

2020-21 ANNUAL REPORT





77th annual report of the Murray Darling Association Inc: 2020-21

Incorporated under the Association's
Incorporation Act 1984 NSW
Registered number Y 40317-47

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May 2021

National Library of Australia
ISSN 1443-7767

Murray Darling Association Incorporated's
public fund, the Murray Darling Foundation is a
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Cover photos courtesy Emma Bradbury.
Front: Nyemba Fish Traps on the Darling Baaka River.
Brewarrina 2020.
Back: Burrima boardwalk, Macquarie Marshes, Warren, 2021.

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INTRODUCTION

Following the adversity of recent droughts, bushfires and Covid-19, communities across the Basin are beginning to emerge stronger and more resilient than ever.

With a strong focus on collaboration, local government and the communities of the Murray Darling Basin are well placed to adapt and forge ahead in 2021 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 and governments, and first nations, collaborating on a daily basis to tackle the big issues of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Together, we can forge a future of connected councils and catchments and communities.

The following report reflects a successful and active year, including the implementation of year one of Vision 2025.



NATIONAL PRESIDENT REPORT

Every year brings new surprises and new challenges and 2020-2021 has been one of the most surprising and challenging in my time as National President.

When I wrote my last annual report, we were just beginning to face the Covid-19 pandemic with no real idea what it would mean for all of us across Australia.

In the past year we have faced border closures which have cut communities off from one another and caused great personal anguish for many people unable to see loved ones, attend family events and celebrations.

That seems to be coming to an end with the roll out of a vaccination programme enabling us to get back to life as it was pre-Covid.

We have learned so many things during the pandemic and we should carry the best bits forward.

Our remote conference in Shepparton 2020 was a great success.

We will incorporate some elements such as remote access to sessions into future conferences, enabling those with a heavy work schedule to attend the conference while avoiding long travel times. Others can enjoy the benefits of once again meeting face-to-face.

The MDA continues to thrive, leading many of the tough conversations around Basin issues such as water availability, ecosystem health and community well-being.

The signing of a Collaborative Relationship Agreement with CSIRO was a significant and important act to align local government with the best science to inform decisions about the rivers, ecology and communities in the Basin.



Notwithstanding the ongoing risks of COVID shutdowns, we have been able to resume delivery of the Basin Communities Leadership Program.

We have been working with councils and regional groups of councils across the Basin connecting our communities with relevant governments and agencies to elevate regional priorities.

Membership is always an important issue, not just for the financial viability of the MDA, but for the weight it gives to every region engaging with other levels of government who have carriage of legislation that affects us all.

Finally, can I say a big thank you to the staff of the MDA, our hard-working CEO Emma Bradbury and her great team in Echuca.

We might be small but we punch well above our weight!

It has been a great honour to serve as the National President for another year and I look forward to catching up with as many of you as possible, in person in Wentworth in May.

Stay safe.

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.

Cr David Thurley OAM
National President

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

This year's annual report reflects an exciting year for the Murray Darling Association and Basin communities, with the implementation of the first year of the MDA's five year Strategic Plan: Vision 2025.

The following is our first report card to our members and provides updates on our performance in delivering those strategies, and our progress in achieving our goals.

As part of our commitment to **Pillar 1 – Membership Services**, the MDA has been working hard to ensure that all Basin communities have access to the MDA Basin Communities Leadership Program, BCLP.

As a result, I have had the privilege to facilitate four face-to-face BCLP workshops in Warren, Wakool, Cunnamulla and Dirranbandi, in collaboration with our valued regional delivery partners.

At these workshops, I have met with and heard from some amazing participants, all deeply committed to the future of their communities and to developing the leadership skills and pathways.

Participants come into the course looking to lead in their local community. They leave the course as local leaders in the Basin community, wanting to be part of the solution and committed to collaborative action.

Our commitment to **Pillar 2 – Science and Education** continues to strengthen. This year, the MDA has seen a shift as business as usual around the Basin has changed from being characterised by conflict, to one that is about opportunity and engagement.

It is with great pride in the achievement of the team, the board, and the members of the MDA that I reflect on the delivery of a truly outstanding 76th National Conference and AGM.

With the challenges of Covid-19, a very limited budget and minimal resources, the benefits of collaboration, ingenuity, belief and good old-fashioned hard work showed through in

great measure, delivering an apparently seamless virtual conference and AGM and experience.

This year also saw the beginning of consultation and engagement for the Regional Boundary Review, a key component of **Pillar 3 – Leadership and Engagement**. As a result, Region 10A has been established, with Mayor Davies, Narromine Council, stepping up as the interim Chair.

Along with Mayor Davies, I have visited several councils within NSW to discuss the Macquarie-Castlereagh over-recovery of water in the Macquarie-Castlereagh and Gwydir valleys impacting communities in the region, and to engage with councils to articulate the benefits of membership.

Pillar 4 – Corporate Development commits to ensuring our organisation is financially sustainable and corporately robust.

This year, the MDA has worked hard to lodge over \$9 million in grant applications across multiple programs to ensure the sustainability of our organisations and programs, which provide benefit to communities across the Basin.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing dedication and leadership of our National President Cr David Thurley OAM, the invaluable contributions of the full MDA Board and our wonderful staff.



Emma Bradbury
Chief Executive Officer



OUR ORGANISATION: BOARD PERFORMANCE

Board	Hosting Council	Region	Commenced	Finished
● Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	Chair Region 1 - President		
● Cr Dennis Patterson	Shepparton City Council	Chair Region 2		7/12/2020
● Cr Bronwyn Thomas	Federation Council	Chair Region 2	7/01/2021	
● Cr Jane MacAllister	Wentworth Shire Council	Chair Region 4		
● Cr Peter Raison	Mid Murray Council	Chair Region 5		
● Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrina Shire Council	Chair Region 6		
● Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham	Chair Region 7		
● Cr Brian Lockyer	District Council Barunga West	Chair Region 8		
● Cr Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council	Chair Region 9		
● Mayor Phyllis Miller	Forbes Shire Council	Chair Region 10		
● Mayor Craig Davies	Narramine	Chair Region 10A	21/12/2020	
● Cr John Campbell	Gunnedah Shire Council	Chair Region 11		
● Mayor Samantha O'Toole	Balonne Shire Council	Chair Region 12	April 2020	
Pete George	M&S Group	<i>Treasurer</i>		
Emma Bradbury	Murray Darling Association	<i>Chief Executive and Public Officer</i>		

Some of the extraordinary plans on the national agenda for 2021 and a generation beyond. Achieving these plans successfully will require local leadership and collaboration.



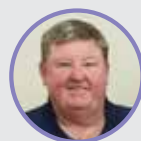
Cr David Thurley



Cr Bronwyn Thomas



Cr Jane MacAllister



Cr Peter Raison



Cr Melissa Rebbeck



Cr Andrew Tilley



Cr Brian Lockyer



Mayor Paul Maytom



Mayor Phyllis Miller



Mayor Craig Davies



Cr John Campbell



Mayor Samantha O'Toole



Pete George



Emma Bradbury

IMMEDIATE PAST CHAIR OF REGION 2



Cr Dennis Patterson
Greater Shepparton City Council

OUR ORGANISATION: MEETINGS RECORD

BOARD MEETINGS

	Meeting 397 20 Apr 2020	Meeting 398 18 May 2020	Meeting 399 15 June 2020	Meeting 400 20 July 2020	Meeting 401 17 Aug 2020	Meeting 402 AGM 16 Sept 2020	Meeting 403 19 Octr 2020	Meeting 404 16 Nov 2020	Meeting 405 21 Dec 2020	Meeting 406 Feb 2021	Committee of Regional Chairs March 2021
Cr David Thurley	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cr Denis Patterson	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
Cr Bronwyn Thomas									✓	✓	A
Cr Jane MacAllister	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A
Cr Peter Raison	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	A	A
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cr Andrew Tilley	✓	✓	A	✓	X	✓	X	✓	A	✓	A
Cr Brian Lockyer	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓
Mayor Paul Maytom	✓	✓	A	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mayor Phyllis Miller	✓	✓	A	A	A	✓	✓	A	A	✓	A
Mayor Craig Davies									✓	✓	✓
Cr John Campbell	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		A	✓	✓
Mayor Samantha O'Toole		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Pete George	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	A	✓	
Emma Bradbury	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

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

REGION MEETINGS

	REGION	04-20	05-20	06-20	07-20	08-20	09-20	10-20	11-20	12-20	01-21	02-21	03-21
Region meetings	1								Red			Red	
play an important	2		Blue					Blue		Blue		Blue	
role in initiating and	3												
facilitating discussion	4			Pink			Pink			Pink			Pink
on regional and	5			Purple				Purple					
Basin issues,	6		Orange			Orange			Orange			Orange	
providing members,	7				Yellow				Yellow			Yellow	
executive and	8			Green			Green			Green			
guests to exchange	9			Yellow			Yellow			Yellow		Yellow	
information and	10			Blue									
identify priorities,	11			Green		Green			Green			Green	
and develop	12												
strategies and													
solutions.													

STRATEGIC ADVISORY GROUP

Members	#009 29-4-20	#010 31-7-20	#011 1-12-20
Qld Representative Matt Magin Balonne Shire Council	✓	A	✓
NSW Representative Adrian Butler, GM Federation Council	✓	✓	✓
SA Representative Brenton Lewis, Mayor Rural City of Murray Bridge	✓	✓	A
NSW Representative #2 Steve Loane, GM Forbes Shire Council	A	A	A
Board Representative Pete George, MDA Treasurer	✓	A	✓
NSW Representative Bob Stewart, Administrator Central Darling Shire Council	A	A	A
Secretariat Emma Bradbury, MDA CEO	✓	✓	✓

The MDA Strategic Advisory Group meets quarterly to consider and make recommendations on matters referred to them by the Board.

