Murraylands and Riverland
Local Government Association

Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association

Date Thursday 30 July 2026
Venue Waikerie Riverfront Community Hub Pavilion
Leonard Norman Drive, Waikerie SA 5330

Briefing

Not open to the public.

PROGRAM

9:30am	**Arrival, Registration + Tea and coffee**
9:45am	**Pavilion Tour - Highlights from Mayor Norton**
10:00am	**Subscriptions 2026 to 2031**

Annual General Board Meeting

PROGRAM

10:30am	**Annual General Meeting Open**
12:00 – 12:30	**Conversation with Member for Chaffey, Tim Whetstone MP**
2:30pm	**Annual General Meeting Close**
	Light Lunch provided

The Board Meeting is open to the public, and on prior request a via MS Teams Video Conference link can be arranged. For online access please email ceo@mrlga.sa.gov.au prior to 12 noon 28 July 2026.

Being a unified local government sector
working in the best interest of the region and our communities.

AGENDA FOR THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE MURRAYLANDS & RIVERLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

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ATTACHMENT 6	Written Update from Landscape Board, Murraylands and Riverland
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1 WELCOME

Acknowledgment of Country

We acknowledge the First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee Region, the Ngaiawang, Ngawait, Nganguruku, Erawirung, Ngintait, Ngaralte & Ngarkat people, the traditional owners of the lands and waters on which we live, work and play. We pay our respects to their Elders past and present and extend that respect to other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in and visit our beautiful region.

We recognise their enduring connection to Country, culture, community and the waterways that have sustained life for countless generations.

As local government, we are committed to listening, learning and working in genuine partnership as caring for Country is a shared responsibility and that respectful collaboration strengthens our communities, enriches decision-making and helps create a more sustainable and inclusive future for all.

Presidents Welcome

Chairperson, Mayor Ella Winnall to open the meeting.

Welcome Board Members, online attendees and invited guests.

Mayor Caroline Phillips is a listed apology for the meeting.
Mayor Paul Simmons is a listed apology for the meeting.

Acknowledge:
- Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch is performing mayoral duties while Mayor Paul Simmons is on leave and joins the Board today representing Coorong District Council.
- Delfina Lanzilli, Executive Director Member Services and Leanne Schmidt, Manager Emergency Support is in attendance representing LGA.

2 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Pursuant to Clause 3.3.1 of the Charter and Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1999 (SA), board members are required to declare any potential conflict of interest(s).

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A copy of the General Board Meeting Minutes is provided at **Attachment 1** (including attendance register).

Motion

"Minutes from the MRLGA General Board Meeting held at the Southern Mallee District Council Offices in Lameroo on Friday 24 April 2026 be taken as read and confirmed."

Moved, *Seconded*

4 ACTIONS REGISTER

- There were 26 board actions from 23/24 and 1 item remains pending.

	20 October 2023 - General Meeting	
	Action:	
1	**Charter Review** Carry out a review and any draft amendments to be abled with Ceo Network and Board before a legal review and adoption.	This was temporarily on hold until the LGA constitutional review was completed. Councils voted at the LGA AGM November Minutes. AGM-2024-Minutes-22-November-2024.pdf This item is now pending the

		outcome of Item. 5.2 – Process to appoint LGA President.

- 1 item remains pending from 24/25 board actions including:

	7 August 2024 – Annual General Meeting	
	Action(s)	
2	**Regional Drought Resilience Plan** The MRLGA re-engage PIRSA and Ministers (Scriven's) Office regarding MRLGA's role in relation to MR Plan, Drought Resilience and Drought Response.	– The Consortium requested a meeting in January with PIRSA. It said its earliest availability was March, but later rescheduled our meeting to 7 May 2026. – Next steps for this action are outlined and to be discussed at Item 10.5.

- There were 32 board actions emerging from 25/26 meetings. 12 items are active and pending.

	31 July 2025	
	Action(s)	
3	**Item of Business to LGA AGM re: Collection of Landscape Levy** The MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to liaise with Mayor Thorley on a potential motion to the LGA AGM (from Rural City of Murray Bridge) about advocacy towards the withdrawal of Council collecting State levy charges, and the concept of an alternative rate notice format for the sector that separates charges.	– Completed
4	**SAROC Groupings** MRLGA Ceo to confirm the groupings representation clauses (including change in regional lga president, vice president and proxy (either specific or flexible nomination).	– Completed. Regional LGA's cannot conduct voting (it must be done by LGA and SAROC Reps cannot have proxy's).
5	**Procedure for items of business to National Ministerial Meetings** LGA to advise of the process to achieve item(s) of business for Minsters Meetings (such as the ones highlighted below). • Local Government Ministers' Forum • Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting	– Completed. LGA responded on 21/10 and the information was disseminated.
6	**Letter to LGA in support of Mayor Simmons being a nominated representative on the SA Drought Advisory Group** The MRLGA Board agree to co-sign a letter from MRLGA to LGA in support of Mayor Simmons as nominee for the role LGA representative on the SA Drought Advisory Working Group.	– Completed
7	**Invite new Landscape Board Ceo** MRLGA Ceo to invite the new Landscape Board Ceo (when known) to an MRLGA meeting, and inform them of a desire to discuss the region having the States highest landscape levy.	– Completed. New Ceo will visit Councils separately.
	Invite new Landscape Board Ceo MRLGA Ceo to extend a new invite to Ceo to present at next meeting.	– Completed. – LB Ceo had a prior commitment on 30 July and is now invited for October meeting.
8	**RDRP** That the MRLGA Board: Support the MRLGA Ceo to pursue an agreement with consortium partners that establish a 12 month shared role for drought resilience coordination using the $140k Implementation Funding.	– Completed
9	**RDRP** That the MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to negotiate for equal division of delivery funding to each three consortium partners, and for it to progress drought resilience initiatives and report back to the Board on its progress".	– Next steps for this action are outlined and to be discussed at Item 10.5
10	**RDRP** The Board support the MRLGA Ceo as the signing officer on funding proposals associated with RDRP funding."	– Completed
11	**Personnel Changes**	– Bank could not receive new user

	The Board approve for its banking systems and forms to remove Mayor Phillips and add Mayor Bailey to the Banks SA and BBO system in line with President and Vice President appointments following the AGM.	paper work until the organisation could be 'ID'. – Paperwork lodged (mid-late '25) – BankSA emailed 20 July '26 stating it received the paperwork but is pending review.
12	**Flood Funding** MRLGA Ceo to liaise with Mid Murray Council about the financials of flood funding and if it can write to the crarp to access the remaining funds.	– MRLGA Ceo met with MMC Ceo 13 Jan. MMC will review more of the financials and be in touch if further advocacy is needed. – Completed
13	**MMC requested** MRLGA Ceo to invite Hon Kirsty McBain to tour the Murraylands and Riverland.	– Not yet commenced.
14	**RPC requested**: The need to list an agenda item for the Adelaide Freight Bypass (and risks/ potential impacts from the delivery stages of this project)	– Item raised with Ceo Network on 6 Nov '25 during its meeting with Senior Executives of DIT. While early concept design work is progressing, the State seeks 80/20 funding arrangements with Feds before further design work. – Completed

	30 October 2025	
	Action(s)	
15	**SAROC Reps Attendance** The MRLGA Board temporarily suspend having delegates attend SAROC meetings until LGA can demonstrate confidence in governance, democratic process, value and outcomes back to the regional grouping, and ask SAROC Chair to speak with regional grouping about solutions for improvement.	– Completed.
16	**One Basin CRC** Ceo to inquire about CRC's acting arrangements.	– Avril Hogan Chief Operating Officer One Basin CRC Email | avril.hogan@onebasin.com.au Ph | 0400 628 257 Web | www.onebasin.com.au – Completed
17	Ceo to see if more updates/information on CRC can be shared with the Board.	– MRLGA Ceo met with One Basin CRC Coo on 3 Feb – action limited while Ceo role is vacant. No further next available on this action.
18	**Sustainable Communities Program** The MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to prepare a submission to the SCP in accordance with the scope parameters outlined in agenda Item 8.4.	– MRLGA has identified an alternative partnership pathway outside of the grant program and it therefore did not make a submission.
19	**Administration fees for regional delivery on behalf of PIRSA** That the MRLGA Ceo liaise with PIRSA Ceo about agenda Items 8.5 with a view to structuring an arrangement that supports regional local government associations to participate in drought prepared opportunities, but not at the expense of the councils operational and regional priorities that support the sustainability of local government.	– Next steps for this action are outlined and to be discussed at Item 10.5.

