

Murray Darling Association Report for Delegates

April 2021



The Murray Darling Association (MDA) is Australia's peak body representing local government across the Murray-Darling Basin. The following delegate's report provides a detailed report of MDA activities and engagements for tabling at council.

1. Welcome to new members

The MDA would like to welcome the following councils who have commenced paid membership with the MDA:

- Gilgandra Shire Council
- Coonamble Shire Council
- Mid Western Shire Council

We look forward to working together to achieve a healthy, vibrant and thriving Murray-Darling Basin.

2. National Conference

Themed *Connectivity: Connecting Councils and Catchments*, the MDA's 2021 National Conference & AGM will be held on 16 - 19 May 2021 in Wentworth. This unmissable event is an opportunity to tackle the big issues of the Basin and forge a future for connected councils and catchments.

Numbers are filling up fast with this year looking to be the most well-attended conference in MDA history – don't miss the opportunity for your council to participate. Register today: www.mda.asn.au



3. Submissions

This month, the MDA provided written feedback to the Productivity Commission, including:

- a. Feedback to the Productivity Commission for the Register of Foreign-owned Water Inquiry Issues Paper. The submission is available [here](#).
- b. Feedback for the Inquiry into the effectiveness of the implementation of the Basin Plan and water resource plans. The submission is available [here](#).

In addition to the written feedback, MDA CEO and Policy Officer met with the Commissioner Jonathan Coppel and his team on Thursday 25 March 2021 to provide further feedback.

4. Grants and Opportunities

This month, the MDA lodged 9 grant applications across 3 programs totalling almost \$8.5m. Projects include:

- Regional Economic Diversification Program
- Basin Communities Leadership Program II
- Local Government Centre for Excellence
- Climate Ready and Water Secure Regions
- Basin Communities Resilience Scorecard
- Coalition of Peaks

5. Key meetings

Several key meetings and engagements were held in the past month, including:

- National President Cr Thurley and CEO Emma Bradbury attended the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's **Climate Resilience Summit** in Canberra on 12 March
- CEO Emma Bradbury met with the **MDBA for a stakeholder dinner** in Echuca on 17 March 2021
- CEO Emma Bradbury and Policy Officer James Marshal met with the **Productivity Commission** to discuss the inquiry into the Register of foreign-owned water entitlements on 25 March 2021
- CEO Emma Bradbury presented at the **Darling Downs & South West QLD Council of Mayors Meeting** in Charleville on 26 March 2020
- CEO Emma Bradbury met with **Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment Northern Tour delegates** on 31 March 2021

6. Projects – leadership program

Overcoming many obstacles including flooding and COVID-19 restrictions, the MDA recently facilitated four inspiring Basin Communities Leadership workshops in the Northern Basin, including workshops in Cunnamulla, Dirranbandi, St George and Collarenebri.

Thank you to the absolutely amazing group of participants who participated and brought to the table some great program ideas that emphasise local leadership achieving national solutions.

A big thank you also to MDA members **Paroo Shire Council**, **Balonne Shire Council** and **Walgett Shire Council** for hosting the workshops in your wonderful communities.

We will shortly announce key leadership program dates for the rest of the Basin. We warmly welcome member councils to make the most of the opportunity and encourage councillors, officers and staff participate in the program, valued at \$4,800 per participant.

To find out more about the program and how your council can get involved, please call our team on (03) 5480 3805.

7. Region Meetings

Our 12 regions meet quarterly. Each meeting is a fabulous opportunity to collaborate with councils in your region and hear from fantastic guest speakers. To find out when your next region meeting is, please contact your chair or our office on (03) 5480 3805.

To find out more about what is happening in other MDA regions, please head over to www.mda.asn.au where all region meeting minutes are available.

8. Committee of Regional Chairs

The Murray Darling Association held its inaugural *Committee of Regional Chairs* meeting on Monday 15 March 2021. Following [Board Meeting 406](#), the committee will meet bi-monthly for the purpose of knowledge sharing, regional development and inter-regional collaboration.

