continue to be an item for discussion and focus at future meetings given this Project is also representative of many issues common to other projects in the water saving initiatives and strategies space as they all appear to be hampered by inadequate Government funding and/or delays in progress.

At the meeting in September 2022 Region 9 Members finalized a Motion to be put to the MDA National Conference 2022 that would seek through a collective voice clarification from Government as to the methodology used to determine annual water allocations in NSW as well as variations to these allocations during the year.

The Meeting in November 2022 included discussion regarding the water inundation across our region that had been caused by the above normal weather events of the preceding few months and the consequent and various impacts that has seriously been felt by communities as well as by Councils as they address the damage and aftermath.

The Region 9 members at the March 2023 meeting resolved that the question needs to be directed to the Federal Minister for a reconciliation of the current status of water recovery across the entire basin whether it be the 450Gl at the Federal level or the 605Gl which is Sustainable Diversion Limits recovery split between the states.

At the May 2023 meeting Region 9 members continued to discuss their collective concern over significant water optimisation projects not being realized, whether this be by reason of delay in construction or in final Government funding. Local Irrigation companies provided information at the meeting, and the Members concurred that if these projects were finalised there would be significant advantage to the region through improved and more efficient water delivery.

Region 9 meetings are all about trying to unlock an understanding around water allocations, the conversations that lead to greater transparency, and the overall need to achieve whole region benefit whereby the triple bottom line framework of economic, social and environmental factors are considered.

REGION 9 REPORT (continued)

As this year has progressed and meetings have taken place, Region 9 members continue to urge our state and federal representatives to ensure a much better and transparent water system and to obtain greater detail around the accountability and reconciliation of current water recovery across the basin, the inclusion of unregulated flows in those calculations and the real effect and purpose of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.

No doubt all Region 9 members look forward to the challenges ahead but also the opportunities that an improved and fair water delivery system across the basin could provide to all communities.



Cr Glen Andrezza
Chair, Region 9



Our Vision

A healthy Murray-Darling Basin supports thriving communities, economic development and sustainable productivity.

Our Purpose

To provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by providing, **information, facilitating debate**, and by seeking to **influence government policy**.

Our Objectives

To achieve our purpose, we will:

- **advocate** on behalf of Basin communities
- **use local knowledge and expertise** to fully understand regional issues
- act as a **two-way conduit for information and discussion** between our communities and governments
- **encourage and facilitate debate** about the things that matter for the Basin's future
- explore options to **achieve sound solutions** to regional issues
- **test information to ensure a sound base** for those options
- be an **educational resource for the Basin**.



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REGION 10 REPORT

Region 10 covers an enormous footprint and takes in the largest number of councils of any region in the Murray-Darling Basin. This leads to difficulties in engagement and collaboration.

Following initial consultation regarding regional boundary realignment, the MDA established Regions 10 and 10A in the 2020-2021 period to better serve and grow our membership in this region. Region 10 and 10A are represented by Region 10A Chair Mayor Craig Davies of Narromine Shire Council, following the stepping down of Region 10 Chair Mayor Phyllis Miller.

Chair

Mayor Craig Davies Narromine Shire Council

Members

Bourke Shire Council

Cobar Shire Council

Cowra Shire Council

Dubbo Regional Council

Forbes Shire Council

Lachlan Shire Council

Mid-Western Regional Council

Narromine Shire Council

Warren Shire Council

Gilgandra Shire Council

Coonamble Shire Council

After an encouraging start to the season the last month has seen a slow up of rainfall as predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology and less favorable growing conditions for local crops. In fact, once north or west of Coonamble and the cropping prospects have diminished significantly with much crop not having been planted. 50-80 mm is now needed to finish most of the crops in the Macquarie Valley.

Burrendong Dam which holds back the waters of the Macquarie River currently sits at 95% with a current irrigation allocation of 50% for General Security water and 100% for high security, Stock and Domestic and Urban allocations. It is a very good place to be for all water users knowing their security is very high for the coming 12-24 months with the irrigation entitlements most at risk.

This situation is most comfortable for all river dwellers and those whose livelihoods rely on the availability of water from the Macquarie. Last year in November we experienced a high river with significant flooding in the lower reaches of the river and indeed below Narromine saw intensive flooding across many hundreds of thousands of hectares particularly in the Warren Shire.

The inflow into the RAMSAR listed Macquarie Marshes during the flooding is estimated at some 5,000,000 megalitres or as some of the environmentalists would describe it as 5,000,000,000,000 litres. That's one heck of an environmental flow. The benefits of such a massive flow to any site would have to be questioned as the level of information as to the benefit of this volume of water is unsubstantiated.

Much of the country along the river was inundated for many months and in places for over a year causing very significant damage to homes, infrastructure and property. It is simply a waste of water and not the way to make best use of this scarce resource.

With significant population growth of many regional and rural centers across Central and Western NSW, many shires are questioning the priorities of government when it comes to the allocation of water for human use. In the case of the Macquarie River where Irrigation usage averages approx. 17% of annual flows, urban use makes up another 2.5% the rest is dedicated to the environment.

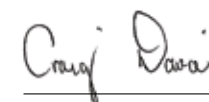


PHOTO: Courtesy of www.narromine.nsw.gov.au

None of us wish to see the environment suffer or in any way be degraded but surely humans must come first and given the miserly take from the river system could do with their allocation being increased by 2% of the total flow.

It is in times such as we have just experienced with massive flows to the environment that exceed the average by a factor of 5-10 that we must find ways to better use this resource. Should a significant proportion of that water be conserved or stored it is then available for all license holders including the environment into the future. It means the impact of flooding for all downstream communities is lessened to the extent that many river communities could be saved the devastation of prolonged flooding such as we saw along the Murray River late last year. Getting the bureaucrats to see logic is clearly the most difficult part of the equation.

Maintaining a level of equality between all aspects of water usage across this vast basin should always be the priority for all our members and the sensible and equitable allocation of this resource foremost in our minds. I hope most fervently that Minister Plibersek has that level of intuition to deliver on what is an almost impossible outcome.



Cr Craig Davies
Chair Region 10A



REGION 11 REPORT



Region 11 comprises total of 15 councils, of which 8 are members of the MDA. The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr Jamie Chaffey	Gunnedah Shire Council
Committee members	
Cr Greg Sauer	Tenterfield Shire Council
Cr Doug Hawkins	Liverpool Plains Shire Council

Members
Brewarrina Shire Council
Coonamble Shire Council
Gunnedah Shire Council
Gwydir Shire Council
Liverpool Plains Shire
Tamworth Regional Council
Tenterfield Shire Council
Walgett Shire Council

Other Eligible Councils
Armidale Dumaresq Council
Glen Innes Severn Council
Inverell Shire Council
Moree Plains Shire Council
Narrabri Shire Council
Uralla Shire Council
Walcha Shire Council

Four region meetings were held during the reporting year.

Date	Location
Friday 21 August 2022	
Friday 25 November 2022	
Friday 19 May 2023	
Friday 18 August 2023	

Region 11 is located at the most northern/north eastern limits of NSW in the Northern Basin, major river systems include the Peel, Namoi, Barwon, Gwydir, Macintyre and Severn rivers.

At the time of writing this report, the storage capacity for our major water storages are;

Pindari Dam – 84%
 Split Rock Dam – 100%
 Copeton Dam – 92 %
 Chaffey Dam – 100 %
 Keepit Dam – 98%

During July this year, MDA CEO Mark Lamb and myself travelled throughout the north eastern local government areas of region 11 and met with elected members and general managers of ten Councils, these face to face discussions with eligible councils were very encouraging and with follow-up in the coming months, I hope to see an increase in participation and membership.