	5 February 2026	–
	Action(s)	–
20	**Feedback to LGA** The MRLGA Ceo to provide feedback to the LGA about the process for advocacy in the lead up to future (State and Federal) Elections	– Completed
21	**Reintstaement of SAROC Reps** The MRLGA Board support SAROC representatives to attend meetings at times when items are pertinent to regional priorities. It supports the MRLGA Ceo, President and SAROC Representatives to continue dialogue with the LGA Ceo and President to advocate for improved engagement and advocacy frameworks with all Councils.	– Completed MRLGA (President, Ceo and Saroc Rep) met with LGA (President, Ceo and SAROC Chair) on 25 March accordingly.
22	**Call for there to be a SA Commissioner for Agriculture** The MRLGA Board, support (in-principle) the LCLGA proposal to	– Completed

	investigate a Commissioner for Agriculture in South Australia, amidst growing challenges facing the regional and rural areas and the need for an expert, independent role to act in the best interest of South Australian Agriculture. Further support would be subject to the scope, powers and functions of the role.	
23	**States withdrawal to prepare a Digital Connectivity Plan** The MRLGA support the MRLGA Ceo to refer the regional digital connectivity matter to relevant state and federal members	– Temporarily on hold while the SA State Election was underway. – Item to be delivered in Q1 26/27.
24	**Audit Committee Exemption** The MRLGA Board support the continuation of the exemption for MRLGA from having a risk and audit committee, given the subsidiary is externally and independently audited each year to the same standard as Councils.	– Completed. Minister approved the exemption on 29 June 2026 (26MLG0034)
25	**Storage of Records** The MRLGA Board support the Ceo to release an EOI to (constituent) Councils who can perform records management services to scan all documents and register them in Sharepoint, as well as organise all documents pre-1980 in categories for MRLGA Ceo and President to determine their value for long term archival and report back to the Board (before any permanent documents are destroyed). If a Council is unable to deliver the service, the MRLGA will seek an external provider.	– Underway : EOI has been sent to all 8 Councils. – Next steps will be taken in August

	24 April 2026	
	Action(s)	
26	**Letter of Advocacy** The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to LGA asking if it would invite the Chair of the Committee, Mrs Fiona Phillips to an online webinar after the committee has finalised the inquiry to discuss the findings and be open to queries	– On hold until after the public hearings, Adelaide 25 August. – A request to speak at the hearing was lodged and later accepted on 17 July.
27	**Meeting Request** The MRLGA Ceo write to the respective Federal Ministers to seek meetings on Housing and Planning and a separate meeting for Roads and LG Sustainability and that the MRLGA Ceo consider attending ALGA in Canberra to support advocacy	– Completed. – MRLGA President and Vice President met with King's advisor in June in Canberra. A mutual time with McBain's advisor was unable to be reached.
28	**Inquiry – National state of the Assets Report** MRLGA Ceo will write to ALGA to seek advice if/when a 2025 National State of the Assets Report will be released to support ongoing advocacy	– Completed. ALGA advised it would release the report at NGA, Canberra which it did.
29	**Letter of Advocacy** The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to Ministers King and McBain (cc LGA and SA Grants Commission) outlining strong support of the LGA's supplementary road funding advocacy and that the need is critical."	– A successful funding announcement was made prior to a letter being drafted.
30	**Energy from Waste Presentation** MRLGA Ceo to organise an online presentation about energy from waste technologies, including an overview of the various energy products that can be derived from selected waste streams and its potential role towards Green Urea, Synthetic Fuels, AdBlue and others in light of the State's objectives.	– To be organised.
31	**Letter of Advocacy** The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to the LGA outlining the valid reasons why regional councils should be provided with an appropriate level of funding and support to deliver regional public health plan reviews and updates."	– To be organised.
32	**Pursuit of Regional Partnership with GISA** The MRLGA Ceo undertake liaison with GISA and appropriate stakeholders to ascertain interest from partners for a joint approach to a single strategy, pursuant to the conditions outlined in Item 9.2 of the Agenda and report back to the board before next steps	– Underway.
33	**Delegation** The MRLGA Board issue delegation to the Ceo to sign and execute the grant funding agreement with PIRSA (to receive approximately $100,000 income) to deliver projects in the region under the Regional Drought Resilience Program	– Completed.
34	**RDRP Coordinator**	– Not delivered.

	Provide the Board with a list of the opportunities and risks if MRLGA was to put forward itself as Regional Coordinator for the fRRR Community Impact Program.	fRRR moved forward with an EOI via a separate online platform that MRLGA did not observe. Whilst we initially considered the income, it remains a function that others may be best to perform with their resources.
35	**Letter of Advocacy** That MRLGA write to relevant Ministers and the Premier about community transport and the impacts of heavy vehicles on Council impacted roads	– Item Underway MRLGA Ceo met with CDC reps online on 20 May to understand the 'asks'. MRLGA liaised with TBCC on 21 May to better understand the issues and 'asks'. A draft letter has been prepared but not yet issued. – ETA August '26

Discussion

Item 13 – Board to review and advise.

<u>Motion</u>

"That the MRLGA Board note the actions completed and those underway from the previous meetings.

Moved, *Seconded*

5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS

5.1 ALGA

- **Current Policy Work**
  - Local Government Financial Sustainability
  - Emergency Management
  - Housing and Planning
  - Roads & Infrastructure
  - Closing the gap
  - Jobs and Skills
  - Environment
  - Cyber Security
  - Climate Change
  - Intergovernmental relations

- **How ALGA represent local government**
  ALGA represents and advocates for local government by participating in the following Ministerial Councils and Forums:
  - National Cabinet (once per year)
  - Council on Federal Financial Relations (once per year)
  - Local Government Ministers' Forum
  - Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting
  - National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting
  - Joint Council on Closing the Gap
  - Energy and Climate Change Ministerial Council
  - Environment Ministers' Meeting
  - Building Ministers' Meeting
  - Water Ministers' Meeting
  - Planning Ministers' Meeting
  - Cultural Ministers' Meeting
  - Food Ministers' Meeting
  - Ministerial Migration Roundtable

- **Local Government Ministers Forum**

Last Meetings:

2025	November (28)	Online
2025	April	Online
2024	November	Melbourne

A link to the November communique is below:
Communiqué November 2025

- Examining Financial Sustainability
- Accounting for Asset Depreciation
- Disaster Preparedness and Response

Note:
A motion relating to this forum is outlined with 2026 National State of the Assets Report Summary below.

- **Advocacy, Events & News**

  - **National General Assembly (Canberra)** **23 to 25 June 2026**

Discussion

Meeting with Minister King's Advisor
Mayor Winnall and Mayor Bailey to share a brief overview of their conversation with Minister King's Advisor.

Other Comments
Open table for any NGA discussions.

Note: MRLGA Ceo Network
During the MRLGA Ceo Network Forum on Monday 29 June 2026, feedback was provided to MRLGA Ceo for a desire to have more collective advocacy undertaken at ALGA next year, as a group may have more success in yielding audiences with Federal Ministers.

- **National Roads Congress (Cairns)** 25-26 August 2026

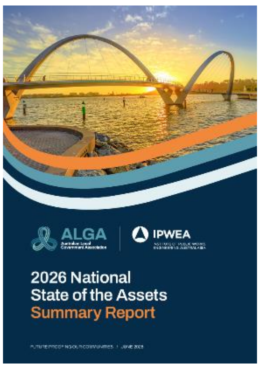
- **Online Webinars**
  NA

- **2026 – ALGA has made submissions to:**

July	Solar Panel Reuse and Recycling Australia
June	National Biosecurity Reforms
	EPBC Act Reforms – National Env. Standards
	Australia's Foreign Relations Amendment Bill 2026
May	National Guideline for Lithiu-ion Battery Waste Management
	Rual, Regional and Remote Medicare Access and Funding
	Streamlining and Modernising the National Construction Code
April	To Fair Work Commission on Fuel Cost Recovery
Mar	Productivity in Australia
	Australian Tyre Industry
Feb	2026-27 Australian Budget
	Draft public guidance for the Future Made in Australia Commun
Jan	Productivity Commission Inquiry into Heavy Vehicle Reform

- **2026 National State of the Assets Summary Report**

Discussion



This Summary Report draws on the findings of the 2026 National State of the Assets (NSoA) Technical Report, prepared by the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia (IPWEA) in partnership with ALGA.
The report supports evidence based advocacy and outlines "estimated replacement cost of assets in poor to very poor condition is between **$65 billion and $68 billion**, while assets in fair condition, function, and capacity represent a further **$173 billion to $212 billion** in future renewal and upgrade demand."

This report presents ongoing, compelling evidence of one of the many critical challenges requiring urgent Commonwealth and State Government attention. Continued underinvestment in local government public assets, places increasing pressure on the infrastructure that communities rely on every day.

Parks, local roads, recreation facilities, community buildings, drainage, stormwater systems, footpaths and public spaces are fundamental to creating thriving, liveable, healthy and sustainable environments. Without additional and sustained investment, governments risk undermining some of the very measures used to assess the success, health and liveability of Australia's cities and towns. Investing in local government infrastructure is an investment in stronger communities, improved wellbeing and the long-term prosperity of the country.

Open for discussion.

A draft motion is tabled below for consideration.

Motion

"That the MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter to the Minister for Local Government, Rhiannon Pearce (for signing by the MRLGA President and Vice President) outlining the urgent need to respond to the widening gap and underinvestment in local government public assets and ask the item be discussed - as a matter of urgency at the next Local Government Ministers Forum with all States, as a call action for Ministers work together and facilitate change.

Moved, Seconded

- **Fuel supply pressures highlight critical role of local government – ALGA**

- **ALGA calls for urgent action on National Packaging Reform – ALGA**
  Each year, Australia uses over 1.3 million tonnes of plastic packaging, but more than 1 million tonnes ends up in landfill or as litter. The new report from the Australian Council of Recycling and the Australian Packaging Covenant Organisation, *Securing Australia's Plastic Recycling Future,* presents an industry in danger of collapse without urgent reform

- **ALGA welcomes the national solar panel recycling pilot – ALGA**
  The Government will invest $24.7 million over three years, including establishing up to 100 pilot collection sites nationwide, to divert end-of-life solar panels from landfill.

- **Reinstatement of the national inquiry into local government sustainability – ALGA**
  ALGA President Mayor Matt Burnett said: *"Reinstatement of the inquiry is a welcome first step in addressing financial sustainability – we simply can't afford to wait any longer."*

- **Council voices heard in Government's $5 million response to Rex shutdown – ALGA**

- **ALGA welcomes the passage of EPBC Act reforms – ALGA**
  Reforms to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act will enable regional and strategic planning, helping to deliver national priorities like housing and renewables.

- **ALGA welcomes the National Climate Change Partnership – ALGA**
  Energy and Climate Ministers endorsed the first National Climate Change Partnership (NCCP) which sets out how governments will work together to address emissions and climate impacts. The NCCP recognises partnership with local government as critical in achieving national climate goals, stating that local government contributions to climate action are nationally significant.

5.2 LGA of SA

- **LGA Representatives**

  Welcome:
  - Delfina Lanzilli (Executive Director Member Services) and
  - Leanne Schmidt (Manager Emergency Support)

  from the LGA to provide an LGA update and answer questions.