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

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

Two region meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
Thursday 4 February 2021	Zoom
Friday 20 November 2020	Councillor Meeting Room, Albury City Council

The Region 1 meeting in November 2020 included a presentation about the work of Farmers for Climate Action, together with broader issues relating to the Murray Darling system itself.

Speakers:

- ▶ Lucinda Corrigan
Farmer, Farmers for climate action

Covid-19 caused significant problems for Region 1 and the ability to hold meetings this year. The councils of Region 1 are spread across NSW and Victoria and there were 3 periods of lockdown between April 2020 and March 2021 with various restriction on travel between states. The lockdowns and travel restrictions lasted cumulatively for several months. In the last year, councils in Region 1 have faced some very challenging circumstances, especially severe bushfires in many parts of the region and especially the shires of Towong and Indigo and areas in and around the Kosciuszko National Park. The fires themselves were devastating for the communities with loss of life and properties and the destruction of trees and habitat. There were also severe problems in the aftermath with the first heavy rains causing massive run off of ash and silt. Rivers and streams were badly polluted and became anoxic in many of the smaller reaches.

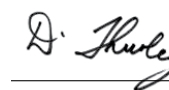
The Region 1 November 2020 meeting included a presentation from Lucinda Corrigan outlining the work of the group Farmers for Climate Action, highlighting the change in farming practices on her farm to address the issues around climate change. This is one of the most pressing issues facing



Picture courtesy: Albury City

the agricultural sector across the Basin and one that the MDA continues to bring to the attention of State and Federal politicians. A continued focus on this is required.

Region 1 also held a strategic planning meeting in February to identify the issues relevant to this region. Current regional boundaries are seen as not appropriate in today's context and some discussion has commenced around how councils in the area can become better engaged with the aims of the MDA. Further work is required in this area to find ways to better serve the regional councils and bring their interests to the attention of governments. The major issues affecting councils in Region 1 at present are feral animals, including horses, deer and pigs as well as the flow on effects of the Covid-19 pandemic to the local economies.



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 2 individual members. The committee is made up of:

Chair

Cr Bronwyn Thomas	Federation Council
Cr Dennis Patterson (Outgoing Chair)	Greater Shepparton City Council

Committee members

Cr Colin Jones	Berrigan Shire Council
Cr Peter Mansfield	Moira Shire Council

Members

Berrigan Shire Council
Edwards River Council
Greater Shepparton City Council
Moira Shire Council
Federation Council

Individual Members

Murray Irrigation
Geoff Mackenzie
Ken Pattison (R3)
Geoff Mackenzie (R3)

Other Eligible Councils

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 meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
Thursday 18 February 2020	Zoom
Wednesday 27 May 2020	Zoom
Friday 2 October 2020	Zoom
Monday 7 December 2020	Yarrowonga Mulwala Golf Club Resort

Four speakers addressed members at the meeting. Topics covered were the change in water availability within the region since 2000, key agricultural challenges for the region going forward and key challenges for the basin plan within the region moving forward, together with broader issues relating to the Murray Darling system itself.

Speakers:

- ▶ Rob Rendell
Principal Consultant , RMCG
- ▶ Bridget Leopold
Executive Officer, RAMJO
- ▶ Mayor Chris Bilkey
Chair of RAMJO Water Security Committee, RAMJO
- ▶ Gavin Helgeland
Manager – Strategic Development, Balranald Shire Council

I was humbled to have been elected chairperson at AGM. Our former chair Mr Dennis Patterson not seeking re-election at the Victorian State Local Government Elections in October 2020.

Dennis's continued valuable contribution to Region 2 and MDA is very welcome with him accepting the offer to continue on the committee.



Region 2 meeting in Mulwala. Left to right: Cr David Thurley, Emma Bradbury, Cr Bronwyn Thomas and Mr Dennis Patterson.

Region 2 encompasses cross state border councils VIC/NSW, with five active memberships - Berrigan, Greater Shepparton City, Edward River, Moira and Federation.

Representation provides opportunity to capture common themes that do not stop at a state/LGA. Our councils provide the foundation of creating partnerships, allowing advocacy at local, state and federal agencies in the management of the Basin resources: community, water, land and energy.

Region 2 key priorities:

- Barmah Choke constraints
- Flooding degradation
- Water allocations
- Creation of engagement opportunities with Ingenious corporations
- Water delivery past the Yarrowonga Weir
- Lake Mulwala Land and Water Management Plan.

Continued collaboration will be sought to clarify and highlight the importance of delivering resolutions, along with interagency planning and communication to support priorities.

Consideration has also been given to Climate Change Ready, with adoption of a landscape approach:

- Landscape 1 – town/village
- Landscape 2 – agribusiness
- Landscape 3 – natural resource management
- Landscape 4 – renewable.

MDA Region 2 welcomed the Riverina Murray Joint Organisation, RAMJO, presentation at our AGM receiving commentary in response to their comprehensive Water Position Paper, capturing local issues in a concise well-presented document that will set the foundation for advocacy.

A highlight was the acknowledgment by both RAMJO and MDA of the content of MDA Vision 2025 and RAMJO Water Position Paper mirror of key outcomes.

Both RAMJO and MDA are at the forefront of promoting the requirement for local government to have influence on Basin management: thriving agriculture, a resilient environment and strong communities.

The long term sustainability of the Murray-Darling is fundamentally the responsibility of those who live, work and have connection: hence the MDA is at the forefront of this vital linkage and Region 2's grass-roots approach increases the capacity to deliver outcomes for the Basin that reflect the core values requiring attention.

Region 2 looks forward to further engagement with local, state, federal and independent organisations.

Cr Bronwyn Thomas



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Dennis Patterson".

Cr Dennis Patterson
Outgoing Chair, Region 2.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bronwyn Thomas".

Cr Bronwyn Thomas
Incoming Chair, Region 2.

MDBA
WEBINAR
SERIES

The graphic features a large green circle with a white center containing the text "MDBA WEBINAR SERIES". To the left, a series of smaller green circles overlap, each containing a white icon: a plant, wavy lines, two people, a flowchart, and a hand holding a document. The background is a sunset over a river.

Learn more about water management and river operations in the Murray-Darling Basin by joining our regular webinars.

 mdba.gov.au/webinars



Australian Government



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 Jane MacAllister	Wentworth Shire Council
Committee members	
Cr Marion Brown	Broken Hill City Council
Cr Jason Modica	Mildura Rural City Council
Gavin Helgeland	Balranald Shire Council
Cr Steve Heywood	Wentworth Shire Council
Greg Hill	Central Darling Council

Members
Balranald Shire Council
Broken Hill City Council
Central Darling Shire
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 meetings were held during the year:

Date	Location
Tuesday 9 June 2020	The Midway Centre, Buronga, NSW
Tuesday 8 September 2020	The Midway Centre, Buronga, NSW
Tuesday 8 December 2020	The Midway Centre, Buronga, NSW
Tuesday 2 March 2021	The Midway Centre, Buronga, NSW

Gavin Helgeland presented to MDA Region 4 their project Murrumbidgee River: *Yanga Lake – Murrumbidgee River e-Water Optimisation Project: Improving Connectivity* Balranald Shire Council has developed the project and is now engaging with DPIE & WaterNSW for a scoping study to be completed.

Speakers:

- ▶ Gavin Helgeland
Balranald Shire Council

The highlight for Region 4 year is MDA's selection of Wentworth as the host of the 2021 MDA National Conference. It is an exciting time planning for what will be a wonderful event that will showcase Region 4.

All Local Government Areas in Region 4 have advocated strongly under Region 4 banner and as individual council's for connectivity, a Royal Commission into the MDBA and in support of the Menindee Lakes SAG for the Menindee Lakes Water Saving Project.

Connectivity is a huge issue for Region 4 which is in the middle of the system. The north of the system takes plenty of water, as does the bottom of the system, but we are the middle section which it appears is left out to dry, literally.



Picture courtesy: wentworth.nsw.gov.au

The Menindee SAG group have struggled to be heard. Consultation, there was plenty, however the community felt they were not listened to. All Councils have advocated and supported the Menindee SAG to the point where the Department has abandoned the Menindee Lakes SDLAM and is seeking further consultation with the community to provide possible options for a mutually desirable outcome.

The Balranald Shire Council's project Murrumbidgee River: *Yanga Lake – Murrumbidgee River e-Water Optimisation Project: Improving Connectivity* is exciting for the region and should see the revitalisation on Yanga Lakes and a secure water supply for Balranald.



Cr Jane MacAllister
Chair, Region 4.



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 Peter Raison	Mid Murray Council – commencing March 2020
Committee members	
Cr Andrew Kassebaum	Berri Barmera Council
Cr Peter Walker	District Council of Loxton Waikerie
Cr Yvonne Smith	District Council of Karoonda East Murray
Cr Margaret Howie	Renmark Paringa Council

Member Councils
Berri Barmera Council
District Council of Karoonda East Murray
District Council of Loxton Waikerie
Mid Murray Council
Renmark Paringa Council
Members (Individuals/Organisations)
Ian and Bobby Mann
Malcolm Wilksch

Two meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
Monday 1 June 2020	Zoom
Monday 26 October 2020	Mid Murray Council

Two speakers addressed members at each meeting. Topics covered: the draft strategic plan and draft annual business plan for Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association, discussion of strategic alliance between MDA, MRLGA and RDAMR, collaboration across the multiple organisation and regions, together with broader issues relating to the Murray Darling system, itself.

Speakers:

- ▶ Tim Smythe
CEO, Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association
- ▶ Ben Fee
Chief Executive, Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland

Drought, fire and to top it off, Covid19. Who would have thought that life in our Basin could possibly take such a battering in such a short time? However the resilience of the Aussie battler is alive and well. I know personally it tested my mental health, and I'm very sure that all of us are looking forward to a change of luck.