I am pleased to report since my last annual report in 2021/22, region 11 has experienced a 30% increase and therefore delivering on one of the priorities of the current leadership team in region 11, that the Northern Basin has a strong voice in the MDA. I am very happy to report that Tamworth Regional Council is one of the new members and have been very active since joining, in fact, they have recently submitted a bid to host the 2024 Annual Conference.

Planning is underway for a Northern Basin forum with a date yet to be finalised, the concept is for region 10, 11 and 12 to come together with local government representatives and industry leaders to discuss and debate the emerging big issues for the near future.



PHOTO: Canola crop, Gunnedah

This will be of vital importance to ensure we are bringing the voice of the Northern Basin to all that we do and say as representatives in the MDA. I look forward to reporting on the event and outcome in the next annual report.

On a somewhat concerning note, although we have considerable water in our major storages in Region 11, many of our LGA's have recently been drought declared and the forecast for the coming summer is worrying. Water security is always front of mind in communities across our river systems, not only as utility providers in local government, but, as providers of the food and fibre that the nation depends on for our prosperity.

I was humbled to be re-elected as chairperson for Region 11 at the Annual General Meeting last year and also wish to congratulate Deputy Chairman Councillor Greg Sauer from Tenterfield Council on his re-election.



The year ahead is shaping up to be a year in which we all need to be alert to the changing water conditions - climatic, policy, legislation and availability and I guess that is why the MDA has successfully delivered for 79 years.

I look forward to catching up in Murray Bridge.

Cr Jamie Chaffey
 Chair, Region 11

REGION 12 REPORT



Region 12 comprises a total of 15 councils, of which 3 are members of the MDA including Balonne Shire Council, Goondiwindi Shire Council, and Paroo Shire Council.

Chair

Mayor Samantha O'Toole Balonne Shire Council

Members

Balonne Shire Council

Goondiwindi Shire Council

Paroo Shire Council

Other Eligible Councils

Eligible Councils

Blackall Tambo Regional Council

South Burnett Regional Council

Bulloo Shire Council

Southern Downs Regional Council

Central Highlands Regional Council

Toowoomba Regional Council

Lockyer Valley Regional Council

Western Downs Regional Council

Maranoa Regional Council

Murweh Shire Council

Quilpie Shire Council

Scenic Rim Regional Council



Four region is quite unique in its characteristics covering from Goondiwindi Regional Council in the east to Paroo Shire Council in the west and Central Highlands Regional Council to the north.

Incorporating the whole footprint of Murray-Darling catchment in Queensland, we struggle to gather for formal standalone meetings in Region 12, but incorporate water and MDA into our quarterly meetings for the Darling Downs South West Council of Mayors meetings. We have been fortunate to have Mark Lamb attend those meetings both virtually and physically this past year.

The economy is also as diverse as our geographic coverage area which includes mining, gas, agriculture, and tourism. What we have in common though is water and more particularly floods when it is abundant and droughts when it isn't.

Our communities rarely strike that sweet spot where we achieve a balance between floods and droughts and this past year has been no exception. Most shires have experienced significant rainfall and riverine flooding which has resulted in inundation in some communities and total isolation in others.

In complete contrast to that however is the rapid onset of drought conditions through the likely return of El Nino, which in my own Shire of Balonne now sees us implementing level 2 water restrictions at the time of writing this report.

In February this year our major water storage, Beardmore Dam was sitting at 101% capacity. Today (07/09/2023) it is sitting at 13.92%.

Additionally, the Northern Basin is very apprehensively waiting on the outcome of the latest round of voluntary water buybacks the process for which commenced earlier in the year.

With the removal of the socio-economic neutrality test by the current Minister we are fearful of the impacts on communities across the whole northern basin and in particular Region 12.



Our concern resides with the communities left behind, not the landholders who make the decision to sell and move onto the next chapter of their lives. That is a commercial decision for them and them alone.

Obviously though that decision will result in a direct loss of contractors who formally were engaged by those landholders, the businesses in our small communities who relied on all of them to purchase their goods and services, the government support services like education, police, and health and of course the banks who eagerly await any opportunity to justify closing another branch.

The last couple of years have been bumper years for many shires across region 12 for which we are genuinely very grateful. We appreciate the cyclical nature of farming and the climate and understand there will always be bumper times followed by hard times.

Sadly though, the harder times go on for much longer than the good times when you are on the land or in the communities depending upon them for the survival of your business.

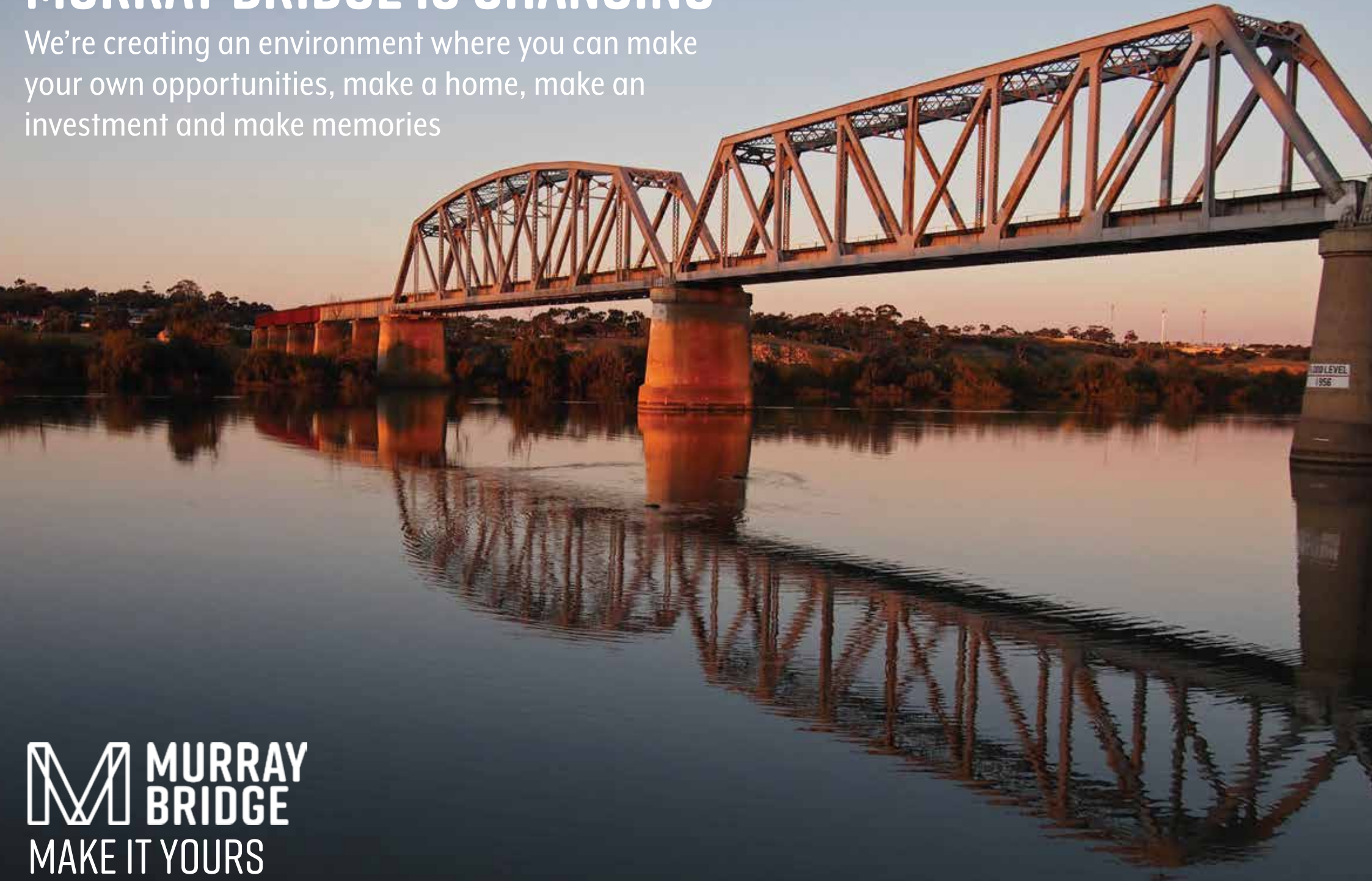
As a region we are always very keen to work closely with the Australian Government to ensure we have sustainable communities, a healthy environment and economies that provide the wealth generation to achieve both.