  Discussion

  Open for discussion and questions.

- **Topical Update**

  July 2026 update is below — Link to LGA Update 2026

- **LGA Strategic Plan**

  Strategic Plan 2025 -2030 is below — Link to LGA Strategic Plan

- **LGA Board Meetings**

Board Agenda from 23 July 2026	Not yet disseminated as of 22 July.
Board Draft Minutes from 23 July 2026	Not yet disseminated as of 22 July.
Board Agenda for 14 May 2026	Public Meeting Agenda 14 May 2026
Board Draft Minutes for 14 May 2026	DRAFT Minutes 14 May 2026

- **LGA President Webinar Series 2026**

  LGA President webinar series 2026 | LGA South Australia

  All webinars are held from 11am to 12 noon.

Date		Webinar
27 February	2026	Ombudsman Briefing
27 March	2026	Role of Behavioral Standards Panel
24 April	2026	
26 June	2026	Minister for Local Government, Rhiannon Pearce MP
31 July	2026	Session with new LGA Ceo : Victoria MacKirdy
28 August	2026	tbc
25 September	2026	tbc
30 October	2026	tbc
27 November	2026	tbc

- **LG Elections**

  A link to Election Information — 2027 LG Elections

  Key dates include:

Roll close:	Monday	4 January 2027
Nominations open:	Tuesday	26 January 2027
Nominations close:	Tuesday	9 February 2027
Close of voting (Polling Day):	Wednesday	7 April 2027 (5pm)
Scrutiny and count:	Saturday	10 April 2027 (9am)

- **ESCOSA - LG Advice Scheme – Second Cycle Schedule**

A link to the Information Page
A link to the Schedule and an extract is below:

Table 1: Schedule of Councils

	2026-27	2027-28	2028-29	2029-30
1	Adelaide Hills Council	City of Marion	Alexandrina Council	Berri Barmera Council
2	Adelaide Plains Council	City of Mitcham	Campbelltown City Council	City of Holdfast Bay
3	Barunga West Council	City of Onkaparinga	City of Charles Sturt	City of Norwood, Payneham and St Peters
4	City of Burnside	City of Playford	City of Mount Gambier	City of Port Adelaide Enfield
5	City of Port Lincoln	City of Victor Harbor	City of Unley	City of Tea Tree Gully
6	City of Prospect	City of Whyalla	Coorong District Council	Copper Coast Council
7	City of Salisbury	Clare & Gilbert Valleys Council	District Council of Elliston	District Council of Ceduna
8	City of West Torrens	District Council of Cleve	District Council of Loxton Waikerie	District Council of Coober Pedy
9	District Council of Yankalilla	District Council of Grant	District Council of Tumby Bay	District Council of Franklin Harbour
10	Kingston District Council	District Council of Karoonda East Murray	Mount Barker District Council	District Council of Mount Remarkable
11	Mid Murray Council	District Council of Kimba	Port Pirie Regional Council	District Council of Orroroo Carrieton
12	Regional Council of Goyder	District Council of Robe	Renmark Paringa Council	District Council of Peterborough
13	Rural City of Murray Bridge	Light Regional Council	Tatiara District Council	District Council of Streaky Bay
14	Wattle Range Council	Lower Eyre Council	The Corporation of the City of Adelaide	Kangaroo Island Council
15	Yorke Peninsula Council	Municipal Council of Roxby Downs	The Flinders Ranges Council	Naracoorte Lucindale Council
16		Northern Areas Council	Town of Gawler	Port Augusta City Council
17		Town of Walkerville	Wudinna District Council	Southern Mallee District Council
18				The Barossa Council
19				Wakefield Regional Council

Consultation Report

ESCOSA plan to release a “What We Heard” report in early August 2026 reflecting feedback from the 43 submissions received during consultation.

Fees

The draft framework stated:

The Commission will provide further information about fees for the second cycle of the scheme as the final Framework and Approach develops, through this consultation.

Submission by Rural City of Murray Bridge to ESOCSA

The Rural City of Murray Bridge wrote to MRLGA on 19 June advising that at its Council Meeting on Tuesday 9 June '26: …Council also considered item 904.4 – Draft Submission – Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA) Advice Scheme Draft Framework and Approach at the same meeting. As part of Council's endorsed submission to ESCOSA, Council resolved to include a recommendation that ESCOSA consider the inclusion of regional Local Government Associations' financial structure and accountability as part of the review.

- **LGA AGM** — **Thursday 3 and Friday 4 December 2026**
  AGM Event Details

Items of Business Close: **5pm, Monday 24 August** (ie 3 weeks)

MRLGA is not eligible to submit motions to LGA's OGM or AGM, however the Board may wish to consider the following areas / activities as a collective, and where there is mutual agreement, provide its support for a constituent Council to table it in its respective chamber for a possible Item of Business to LGA AGM.

Discussion

- **Process to appoint LGA President**

The pathway for an elected member to be LGA President requires an individual to have a minimum of one year on SAROC.

This requirement has a negative flow on impact to all regional elected members in that :
- It reduces a person's ability to nominate and access the role of LGA President.
- It reduces a person's ability to be guaranteed more than 1 year (of a two year) role, as the cycle clashes with LG Elections.

To support a discussion on this item, a draft workflow showing the process is below (noting it is still under development and review).

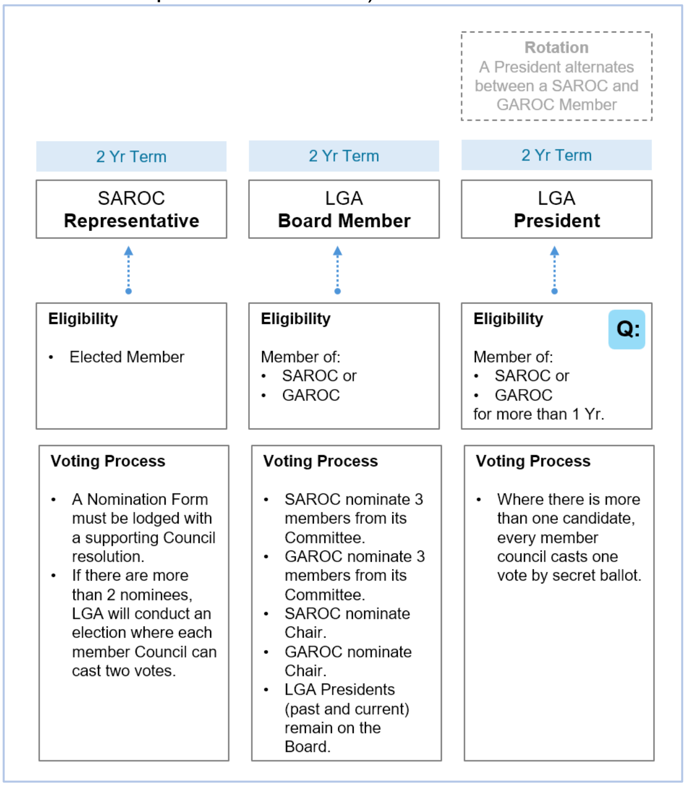


Diagram: Eligibility requirements for SAROC, LGA Board and LGA President

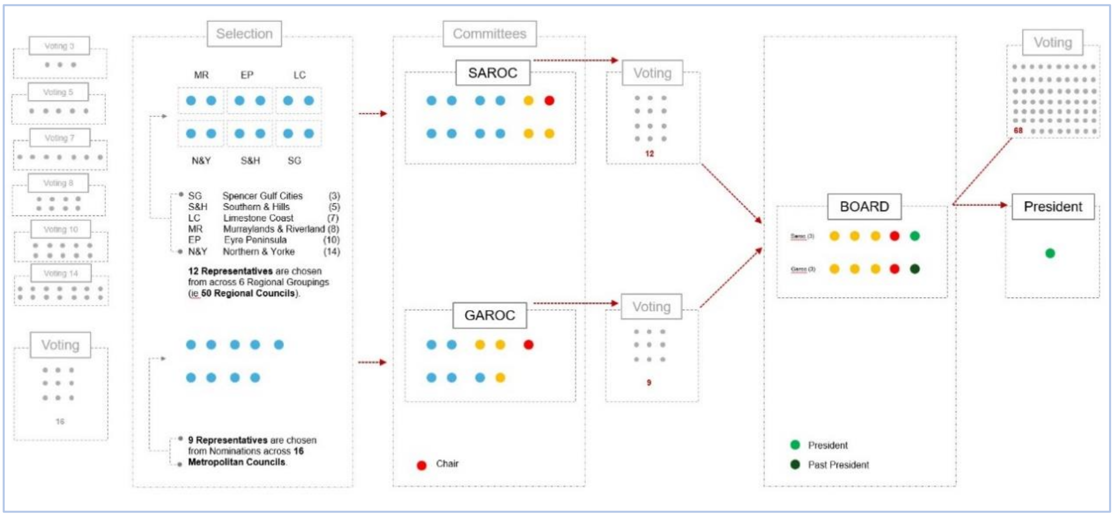


Diagram: Nomination and Voting to SAROC/GAROC, Board and President.