Until Covid19, I had never heard of Zoom but now it is a part of our lives.

On a positive note Region 5 and Region 6 have combined with the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA) and formed a Water position working group chaired by Cr Andrew Kassebaum and co-ordinated by Tim Smythe, CEO of MRLGA, which enables us to focus and discuss our concerns and build a plan going forward that will strengthen our regions.



Sunset on the River Murray, South Australia

The South Australian regions and possibly our close neighbor Region 4 are also looking at having a combined meeting at possibly Murray Bridge later this year.

Region 5 still has 100 percent support from our councils and I feel the MDA is building a strong voice which can only help the Basin.

Peter Raison
Chair, Region 5.



REGION 6 REPORT



Region 6 comprises a total of 7 councils, of which 6 are members of the MDA. Region 6 has 5 individual members. The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Alexandrina Council
Committee members	
Bridget Mather	Coorong District Council
Heather Barclay	Rural City of Murray Bridge
Glenn Rappensberg	Alexandrina Council

Members
Alexandrina Council
Coorong District Council
Rural City of Murray Bridge
Tatiara District Council
City of Victor Harbour
Southern Mallee District Council
Members (Individuals/Organisations)
Keith Loeser
Warren Jacobs
Frank Tuckwell
Bruce Brooks
Adrian Pederick MP
Colin Grundy

Other Eligible Councils
Kingston City Council

Since our last annual report in August 2020, we have had four executive meetings preceding our ordinary meetings:

Date	Location
Friday 7 August 2020	Chambers, Alexandrina Council
Friday 6 November 2020	Mobilong Suite, Rural City of Murray Bridge Local Government Centre
Friday 5 February 2021	Coorong District Council
Friday 26 February 2021	Murray Bridge District Council

Topics covered at our meetings included development of the basin, existing climate adaptations, evaluation opportunities, future mitigation challenges, river Murray system inflows and storages; an overview of floodplain harvesting; current water resource position and climate outlook; and what does this mean for South Australia and the Lower Lakes together with broader issues relating to the Murray Darling system, itself. In November 2020 we had an excellent presentation from Tony McLeod (GM- SDL Accounting and Aboriginal Partnerships and David Cook (Assistant Director, Surface Water, SDL Accounting, Basin Plan Regulation (MDBA) on Floodwater harvesting. Deana Mildren from MDBA is a regular at all our meetings providing updates on dam levels, flows and the state of the MDB.

Speakers:

- ▶ Deana Mildren
Regional Engagement Officer, MDBA
- ▶ Jarrod Eaton
River Murray Water Delivery Manager,
Department of Environment and Water
- ▶ Dr Tony McLeod
General Manager, SDL Accounting & Aboriginal
Partnerships Program, MDBA

- ▶ David Cook
Assistant Director, Surface Water, SDL Accounting,
Basin Plan Regulation, MDBA
- ▶ Tim Smythe
CEO, Murraylands and Riverland LGA

During May 2020, Region 6 completed our climate ready communities' statement and as a region remain committed and proactive in working toward our goals. In August we finalised our national AGM motions and presented them successfully at the September AGM. These motions centred around better adaptation and mitigation of climate change, drought management and economic viability across the basin. We also continue to advocate for the upgrade of our barrages due to climate change. We look forward to further feedback on these.

Over the last year Region 6 via the chair has been working with Tim Smythe, CEO Murraylands and Riverland LGA, and other regional chairs on a Water Position Paper with 4 meetings to date to develop an outline. We have recognised the efforts to put together this paper together and are currently looking toward some grants and investment to support the paper moving forward.

Other regular volunteer activities for the Chair include: bimonthly Coorong Lower Lakes Murray Mallee Community Advisory panel meetings, Alexandrina Council Environmental Advisory Panel meetings, Fleurieu Beef Group meetings, SA Livestock Consultants Group meetings and conference, ANZ Biochar Industry Group meetings and council meetings.

The Coorong Lower Lakes Community Advisory Panel and Scientific Advisory Group conducted a celebration late last year at the barrages to congratulate all those who have been part of the regions effort to recover from the Millennium drought. The chair presented at this. In February 2021, the

REGION 6 REPORT CONTINUED

chair also attended a wetlands day and barrage tour. At these events we recognised the significant investment and collaborative effort between state and federal government, other stakeholders, community and the MDB Plan in working toward environmental recovery of our region after the millennium drought. *A key and integral part of this story is that we are only part way toward a recovery and return to the number*

of birds, animals that existed prior to the drought. Regular and increased flows are essential to ensure a full recovery of our Coorong and Lower Lakes and Lagoons.

2019 was the driest year ever on record and while we looked to 2020, a La Nina year, for some reprieve we need more than this to ensure long term sustainable adequate flows for

Picture courtesy: Monika Rhodes



recovery and the health of our MDB including Region 6 the Coorong and Lower Lakes.

In 2020 we recruited Nathan Bicknell as a community engagement officer for Region 6. Nathan works part time with MDBA and part time with the MDA. With Nathan on board, in 2021 we aim to have an inter-regional meeting, local symposium and barrage tour *flagged dates 13-14 October*. This will be in Murray Bridge SA and will focus on water use efficiency and regional issues and opportunities. We trust we can have some interstate visitors to show our barrages and Coorong and lower lakes and exchange knowledge and experience. Nathan will also be a part of a bid for the national MDA conference in 2023.

A sincere and big thank you to Monika Rhodes our outgoing secretary for her hard work over the last year and a big thank you to our executive team and each one of our members for their commitment and support for Region 6 and the MDA. We have put together some well thought out motions this year for our annual MDA conference and I am very proud of our team.

I would also like to give a huge thank you to Emma Bradbury and the office staff for what I see as one of the largest bodies of work ever in the MDA in 2020. The advocacy of Emma and her team and the workload at the national level has seen the MDA be recognised at an exacerbated level. I am grateful to have worked cohesively with the 11 other board members of the MDA over the last 12 months.

Cr Melissa Rebbeck
Chair, Region 6.



REGION 7 REPORT

Region 7 comprises a total of 21 councils, of which 8 are members of the MDA. Region 7 has 9 individual members. The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham
Committee members	
Cr John Kennedy	Campbelltown City Council
Cr Shirley Halls	City of Playford
Cr Robin Coleman	City of Tea Tree Gully
Cr Therese Britton-La Selle	Campbelltown City Council

Member Councils	
Adelaide Hills Council	
City of Burnside	
Campbelltown City Council	
City of Mitcham	
City of Norwood Payneham and St Peters	
City of Playford	
City of Tea Tree Gully	
City of Port Adelaide Enfield	
Members (Individuals/Organisations)	
Frank and Fran Verrall	Peter Shepard
Ray Najjar	Gary Goland
Pauline Frost (Life Member)	Lynda Yates
Jim Hullick OAM (Life Member)	

Other Eligible Councils	
City of Onkaparinga	City of Holdfast Bay
Town of Walkerville	City of Charles Sturt
Town of Gawler	Mount Barker District Council
City of Prospect	City of Salisbury
City of Unley	District Council of Yankalilla
City of Marion	City of Adelaide
City of West Torrens	

Three meetings were held during the year.

Date	Location
Thursday 16 July 2020	City of Mitcham chambers
Thursday 26 November 2020	City of Mitcham chambers
Thursday 18 February 2021	City of Mitcham chambers

Speakers addressed members at each meeting. Topics covered: the Keilty report and MDBA response to his recommendations, a water outlook for the season, Allocation 101, Healthy Coorong Basin Plan, Water management projects, Independent review of the management of the Lower Lakes, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth Master Plan, together with broader issues relating to the Murray Darling system, itself.

Speakers included:

- ▶ Ms Deana Mildren
Regional Engagement Officer, MDBA
- ▶ Ray Najjar
Former GM, Murray Darling Association
- ▶ Angus MacGregor
Manager Healthy Coorong, Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources
- ▶ Peter Mettam
Senior Operations Officer and Project Manager, Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources
- ▶ Professor Wayne Meyer
Professor Natural Resources Science, The University of Adelaide



Members of Region 7 virtually attend 2020 MDA National Conference.

Hello from Region 7. We represent a broad section of councillors from urban and peri urban Adelaide councils, and a valued number of independent members.

Last year despite some interruption from Covid19 we were able to meet face-to-face with the exception of one ordinary meeting and the Shepparton annual conference.

That Zoom conference was successful but highlighted the value of the informal debriefing sessions that are not available in video presentations.

Region 7 continues to benefit from the proximity of tertiary education facilities, research bodies like the CSIRO and private organisations. We draw representatives from these bodies.

These scientists' everyday life is centred around detailed study into all aspects of the Murray Darling Basin. Their knowledge and experience is a huge asset to our region. A portion of the speakers and topics are mentioned in this report.

REGION 7 REPORT CONTINUED

The challenge for us is to communicate some of this information into the public realm to improve water awareness across the whole community via schools and community groups.

In particular, our councils are proud of their application of water sensitive urban design features. In keeping with the oft repeated phrase, SA is the driest state in the driest continent, we are conscious of the responsibility that drawing 160gl of water from the Murray carries with it.

The discharge of stormwater straight into the sea is now recognised as unacceptable and, where possible, it is used to recharge aquifers and through tree nets and water gardens used to water street trees etc.

Increasing suburban densification generates increasing stormwater issues that puts pressure on old systems and the ideas that created them.

Adelaide councils with the help of the MDA is very conscious of the 160gl of Murray water drawn from the river.



Cr Andrew Tilley
Chair, Region 7.