Mayor Samantha O'Toole
Chair, Region 12.

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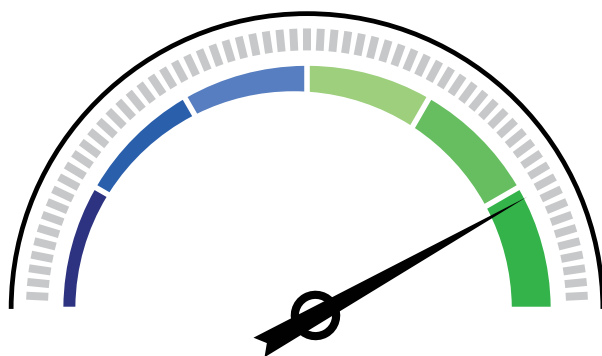
REPORT ON OUR PERFORMANCE

The MDA tracks its performance in many ways.

Primarily, we report on completed actions that we committed to in our strategic plan using the planning and reporting framework incorporated in the plan.

Other ways the MDA tracks our performance can be a little more complex.

We assess how the MDA's motions at conference, and commitment to action have shifted-the-need in informing policy in the management of Basin resources.



Resolutions made at the MDA's annual national conference contribute to important reforms in the policies and practice, guiding the health and sustainability of Basin communities, economies and ecologies.

Our resolutions and actions enable the MDA to build consensus, to share and to ensure local knowledge informs our national priorities.

Our annual national conference and AGM brings together those community leaders and speakers who, together with our members, can explore the great challenges of our time.

In 2023, our National Conference attracted an incredible line-up of guest speakers.

This year's conference offered the opportunity to hear, and engage with the Minister for Environment and Water, the Hon Tanya Plibersek, the Shadow Water Minister, Senator Perin Davey, and leaders and heads from Government Departments, Authorities and Agencies, such as the DCCEEW, the CSIRO, the Bureau of Meteorology, the SA Disaster Recovery Coordinator, Alex Zimmermann, and many more that are all known for their advocacy for, and work regarding, water across the Murray-Darling Basin.

Other speakers at the National Conference included a powerful range of community, business, science, education, and industry leaders.

Following on from past year's Motions, the MDA has engaged with State, and Federal Governments, as well as Government entities through a consistent and dedicated engagement campaign, from which the MDA has made excellent progress. In the wake of State and Federal elections, the MDA is exploring further avenues of advocacy on behalf of Local Governments and their communities to influence Government Policies, and the management of Basin Resources.

With an everdeveloping calendar of events, such as the 2024 National Conference and AGM, as well as upcoming Basin Forums in the Northern and Southern Basin, as well as water Symposiums and ongoing development of the successor of the Basin Communities Leadership Program the MDA continues to deliver networking platforms, and outcomes that ensure local government, and the communities we serve, inform the state and federal policies that impact our regions.



Ensuring ongoing support and accessibility, the MDA has redeveloped and modernised its online portal.

Along with a new and revamped website, the MDA has introduced a Member exclusive resource repository, called the **Member Access** area.

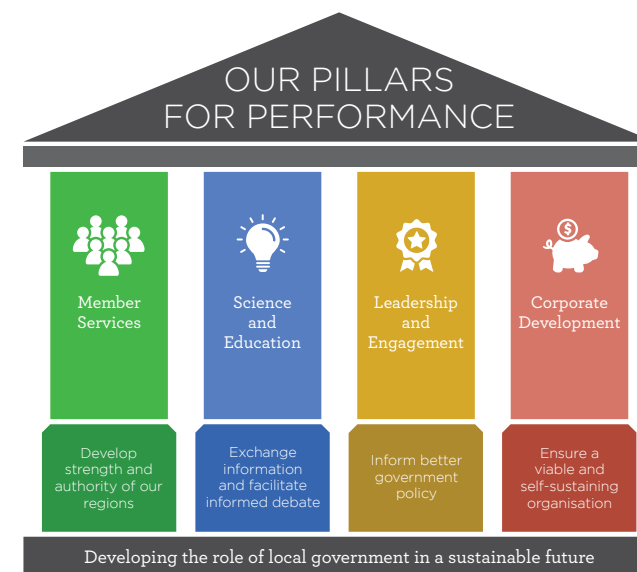
The **Member Access** area centralises Information, Documents, Presentations, Transcripts, Analysis Results, and Reports gathered during Region Meetings, National Conferences, Forums, Symposiums, and documents received from relevant entities and Ministers in one space.

MEETINGS AND ENGAGEMENTS

The following table is a snapshot of some of the meetings at which our members' interests were promoted by the MDA Executive leadership.

Month	Name
Oct 2022	Meeting with Julia Reynolds Sauce Communications
Oct 2022	One Basin CRC Partners Briefing
Oct 2022	Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors Presentation to the DDSWQC Meeting.
Nov 2022	Chris Edwards - Inside Water Magazine Interview with Inside Water Magazine
Nov 2022	AW School Webinar on Bradfield Scheme
Nov 2022	MDBA November Peak Groups Briefing 2022
Nov 2022	MDBA 2022 SDLAM Assurance Report
Dec 2022	CSIRO Future work on the Circular Economy
Dec 2022	Denise Tanner - Legalwise Legalwise Symposium
Dec 2022	One Basin CRC Partners Briefing
Dec 2022	Wentworth Group of Concerned Scientists Meeting with Michael Vanderzee
Feb 2023	CSIRO Understanding the Quantum opportunity for Australia
Feb 2023	ANU IWF Next-Gen Murray-Darling Basin Workshop
Feb 2023	Legalwise Water Symposium MDA Presentation to Water Symposium
Mar 2023	Meeting with Hon Tanya Plibersek MP Discussion: Water Plan
Mar 2023	Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors Presentation to the DDSWQC Meeting.