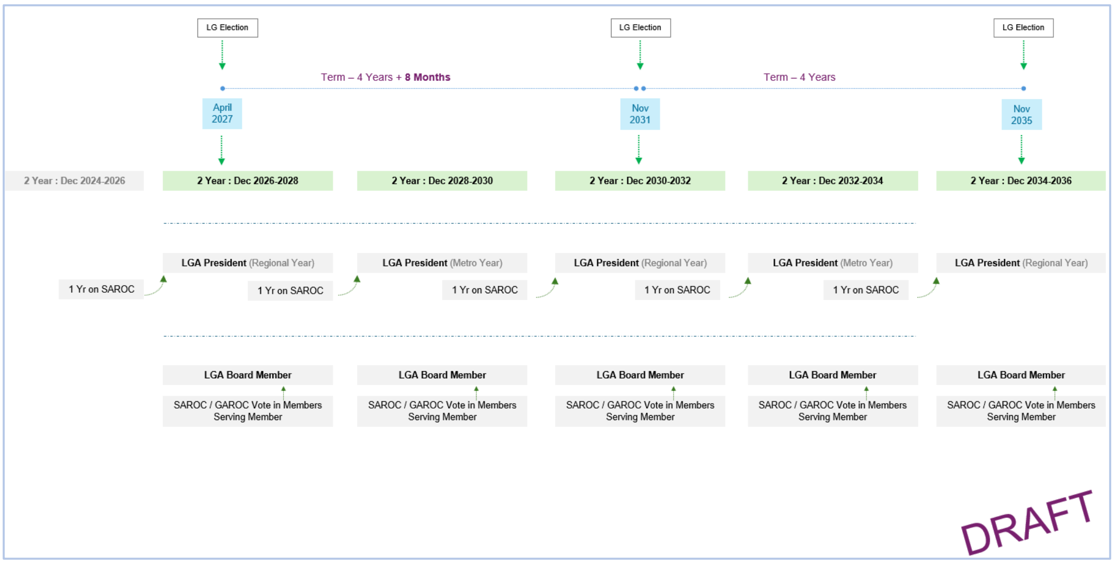


Diagram: Interface between 4 Year LG Election Cycle and 2 Yr Appointment Cycle

Items for discussion include:

- The removal of the requirement to serve one year on SAROC before being eligible to be LGA President.
- Introduce a requirement that nominees for LGA President, SAROC and GAROC be serving Mayors (opposed to elected members), to enable improved processes..
- A request to LGA that it holds nominations and voting one month after local government elections to avoid governance risks, reputational damage and loss of community confidence in the system.

Motion

*"That the MRLGA Board supports ' **XXX** ' Council to submit an Item of Business to the LGA AGM (due 24 August) calling on the LGA to develop and implement a revised election process before November 2031 that removes the ongoing governance conflict and reputational risk created by local government elections occurring one year into each two-year term of the (saroc) LGA President role, and by default placing unfair disadvantage to all regional members.*

Moved, *Seconded*

5.3 SAROC

- **Meetings, Agenda and Minutes**

Meetings are scheduled for:

23 July	2026	Adelaide
1 October	2026	Adelaide
3 December	2026	Adelaide

Saroc Agenda from 23 July 2026	Not yet disseminated as of 22 July.
Saroc Minutes from 23 July 2026	Not yet disseminated as of 22 July.
Saroc Agenda from 14 May 2026	May 2026 SAROC Agenda Late Report - COM for Agriculture Late Report - SAROC Review
Saroc Agenda from 14 May 2026	May 2026 SAROC Minutes

- **SAROC Representatives - Update**

Discussion

SAROC representative Mayor Simone Bailey to provide a verbal report from meetings on 14 May and 23 July.

Open to any questions and comments.

- **SAROC Nominations - Open**

Discussion

LGA wrote to Councils on 9 July 2026 to open nominations for SAROC Representatives for the term of December 2026 to December 2028.

Two positions are available for the Murraylands & Riverland Grouping.

Given Local Government Elections will occur April 2027, these appointments will operate from 4 December 2026 to 7 April 2027 (ie 12 weeks plus 4 weeks caretaker that will be equivalent to 1 - 2 SAROC meetings and 1-2 LGA Board Meetings).

Moving forward, if a SAROC Representative elects to run in the 2027 elections and is successful, then the (SAROC) appointment will carry through to December 2028.

Moving forward, if a SAROC Representative elects not to run or is unsuccessful to be an elected member in the election, the (SAROC) appointment will become vacant in April 2027.

A vacant role will require a new call for nominations, followed by either a direct appointment or an election process to appoint new member(s).

If vacancies happen after the April elections (on SAROC, GAROC, Board or Presidency) the nominations and voting process will commence (ie 1-2 months) and the term sought will be for the remaining time - May/June 2027 to December 2028 (ie 18 months).

As part of this process, it is prudent to consider that if in the event of a vacancy(s) from the MR grouping, the following influences occur:
- SAROC vote for its SAROC Chair (who is then automatically on LGA Board)
- SAROC vote for three representatives from its Committee to sit on the LGA Board
- If the Murraylands & Riverland grouping does not have SAROC representative(s) between now and April 2027, it will not:

- be casting its two votes on the above items (that will operate from 4 December 2026 to December 2028 – subject to April 2027 elections)
- be eligible to nominate to sit on the LGA Board and/or
- have a chance to have its grouping represented on the LGA Board.

To support a discussion on this item, a draft workflow showing the process is below (noting it is still under development and review).

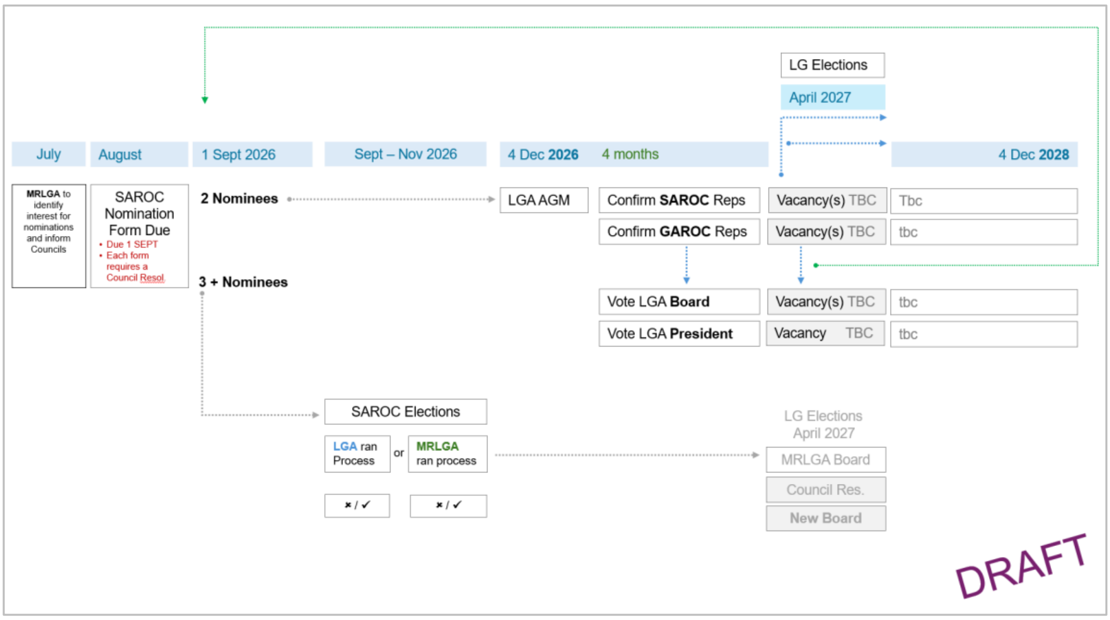


Diagram: Timing of 2 Year appointments interfacing with deferred LG Elections

The following items are for Board discussion :

1. Seek expressions of interest from the Board for SAROC Nomination ? Any confirmed interest from the Board can be communicated to our eight constitute councils for awareness if the region has none, one, two or more people nominating and vote on motion(s) accordingly.

   Mayor Philips has advised she does not intend to nominate for a SAROC - Dec '26 to Dec '28.

Board Direction Would the Board like to ascertain interest from its group to nominate - so MRLGA Ceo can advise Council Ceo's in writing ?

2. Does MRLGA wish to take on the role of running SAROC elections, if there are more than 2 nominees ?

   The MRLGA Ceo recommends the subsidiary does not take on the role of running SAROC elections if there are more than 2 nominees for the following reasons:

   Governance
   - We don't have any documented procedure(s). To develop a procedure and have it adopted by all Councils will draw on its finite resource and may not be achievable by September.
   - The MRLGA Charter does not provide for running LGA processes.

   LGA Process
   - SAROC is an LGA Committee and therefore, it is better positioned to use its resources to run its processes and ensure compliance with its terms of reference and/or constitution or election standards.

   Complaints

- If there are any concerns or complaints about the process or outcome, LGA can defend or manage the issue(s).
  Not listed in the Annual Business Plan
- We have not made LGA processes a priority in our Annual Business Plan. If the Board would like to prioritise this function it will need to withdraw a nominated activity to facilitate capacity.

Open to any questions and comments.

Motion

"MRLGA Board has determined the subsidiary will not run or conduct elections on-behalf of LGA for SAROC if there are more than 2 nominations from the regional grouping. MRLGA Ceo will inform the LGA in writing of the Boards decision accordingly."

Moved, *Seconded*

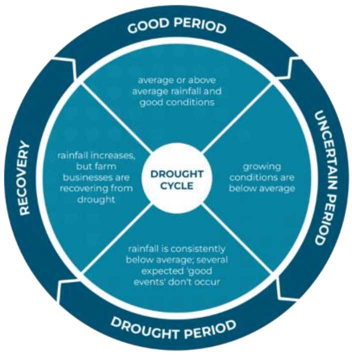
- **Southern & Hills LGA**

S&H LGA President, Mayor Moira Jenkins wrote to MRLGA President Mayor Ella Winnall on 23 July '26 providing a copy of its ABP and is looking forward to continuing to work with MRLGA *over the coming year and welcome opportunities to explore how our organisations can collaborate to advance our shared priorities*.

- **DROUGHT INFORMATION**

Future Drought Fund - Framework

DAFF : Video and Information - Living with drought – who can help and how



Agricultural dependent communities, business and economies experience:
Preparing for Drought
In Drought
Recovering from Drought

State Government Support Package

A link to the States drought support initiatives is below:
https://pir.sa.gov.au/regions-and-support/drought/drought-support

SA Drought Loan Scheme - Open *Administered by QRIDA (through PIRSA)*

Key Dates	Applications close 31 December 2026 or when all funding has been allocated.
Amounts	Loans of up to $250,000 are available with a loan term of up to 10 years. Total funding for the scheme is $200 million.