Murray River, South Australia. Picture courtesy Emma Bradbury, Murray Darling Association



REGION 8 REPORT



Region 8 comprises a total of 16 councils, of which 7 are members of the MDA. Region 8 has no individual members. The committee is made up of:

Chair

Cr Brian Lockyer Barunga West Council

Committee members

Cr Denis Clark Northern Areas Council

Member Councils

District Council of Barunga West

The Regional Council of Goyder

Light Regional Council

Northern Areas Council

The District Council of Peterborough

Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council

District Council of Orreroo Carrieton

Other Eligible Councils

Wakefield Regional Council

Adelaide Plains Council

Copper Coast Council

Yorke Peninsula Council

Port Augusta City Council

Port Pirie Regional Council

Whyalla City Council

The Barossa Council

District Council of Mount Remarkable

Three meetings were held during the year:

Date	Location
Friday 26 June 2020	Via Zoom meeting
Friday 25 September 2020	Via Zoom meeting
Friday 11 December 2020	Via Zoom meeting

Five speakers addressed members throughout the year. Topics covered include fish kills, growth of the almond industry and impacts to the Darling river, the great value in having the Mayors across the MDA coming together and engaging in broader regional conversations, Basin-scale Environmental Watering, *Yanga Lake – Murrumbidgee River e-Water Optimisation Project: Improving Connectivity*, an update from MDA region 6 together with broader issues relating to the Murray Darling system, itself.

Speakers:

- ▶ Cr Jane MacAllister
Chair, Region 4, MDA
- ▶ Richard Mintern
Local Engagement Officer, CEWO
- ▶ Amy Czura
Engagement Advisor, (Local Government Liaison)
SA Water
- ▶ Gavin Helgeland
Manager – Strategic Development, Balranald Shire
Council
- ▶ Cr Melissa Rebbeck
MDA Region 6 Chair, MDA

Region 8 is located in the driest state in the driest country in the world. While councils and communities within my region do not live on the Murray Darling, we all draw from the system. We do not have reservoirs or large storage facilities and rely solely on pipe distribution from the Murray River. We turn on a tap and the supply is there.

It is unfortunate that concerns regarding water security and supply is of low concern within most of the regional councils. It has been my scope as Chair of Region 8 to inform and support members to express their concerns in relation to water security and our relationship to the Murray Darling.

Support and collaboration across our regions gives the MDA the strength of unity and a voice. Whatever occurs on the greatest river in Australia affects us all. If the system fails up stream, then we suffer the consequences.

Since being involved with the MDA and all regional chairs, I have broadened my knowledge to include concerns all along the river system.

To all Regional Chairs and Emma, David and all staff, I thank you all sincerely for the support, direction and the great honour of representing a great organisation.

Cr Brian Lockyer
Chair, Region 8



REGION 9 REPORT



Region 9 comprises a total of 18 councils, of which eight are members of the MDA. Region 9 has three individual members. The committee is made up of:

Chair

Cr Paul Maytom Leeton Shire Council

Committee members

Cr John Dal Broi Griffith City Council

Cr Dino Zappacosta Griffith City Council

Bede Spannagle Riverina Water County Council

Member Councils

Griffith City Council

Hay Shire Council

Leeton Shire Council

Lockhart Shire Council

Narrandera Shire Council

Murrumbidgee Shire Council

Wagga Wagga City Council

Carrathool Shire Council

Members (Individuals/Organisations)

Riverina Water County Council

Joe Burns

Michael McCormack MP

Other Eligible Councils

Bega Valley Shire Council

Coolamon Shire Council

Cootamundra-Gundagai Regional Council

Eurobodalla Shire Council

Hilltops Shire Council

Junee Shire Council

Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council

Temora Shire Council

Weddin Shire Council

Yass Valley Council

Four meetings were held during the year:

Date	Location
Friday 26 June 2020	Leeton Shire Council Chambers
Thursday 17 September 2020	Leeton Shire Council Chambers
Wednesday 2 December 2020	Leeton Shire Council Chambers
Wednesday 17 February 2021	Leeton Shire Council Chambers

Three speakers addressed members at the meetings. Topics included:

An update on the National Water Initiative and the Water Act and the Productivity Commission Review, reading and interpreting Water Allocation Statements, how General Security Allocations are made, status of the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism Projects in NSW, pros and cons of Intervalley Trade and over extraction of Ground Water in the Murrumbidgee Valley and MIA

The NSW Government's Regional Water Strategy Program, being a 20-year State Water Strategy for NSW that draws on recent water reform, water planning and water security work and sits within the broader policy and planning context, including the National Water Initiative, the Basin Plan and Murray Darling Basin Agreement. The initial draft is scheduled for public consultation in 2021.

Gogeldrie Wier on the Murrumbidgee River, Leeton Shire



WaterNSW overview of the Murrumbidgee Valley Operations, covering dam storage, inflows, climatic outlook, storage and water allocation forecasts, as well as information on the Inter Valley Transfer Account and River Transmission Loss.

Speakers:

- ▶ Claire Miller
Director, Claire Miller Consulting Pty Ltd
- ▶ Stefanie Shulte
Acting Director, Water Group Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- ▶ Wendy Cox
Senior Regional Water Strategy Officer,
Water Group Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
- ▶ Vince Kelly
Water System Operations Manager South, Water NSW

We have had another busy year of involvement in water related forums. These included hosting the newly appointed Chairman of the MDBA, Sir Angus Houston, at Leeton Shire Council; attending meetings of WaterNSW's Murrumbidgee Customer Advisory Group and River Operators Stakeholder Consultation Committee as well as participation in the WaterNSW Rural Valley's Pricing Determination (Metering) 2021-24 Murrumbidgee Operating Expenditure engagement session.

There has been involvement with the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment Regional Water Strategies, to see better management of the state's water resources. While such partnering ensures improved understanding of each region's needs, we urge state and federal governments to ensure their water initiatives are effectively coordinated to achieve outcomes for regional communities that depend on this precious resource.

REGION 9 REPORT CONTINUED



Examples include the National Water Grid Authority and the National Farmers' Federation 2030 Roadmap - *Australian Agriculture's Plan for a \$100 Billion Industry*, supported by the federal government.

Following the prolonged drought and issues associated with water policy over recent years, and the many job losses across agricultural and manufacturing industries, it is pleasing to see general and high security water allocations now at the maximum limit of 100pc for the Murrumbidgee Valley. Furthermore, the outlook is positive for water availability in the 2021-22 water year. This will continue to boost the economies and confidence of regional communities.

Notwithstanding, we will continue to advocate state and federal governments and the MDBA to ensure the sustainability of our region at the whole of community level and to support our wide range of agriculture, food processing and manufacturing industries.

Mayor Paul Maytom
Chair, Region 9.



Main Canal, Leeton Shire

REGION 10 REPORT

Region 10 comprises a total of 25 councils, of which 7 are members of the MDA. Region 10 has 1 individual member. The committee is made up of:

Chair

Mayor Phyllis Miller OAM Forbes Shire Council

Committee members

Cr Janine Lea-Barrett	Cobar Shire Council
Cr Ben Shields	Dubbo Regional Council
Cr John Medcalf	Lachlan Shire Council
Cr Craig Davies	Narromine Shire Council
Jane Redden	Narromine Shire Council

Member Councils

Bourke Shire Council
Cobar Shire Council
Dubbo Regional Council
Forbes Shire Council
Lachlan Shire Council
Narromine Shire Council
Warren Shire Council
Cowra Shire Council

Members (Individuals/Organisations)

Jack Bennet

Other Eligible Councils

Mid-Western Regional Council	Bland Shire Council
Bathurst Regional Council	Bogan Shire Council
Blayney Shire Council	City of Lithgow Council
Cabonne Council	Goulburn Mulwaree Council
Gilgandra Shire Council	Oberon Council
Muswellbrook Shire Council	Parkes Shire Council
Orange City Council	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Warrumbungle Shire Council	Singleton Shire Council
Upper Lachlan Shire Council	

One meeting was held during the year.

Date	Location
Tuesday 21 July 2020	Via Online Microsoft Teams App

One speaker addressed members at the meeting. Topics covered were an update on Water Resource Plans, Floodplain Harvesting Policy, request for extension for further consultation on Regional Water Strategies, MDA 76th National Conference and AGM together with broader issues relating to the Murray Darling system, itself.

Speaker:

- ▶ The Hon. Melinda Pavey MP
NSW Minister for Water, Property and Housing
NSW Government

This year has been a busy year, with councils across the region engaging extensively with Commonwealth and State government stakeholders and attending bi-weekly water-related meetings and briefings.

The ACCC Murray-Darling Basin water markets inquiry was also published in March this year, highlighting the need for more transparency in water trade, which was strongly supported by our region.

I am immensely pleased with the development of Region 10A. Region 10 currently covers an enormous geographic footprint making it far too large for any one region chair to cover. The establishment of a Region 10A is a great opportunity to better engage our members and grow membership.

I commend Mayor Craig Davies, interim Chair of Region 10A, on his work this year to grow and engage the membership within our region and look forward to continuing to work with all Basin chairs.



Cr Phyllis Miller OAM
Chair Region 10



REGION 10A 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 Region 10A during this reporting year to better serve and grow our membership in this region.

Narromine Shire Council Mayor Craig Davies, an experienced MDA chair, welcomed the opportunity to step up and lead the growth of this important region.

The region will be confirmed following the completion of the MDA's Regional Boundary Review.

Interim Chair

Mayor Craig Davies	Narromine Shire Council
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Councils

Bogan Shire Council
Cobar Shire Council
Coonamble Shire Council
Warren Shire Council
Warrumbungle Shire Council
Mid-Western Regional Council
Gilgandra Shire Council
Narromine Shire Council

I am delighted to be able to bring the first report of MDA region 10A to the committee.

Over the course of the past few months, I have spent three days on the road in the company of our CEO, Emma Bradbury, traversing my region, from Mudgee in the east to Cobar in the west and Coonamble in the north.

Of the 7 councils canvassed for membership we have achieved a 100pc take-up, and I am most grateful to Emma for her very professional input.