Month	Name
Apr 2023	MDBA April Peak Groups Briefing 2023
Apr 2023	Murray River Action Group Meeting with Richard Sargood
Apr 2023	CSIRO Meeting with CSIRO - Circular Economy
May 2023	One Basin CRC Partners Briefing
May 2023	Hon Kristie McBain MP
Jun 2023	One Basin CRC Partners Briefing
Jun 2023	Darling Downs and South West Queensland Council of Mayors Presentation to the DDSWQC Meeting.
Jun 2023	Australian University Co-design 3:1 Alternative Water Initial Workshop
Jun 2023	Murray-Darling Basin Authority River Reflections Conference
Jun 2023	BioChar Conference, Canberra
Jun 2023	Productivity Commission First MDB Plan inquiry working group meeting
Jul 2023	One Basin CRC Partners Briefing
Jul 2023	Productivity Commission Meeting with Joanne Chong
Jul 2023	Murray-Darling Basin Authority July Peak Groups Briefing 2023
Aug 2023	One Basin CRC Annual Conference Partner-only collaboration event
Aug 2023	S NSW Drought and Innovation Hub Online Forum - Help shape the future of the Southern NSW Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hub



Month	Name
Aug 2023	Water Group - DPE Targeted consultation session - Non-urban metering review- Local Government session
Aug 2023	CSIRO Panel Briefing: Innovation for Impact Summit- Securing Australia's Environment Panel
Aug 2023	Productivity Commission Second MDB Plan inquiry working group meeting
Aug 2023	CSIRO Presenting to Innovation for Impact Summit
Sept 2023	S NSW Drought an Innovation Hub Discussion regarding opportunities and progress
Sept 2023	Natural Resources Commission Murrumbidgee regulated plan review
Sept 2023	CSIRO Climate Risks to Regional and Remote Communities Workshop
Sept 2023	MRLGA Working Group - Water Position Paper Monthly meetings 2021 -2022



PILLAR 1 – MEMBER SERVICES

VISION 2025

In 2021 the MDA launched its five-year Strategic Plan: Vision 2025, following approval by the MDA membership at the 76th Annual General Meeting.

During the past year, the MDA's focus has been implementing year two of our 5 year plan, and giving effect to the priorities for local government outlined by our members at past National Conferences.

This Strategic Plan sets out our five-year goals and describes the strategies the MDA will implement to achieve them, committing to providing a regular report card to our members to provide updates on our performance in delivering these strategies, and our progress in achieving our goals.

This plan sets the course to ensure local leadership is elevated to a national priority in the management of Basin resources in the years ahead.

We look forward to delivering the plan alongside our members, stakeholders, and partners.

The MDA is committed to providing high-value, high quality services to members. Our services, products, and programs seek to provide enduring value to Basin communities and governments.

The following report highlights our progress and achievements in Pillar 1: Member Services.

OBJECTIVES	STATUS	NOTES
<p>1.1.4 Deliver tailored projects and initiatives which meet the current and emerging needs of the Basin.</p>	→	<p>Delivered. Ongoing. The MDA has concluded its delivery of the Basin Communities Leadership Program (BCLP) across the Murray-Darling Basin. The MDA is developing a targeted successor Program of the BCLP to engage with Water Users and Industry.</p> <p>Further projects and initiatives are currently being developed based on member needs and funding is being sought.</p>
<p>1.1.5 Enhance and expand the resources, materials and products available for our members.</p> <p>Design and develop content such as videos, web pages, Delegates' Report template.</p>	✓	<p>Delivered. Ongoing. Currently providing a range of member resources, including delegate reports and briefing reports.</p> <p>The MDA continues to improve resources, materials and products based on member feedback.</p> <p>The MDA has revamped its website to more proactively engage with members, and to provide resources, including exclusively member accessible resources.</p>
<p>1.2.3 Create and utilise a standard format for position statements that captures research and Board resolutions, and articulates clearly the MDA's position.</p>	✓	<p>The MDA has developed a standard format for position statements.</p>
<p>1.2.4 Deliver the Basin Communities Leadership Program.</p>	✓	<p>Delivered.</p> <p>The MDA has concluded its delivery of the Basin Communities Leadership Program across the Murray-Darling Basin.</p> <p>The MDA is exploring a fee-for-service approach to tailor the BCLP for community, local government, and industry groups.</p>



FOSTERING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS IN SCIENCE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Partnerships are key for the responsible management of Basin resources.

The MDA is very excited to note its continued development of the official partnership with Australia's national science research agency, the CSIRO with the delivery of the MDA-CSIRO Circular Economy Market Analysis, exploring the challenges and opportunities in the Murray-Darling Basin in the implementation and development of a circular/waste economy.

PILLAR 2 – SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

The MDA is committed to contributing to the evidence that supports a healthy, vibrant and thriving Basin. By enabling and providing opportunities for our members and others to learn and share knowledge, we contribute to longer-term positive impacts for our Basin communities.

The following report highlights our progress and achievements in Pillar 2: Science and Education.

OBJECTIVES	STATUS	NOTES
2.1.3 Participate and contribute toward Basin committees, reviews, commissions, inquiries and other interrogative forums.	✓	Delivered/Ongoing. During the past year, the MDA has submitted the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submission to the DCCEEW regarding the Murray-Darling Basin Plan Review. • Submission to the Victorian Flood Inquiry.
2.2.2 Work with universities and the academic community to apply science and deliver practical solutions to local and regional problems.	➔	Ongoing. MDA continues to engage key partners, particularly within the science and education space, including:
2.3.1 Engage key partners (agencies, universities and other key stakeholders) to collaborate and build on existing initiatives.	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDA-CSIRO Circular Economy Market Analysis • Partner in the One Basin CRC bid
2.4.2 Partner with CSIRO on appropriate projects and opportunities including 'Basin Outlook 2050.'	✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key partner in SQNNSW Drought Innovation Hub.
2.3.3 Host a calendar of events which focus on providing opportunities for learning about and sharing contemporary and emerging issues.	✓	<p>Delivered. Ongoing. The MDA has hosted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2023 Inter-regional Meeting • 2023 MDA 79th National Conference <p>The MDA is gearing up to host Northern and Southern Basin Forums in the 2023 -2024 Membership year.</p>



REGIONAL BOUNDARY REVIEW

Pillar 3 seeks to establish the MDA as ideally positioned to be the go-to organisation for governments and others in relation to Basin policy.

Our strong and effective leadership on Basin matters enables us to effectively engage with internal and external stakeholders.

The strategic objectives relate to:

- Being engaged in the policy process
- Building stronger regions and supporting local action
- Creating opportunities for valued collaboration
- Strong stakeholder relationships.

PILLAR 3 – LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

The MDA is ideally positioned to be the go-to organisation for governments and others in relation to Basin policy. Our strong and effective leadership on Basin matters enables us to effectively engage with internal and external stakeholders.

The following report highlights our progress and achievements in Pillar 3: Leadership and Engagement.

OBJECTIVES	STATUS	NOTES
<p>3.1.1 Prepare and submit high quality documents to key Basin stakeholders.</p> <p>Participate effectively in Basin forums</p> <p>Initiate member-driven discussion with MPs as emerging issues arise.</p>	✓	<p>Delivered/Ongoing.</p> <p>The MDA continues to elevate local and regional issues to state and national levels through meetings with ministers and department representatives. To prepare for each meeting, the MDA consults with member councils to inform high quality documents identifying matters and issues raised by members.</p> <p>The MDA continues to participate effectively in Basin forums.</p>
<p>3.1.2 Continue to push for local government's seat at the table when Basin resource management is discussed.</p>	✓	<p>At the 76th National Conference and AGM, the MDA membership resolved that the MDA continue to seek representation of local government as a sector at the Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council and the Basin Official Committee. As a result, this year the MDA has continued to push for local government to have a greater role in Basin resource management through meetings with ministers, submissions and participating in Basin forums.</p> <p>The MDA continues to participate effectively in Basin forums and is seeking to engage with Ministers where possible, including representation at MINCO meetings.</p> <p>The MDA has developed a good working relationship with the Federal Minister for Environment and water, and has been invited to partake in Productivity Commission meetings, and DCCEEW meetings addressing the successful delivery of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan.</p>



PILLAR 4 – CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

If there is one thing the Murray-Darling River system needs as much as rain, it's leadership.
Cr David Thurley, OAM, MDA National President

This year, the MDA continued to make leadership happen, through drought, COVID and now floods.