A link to more information can be found on the weblink below:

https://pir.sa.gov.au/regions-and-support/apply-for-funding/south-australia-drought-loan-scheme

The Scheme has **$200m** allocation.

During the Estimates Committee on 23 June 2026, Hansard Record Minister Scriven was asked about the Scheme and responded as follows:

> *"My advice is that 74 applications have been submitted, totalling $17.8 million approximately.*
>
> *There have been 23 applications approved, totalling **$5.227 million**.*
>
> *The remainder are under assessment or are having clarification, additional information, etc., sought."*

Rural Industry Adjustment and Development Fund $28M sitting in cash

In 1980's the Rural Industry Adjustment and Development Fund was established to provide loans and grants at the discretion of the primary industries and regions minister. ***ABC News Article***

The fund has not been used for many years, thus sitting idle.

The fund has grown by $4 million since 2018, with about $1 million generated in interest in both 2024 and 2025, according to the auditor-general's reports.

The Rural Industry Adjustment and Development Fund (Fund) is established pursuant to the Rural Industry Adjustment and Development Act 1985, administered by the Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA). Act

The Act defines ***farmer*** as *a person engaged in the growing of crops or the rearing of animals in this State, and farm and farming have corresponding meanings*.

Key management personnel of the Fund include the Minister who has responsibility for the strategic direction and management of the Fund.

A link to the audit report and finances:
Rural Industry Adjustment Fund Audit as of 30 June 2025

- **Balance as of 30 June 2025** **$28,397 M**
- **Interest in 24/25** **$1,122 M**

During the Estimates Committee on 23 June 2026, Hansard Record the following question was asked:

Question:

(Mr Whetstone) With regard to funding, is the $28.4 million allocated to the Rural Industry Adjustment and Development Fund currently being utilised?

This $28.4 million could also be there to support other commodities that are currently doing it tough.

Answer:

(Minister Scriven) My understanding is that particular fund has not been utilised for at least 10 years, including under the former Liberal government. The reason it is not considered particularly appropriate for current circumstances is the requirement to increase rates—for any loan scheme, for example, which I understand is being proposed by those opposite—to commercial rates. Its utility and its effectiveness are severely limited by that requirement.

SA Drought Advisory Group Meeting *Led by PIRSA*

Local Government representatives are
- Mayor Bill Gebhardt (Goyder Shire Council)
- Mayor Paul Simmons (Coorong District Council) – Listed as a standing apology

Appointed by the Minister
- Mayor Stephen McCarthy (DC of Mount Remarkable)

Extreme sand drift *Led by Councils and MRLGA*

Discussion


Photos: July 2026, Kunlara Road, Extreme Sand Drift on road reserve >2.5m

MRLGA:
- has collected sites of extreme sand drift (predominantly occurring in DCKEM and DCLW) as well as photos, volumes and data from Councils
- held a Regional Transport Committee meeting with Council Representatives and Landscape Board representatives to discuss options and next steps
- liaised with the SA Drought Commissioner seeking funding support for Councils (who are undertaking reactive road maintenance). This was undertaken until the role closed.
- secured funding (through the FDF, Regional Drought Resilience program) to explore mapping and/or improved early intervention and trial solution(s) in terms or response, recovery, preparedness and intervention (on roads).

Sand drift has been a defining land management challenge across South Australia's Murray Mallee and Riverland since widespread land clearing and agricultural development in the late 1800s exposed fragile sandy soils to wind erosion. Following severe periods of sand movement and land degradation, South Australia introduced the **Sand Drift Act 1923** - the first soil conservation legislation of its kind in Australia - to enable landholders to seek action where drifting sand from neighbouring properties threatened productive land. The legislation later evolved into the Soil Conservation Act 1939, the Soil Conservation and Land Care Act 1989, the Natural Resources Management Act 2004, and is now incorporated within the **Landscape South Australia Act 2019**, reflecting a broader shift from responding to erosion events to promoting proactive and sustainable landscape management.

Today, the **Act** does not expressly require Landscape Boards to monitor "extreme sand drift" as a standalone statutory function.

Instead, the Act places broader responsibilities on Landscape Boards to manage land degradation, including wind erosion and soil conservation, which can encompass sand drift.

The relevant provisions are:
1. **Regional Landscape Boards have functions relating to land management**
   Under the Landscape South Australia Act 2019, Regional Landscape Boards are responsible for:
   - promoting sustainable land management;
   - preventing and mitigating land degradation;

- supporting the sustainable use of natural resources; and
- implementing their Regional Landscape Plans.

These functions include addressing issues such as:

- wind erosion;
- soil degradation;
- loss of vegetation cover; and
- degradation of agricultural land.

Extreme sand drift is generally considered a symptom of these broader land degradation processes.

2. **Landowners have the primary responsibility**

   The Act places the primary responsibility for land management on landholders, not Landscape Boards. Boards are intended to:

   - provide advice and education;
   - coordinate regional responses;
   - undertake strategic planning;
   - provide incentives or grants; and
   - exercise compliance powers where appropriate.

3. **Compliance powers**

   Where land degradation is serious, the Act provides powers to investigate and issue directions requiring landholders to address land degradation if necessary. These powers are generally used where there is evidence that land management practices are causing significant degradation.

In the locations where an extreme outcome has resulted, sand drift has moved onto road reserves and become a hazard for local councils to manage and fund mitigation works as well as recovery of road(s).

On behalf of impacted Councils in the region, MRLGA has (and will continue to) advocate for access to funding given they are the recipients of the problem and have little to no means to financially cover the costs of early intervention, response and recovery.

<u>Motion</u>

"That the MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by MRLGA President and Vice President to the Board of the Landscape Board - Murraylands and Riverland seeking a:

- *list of steps and actions it performs to monitor and undertake early engagement with landowners to prevent extreme land degradation / sand drift, so we can understand the work happening,*
- *how it undertakes this with regards to any focus or priority for protecting public roads – critical for regional and local freight and transport lines - using the outcome at Kunlara Road as an example.*
- *An understanding if the Landscape Board has identified any process improvements where extreme outcomes can be avoided.*

Moved, *Seconded*

Grant - Geographical Information

In late 2025 Councils asked PIRSA for a copy of grant statistics for On-Farm Infrastructure Program and Connecting Community Event grants to see the geographical recipients of funding and the timing of the uptake of programs relevant to need. The information was subsequently provided on 9 April 2026 via the LGA.

A copy of the geographical spread of both grants is provided at **Attachment 2.**

Future Drought Fund - Community Impact Program *Delivered by fRRR*

This initiative has been reported on in previous agendas – the following is therefore an update.

The program is designed, delivered and administered by fRRR on behalf of the

Commonwealth.

fRRR has released the following table of pre-approved projects. Each application (ie project) will be assessment and reviewed by the Program Advisory Committee before being submitted to the fRRR Board for approval.

	Lead Delivery Organisation	Project Title	Indicative Amount
	Regional Development Australia Murraylands Riverland	Region Coordination	$150,000
1	Mallee Sustainable Farming	Stronger Together: Connecting Mallee Dryland Farming	$90,000
2	Ramble Arts	Third Places	$94,871
3	Our Town Berri	Revive and Thrive Pathways to Independence	$98,000
4	Loxton Community Futures Inc	Reconciliation Garden Partnerships Project	$32,000
5	Tintinara Lions Club	Rural Women's Circles	$29,700
		Total	**$494,571**
		Balance	**$405,429** ($900,000)

This is a two year program. It's understood the balance of the funding (ie $405k) will be available through Round 2).

- **FUEL SUPPLY**

Level 2 : Keeping Australia Moving Link to Information about Level 1, 2, 3 and 4

A link to the national Fuel plan, including separate state statics can be viewed below: Fuel statistics | Fuel Plan

Information from the Australian and South Australian Government on fuel security can be read at : Home - SA Fuel Security and/or Government action | Fuel Plan

What the Australian Government is doing
The Australian Government is:
- temporarily lowering national taxes on fuel
- increasing the availability of supplies by changing laws and regulations
- making sure that service stations and the oil sector are acting in customers' interests
- planning ahead so that if the situation becomes more difficult the nation is prepared.

What the Government of South Australia is doing
The Government of South Australia is helping by:
- monitoring and reporting fuel station supplies through a partnership with the RAA
- working with business and industry groups to identify economic impacts on fuel-exposed sectors
- implementing regulatory reforms to improve the efficiency of freight, such as recent reforms to heavy freight regulations allowing trucks to carry larger payloads per trip.
- Fast-tracked freight reform to reduce fuel costs | Premier of South Australia

Fuel excise relief and current picture:
The government has extended fuel excise relief for petrol and diesel from 1 July to 2 August, with the temporary cut in the excise reduced to 16 cents a litre. Retail petrol and diesel prices have generally decreased following the excise cut from 1 April and lower international benchmark prices. Retail petrol prices for Australia's 5 largest cities are down 35% since 1 April, while diesel prices are down 42% (as at 8 July). Since 30 June, retail prices have increased as retailers pass-through the partial excise restoration. Compared with pre-conflict, average retail petrol prices for the 5 largest cities were still 3 cpl lower on 8 July, while average retail diesel prices were 9 cpl higher.

6 REGION WIDE AGENCY UPDATES

Reports from region-wide organisations, partners and stakeholders are below:

6.1 Zone Emergency Management Committee (ZEMC)

The last ZEMC meeting was held online on 13 May 2026. Some meeting highlights or general news include.