We have a diverse and at times conflicting list of priorities that will test us all, but given the importance of the task at hand I am very confident we can move forward in a positive manner.

I look forward to the conference in Wentworth and the opportunity to put names to faces and to be able to discuss the bigger issues that make this a unique organisation.



Mayor Craig Davies meets with Cobar Deputy Mayor Peter Abbott and GM Peter Vlatko.



Craig Davies

Cr Craig Davies
Interim Chair Region 10A

REGION 11 REPORT

Region 11 comprises a total of 15 councils, of which 6 are members of the MDBA. The committee is made up of:

Chair	
Cr John Campbell	Gunnedah Shire Council
Committee members	
Cr Jamie Chaffey	Gunnedah Shire Council
Cr Greg Sauer	Tenterfield Shire Council

Member Councils
Brewarrina Shire Council
Gunnedah Shire Council
Gwydir Shire Council
Tenterfield Shire Council
Walgett Shire Council
Liverpool Plains Shire

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

Four meetings were held during the year:

Date	Location
Thursday 11 June 2020	Gunnedah Shire Council
Friday 14 August 2020	Gunnedah Shire Council
Friday 13 November 2020	Gwydir Shire Council
Friday 12 February 2021	Inverell Shire Council

Three speakers addressed members this year. Topics covered:

- an MDBA update and information on current projects
- who does what in the water space in the northern Basin
- the role of the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder
- the water managed – licences previously used for irrigation
- the example of water management in the last four years
- plans for the coming year for use of Commonwealth water for the environment
- links between the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office and communities and councils.

Speakers:

- ▶ Annabelle Guest
Regional Engagement Officer, MDBA
- ▶ Sally Dickinson
Goondiwindi, MDBA
- ▶ Jane Humphries
Local Engagement Officer, Commonwealth Environmental Water Office

This year saw some reasonable rainfall and as a result a marked improvement in yields. Some farmers actually obtained a yield, which they had been unable to do during the previous drought years.



Cr John Campbell with participants and facilitators of the Basin Communities Leadership Program in Collarenebri, NSW.

At the time of writing, our storages are around 10pc Pindari Dam, 15pc Copeton Dam and 40pc Chaffey and Keepit Dams. Some general rain is still being received on the back end of La Niña and this could assist in maintaining storage levels as irrigators are not requiring flows at present. Some good falls in the catchments would be a huge boost.

Much work is being done at present on the Floodplain Harvesting Regulations/Guidelines and whether you agree with the policy or not, some certainty in the future downstream flows should eventuate.

Looking forward to seeing and catching up with everyone, personally, at Wentworth for the conference.



Cr John Campbell
Chair, Region 11.



REGION 12 REPORT



Region 12 comprises a total of 15 councils, of which 5 are members of the MDA. Region 12 has 1 individual member:

Chair

Mayor Samantha O'Toole Balonne Shire Council

Committee members

Member Councils

Balonne Shire Council

Goondiwindi Regional Council

Paroo Shire Council

Toowoomba Regional Council

Western Downs Regional Council

Members (Individuals/Organisations)

David Sheil

Other Eligible Councils

Blackall Tambo Regional Council

Bulloo Shire Council

Central Highlands Regional Council

Lockyer Valley Regional Council

Maranoa Regional Council

Murweh Shire Council

Quilpie Shire Council

Scenic Rim Regional Council

South Burnett Regional Council

Southern Downs Regional Council

No meetings were held during the year.

No speakers addressed the members.

Across the entire region this year it has been one of extremes and stark contrasts. From shires experiencing continued drought to good but patchy rain over large sections of the region and flooding from both overland flows and riverine.

A major weather event swept across the region in February and March this year which produced some incredible rainfall over very short periods of time resulting in some localised and cross region flooding. This recharged many of our river systems allowed for capture of irrigation water and generally improved soil moisture. It was however quite disparate and large tracts of country are still yet to see meaningful rainfall.

In March, from Goondiwindi to Mungindi we experienced a separate weather system which produced good flooding rainfall. Communities along the Queensland and NSW border regions were able to celebrate the filling of water infrastructure that has been dry for many seasons.

The good news from both events is that very little property damage was recorded and to the best of our knowledge no homes were inundated. Farmers across the region are calling both events, good events that will bring some long-awaited economic prosperity to Region 12 after 8 years of prolonged drought.

While these events have been hailed good events it still does not alleviate the drought. We remain drought declared as it won't take much to quickly run out of water once again and the dry winter winds suck up all the soil moisture. Some 60pc of the region is yet to receive rainfall.

In terms of cross region knowledge sharing, it was great to welcome a touring group from the Goulburn Murray Irrigation District water leadership group who were travelling from their home base in Shepparton all the way to St George



in Balonne Shire. It was great to see this group, welcome them to our region and walk them through a lot of the issues from our perspective. We look forward to travelling to their region at some future point.

Our ever-present CEO, Emma, has also been very active in Region 12 of late. She attended and presented at a Darling Downs and South West Qld Council of Mayors meeting in Charleville which followed on some weeks after a presentation to the Border Region Organisation of Councils meeting in Inverell.

Mayor Samantha O'Toole
Chair, Region 12.





MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Communities Investment Package

Water Division is helping to deliver the Murray-Darling Basin Communities Investment Package — a \$270 million investment focused on putting communities, jobs and economic activity at the heart of delivering the Basin Plan. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment works to protect and strengthen our agriculture, water resources, the environment and our heritage.

For more information, visit the department's website:
www.awe.gov.au/communitiesinvestmentpackage



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

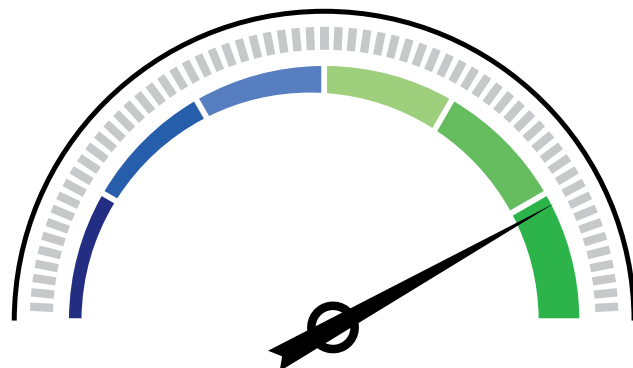
REPORT ON OUR PERFORMANCE

We track our 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 2021, our National Conference will be opened by Environment Minister, the Hon Sussan Ley, addressed by the NSW Water Minister The Hon Melinda Pavey and Water NSW CEO Jim Pavey and closed by the Minister for Water and Northern Australia, The Hon Keith Pitt.

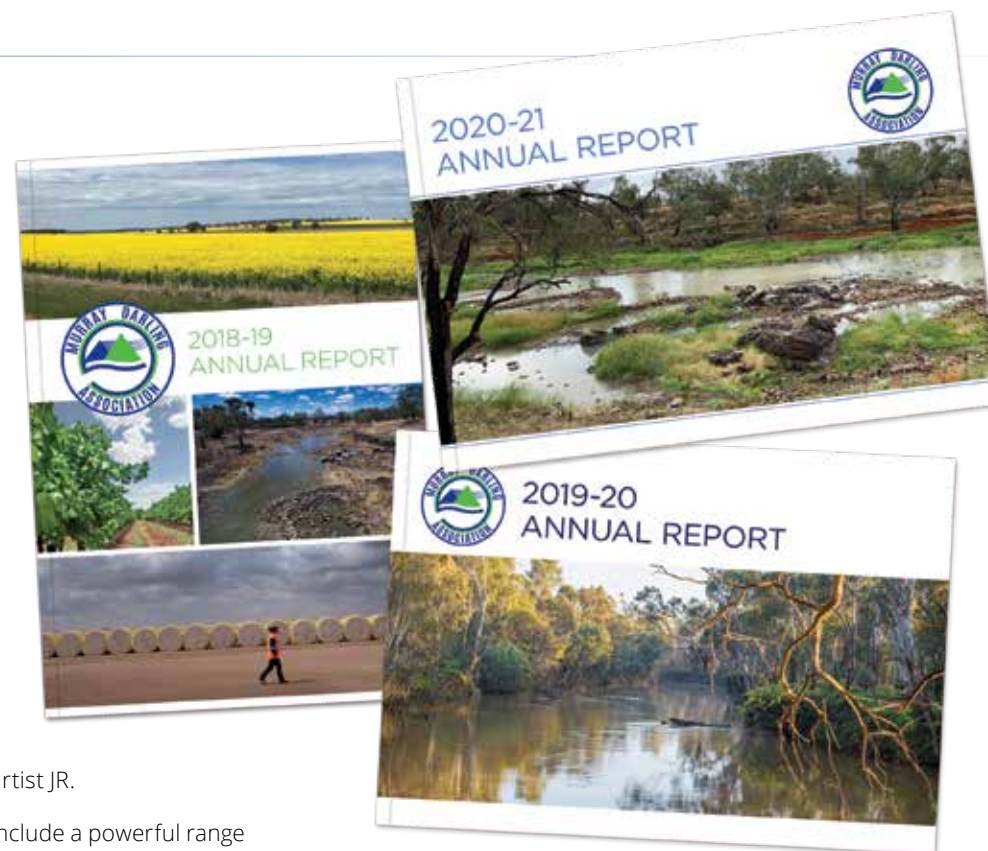
Presenters will include: Barkindji Elder Uncle Badger Bates, Marowra Elder Uncle Rex Smith and Grant Rigney, Ngarrindjeri leader and Chair of the Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations.

The Annual Dinner address will feature a presentation of the NGV's Homily to Country 2020 by French artist JR.

Other speakers at the conference, include a powerful range of community, business and industry leaders all known for their ability to build consensus and a stronger future for the Murray Darling Basin.