Face-to-face workshops were held across NSW, VIC, and SA, concluding the rollout of the Basin Communities Leadership Program.

The MDA has been absolutely blown away by the inspiring individuals who attended the workshops, all bringing their best selves to the workshops, including their energy, knowledge and passion for making their community and the Murray-Darling Basin the best place that it can be.

Valued at over \$4,500 per person, this program was a wonderful opportunity for our member councils to get involved in and encourage their staff members and fellow councillors to apply.

This project was funded by the Australian Government under the Murray-Darling Basin Economic Development Program.

The MDA seeks to continue to develop its legitimate, effective and respected leadership, and ensure its leadership reflects the diversity and expertise of our communities. We are committed to ensuring our organisation is financially sustainable and corporately robust.

The following report highlights our progress and achievements in Pillar 4: Corporate Development.

4.1.1	Provide and promote leadership development opportunities for our members.	✓	Delivered/Ongoing. MDA member councils were offered leadership opportunities through participation in the BCLP. The MDA is in the process of developing a targeted version of the BCLP for Industry and Water Users.
4.1.4	Proactively engage our members and other stakeholders in setting our strategic direction and prioritising our annual programs and activities.	✓	Delivered/Ongoing. The MDA engages with its members through Symposiums and Forums throughout 2021, 2022, and 2023, with Southern, and Northern Basin Forums planned for 2024.
4.1.5	Acquire assets and implement software platforms, including Salesforce CRM.	✓	Delivered/Ongoing. The MDA has revamped its website to more proactively engage with members, and to provide resources, including exclusively member accessible resources. The MDA redeveloped its CRM to not depend on the Salesforce platform, offering greater flexibility in engaging with members and non-members.
4.2.5	Encourage membership renewal through robust internal communications. Follow up with non-renewing councils to identify reasons for non-renewal. Develop, promote and distribute a new member information kit to all eligible Councils.	✓	Delivered/Ongoing. Internal communications include monthly newsletters and Delegate's Reports for tabling at council meetings. The MDA's Newsletters and Delegate's Reports are made available on the MDA website. The MDA has engaged with all eligible Non-Member councils. Member information kits are also made available on the MDA website.
4.4.1	Develop and implement succession planning for the organisation	➔	Ongoing. The MDA is developing a sound succession plan for all key roles within the organisation. This is an ongoing task.



OUR PARTNERSHIPS

The MDA has continued to work partnering local government and communities with our valued partners and stakeholders. These partnerships are essential to deliver strong outcomes for our communities and build future focused collaboration opportunities for our members.

We value the partnerships we have established across the Basin that are essential to the effective performance of our organisation and the achievement of our goals:

OUR PARTNERS	OUR INTENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Basin LGAs including regional and state local government organisations 	Collaborate effectively and respectfully to maximise efficiencies for local government and their peak agencies by avoiding duplication and providing multi-jurisdictional perspectives.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Basin Governments ▶ Murray Darling Basin Authority ▶ National Water Grid Authority ▶ Climate Change Authority ▶ Australian Energy Market Authority ▶ Commonwealth Environmental Water Office 	Fairly and frankly represent the interests and priorities of local government at the Basin scale on positions of common interest. Collaborate and exchange information and advice to improve knowledge and awareness of Basin issues, and of the impacts of policy and decisions to create better outcomes for local government and communities.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ State and national peak bodies and other agencies 	Consult and work with state and national peak bodies and other agencies to foster a stronger relationship to local government of sector-specific perspectives and issues.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ First Nations organisations 	That we learn from, respect and treasure the natural resource management practices of First Nations custodians.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Regional Development Australia 	Work together to maximise benefits and value for all, and progress the relationship ensuring that our roles are clear and our collaboration adds value to the work we do. Through our partnership we aim to avoid unnecessary duplication.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Universities 	Partner with universities to enhance water literacy, and provide practical application of academic research for the benefit of local government and community.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ CSIRO 	Ongoing work developing a framework under which we will collaborate on research projects to conduct research, development and related activities to overcome the key challenges of resource management in the Murray-Darling Basin and turn them to the Basin community's unique advantage.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ Media 	Promote the interests and achievements of our Basin communities through the media.

PHOTO: Urrbrae Wetlands. Courtesy of Cr Andrew Tilley.

OUR PEOPLE



Mark Lamb
Chief Executive Officer

An experienced senior management executive, Mark joined the Murray Darling Association in December 2021 in the role of Chief Executive Officer.

Mark has worked across various sectors, both at a local level and for global organisations, and is passionate about peak bodies, having led three peak bodies, both domestically and Internationally. Mark has an exceptional track record of organisational development, membership growth, conferencing and events, and consensus-building across complex policy areas.

Mark began his career in banking and finance, before transitioning to more broadly-based financial services including financial planning and risk management. He has held a number of strategic and consulting roles, especially in relation to key areas such as leadership and team building, marketing and distribution, with proven business, strategy and operational skills. Much of his consulting was focused on the areas of professionalism - quality improvement and change management - both internally and externally. Mark has assisted many organisations to transition into new strategies and methodologies. He has global experience and expertise in training and has conducted open and in-house training courses around the world, and is a highly-rated lecturer, trainer and facilitator, experienced in behavioural change management.



Tim Phillips
Communications and Engagement Officer

A qualified Graphic Designer, Tim joined the Murray Darling Association in August 2021 in the role of Communications and Engagement Officer.

Since joining the association, Tim has enjoyed meeting the MDA's region chairs and delegates at various events throughout the years including the 78th National Conference in Albury NSW and the MDA's Annual Strategic Planning Workshop in Canberra ACT, learning through these meetings and events about the Murray-Darling Basin's complex issues and many opportunities.



Local Priorities, National Influence

Representing 172 Local Government Areas and Communities across the Murray-Darling Basin at a State and Federal Level in the management of Basin resources.

Region 11 is delighted to invite delegates to the 2024 MDA National Conference hosted by the Tamworth Regional Council.



PHOTO: Courtesy of www.tamworth.nsw.gov.au

The Murray Darling Association would like to thank our valued partners for their generous support:

STRATEGIC PARTNERS



SPONSORS



Australian Government
Department of Climate Change, Energy,
the Environment and Water



Australian Government
Commonwealth Environmental Water Office



Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology



PUBLIC SAFETY
TRAINING &
RESPONSE GROUP



Australian Government



Natural Resources
Access Regulator

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2022 - 23

Working With Our Clients, Not Simply For Them



Experienced accountant Peter George of M+S Group was appointed the Murray Darling Association's first skills-based treasurer in 2017, marking a new era in financial administration for the organisation.

Mr George's appointment to the MDA Board as a skills-based treasurer is allowed under Part 4 s8(3) of the 2016 Constitution, and sees the association's continuing commitment to sound governance, with the composition of the board viewed as a strategic asset to the association.