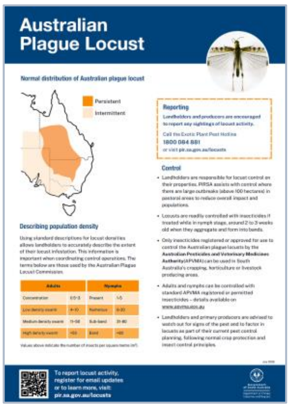
- **H5 Bird Flu - Update**
  SES, ZEMC and PIRSA convened a webinar on 8 July 2026 to provide information and an update on H5 Bird Flu. It was attended by approximately 120 staff from across several government organisations in SA.

  Fact Sheets are being disseminated for operational staff who handle animals.

  An important message for the community is that if you notice sick or dead birds or other animals, you should not touch them. If it is safe to do so, take photos or a video, record the location and report it to the Emergency Animal Disease (EAD) Hotline: 1800 675 888.

  More information can also be read on the PIRSA website Avian influenza

- **Locust Plague** *Led by PIRSA :Alert & Planning Stage*



  A Locust Plague Working Group has been established an provide a Q&A session to several organisations on 16 July.

  Aerial spraying has been restricted in the MR region and dryland / pastoral farmers have asked PIRSA to review this restriction (given much of the region has sufficient to horticulture / food cropping areas).

  Financial assistance measures are being discussed. A rebate (for chemical cost to undertake spaying) may be offered but is pending discussion at Parliament.

- **Disaster Recovery Funding Agreement - Reform**
  The Hon Kristy McBain announced in June 2026 that there would be reform to the Disaster Recovery Funding Agreement (DRFA) News DRFA Reform

  "The Albanese Government is taking the next step in its national emergency management reform, introducing new Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements that are simpler and fairer for all Australians. Minister for Emergency Management Kristy McBain today briefed the National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting on the proposed new Disaster Recovery Funding Framework. The new framework will ensure Commonwealth funding will flow to impacted communities faster and with less red tape, while building on our record investment in risk reduction."

LGA has been contacted about the reform and is currently waiting details of the proposed changes.

- **AusAlert** Testing will happen 27 July 2026
  SES, ZEMC and AusAlert convened a webinar on 8 July 2026 that was attended by approximately 120 staff from across several government organisations. AusAlert is a new national warning system that uses the latest technology to send emergency messages to compatible mobile devices during local and national disasters. AusAlert messages keep communities informed so they can take action, saving lives and property. It's another way its seeking to help keep Australia safe More Info

  It will be ready to use in October 2026, but before it launches, the system needs to be tested in local communities across Australia and nationally. It will be tested in selected community locations in June 2026 and a national test will be sent to all compatible mobile devices in Australia on Monday 27 July 2026.

- **Preparing for Disaster** 10 August

Legal Services Commission SA are currently delivering a disaster legal project. They have a series of upcoming general public information sessions *"Preparing for a Disaster"* to be held in Mount Barker, **Murray Bridge,** Whyalla, Port Augusta and Mount Gambier. At each location, two sessions will be delivered.
This session is designed for the general public. It will help attendees to:

- Have an awareness of disaster preparedness and being legally 'healthy'.
- Provide a pre-disaster 'Five point health check plan' and other useful publications (e.g. Fences and the Law, Trees and the Law)

6.2 Murray Darling Association

Next Conference 24 – 27 August 2026

82nd National Conference -"Working Together for our Basin Future"
82nd National Conference — Murray Darling Association
Greater Shepparton City Council, VIC

Strategic Plan
A link to the 2025 – 2030 Strategic Plan is : Strategic Plan 2025-30

Region 5
Region 5 Chair is Cr Margaret Howie (Renmark Paringa Council)

Region 6
Region 6 Chair is Cr Millie Livingston (Alexandrina Council)

6.3 SA Drought Hub

The June 2026 Newsletter can be found below:
SA Drought Hub June 2026 Newsletter

Webinars began late 2025 (50mins):

June 2026 SA Drought Hub – Quarterly Update
SA Drought Hub Quarterly Update – June 2026 - SA Drought Hub

March 2026
- Regional Engagement Update: A webinar for SA Drought Hub Members and Network Partners - SA Drought Hub

November 2025

- Regional Engagement webinar for SA Drought Hub partners (Nov 2025) - SA Drought Hub

Podcast Episodes are now covering:

- Supporting South Australian early to mid farmers
- Optimising harvester set up with Brett Asphar
- Understanding frost and minimizing financial risk due to frost in the MNHRZ
- Managing erosion in dry times.

6.4 One Basin CRC (Loxton)

Ceo
The Regional Hub Loxton Ceo role remains **vacant** and is being performed by Chief Operating Officer, Avril Hogan.

Projects
Its current projects are listed below and can be found at Projects - One Basin CRC :

- Policy and Regulatory Aspects of Water Banking in the Muray Darling Basin, Australia and California (USA)
- Truth telling in Agriculture
- Future Basin Economies: Innovative Approaches to Design and Deliver Economic Investments Wanted by Basin Communities
- Decarbonising the Bains's irrigation regions
- Cyanobacteria toxin uptake in food crops and implications to humans
- Geospatial modelling of region-scale crop water use to forecast climate change
- Incentivising and investing in climate adaptation and the adoption of sustainable basin management practices
- Water banking for enhance drought resilience
- Predicting the impact of climate change on irrigation demand across One Basin
- Opportunities and challenges identifying, sourcing and treating brackish groundwater

Event : Renmark

The One Basin CRC Annual Partner Event, One Basin's annual conference, connects researchers, industry leaders, government representatives, and regional community members to discuss the collective challenges and strategies to support a resilient, productive, and sustainable Murray-Darling Basin. This year we focus on impact pathways: celebrating the real-world outcomes we're already achieving across the Basin, while exploring new opportunities to amplify and enhance this work.

Date:	Wednesday 19 August & Thursday 20 August 2026
Time:	8:30am - 4:30pm
Location:	Renmark Club, 160 Murray Ave, Renmark SA 5341

MRLGA Ceo has been invited to attend and has been offered a second ticket to the limited seated event.

Board Direction
MRLGA can rsvp for one additional ticket available for the One Basin CRC event, with expressions of interest now invited.

6.5 PIRSA

A written update can be found at **Attachment 3.**

PIRSA advised its Murraylands & Riverland Regional Principal Regional Advisor, Barb Cowey is currently engaged in a range of other priority projects across the agency.

Accordingly, for matters relating to the Riverland and Murraylands, the following PIRSA contacts are advised to be used in the interim:

- Jennifer Schilling, Acting General Manager, Regions – for ongoing matters previously supported or overseen by the Principal Regional Advisor.
- Rachael Kelly, Manager, Drought and Resilience – for matters relating to the Sustainable Communities Program.
- Geoff Cowey, Senior Industry Advisor – for grape and wine-related matters.

6.6 RDA, MURRAYLANDS & RIVERLAND

A written update can be found at **Attachment 4.**

Correspondence from the RDA.MR President about it's Ceo recruitment process can be found at **Attachment 5**.

6.7 LANDSCAPE BOARD, MURRAYLANDS & RIVERLAND

A written update can be found at **Attachment 6.**

6.8 RURAL BUSINESS SUPPORT

A written update on information for Murraylands & Riverland will be provided on the day.

6.9 SAPOL

Officer in Charge: Cynthia Healey.

Supt Cindy Healey
Officer in Charge
Murray Mallee Region
South Australia Police
58 Swanport Rd, Murray Bridge
T 08 853 56076 **M** 0410466384
E Cynthia.Healey@police.sa.gov.au
W www.police.sa.gov.au

Encouraged to follow its Facebook page for live updates and initiatives:
https://www.facebook.com/SouthAustraliaPolice/

6.10 SA Cross Border Commissioner

A written update can be found at **Attachment 7.**

6.11 Coorong District Council – Matters for discussion

Following a resolution from Coorong District Council Ordinary Council meeting held on 19 May 2026 it wrote to MRLGA requesting the following matters be raised at the next meeting of the Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA), as items for advocacy by MRLGA:

- Impact of wild dogs in South Australia
- Rating of power generation facilities

A copy of Coorong District Council's letter can be found at **Attachment 16.**

In regards to:

- Rating of power generation facilities, please refer to Item 7.2. and an associated proposed motion.

- Impact of wild dogs in SA :
  - MRLGA Ceo met with Coorong Representatives online on 20 May to understand the issues raised at its 24 April Board Meeting. Following this, it then,
  - Emailed the challenges to the Landscape Board Ceo and Cross Border Commissioner for initial comment.
    The item was discussed in Parliament by Minister Scriven and the Hon Nicola Centofanti MLC in June 2025:
    Hansard Daily: Legislative Council - Thursday, June 5 2025
  - A brief summary of the exchange :
  - Minister Scriven said she advocated very strongly to her counterparts in Victoria, but that they share very different view on the treatment of wild dogs. In a meeting with the Victorian minister for agriculture as well as with the Victorian minister for the environment, she was able to put SA view very strongly, although it is fair to say that an agreement could no be reached. They have increased resources (on the SA border side) to assist with reducing the number of wild dogs. Given the economic and emotional impact from attacks she is committed to continue to advocate for a better approach to wild dog management.
  - The Box Flat Wild Dog Co-ordinating Committee, chaired by Councillor Richard Halliday (Tatiara Council) are playing a key role in monitoring and advocating on this.
    Advice received from our initial research is :
  - The Victorian government is unlikely to change its stance in the short term, the protected nature of the wild dogs in the Wimmera area will not be re-visited this side of their election (scheduled for November 2026).
  - Councils are encouraged to continue to promote the independent verification of wild dog activity in South Australia - the prosecution for additional intervention is greatly assisted with evidence of any Wild Dog sightings or incursion into South Australia. Reporting is very important to assist in advocacy for understanding the impacts therefore need for change.
  - In June 2025 NSW agreed to provide $12M to SA to co-ordinate the construction of 32kms of dog fence and provide maintenance to a further 290kms - this is an important piece as it completes the border with NSW and protects SA's significant investment in wild dog protection.
  - Livestock SA have been playing a key role to collect information and advocate on this issue.
  - Wild dogs are not recognised on both sides of state boundaries, creating ongoing challenges for coordinated management between South Australian and Victorian agencies, landholders and local communities.
    The difference in legislation, baiting rules and control programs is likely having reduced effectiveness of regional responses.
  - Prior to legislative change in Victoria, the Victorian government undertook baiting programs within Big Desert Wilderness Area (adjacent to Ngarkat in SA) that included the baiting of a buffer zone around the perimeter of the Wilderness Area. The intention of the program was to prevent wild dogs exiting the Wilderness Area and entering private property. The changes to legislation have stopped the baiting of this buffer zone in Victoria.
  - Within South Australia, National Parks and Wildlife Services, supported by the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, continue to undertake baiting in Ngarkat Conservation park. The baiting program occurs 4 times per year, ensuring bait placement, timing and density are delivered in line with the wild dog control policy tied to the Landscape South Australia Act (2019). The Ngarkat Conservation Park baiting plan is designed with the aim of preventing Wild Dog incursions outside of the park, therefore protecting the livestock industry.