For the first time in any conference of its type, we also have the entire commonwealth water family including the Department of Ag Water and Environment, the CSIRO, the BOM, the Office of the Interim Inspector General, the MDBA and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder.

All are present for the full two days, not just as presenters, but each occupying a discovery booth enabling delegates to genuinely meet, engage with, hear from and inform the departments in a very meaningful way.



We will also have representatives of the NSW Department of Planning Industry and Environment Water and others.

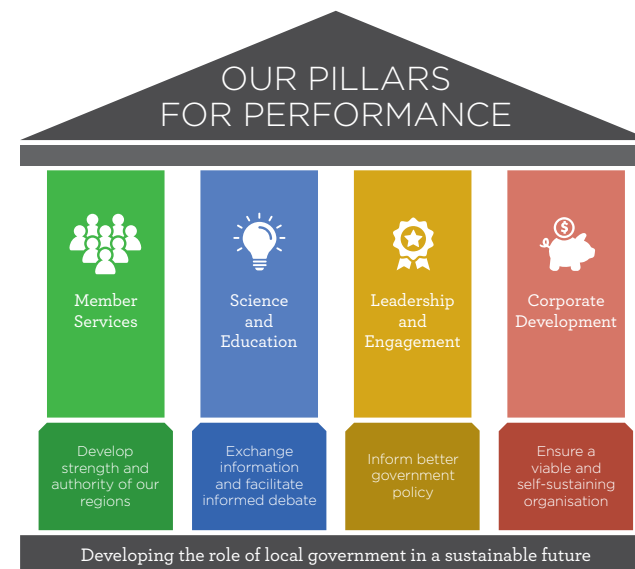
Our national conference, our AGM, and other events continue to deliver outcomes that ensure local government and the communities we serve inform the state and federal policies that impact our regions.

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
April 2020	The Hon Keith Pitt MP Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia
May 2020	Professor Michael Stewardson Interim CEO, One Basin CRC
July 2020	Phillip Glyde Chief Executive, Murray-Darling Basin Authority
September 2020	The Hon Sussan Ley MP Federal Minister for the Environment
	Senator Perin Davey Senator for New South Wales
	Mr Matthew Coulton General Manager, Water, Bureau of Meteorology
October 2020	Mr Chris Olszak Director and Co-founder, Aither
November 2020	The Hon Michael McCormack Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Development
	The Hon Mark Coulton MP Minister for Regional Health, Regional Communication and Local Government
	Cr David Thurley OAM Investiture at Government House Sydney

Month	Name
January 2021	The Hon Troy Grant Interim Inspector-General of Water Compliance
February 2021	The Hon Melinda Pavey MP NSW Minister for Water, Property and Housing, Member for Oxley
	Mr Jim Bentley CEO – NSW Water Sector, Deputy Secretary, Water – Department of Planning, Industry and Environment
March 2021	The Hon Keith Pitt MP Minister for Resources, Water and Northern Australia
	Productivity Commission Meeting to discuss the inquiry into the Register of foreign-owned water entitlements



Right: Radio interview, 2web

Far right: Cr David Thurley OAM and the Governor of NSW the Hon Margaret Beazley.





PILLAR 1 – MEMBER SERVICES

LAUNCH OF VISION 2025

This year, the MDA launched our 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 one of our 5 year plan, and giving effect to the priorities for local government so clearly outlined by our members at the 76th National Conference.

This Strategic Plan sets out our five-year goals and describes the strategies we will implement to achieve them. We commit 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. Our Strategic Plan builds on the foundations established by the 2016-19 Strategic Plan, and confirms our place as the Basin's primary driver in local leadership and policy development.

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
1.1.4 Deliver tailored projects and initiatives which meet the current and emerging needs of the Basin.	→	Ongoing. Currently delivering Basin Communities Leadership Program across our regions. Further projects and initiatives are currently being developed based on member needs and funding is being sought.
1.1.5 Enhance and expand the resources, materials and products available for our members. Design and develop content such as videos, web pages, Delegates' Report template.	✓	Delivered. Ongoing. Currently providing a range of member resources, including delegate reports and briefing reports. The MDA continues to improve resources, materials and products based on member feedback.
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.	✓	The MDA has developed a standard format for position statements. The Board was provided with more than 20 briefing reports this year for consideration prior to discussing important resolutions and issues
1.2.4 Deliver the Basin Communities Leadership Program.	→	Ongoing. Completed 3 workshops by 31 March 2021. The remaining 12 workshops will be delivered in 2021. Further funding has been sought for roll-out of the program across the Basin.
1.2.5 Secure funding for the continued roll-out of the regional economic diversification program.	→	Ongoing. Funding proposal completed. Proposals will be submitted to funding opportunities in 2021.



FOSTERING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS IN SCIENCE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Partnerships are key for the responsible management of Basin resources.

The MDA is very excited to announce its official partnership with Australia's national science research agency with the signing of the MDA / CSIRO Relationship Agreement, the first agreement of its kind for local government in Australia.

CEO Emma Bradbury met with key representatives from the CSIRO in Canberra in November 2020 to sign the agreement and begin discussions about key projects to undertake for the benefit of Basin councils and communities.

A key initiative includes the MDA Local Government Science and Advisory Sub Committee, which is an opportunity to develop knowledge within the MDA, by inviting skills-based members who can focus their skills, expertise and networks in areas that will benefit the MDA and align with our strategic priorities.

Emma Bradbury and Jane Coram (Director, Land and Water Business Unit, CSIRO) sign the Collaborative Relationship Agreement date



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 participated in the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submission to the <i>Independent Panel Assessment of the Northern Basin First Flush Event, July 2020</i> • submission to the <i>Socio-Economic Assessment Panel Draft Report</i> on 7 April 2020 • submission to the <i>NSW Border Rivers: Floodplain harvesting in water sharing plans</i>.
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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relationship Agreement with CSIRO to create stronger links between local government and science
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"> • partner in the One Basin CRC bid • key partner in Innovation Hub.
2.3.6 Engage key partners (agencies, universities and other key stakeholders) to collaborate and build on existing initiatives.	✓	Author of <i>Dark Emu</i> Bruce Pascoe provided a presentation titled <i>Back on country to build an industry for native foods, grains and grasses</i> at the MDA 2020 virtual national conference. Mr Pascoe also participated in the panel session.



REGIONAL BOUNDARY REVIEW

The MDA currently has 12 Regions across the Murray-Darling Basin, covering four states and the ACT. At the 2016 Annual General Meeting, the MDA membership resolved to:

- a) undertake a body of work, in 2017-18 to review the regional boundaries in collaboration with all member councils to ensure a continuation of alignment as communities of interest.
- b) notes that the Murray Darling Association does not recognise state borders as defining regional boundaries.

To ensure the strength of our regions, it is important that our member councils identify a strong alignment of interests within each region. To ensure that our regional boundaries do reflect and achieve that objective, a review is currently being undertaken with the active engagement of our members and stakeholders.

Feedback indicates that many regions have extended their collaboration with their regional organisation of councils and joint organisations and regional development associations. This has created a valuable triangulation of local government interests across levels of government and horizontally across regional footprints.

Following the review, a recommendation will be made to members at the 2022 National Conference.

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. This year the MDA hosted the Murray-Darling Roundtable, bringing together key stakeholders to address immediate and long term challenges of water security and river health in the Basin.</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>



PILLAR 3 – LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT CONT.



OBJECTIVES	STATUS	NOTES
3.1.3 Utilise annual conference motions as the basis for our policy and position development.	✓	Completed. See outcomes from our resolutions (p.xx)
3.2.2 Undertake an analysis of strategic regional alliances and prepare regional boundaries update discussion paper for member consideration in response.	➔	Ongoing. The MDA has commenced a Regional Boundary Review. This review is an opportunity for the MDA to better align and partner with regional organisations to increase opportunities for councils to participate more effectively with the MDA.
3.4.2 Maintain a Memorandum of Understanding with the Murray Darling Basin Authority, MDBA.	✓	Completed. Ongoing. The Memorandum of Understanding aims to maintain and enhance the positive relationship currently shared and builds on the success of the preceding MoU 2013-18. The importance of the MDBA and the MDA working closely remains important as MDBA continues to advance water reform activities in the basin and implement the Basin Plan. As a result, this MoU focusses on mutual cooperation, consultation and knowledge sharing.
3.5.3 Foster strong and active relationships with First Nations peak agencies across the Basin.	➔	The MDA is currently strengthening active relationships with First Nations peak agencies across the Basin including MLDRIN and NBAN.



SUPPORTING THE NEXT GENERATION OF WATER LEADERS

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 in Wakool NSW, Warren NSW and Cunnamulla QLD, with 12 further workshops planned for the year ahead.

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 is 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.



PILLAR 4 – CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

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.

OBJECTIVES	STATUS	NOTES
4.1.1 Provide and promote leadership development opportunities for our members.	✓	Ongoing. MDA member councils have been offered leadership opportunities through participation in the Basin Communities Leadership Program. Full enrolment of a complete cohort is valued at over \$67,500 per workshop, representing a significant contribution to council's training and development budget at no out of pocket cost to council.
4.1.1 Establish a Regional Executive Committee framework.	✓	Completed. At Board Meeting 406, the board resolved to establish a Committee of Regional Chairs consisting of such members to represent their regions in the role of chairs. The board now meets bi-monthly as a Committee of Regional Chairs for the purpose of knowledge sharing, regional development and inter-regional collaboration.
4.1.4 Maintain a strong Strategic Advisory Committee to support our planning and reporting functions.	✓	The Strategic Advisory Committee was convened in 2018 to provide advice to, and act as a reference and support mechanism for the Board in relation to the strategic development of the Association. Strategic Advisory Committee held 11 meetings since its first meeting. These meetings: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide strategic guidance and advice to the MDA board • act as a sounding board for MDA CEO • attract and retain diversity of thought, opinion, experience and representation.