Peter is Senior Accountant and Partner of M+S Group Accounting Pty Ltd, the largest accounting firm in rural Victoria.

The MDA gratefully acknowledges the contribution of Peter George and M&S Group Accounting.



m+s group
accounting

Committee's Report

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

For the period ended 31 March 2023

Committee's Report

Your Committee members submit the financial report of Murray Darling Association Inc. for the financial period ended 31 March 2023.

Committee Members

The names of committee members throughout the period and at the date of this report are:

Cr David Thurley	National President	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Cr David Thurley	Chair Region 1	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Cr Geoff Dobson	Chair Region 2	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Vacant	Chair Region 3	
Cr Tim Elstone	Chair Region 4	April 1st 2022 - May 31st 2022
Cr Jason Modica	Chair Region 4	May 31st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Cr Marion Browne	Chair (Interim) Region 4	March 16th 2023 - March 31st 2023
Cr Andrew Kassebaum	Chair Region 5	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Chair Region 6	April 1st 2022 - February 24th 2023
Cr Airlie Keen	Chair Region 6	February 24th 2023 - March 31st 2023
Cr Andrew Tilley	Chair Region 7	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Vacant	Chair Region 8	
Cr Glen Andrezza	Chair Region 9	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Mayor Phyllis Miller	Chair Region 10	April 1st 2022 - February 23 2023
Cr Craig Davies	Chair Region 10A	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Cr Craig Davies	Vice President	March 3rd 2023 - March 31st 2023
Cr Jamie Chaffey	Chair Region 11	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Cr Samantha O'Toole	Chair Region 12	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Mark Lamb	CEO and Public Officer	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023
Peter George	Treasurer	April 1st 2022 - March 31st 2023

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial period were:

To provide effective representation of local government and communities of the Murray Darling Basin at state and federal level in the management of Basin Resources by providing information, facilitating informed debate, and seeking to influence government policy.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the financial period.

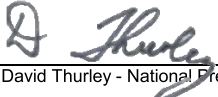
Operating Result

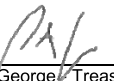
The surplus / (loss) after providing for income tax for the financial period amounted to \$157,369 - [31 March 2022 (\$210,476)]

Going Concern

This financial report has been prepared on a going concern basis which contemplates continuity of normal business activities and the realisation of assets and settlement of liabilities in the ordinary course of business. The ability of the association to continue to operate as a going concern is dependent upon the ability of the association to generate sufficient cashflows from operations to meet its liabilities. The members of the association believe that the going concern assumption is appropriate.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the Members of the Committee on:


Cr David Thurley - National President


Peter George - Treasurer

Income and Expenditure Statement

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

For the period ended 31 March 2023

	2023	2022
Income		
	Note	
Conference Income	110,079	80,840
Income - Memberships	2 205,866	221,167
Income - Projects	222,205	160,550
Income From Fundraising Events	-	317
Interest Income	3 -	53
Other Income	4 343	155
Total Income	538,493	463,082
Expenditure		
Depreciation		
Depreciation - Low Value Pool	-	36
Depreciation - Software	1,120	1,867
Depreciation - Office Equipment	1,087	2,020
Total Depreciation	2,207	3,923
Motor Vehicles		
Motor Vehicle Maintenance	3,691	2,963
Motor Vehicle Registration	1,564	1,238
Total Motor Vehicles	5,255	4,201
Advertising & Marketing	-	27,932
Bank Fees	32	854
Business Insurance	-	2,061
Computer Expenses	1,358	11,760
Conference Expenses	33,048	87,090
Engagement and Communications	-	6,326
General Repairs & Maintenance	-	824
Licences and Subscriptions	796	4,649
Loss on sale of assets	-	386
Project Expenses	4,674	28,884
Meeting Expense	-	6,743
Other Payroll Expenses	5 27,797	(58,242)
Postage	210	90
Premises Rent - Echuca	1,140	27,332
Printing	1,662	1,332
Professional Fees	6 6,830	70,351
Public Liability Insurance	-	1,224
Staff Amenities	-	-
Stationery	45	676
Superannuation	25,153	25,299
Telephone Expenses	2,226	6,232
Travel & Accom. Expenses	23,512	28,004
Wages & Salaries Expenses	242,217	381,043
Work Cover Premiums	2,959	4,583
Total Expenditure	381,123	673,558
Net Operating Profit / (Loss) For The period	157,369	(210,476)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Assets and Liabilities Statement

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

As at 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash on Hand	7	107,016	19,129
Accounts Receivable and other Debtors	8	74,250	1,874
Total Current Assets		181,266	21,003
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9	8,716	10,923
Other	10	-	-
Total Non-Current Assets		8,716	10,923
Total Assets		189,982	31,926
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts payable and other payables	11	35,947	63,323
Provisions	13	52,760	24,695
Total Current Liabilities		88,707	88,018
Non-Current Liabilities			
Non-Current Liabilities			
Borrowings	12	1,500	1,500
Total Non-Current Liabilities		1,500	1,500
Total Liabilities		90,207	89,518
Net Assets		99,775	(57,592)
Member's Funds			
Capital Reserve			
Reserves		-	-
Retained Earnings		99,775	(57,592)
Total Member's Funds		99,775	(57,592)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Movements in Equity

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

For the period ended 31 March 2023

	Retained Earnings \$	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 April 2021	152,882	-	152,882
Comprehensive Income			
Profit (Loss) for the period	(210,476)	-	(210,476)
Total Comprehensive Income	(210,476)	-	(210,476)
Other Revaluations	-	-	-
Total Other	-	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2022	(57,594)	-	(57,594)
Balance at 1 April 2022	(57,594)	-	(57,594)
Comprehensive Income			
Profit (Loss) for the period	157,369	-	157,369
Total Comprehensive Income	157,369	-	157,369
Other Revaluations	-	-	-
Total Other	-	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2023	99,775	-	99,775

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Statement of Cash Flows

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

For the period ended 31 March 2023

	Notes	2023	2022
Cash flows from Operating Activities			
Other Receipts		494,214	519,934
Interest Received		-	53
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(406,327)	(693,942)
Net Cash Provided by (Used In) Operating Activities	18b	87,887	(173,955)
Cash flows from Investing Activities			
Proceeds from sale of Property, plant and equipment		-	1,100
Payments for Property, plant and equipment		-	(1,233)
Other cash items from Investing activities		-	14,676
Net Cash Provided by (Used In) Investing Activities		-	14,544
Cash flows from Financing Activities			
Other cash items from financing activities		-	(197,768)
Net Cash Provided by (Used In) from Financing Activities		-	(197,768)
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		87,887	(357,179)
Cash on Hand at beginning of the Financial period		19,129	376,308
Cash on Hand at End of Financial period	18a	107,016	19,129

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

Notes of the Financial Statements

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

For the period ended 31 March 2023

1. Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

This financial report is a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009 and the Associations Incorporation Regulation (NSW) 2010. The Board has determined that the not-for-profit Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report covers Murray Darling Association Inc. as an individual entity. Murray Darling Association Inc. is a not-for-profit association incorporated in New South Wales under the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009 and the Associations Incorporation Regulation (NSW) 2010.

The financial report has been prepared on a going concern and accruals basis, and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is also the Association's functional currency.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

Income Tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the Association is exempt from income tax pursuant to Division 50, section 50-10 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

Property, Plant and Equipment (PPE)

Fixed Assets are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all Fixed Assets is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the committee to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of expected net cash flows that will be received from the asset's employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to present values in determining recoverable amounts.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a diminishing-value basis over the asset's useful life to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use. The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period. An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

NOTES CONTINUED

Accounts Receivable and Other Debtors

Contractual receivables include accrued interest and other minor receivables. They are recognised at fair value.

Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the nominal amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus any related on-costs. Both annual leave and long service leave are recognised within the provisions liability.

Short-term employee benefits

Provision is made for the association's obligation for short-term employee benefits. Short-term employee benefits are benefits (other than termination benefits) that are expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service, including wages, salaries and sick leave. Short-term employee benefits are measured at the (undiscounted) amounts expected to be paid when the obligation is settled.

The association's obligations for short-term employee benefits such as wages, salaries and sick leave are recognised as a part of current trade and other payables in the statement of financial position.

Other long-term employee benefits

Provision is made for employees' long service leave and annual leave entitlements not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service. Other long-term employee benefits are measured at the present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. Expected future payments incorporate anticipated future wage and salary levels, durations of service and employee departures and are discounted at rates determined by reference to market yields at the end of the reporting period on government bonds that have maturity dates that approximate the terms of the obligations. Upon the re-measurement of obligations for other long-term employee benefits, the net change in the obligation is recognised in profit or loss as a part of employee benefits expense.

The association's obligations for long-term employee benefits are presented as non-current provisions in its statement of financial position, except where the association does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period, in which case the obligations are presented as current provisions.

Provisions

Provisions are recognised when the association has a legal or constructive obligation, as a result of past events, for which it is probable that an outflow of economic benefits will result and that outflow can be reliably measured. Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the amounts required to settle the obligation at the end of the reporting period.

Cash on Hand

Cash includes cash on hand, deposits held at call with banks, and other short-term highly liquid investments with original maturities of three months or less.

NOTES CONTINUED

Revenue and Other Income

Membership, Grants, Project, Activities & Interest revenue are recognised when received.

Donations and bequests are recognised in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1004 Contributions, which occurs when all of the following three conditions are satisfied: -

- (a) the entity gains control of the contribution or the right to receive the contribution; and
- (b) it is probable that the economic benefits comprising the contribution will flow to the entity; and
- (c) the amount of the contribution can be measured reliably.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

Murray Darling Foundation

The Murray Darling Foundation was established by the Murray Darling Association Inc. As a "Gift Fund" to receive tax deductible donations. The principal activity of the Foundation is to support the objectives of the Murray Darling Association Inc. The Foundation may receive gifts of money or property which are eligible tax deductible donations under item 6.1.1 of sub-section 30-55(1) of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997. The Foundation is not currently operational. The Board resolved to suspend its activities pending a review of its purpose and the formation of a new committee.

Leases

Leases of PPE, where substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset (but not the legal ownership) are transferred to the association, are classified as finance leases.

Finance leases are capitalised by recording an asset and a liability at the lower of the amounts equal to the fair value of the leased property or the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any guaranteed residual values. Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the lease interest expense for that period.

Leased assets are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the shorter of their estimated useful lives or the lease term. Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

Financial Assets

Investments in financial assets are initially recognised at cost, which includes transaction costs, and are subsequently measured at fair value, which is equivalent to their market bid price at the end of the reporting period. Movements in fair value are recognised through an equity reserve.

Accounts Payable and Other Payables

Contractual payables arise when the association becomes obliged to make future payments in respect of the purchase of goods and services. They are initially recognised at fair value, and then subsequently carried at amortised cost.

NOTES CONTINUED

	2023	2022
2. Memberships		
Memberships	205,866	221,167
3. Interest Income		
Interest Received	-	53
4. Other Income		
Sundry Income	343	155
ATO Cashflow Boost	-	-
	<u>343</u>	<u>155</u>
5. Employee Entitlements		
Annual and Long Service Leave	27,797	(58,242)
6. Professional Fees		
Consulting Fees	-	62,166
Audit Fees	6,830	8,185
	<u>6,830</u>	<u>70,351</u>
7. Cash on Hand		
Cash At Bank	107,016	19,129
	<u>107,016</u>	<u>19,129</u>
8. Accounts Receivable and other Debtors		
Trade Debtors	74,250	808
Less Provision for Doubtful Debts	-	-
Goods and Services Tax	-	1,066
	<u>74,250</u>	<u>1,874</u>

NOTES CONTINUED

	2023	2022
9. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Office Furniture, Equipment and Computers	9,670	9,670
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(7,633)	(6,546)
	<u>2,037</u>	<u>3,124</u>
Low Value Pool	-	-
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>0</u>
Software	23,300	23,300
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(21,621)	(20,501)
	<u>1,679</u>	<u>2,799</u>
Artwork	5,000	5,000
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	<u>8,716</u>	<u>10,923</u>
10. Other Non-Current Assets		
Bond Paid - Office	-	-
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
11. Accounts Payable and Other Payables		
Trade Creditors	3,206	2,480
Prepaid Memberships	-	-
BCLP Grant Received	-	21,661
Tax Payable	32,740	39,182
	<u>35,947</u>	<u>63,323</u>
12. Borrowings		
Non-Current		
Debenture Loans	1,500	1,500
13. Provisions		
Current		
Provision for Annual Leave	43,460	15,662
Provision for Long Service Leave	-	-
Superannuation Liability	9,301	9,033
	<u>52,760</u>	<u>24,695</u>
Provision for Annual Leave		
Opening Balance 1 April 2022	15,661	52,561
Additional Provisions Raised	35,707	58,084
Amounts Taken	(7,908)	(94,984)
Balance at 31 March 2023	<u>43,460</u>	<u>15,661</u>
Provision for Long Service Leave		
Opening Balance 1 April 2022	-	21,343
Additional Provisions Raised	-	2,891
Amounts Taken	-	(24,234)
Balance at 31 March 2023	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

NOTES CONTINUED

	2023	2022
Total Provisions		
Opening Balance 1 April 2022	15,661	73,904
Additional Provisions Raised	35,707	60,975
Amounts Taken	(7,908)	(119,218)
Superannuation Liability	9,301	9,033
Balance at 31 March 2023	52,760	24,695

14. Reserves

Asset Revaluation Reserve

The asset revaluation reserve records revaluations of non-current assets. Under certain circumstances dividends can be declared from this reserve.

15. Capital Commitments

There are no commitments as at 31 March 2023 (31 March 2022: \$Nil)

16. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

There are no Contingent Liabilities at 31 March 2023 (31 March 2022: \$Nil). There are no Contingent Assets at 31 March 2023 (31 March 2022: \$Nil).

17. Events after the reporting period

Since 31 March 2023, there have been no events that would materially affect the Financial Statements at Balance Date.

