



## Chief Executive Officer's Report

December 2019

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## 1. Appointments

Date	Event/meeting	Location
25/11/2019	MDA Board Meeting 392	Zoom Videolink
25/11/2019	Financial Review with Treasurer Pete George & Tony Banks	Echuca
26/11/2019	CRM – Salesforce Workshop	Echuca
29/11/2019	University of Melbourne – Michael Stewardson	Zoom Videolink
02/12/2019	Department of Agriculture – David Tonkin – BCLP	Canberra
02/12/2019	Dr. Jacki Schirmer – University of Canberra	Canberra
03/12/2019	Minister Littleproud’s Adviser Philip Alcorn	Canberra
03/12/2019	Mick Keelty – Interim Inspector-General	Canberra
03/12/2019	Mr Tony Pasin MP – Member for Barker	Canberra
03/12/2019	Hon Bob Katter MP – Member for Kennedy	Canberra
03/12/2019	CEWO and MDBA Roundtable discussion Meeting	Canberra
04/12/2019	The Hon. Melinda Pavey MP – Minister for Water NSW	Sydney
04/12/2019	Native Fish Management and Recovery Strategy Workshop	Sydney
09/12/2019	Region 5 Ordinary Meeting	Zoom Videolink

## 2. Basin Communities Leadership Project – BCLP

### 2.1 [Training Program schedule](#)

#### **Project Update – DEC 2019: *Basin Community Leadership Program (BCLP)***

##### **Project Stages / Current status:**

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

##### **Progress Comments:**

- Draft Advertising, Flyers and Programs have been disseminated to key stakeholders;
- Funding Body Update – Dept of Agriculture has been back-briefed on our progress and are very happy with the progress and work;
- The following key agencies have successfully been engaged as part of the program developments and initial advertising / support campaign:
  - Federal - Minister Littleprouds’ Office;
  - Federal - Dept of Agriculture;
  - Federal – MPs within the MDB;
  - State – NSW Minister Paveys’ Office;
  - Local – MDA Regions;
  - Future Regional Engagements Intended – Regional Australia Institute; Regional Development Australia (Riverina); Non-member MDB Councils; QLD and SA MPs Offices.
- A mature advertising and recruitment campaign remain on target to occur early January 2020.

**Risks / Opportunities:**

- Opportunity – considering trial module of the program materials and content with Board Members at the MDAs March 2020 Strategic Planning workshop.
- Opportunity – synchronising the BCLP with other concurrent Community Based Programs which have been funded by Government;
- Opportunity – facilitate Community Consultation Committees off selected BCLP workshops.
- Risks – successfully getting all the key stakeholders and support networks to be able synchronise / support dates across the 15 x locations.

**3. Regional & Remote Communities Reliability Fund Microgrids 2019-2020**

Submissions closed Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2019.

The MDA submitted a detailed proposal to the Department of Industry, Innovation & Science. Problems with the grant website saw the submission rejected prior to the deadline. The application was re-submitted via email at 5.09pm, 9 minutes after the deadline. Outcome to be advised.

**4. University of Melbourne - ONE Basin CRC and Centre for Drought Resilience**

Ongoing discussions with University of Melbourne Prof Mike Stewardson regarding opportunities to participate and collaborate in a range of research, leadership and drought resilience initiatives.

**5. Dr. Jacki Schirmer – University of Canberra**

Informal meeting with Dr Schirmer to discuss progress on a range of initiatives and collaborations incl micro-grid feasibility project.

**6. Meetings at Parliament House**

Meetings at Parliament House coincided with the *Can the Plan* protests. MDA's position was expressed as affirming the MDA's continued support for the Basin Plan, while having empathy and regard for the pain and hardship being experienced by farmers and communities dealing with drought and changing water availability.

**7.1 Philip Alcorn – Advisor the Minister David Littleproud**

Invited the Minister's support for and participation in the Basin Communities Leadership Program

Flagged the importance of continuing education to build trust, unity and equity under the Plan.

Reviewed outcomes from National Conference – motions to follow.

**7.2 Mick Keelty – Interim Inspector-General**

Met with IIG Mick Keelty, Deputy Ramzi Jabour and EO . The IIG Mick Keelty has been tasked to conduct an enquiry into various aspects of state and federal water sharing, with completion of the enquiry due by 31 March 2020; however, requires the approval of state water ministers. Mr Keelty canvassed the opportunity for the MDA to potentially support the enquiry proceedings - through access and facilitation to the LGA network for his visits and consultation process.

### **7.3 Mr Tony Pasin MP – Member for Barker**

Met with Mr Pasin who expressed his support for ‘farmers over frogs’ in heightened and passionate terms.

### **7.4 Hon Bob Katter MP – Member for Kennedy**

Informal discussion with Bob following the determination of viability of the long awaited Hell’s Gates Dam and significant funding for a number of other water infrastructure initiatives in Qld. Relationship to Basin opportunities.

### **7.5 CEWO and MDBA Roundtable discussion Meeting**

Discussion with CEWO and MDBA to progress options for a collaborative action plan. Provided MDA calendar of events incl 2020 National Conference, CCC’s, BCLP, Region meetings and board meetings. Encouraged attendance at region meetings by REOs and LEOs.

## **8 Meetings in Sydney**

### **8.1 The Hon. Melinda Pavey MP – Minister for Water NSW**

Met with Minister Melinda Pavey and advisors Tom Chesson and Angus XX

#### **Topics discussed included**

- Basin Communities Leadership Program
- Motions – National Conference 2019, incl Motion 20, Diversions.
- Efficiencies – West Corrigan Private Irrigation District
- Guest Speaker at NSW Regions – R10 in March, R11 in June
- NSW Position on Basin Plan. Minister made clear that she does not seek to withdraw but needs support to meet the challenges being faced in NSW.
- Requested MDA facilitate meetings in SA.
- Tabled presentation from Goondiwindi Regional Council, and from Namoi Unlimited.
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### **8.2 Regional Australia Institute - Regions Rising 2019 – NSW**

(Tony Banks - XO)The Regional Australia Institute, a think tank devoted to issues concerning regional Australia met in Sydney on 4<sup>th</sup> December for their Regions Rising Conference. The half day event was attended by Tony. See link below for the full report.

[External Engagement report](#) – T. Banks (Executive Officer)

### **8.3 Native Fish Management and Recovery Strategy Workshop**

Collaborative meeting to confirm the main threats that affect native fish across the Murray Darling Basin and potential options for managing the threats, and to identify how best to maintain community engagement and support on-ground activities within an adaptive management approach. Offered engagement with the CCC’s and BCLP to support engagement and education.

## **9 2020 76<sup>th</sup> National Conference – Shepparton – Victoria**

The committee planning meetings commenced this month, with exceptional input from Cr Dennis Patterson and Greg McKenzie – Greater Shepparton City Council Preparations and logistical details are underway to ensure a successful 76<sup>th</sup> Event.

#### **10 Connor Pettigrove – MDA Office Assistant**

The MDA team welcomed Connor who commenced employment on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019. Connor's role within the organisation is Office Assistance with Connor working 2 hours every Tuesday, with the support provided. Connors exuberant personality and commitment to this, his first job, is already a wonderful addition to the team.

#### **11 Christmas and New Year**

The MDA Office will be closed:

Wednesday 25 December 2019 – Christmas Day

Thursday 26 December 2019 – Boxing Day

Friday 27 December 2019

Wednesday 1 January 2020

From all the team at the MDA we sincerely wish everyone a very happy, safe and joyous festive season, we look forward to working with you all in 2020



**Emma Bradbury**

**Chief Executive Officer**