  - The Victorian policy changes also now require landholders on private land in Victoria to seek approval prior to being permitted to destroy a wild dog on private land. This is not the case in South Australia. Landholders within South Australia have a legislative obligation to destroy wild dogs on their property.
  - Community members have expressed concerns, through the Box Flat Wild

Dog Coordinating Committee (BFWDCC), regarding the anticipated risk that wild dog activity will increase because of the changes to legislation in Victoria that may lead to increasing population extents in South Australia. Landholders who own property spanning the border between states have expressed challenges addressing wild dog activity depending on where on their property the wild dog is sighted. In this instance, the landholder will need to undertake action relevant to each state as it applies to the location of the parcel of land.

- Rural communities along the SA–Victoria border report significant impacts on sheep and livestock enterprises from wild dog attacks, including stock losses, animal welfare concerns, reduced lambing rates and increased operational costs associated with fencing and monitoring.
- The Landscape board has an obligation to respond to landholder reports of wild dog sightings and incidents of attacks on stock. As such, accurate records of wild dog incident reports from landholders are collated and then reported to the BFWDCC. **Our records indicate that wild dog sightings and incidents of attacks on stock within South Australia are low and have not increased in the last few years** or more recently despite the legislation change in Victoria.
- The BFWDCC provide verbal reports to the Landscape Board regarding attacks within Victoria. **Prior to the February 2026 Ngarkat baiting program**, the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board sent landholders neighbouring the park a detailed update on the importance of reporting wild dog activity, along with the support available to them if they experience wild dog impacts on their property.
- Not withstanding these points, under-reporting of incursions/incidents is a concern that has also been raised at the Board and is a matter of importance to the Landscape Board because of the important role it plays to support livestock owners address the risk. **It is currently considering options to better understand the issue and will provide follow up correspondence and education material to landholders adjacent to Ngarkat**.
- Persistent wild dog activity can place considerable emotional and financial stress on farming families, particularly during drought and difficult seasonal conditions. And repeated attacks can bring on emotional worry.
- The Landscape Board is conscious of the pressures experienced in the community given recent multiple challenging seasons. Through the BFWDCC, the Landscape Board supports landholders who suspect wild dog activity on their properties. This involves the provision of free wild dog baits, advice on baiting and coordination with Primary Industries and Regions South Australia's Dog Trapper program. Landscape Board staff work with the landholder until the issue is resolved. Additionally, any wild dog reports received from properties bordering Ngarkat Conservation Park will trigger additional baiting within the park to mitigate the risk of wild dogs moving from public to private property.
- Beyond the informal sharing of information from BFWDCC members and landholders within Victoria, the Landscape Board is not aware of any cross-border integrated management approaches. Landholders who utilise FeralScan to report wild dog activity will report this information directly to the BFWDCC members and landscape boards.
- The matter of reporting will assist to better quantify the scale of the issue and is needed.
- Landscape Board are keen to continue to work closely with stakeholders, partners and the community to pursue pragmatic and meaningful initiatives to understand the scale of the risk and to protect landholders from impacts to livestock through our education, bait supply, support and engagement initiatives.

While advocating about the impacts may illicit change, it seems the feedback is to quantify the increased impacts. This would require people to be encouraged to report incidents. We therefore suggest considering asking PIRSA and/or the Landscape Board if more can be done from their perspective to encourage reporting (ie a campaign or other) so SA can advance its call to action for change.

With limited capacity at MRLGA, two pathways are offered below.

- Option A – MRLGA Ceo to liaise with Livestock SA Ceo to understand:
  - its views towards next steps
  - increased incidents
  - what would be helpful

  Report this back to the board to recommend any further steps.

- Option B – Ask PIRSA to host 2 executive meetings per region per year to discuss programs, issues and opportunities. With mounting dependency increasing between 'regions' and 'PIRSA' challenges like this will be stuck in correspondence unless we can strengthen relationships "in region".

Motion Option A

"That the MRLGA Ceo liaise with Livestock Ceo on next steps and report back to the Board."

Moved, *Seconded*

Motion Option B

"That the MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President and Vice president seeking a forum twice yearly in region with PIRSA Executives and Senior Representatives from Landscape Board, Local Government (at a minimum) to discuss and address regional issues, and invest in strengthening relationships "in-region" to more effectively address issues and exchange information in a timely and efficient manner.

Moved, *Seconded*

7 STATE NEWS & STRATEGY'S

An overview of State Government strategy's, plans or news is provided below:

7.1 SA Government 2026 Parliamentary sitting calendar

Getting on with business | Premier of South Australia

The Opening of the 56th Parliament will take place on Tuesday, 5 May, marking the formal commencement of the new parliamentary term and the beginning of an ambitious legislative agenda.

7.2 Council Rates, Electricity Generator Bill

Discussion

The bill was introduced by Hon. Frank Pangallo and seeks to change how large electricity generators are rated for council rates in SA. It would address a long-standing anomaly under the Electricity Corporation Rates Deregulation (ECRD) Act that has effectively given some electricity generation assets a reduced or exempt rating status for about 25 years, which councils and the Local Government Association argue that this limits community investment in millions annually. Because it is not a government bill, its progress depends heavily on:

- Cross-bench support
- Government willingness to adopt or amend the proposal

As of the latest Hansard record (April 2025), it remains in progress, not yet enacted.
Statutes Amendment (Rates—Electricity Generation) Bill 2025 | South Australian Legislation

Article - Advocating for the Bill on Steps of Parliament

Motion
"That the MRLGA Ceo write to all five State Members outlining the importance of this bill and ask for support to see it regain priority to get it passed."

Moved, *Seconded*

7.3 State & Local Government - Economic Partnership Accord

In November 2025 an Accord was signed (link below) outlining a proposed Local Government Co-Ordinator. An extract from the Accord is :

- A Local Government Coordinator will be nominated within the Coordinator General's Office (CGO) to, in accordance with the *State Development Coordination and Facilitation Act 2025*:
  - Promote the opportunity for councils and local government bodies to submit initiatives to be considered as a Priority Project.
  - Develop guidelines for the identification and project management of local government initiatives declared as Priority Projects.
  - Receive and consider project and initiative proposals from councils and advise the CGO or the Minister on their designation as a Priority Project.
  - Facilitate engagement and coordinate resources within State Government organisations to accelerate the development and implementation of Priority Projects.
  - Develop, in collaboration with the LGA, a biannual report to the Premier and the Minister for Local Government on local government initiatives that have been progressed through the CGO.
  Economic-Partnership SIGNED

LGA announced the signing during the Nov '25 AGM and published news on 16 January 2026: New Accord - Agreement Signed

Priority Projects – Early Thinking

Discussion

After considering the definitions and scope highlighted in orange below, would the MRLGA Board like to begin identifying opportunities that would be well aligned to a Priority Project?

01 PREAMBLE

1.1 Local and state government are key economic partners. A dynamic, highly functioning partnership between local and state governments is essential to improve the wellbeing of all South Australians.

1.2 The South Australia Local and State Government Economic Partnership Accord (the **Accord**) will promote cooperation, collaboration, and coordination between local and state governments to:

1.2.1 address shared challenges and opportunities; and

1.2.2 jointly advance a smart, sustainable and inclusive economy

to improve the prosperity and wellbeing of South Australians.

1.3 To the extent set out in the Accord, state and local government will pursue alignment of purpose and effort to accelerate the development and delivery of projects and initiatives that advance the vision for the South Australian economy set out in the South Australian Economic Statement (**SAES**) (the **Accord Objectives**).

02 DEFINITIONS

Local Government bodies means councils constituted under the *Local Government Act 1999*, council subsidiaries and other formally constituted council bodies.

LGA means the Local Government Association of South Australia.

Local Government Coordinator means that person or persons nominated pursuant to clause 4.1.

Priority Project means a project designated as a coordinated project, designated project or State development area, in accordance with the *State Development Coordination and Facilitation Act 2025*.

03 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the parties in entering into the Accord are to establish a pathway for local government bodies to accelerate projects that make a significant contribution to the State's economic growth, particularly through the delivery of South Australia's Economic Statement ▶

For example:

- Energy from Waste - Options Paper
- Green Energy Infrastructure - Dismantling and landfill centres

7.1 Data Centres in SA

The link below will show the locations of **22 data centers** in Adelaide, SA.
Adelaide Data Centers - 19 Facilities from 5 Operators

Ther are different types / categories of Data Centres.
The table below, begins to break the differences.