Pillar 4 commits to ensuring our organisation is financially sustainable and robust. This year, the MDA lodged 9 grant applications across 3 programs totalling almost \$8.5m.

PILLAR 4 – CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT CONTINUED

4.2.2	Maintains submission-ready project proposals that reflect the needs of our member councils and communities	✓	Submission-ready project proposals have been completed . Proposals will be submitted to funding applications in early 2021.
4.2.5	Encourage membership renewal through robust internal communications. Follow up with non-renewing councils to identify reasons for non-renewal.	✓	Ongoing . Internal communications now includes monthly newsletter and monthly delegate's report for tabling at council, allowing councils to effectively report on MDA value.
4.4.1	Develop and implement succession planning for the organisation	→	Ongoing . The MDA is currently developing a sound succession plan for all key roles within the organisation.



Work with us to solve the greatest challenges through innovative science and technology.

[csiro.au/water](https://www.csiro.au/water)



Australia's National Science Agency

We are providing science solutions for the Murray-Darling Basin to preserve and protect this national icon for the future.



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 	Establish 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.

OUR PEOPLE



Emma Bradbury B. Soc. Sci, Grad Dip Ed, GAICD
Chief Executive Officer

Emma has almost 30 years' experience in business management, education, governance and strategic development.

This includes roles as CEO, Managing Director, Principal, and Councillor. Her 7 years with the MDA representing local government and communities across 4 states in an area of complex policy reform is seeing Emma's expertise in strategic

planning and implementation building confidence, stability, and continuing to deliver on mission for the councils and communities of the Murray-Darling Basin.



James Marshall
Policy Officer

James joined the Murray Darling Association staff in March 2019. James currently works three days a week as he is also a full-time student studying a Bachelor of Commerce (Economics) at Latrobe University. James has a background in agricultural industries and a keen interest in agri-economics.



Jess Maher
Communications and Engagement Officer

With a background in communications for social change and not-for-profit organisations, Jess joined the Murray Darling Association in June 2019.

Since joining the organisation, Jess has enjoyed meeting the MDA's region chairs and delegates at various events throughout the year including the MDA's 75th National

Conference in Toowoomba and the MDA Annual Strategic meeting in Moama and, through these meetings, learning about the Basin's complex issues and many opportunities first-hand.



Sharolyn Taylor
Executive Assistant

Sharolyn Taylor joined the team as Executive Assistant in February 2021.

Sharolyn has over eight years experience in providing executive support to Mayor and councillors. Her exceptional skills and experience together with her business acumen, extensive administration skills, knowledge, and passion for

the agricultural industry and with her knowledge of local government, she is an exciting addition to the executive team.



Cathy Keegan
Membership Services Officer

The MDA Board and staff would like to wish the wonderful Cathy Keegan all the best for her future endeavours. Thank you for all your dedication, hard work and energy you have brought to the role. You will be missed by all.

Region 1 is delighted to invite delegates to the 2022 MDA National Conference hosted by Albury City.



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

SPONSORS



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**



Australian Government



EXHIBITORS



Australian Government
Commonwealth Environmental Water Office



Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology



FINANCIAL STATEMENTS 2020-21

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.



COMMITTEE'S REPORT

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

COMMITTEE'S REPORT

Your Committee members submit the financial report of Murray Darling Association Inc. for the financial period ended 31 March 2021.

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 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr David Thurley	Chair Region 1	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Denis Patterson	Chair Region 2	April 1st 2020 - Dec 7th 2021
Cr Bronwyn Thomas	Chair Region 2	Dec 7th 2020 - March 31st 2021
Vacant	Chair Region 3	
Cr Jane MacAllister	Chair Region 4	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Peter Raison	Chair Region 5	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Melissa Rebbeck	Chair Region 6	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Andrew Tilley	Chair Region 7	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Brian Lockyer	Chair Region 8	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Paul Maytom	Chair Region 9	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Mayor Phyllis Miller	Chair Region 10	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Craig Davies	Chair Region 10A	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr John Campbell	Chair Region 11	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Cr Samantha O'Toole	Chair Region 12	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Emma Bradbury	Public Officer	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021
Peter George	Treasurer	April 1st 2020 - March 31st 2021

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.

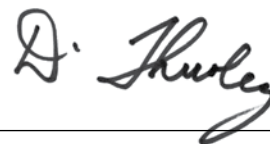
Operating Result

The surplus / (loss) after providing for income tax for the financial period amounted to (\$2,428) - [31 March 2020 \$33,447]

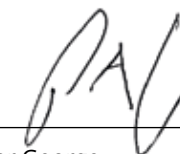
Going Concern

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 OAM
- National President



Peter George
- Treasurer

Dated: 3 May 2021

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

		2021	2020
Income			
	Note		
Conference Income		75,203	98,095
Income - Memberships	2	232,327	236,102
Income - Projects		240,827	66,031
Income From Fundraising Events		507	889
Interest Income	3	153	103
Other Income	4	117,293	196,386
Total Income		666,310	597,606

		2021	2020
Expenditure			
	Note		
Depreciation			
Depreciation - Low Value Pool		79	82
Depreciation - Motor Vehicle		3,426	324
Depreciation - Software		3,111	3,342
Depreciation - Office Equipment		3,263	1,498
Total Depreciation		9,879	5,247
Motor Vehicles			
Motor Vehicle Insurance		-	-
Fuel Expenses		-	-
Motor Vehicle Maintenance		2,589	182
Motor Vehicle Registration		856	1,217
Total Motor Vehicles		3,445	1,399
Advertising & Marketing		17,259	11,501
Bad Debts Expense		-	7,350
Bank Fees		1,249	707
Business Insurance		2,061	1,010
Computer Expenses		7,661	12,182
Conference Expenses		58,766	65,322
Engagement and Communiations		109	17,874
General Repairs & Maintenance		188	4,316
Licences and Subscriptions		41,040	20,511
Loss on sale of assets		9,116	-
Project Expenses		18,255	16,914
Meeting Expense		1,545	423
Other Payroll Expenses	5	12,077	31,457
Postage		910	3,460
Premises Rent - Echuca		21,816	15,964
Printing		2,790	1,130
Professional Fees	6	31,220	14,282
Public Liability Insurance		1,196	1,543
Staff Amenities		374	309
Staff Training Expenses		-	3,212
Stationery		2,107	1,463
Superannuation		32,382	25,921
Telephone Expenses		4,037	3,862
Travel & Accom. Expenses		27,384	14,677
Uniforms		-	32
Wages & Salaries Expenses		358,404	273,370
Water Expenses		-	7,995
Work Cover Premiums		3,468	729
Total Expenditure		668,738	564,159
Net Operating Profit / (Loss) For The period		(2,428)	33,447

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

ASSETS AND LIABILITIES STATEMENT

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
AS AT 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021	2020
Assets			
Current Assets			
Cash on Hand	7	376,298	437,749
Accounts Receivable and other Debtors	8	49,994	8,007
Total Current Assets		426,292	445,756
Non-Current Assets			
Property, plant and equipment	9	16,133	62,855
Other	10	1,100	1,100
Total Non-Current Assets		17,233	63,955
Total Assets		443,525	509,711
Liabilities			
Current Liabilities			
Accounts payable and other payables	11	201,889	273,569
Provisions	13	87,252	79,330
Total Current Liabilities		289,141	352,899
Non-Current Liabilities			
Non-Current Liabilities			
Borrowings	12	1,500	1,500
Total Non-Current Liabilities		1,500	1,500
Total Liabilities		290,641	354,399
Net Assets		152,884	155,312
Member's Funds			
Capital Reserve			
Reserves		-	-
Retained Earnings		152,884	155,312
Total Member's Funds		152,884	155,312

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MOVEMENTS IN EQUITY

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Retained Earnings \$	Asset Revaluation Reserve \$	Total \$
Balance at 1 July 2019	121,865	200,561	322,426
Comprehensive Income			
Profit (Loss) for the period	33,447	-	33,447
Total Comprehensive Income	33,447	-	33,447
Other			
Revaluations	-	(200,561)	(200,561)
Total Other	-	(200,561)	(200,561)
Balance at 31 March 2020	155,312	-	155,312
Balance at 1 April 2020	155,312	-	155,312
Comprehensive Income			
Profit (Loss) for the period	(2,428)	-	(2,428)
Total Comprehensive Income	(2,428)	-	(2,428)
Other			
Revaluations	-	-	-
Total Other	-	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2021	152,884	-	152,884

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	Notes	2021	2020
Cash flows from Operating Activities			
Other Receipts		689,698	912,043
Interest Received		153	103
Payments to Suppliers and Employees		(664,819)	(575,023)
Net Cash Provided by (Used In) Operating Activities	18b	25,032	337,123
Cash flows from Investing Activities			
Proceeds from sale of Property, plant and equipment		27,862	-
Payments for Property, plant and equipment		(48,653)	47,474
Net Cash Provided by (Used In) Investing Activities		(20,791)	47,474
Cash flows from Financing Activities			
Other cash items from financing activities		(65,682)	-
Net Cash Provided by (Used In) from Financing Activities		(65,682)	-
Net increase/(decrease) in cash held		(61,441)	384,597
Cash on Hand at Beginning of the Financial period		437,749	53,152
Cash on Hand at End of Financial period	18a	376,308	437,749

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

NOTES OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

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 OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

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.

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.

NOTES OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

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.

Change of Reporting Period

Murray Darling Association Incorporated had elected to change its annual reporting date from June 30th to March 31st. This being the second year of change the financial reports to March 31st 2020 contain 9 months of financial information. Previous years and comparative figures contain 12 months of financial information. The decision was approved at the 2019 Annual General Meeting. The intent of this decision is to allow the Annual General Meeting to be held earlier in the year and avoid the congested second half of the year.