18. Cash Flow Information

	2023	2022
Reconciliation of Cash		
(a) Cash on Hand at the end of the financial period as included in the Statement of Cash Flows is reconciled to the related items in the Statement of Financial Position as follows:		
Cash at Bank	107,016	19,129
	107,016	19,129
(b) Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities with net current period profit		
Current period profit after income tax	157,369	(210,476)
Cash flows excluded from current period profit:		
Depreciation Expense	2,207	3,923
Impairment Loss / (Gain) on Fixed Assets	-	386
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase) / Decrease in Receivables	(72,378)	48,120
(Increase) / Decrease in Prepayments	-	(13,576)
Increase / (Decrease) in Payables	(27,376)	60,224
Increase / (Decrease) in Provisions	28,065	(62,556)
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	87,887	(173,955)

Statement by Members of the Committee

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED

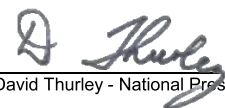
For the period ended 31 March 2023

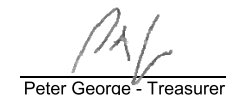
The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

In accordance with a resolution of the committee of Murray Darling Association Inc. the members of the committee declare that the financial statements as set out on pages 15 to 26:

- 1 present a true and fair view of the financial position of Murray Darling Association Inc. as at 31 March 2023 and its performance for the period ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009 and Associations Incorporation Regulation (NSW) 2010; and
- 2 at the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Murray Darling Association Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:


Cr David Thurley - National President


Peter George - Treasurer

Dated: 14th September 2023

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

TO THE MEMBERS OF MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Qualified Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Murray Darling Association Inc, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2023, and profit and loss statement.

In our opinion, except for the effects of the matters described in the Basis for the Qualified Audit Opinion paragraphs, the financial report of Murray Darling Association Inc has been prepared in accordance with Murray Darling Association Inc's Constitution and the applicable Australian Accounting Standards.

Basis of Qualified Opinion

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for the Murray Darling Association Inc to maintain an effective system of internal control over receipts until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit in relation to receipts was limited to amounts recorded.

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report section of our report. We are independent of the registered entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110: *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Emphasis of Matter - Basis of Accounting

The financial report has been prepared for the purpose of fulfilling the entity's financial reporting responsibilities under its Constitution and the applicable Australian Accounting Standards. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of this matter.

Responsibilities of the Directors for the Financial Report

The directors of the Association are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation is appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The directors' responsibility also includes such internal control as the directors determine is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, the directors are responsible for assessing the entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters related to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless the directors either intend to liquidate the entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of the financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgement and maintain professional scepticism throughout the audit. We also:

Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intentional omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the registered entity's internal control.

Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.

Conclude on the appropriateness of the director's use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the registered entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the registered entity to cease to continue as a going concern.

Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with the directors regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Warren Pollock', written in a cursive style.

Warren Pollock
Registered Company Auditor 224497
Kelly Partners Bendigo Partnership
Location- Bendigo
bendigo@kellypartners.com.au

14 September 2023

HONOR ROLL

OF THE MURRAY VALLEY DEVELOPMENT LEAGUE, THE MURRAY VALLEY LEAGUE,
AND THE MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr Graham Camac	Meningie
Ms Pauline Frost	Adelaide
Mr Bill Gorman	Yarrowonga
Mr Brian J Grogan OAM	Mildura
Cr Les Hill	Berri
Dr Terry Hillman	Lavington
Mr Jim Hullick OAM	Adelaide*
Mr J Bede Mecham	Wagga Wagga
Mr Ken Rogers	Dubbo
Mr Max Moor	Barmah
Mr Phillip Moore	Melbourne
Mr Don Oberin	Echuca*
Mr Kevin Pell OAM	Nathalia
Cr Wulf Reichler OAM	Brewarrina*
Cr Stuart Anderson OAM	Moama*
Mr David Dalzell	Whyalla*
Dr Peter Davies	Adelaide*
Mr James Wallace Gemmell	Cobram*
Mr Albert Heslop	Swan Hill*
Mr Ralph Jacobi	Adelaide*
Mr Frank Tuckwell OAM	Adelaide

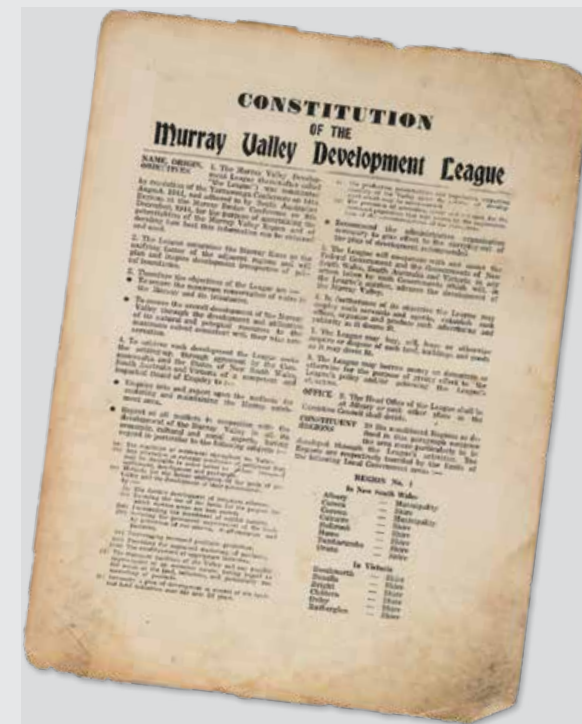
Mr Ian Killmister	Nathalia*
Mr Jack James Larkin OAM	Kooloonong*
Mr Gunnar Vernon Lawrence AM	Hawthorn*
Mr John Joseph McGuire	*
Cr Neil McKinnon OAM	Jerilderie*
Mr T Norm Martin	Wodonga*
Cr Reg Mengler	Balranald*
Dr William Andres Merrylees	Carrathool*
Mr Thomas Ernest Pearsall	Albury*
Mr Percival Alfred Yeomans	*
Mr Wal Perry	Port Elliott*
Mr Phillip Potter	Narooma*
Ms Agnes Isabel Robertson	Albury*
Cr Max Schmidt	Paringa*
Mr Robert Starritt Rankin OBE	Rochester*
Mr HG Tredinnick	Murray Valley*
Mr Allen Tume	Adelaide*
Mr Henry Lester Smith MBE	Kerang*
Cr Maurice Wilhelm OAM	Murray Bridge*
Mr Percy Weston	Eurobin*
Mr Paul Maytom	Leeton

PRESIDENTS

D G Padman	Albury*	1944 to 1952
J G Strangman	Waikerie*	1952 to 1956
Henry Lester Smith OBE	Kerang*	1956 to 1960
E Verco Whyte	Wentworth*	1960 to 1965
Robert S Rankin OBE	Rochester*	1968 to 1971
Paul Gerard Schmidt	Mannum*	1971 to 1974
Jim W Gemmell	Cobram*	1974 to 1977
Jack J Larkin OAM	Kooloonong*	1977 to 1982
Don K Oberin	Echuca*	1982 to 1986
Jim M Hullick OAM	Adelaide*	1986 to 1989

Graham C Camac	Meningie	1989 to 1992
Max Moor	Barmah	1992 to 1998
Ray Trestrail	Albury	1998 to 2000
Brian Sharp OAM	Moama	2000 to 2003
Brian J Grogan OAM	Mildura	2003 to 2006
Bill Gorman	Mulwala	2006 to 2009
Ken Rogers	Dubbo	2009 to 2013
Greg Toll	Gunbower	2013 to 2015
David Thurley	Albury	2015

* Passed



The Murray Darling Association formed in 1944, then named the Murray Valley Development League. A coalition of councils with the objective working with the states and Commonwealth to ensure sufficient water supplies and hydro-electricity to support sustainable production in agriculture, business and industry across the Murray Valley, the association expanded to cover the whole of the Murray-Darling Basin in 1983.

Vale Notice

We are also saddened by the loss of two of our Life Members, **Mr Jim Hullick OAM**, and **Mr Don Oberin**.

The Murray Darling Association would like to recognise the important roles Mr Hullick and Mr Oberin played both in the Murray Darling Association and within their communities.