	2021	2020
2. Memberships		
Memberships	232,327	236,102
3. Interest Income		
Interest Received	153	103
4. Other Income		
Sundry Income	27,376	2,450
ATO Cashflow Boost	89,917	-
Water Sales - Permanent	-	193,936
	117,293	196,386
5. Employee Entitlements		
Annual Leave	12,077	31,457
6. Professional Fees		
Consulting Fees	25,620	7,500
Audit Fees	5,600	6,782
	31,220	14,282
7. Cash on Hand		
Cash At Bank	376,298	437,749
	376,298	437,749
8. Accounts Receivable and other Debtors		
Trade Debtors	8,250	8,395
Less Provision for Doubtful Debts	-	(7,350)
Goods and Services Tax	41,744	6,962
	49,994	8,007

NOTES OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS CONTINUED

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	2021	2020
9. Property, Plant and Equipment		
Motor Vehicles	-	40,593
Less Accumulated Depreciation	-	(324)
	-	40,269
Office Furniture, Equipment and Computers	15,793	15,793
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(9,458)	(6,195)
	6,335	9,598
Low Value Pool	1,761	1,761
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(1,630)	(1,551)
	131	210
Software	23,300	23,300
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(18,633)	(15,522)
	4,667	7,778
Artwork	5,000	5,000
Total Property, Plant and Equipment	16,133	62,855
10 Other Non-Current Assets		
Bond Paid - Office	1,100	1,100
	1,100	1,100
11. Accounts Payable and Other Payables		
Trade Creditors	5,196	3,869
Prepaid Memberships	13,576	-
BCLP Grant Received	170,769	253,969
Tax Payable	12,348	15,731
	201,889	273,569
12. Borrowings		
Non-Current		
Debenture Loans	1,500	1,500

	2021	2020
13. Provisions		
Current		
Provision for Annual Leave	52,561	48,803
Provision for Long Service Leave	21,343	13,024
Superannuation Liability	13,348	17,503
	87,252	79,330
Provision for Annual Leave		
Opening Balance 1 April 2020	48,803	30,370
Additional Provisions Raised	(662)	22,570
Amounts Taken	4,420	(4,137)
Balance at 31 March 2021	52,561	48,803
Provision for Long Service Leave		
Opening Balance 1 April 2020	13,024	-
Additional Provisions Raised	8,319	13,024
Amounts Taken	-	-
Balance at 31 March 2021	21,343	13,024
Total Provisions		
Opening Balance 1 April 2020	61,827	30,370
Additional Provisions Raised	7,657	35,594
Amounts Taken	4,420	(4,137)
Superannuation Liability	13,348	17,503
Balance at 31 March 2021	87,252	79,330
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 2021 (31 March 2020: \$Nil)		
16. Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets		
There are no Contingent Liabilities at 31 March 2021 (31 March 2020: \$Nil). There are no Contingent Assets at 31 March 2021 (31 March 2020: \$Nil).		

NOTES OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

CONTINUED

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

	2021	2020
17. Events after the reporting period		
Since 31 March 2021, there have been no events that would materially affect the Financial Statements at Balance Date.		
18. Cash Flow Information		
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	376,308	437,749
	376,308	437,749
(b) Reconciliation of cash flows from operating activities with net current period profit		
Current period profit after income tax	(2,428)	33,447
Cash flows excluded from current period profit:		
Depreciation Expense	9,879	5,247
Impairment Loss / (Gain) on Fixed Assets	9,116	(5,310)
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase) / Decrease in Receivables	41,988	15,243
(Increase) / Decrease in Prepayments	13,576	-
Increase / (Decrease) in Payables	(55,021)	251,264
Increase / (Decrease) in Provisions	7,922	37,232
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	25,032	337,123

STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED
FOR THE PERIOD ENDED 31 MARCH 2021

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 36 to 44:

- 1 present a true and fair view of the financial position of Murray Darling Association Inc. as at 31 March 2021 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 OAM
– National President



Peter George
– Treasurer

Dated: 3 May 2021

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF
MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC**

Report on the Audit of the Financial Report

Opinion

We have audited the accompanying financial report of Murray Darling Association Inc, which comprises the balance sheet as at 31 March 2021, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the certification by members of the committee on the annual statements giving a true and fair view of the financial position and performance of the association.

In our opinion, the financial report gives a true and fair view of the financial position of Murray Darling Association Inc as of 31 March 2021, and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements, and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009.

Basis of Opinion

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 association 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

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist the association to meet the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009. 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 Committee for the Financial Report

The committee of the Murray Darling Association Inc are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards and the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009 and for such internal control as the committee determines 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, committees are responsible for assessing the association'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 committee either intends to liquidate the association or to cease operations, or has 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 association's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the committee.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the committee'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 association'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 association 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 committee 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.



Warren Pollock
MGR ACCOUNTANTS
mgr@mgr.com.au

3 May 2021

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*

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

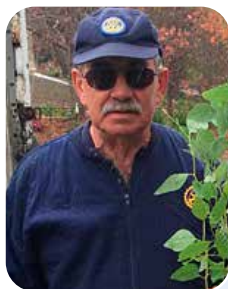
Mr Ian Killmister	Nathalia*
Mr Jack James Larkin OAM	Kooloonong*
Mr Gunnar Vernon Lawrence AM	Hawthorn*
Mr John Joseph McGuire	*
Cr Neil McKinnon OAM	Jerilderie*
Mr T Norm Martin	Wodonga*
Cr Reg Mengler	Balranald*
Dr William Andres Merrylees	Carrathool*
Mr Thomas Ernest Pearsall	Albury*
Mr Percival Alfred 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*

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



WE VALUE OUR HISTORY



Mr Rex Adams

The Murray Darling Association notes the passing of Cr Rex Adams OAM of Town of Walkerville Council, who passed away on 30 July 2020 at the age of 74.

Rex is remembered through his dedicated and passionate service to local government as a councillor and deputy mayor for the Town of Walkerville Council. Rex was a delegate of the Murray Darling Association for over 18

years and Chair of Region 7 for 6 years.

In recognition of his service to local government and the environment, Rex received an Order of Australia Medal in 2018. Since 1989, Rex was involved in the organisation of native tree revegetation in a number of areas in South Australia and has planted over 120,000 trees. Since 2014, Rex propagated over 25,000 trees for supply to fire ravaged property owners in the Adelaide Hills area and farmers in the Pinery area.



Mr Rodney Button

The Murray Darling Association notes the passing of Cr Rodney Button of Yorke Peninsula.

Rodney served as a councillor on Yorke Peninsular for over 20 years, and was a lively and active member of the MDA, championing the involvement of South

Australia and the western communities in sustainable water management.

Rodney served the MDA as Chair of Region 8, and Vice President until his retirement from the Board in 2015. With wife Rosemary he was a regular attendee at the MDA National Conference, adding colour and commitment.



Mr Wulf Reichler

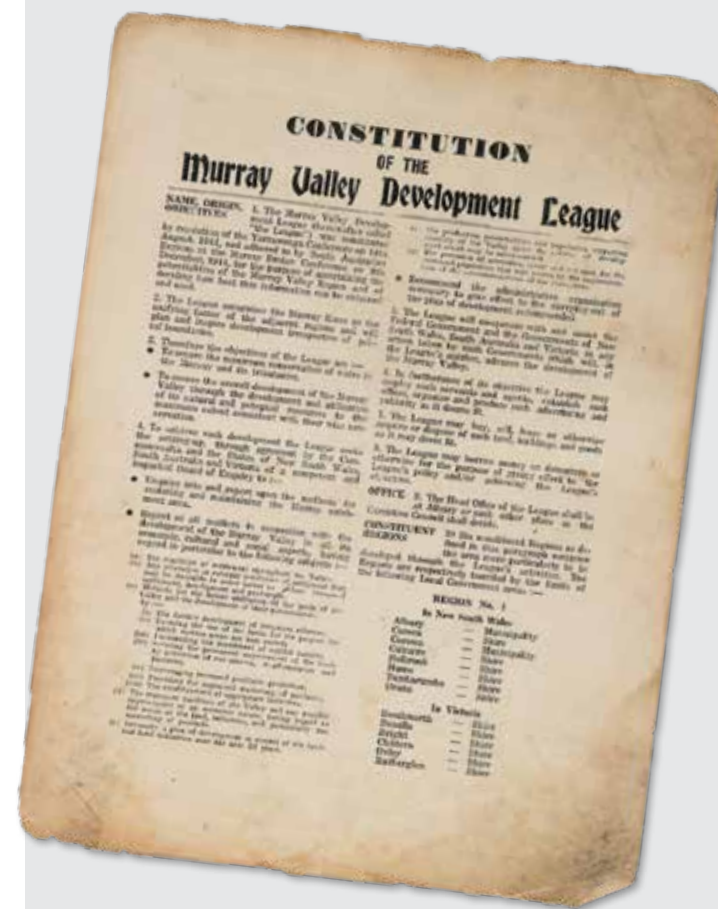
The Murray Darling Association notes the passing of Cr Wulf Reichler OAM of Brewarrina Shire Council.

Cr Reichler was a staunch advocate for the association and played a key role in expanding the association's membership into northern NSW

and southern Queensland. Brewarrina was one of the first members of the MDA along the Darling River, as far back as 1992, and hosted the association's first national conference along the Darling River in 2000. Wulf served

on the MDA board for many years and was awarded Life Membership of the MDA in 2007.

Wulf was always prepared to travel extraordinary distances, often dodging kangaroos and emus, to all corners of the Basin to participate in MDA activities. He played a pivotal role during the preparation of the MDA's many submissions on the Basin Plan. Wulf always took an interest in staff activities and welfare and helped develop a number of important projects in the Brewarrina and Bourke area of the Darling catchment.



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.