Type	Primary Purpose	Typical Size	Energy & Water Demand
Enterprise Data Centre	Supports a single organisation's IT systems	Small to medium	Low to moderate
Colocation Data Centre	Houses IT equipment for multiple customers	Medium to very large	Moderate to high
Hyperscale Data Centre	Cloud computing (AWS, Microsoft, Google, etc.)	Very large	Very high
Edge Data Centre	Local, low-latency computing close to users	Small	Low
High Performance Computing (HPC) Centre	Scientific research and complex modelling	Large	High
AI Infrastructure / AI Factory	AI model training and inference	Medium to very large	High electricity, variable water
Modular / Containerised Data Centre	Rapid deployment in remote or temporary locations	Small	Low to moderate

Would you like to know some basics with Data Centre's ?

Click this link [Google Data Centres] and watch a 2 mins movie!

ABC News - Proposed data centre in South Australia dividing locals

From the country to the city, AI data centre developments are accelerating.

Industry figures show there are already 162 operating across Australia and 90 in the pipeline.

On a broader state level, infrastructure is scaling up significantly. Nasdaq-listed operator IREN is developing a massive $10 billion AI data centre campus in Bundey (about 165 km north-east of Adelaide), planned to open in stages starting in 2028.

"It'll be one of the biggest in the Asia Pacific region ever built," Mr Hajkowicz said.

*The centre will need up to **800 megawatts of electricity**, the equivalent of powering around **800,000 Australian homes**.*

The Greens want a moratorium on "hyperscale" developments, like the one proposed for SA.

Jeff Knispel runs Nippy's, a citrus supplier and juice maker in South Australia's Riverland region. He's not opposed to data centres but wants to know how much River Murray water the proposed Bundey data centre will use?

With the Murray River predicted to have lower flows due to a below-average rainfall outlook in parts of the Murray-Darling basin, irrigators in South Australia's Riverland, such as Mr Knispel, are facing a 20 per cent cut in their annual water allocation from July.

Centres / Facilities Emerging in the Murraylands and Riverland include:

- **SkyLAB** **"Co-Development - Renewables and Data Centre"** *Brinkley*

  South East Adelaide - SkyLab Australia

- **Firmus** **"Ai Factory"** *Tailem Bend*

  South Australia Community Hub - Firmus

Further information has been detailed in a short report at **Attachment 15**.

Discussion

Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch is invited to provide a 5 minute verbal report on its experiences with the facilities emerging in Tailem Bend.

Open for discussion.

Board Direction

Would the Board like a:
- *Presentation from CSIRO chief research consultant and AI advisor Stefan Hajkowicz to understand the realities of water use and data centres?*
- *State Development invited to next meeting to present?*
- *Presentation from Landscape Board Ceo on how Water Allocation Plans are considering Data Centres in the region?*
- *Could a research paper on the + /- data centres be an option in RDR initative.*
- *No action needed.*

7.2 Expand Together Infrastructure & Equipment Grant – Multicultural Affairs

DPC Grant Promotion May 2026

Multicultural Affairs is offering Expand Together Infrastructure and Equipment Grants to support projects that build organisational capacity and better respond to the needs of culturally and linguistically diverse communities. Funding can be used to improve community facilities or purchase equipment that helps organisations deliver services more effectively.
Grants of up to $100,000 are available for projects running over 12-month period, starting in February 2027.

Applications close **31 July 2026**, and eligible multicultural organisations are encouraged to apply.

7.3 State Public Health Plan

The State released its Plan in June 2026:

State Public Health Plan | SA Health

The Plan's priority areas are:
- Prevent and control the spread of infectious disease
- Promote healthy living to reduce chronic disease
- Improve mental health and wellbeing
- Reduce the risk, burden and severity of injury
- Ensure healthy environments for human health

The State has been proactive in its communications, also developing an:
- *Easy Read Guide* and
- *Plain English* version of the plan on its website.

The translation is there are 5 important areas to make public health better :
- Help people live without chronic illness.
- Help people feel happy and calm.
- Stop people from getting sick and spreading illnesses.
- Stop people from getting hurt.
- Make the land, water, sky, and where we live healthy.

MRLGA will be using the State Plan to inform its update to the MRLGA Regional Public Health & Wellbeing Plan.

MRLGA has been waiting on population profiles and current data to further its regional update, as current data will inform work. The timing of census data also plays a role in this.

8 FEDERAL NEWS & STRATEGY'S

For Information

- **Department of Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development, Communication, Sport and the Arts**

  A link to recent news:
  Media releases | Ministers for the Department of Infrastructure

8.1 Federal Inquiry : Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability

Discussion

Inquiry No 1.
A total of 287 submissions from across Australia were made to this Inquiry.
MRLGA, MMC, SMDC, CDC, DCLW all lodged submissions to the inquiry in May 2024.

Inquiry No. 2
A total of 239 submissions from across Australia were made to this Inquiry.
Three hearings were held in Feb/March 2026 in Canberra.

A link to the current inquiry is:
Inquiry into Local Government Funding and Fiscal Sustainability – Parliament of Australia

Chair of the Committee, Mrs Fiona Phillips, said '*the Committee will be considering whether existing funding mechanisms are addressing the evolving responsibilities of local governments and identify how funding arrangements affect local government's ability to deliver services and invest in local infrastructure*'.

The Committee plans to have Public Hearings in Adelaide and Port Lincoln in August 2026.

MRLGA lodged an expression of interest to the Committee to present at the hearing, following interest declared from :

- Mayor Winnall of Berri Barmera Council
- Mayor Bailey of Mid Murray Council and
- Mayor Phillips of District Council of Karoonda East Murray

The Committee has invited "1 or 2 representatives" from MRLGA to speak at the public hearing. MRLGA will rsvp to confirm the following attendees :

- Mayor Winnall of Berri Barmera Council and
- Mayor Bailey of Mid Murray Council
  who will present on behalf of MRLGA on the day.

The Regional LGA's have worked together towards:

- setting key advocacy items for Saroc to discuss (copy below) and
- a joint media release during the time of the Committee's visit.

Suggested the next SAROC meeting on 23 July includes a discussion around developing a set of shared principles and advocacy positions that regional councils and local government associations could incorporate into their presentations to the Committee.
While each region faces its own unique opportunities and challenges, consideration could be given to adopting the following principles as part of a shared platform:

- **Improving horizontal fiscal equalisation** by reviewing the legislation governing the distribution of Financial Assistance Grants to ensure funding is more effectively directed towards councils with the greatest relative need and capacity constraints.

- **Establishing a new formula-based Commonwealth funding program** for local government that would either replace, or operate alongside, existing competitive grant programs. Such a fund would provide every council with predictable, ongoing funding to deliver community infrastructure and local priority projects, while reducing the administrative burden and uncertainty associated with competitive funding rounds.
- **Recognising the disproportionate asset management burden** carried by regional councils, particularly those responsible for extensive local road networks and large portfolios of community infrastructure servicing small and dispersed populations. Funding models should better reflect the scale and cost of maintaining these assets and the limited revenue bases available to regional councils.
- **Acknowledging the increased burden on regional councils** through cost shifting and thin markets, with many councils forced to spend ratepayer funds to ensure their communities can access vital services such as health and childcare.

There may well be additional matters that emerge through discussion at the SAROC meeting. A concise set of common positions would significantly strengthen the collective voice of regional South Australia before the Committee, while still allowing each regional organisation and their member councils to highlight the specific issues affecting their communities.

To support Mayor Winnall and Mayor Bailey attend the public hearing, the MLRGA proposes to lodge a supplementary submission. Refer to **Attachment 8**.

<u>**Motion**</u>
"The MRLGA Board endorse the supplementary submission (and any amendment(s) by President and Vice President) for lodgment to the Committee prior to 7 August 2026 to support responses and advocacy at the public hearing."

Moved, *Seconded*

8.2 Employee costs reach $41.6 Billion

<u>Article - Financial Review</u>

The number of public servants has grown by nearly a quarter, or 41,000 people, to about 213,000 in the last 4 years.

Minister for Finance and the Public Service Katy Gallagher said the government had not ordered across-the-board job cuts in the public service. "As with all budget processes, agencies are working through their settings and priorities, and decisions will be reflected in the budget in the usual way."

A Department of Finance briefing note released last week under freedom of information warned of a:

- *"significant increase" in total public* ***service employee expenses to $41.6 billion in 2025-26****, driven by a jump in workers' compensation premiums and claims expenses.*

Labor would need to cut 28,000 jobs over the next four years to meet its forecast for the public sector wage bill.

Analysis of PBO costings indicated that Labor must find an extra $11.8 billion in savings to prevent job cuts or another blowout in its already-stretched budget.

A freeze on new recruitment has commenced for non-essential roles.

Government departments and agencies are now seeking voluntary redundancies including from the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet, the Department of Climate Change and Energy, the Department of Home Affairs, CSIRO, the Department of

Education, the Department of Social Services, the National Indigenous Australians Agency, the Australian Bureau of Statistics and the Fair Work Ombudsman.

8.3 New – Fair Work Court

The Australian government recently announced a proposal to establish a specialist Fair Work Court. It aims to provide simpler, faster, and more cost-effective resolutions for employment disputes by working alongside the Fair Work Commission.

The Government will consult on the design of the proposed court this year.
New Fair Work Court

Consultation will help shape how the Court works, including how it will work with the existing Fair Work Commission, and how it will improve access to justice and better support workers and employers navigating disputes.

8.4 Regional Roads Australia Mobile Program – Consultation on grant guidelines

The Department is providing $30 million (GST exclusive) for the National RRAMP to improve multi-carrier mobile coverage on highways and major roads in regional and remote Australia. Multi-carrier coverage is mobile coverage from two or more network operators. The program is funded under the *Better Connectivity Plan for Regional and Rural Australia*. It complements the RRAMP Pilot Programs being delivered by state and territory governments, with a $50 million contribution from the Australian Government.
The draft guidelines set out who can apply for grant funding, eligible roads and locations of projects, and arrangements for assessing proposed projects. The National RRAMP will use a non-competitive, open grants process, with registered applicants able to submit 'shovel-ready' projects for funding at any time during the 12-month application period.

Have Your Say - Draft Grant Guidelines

8.5 Australia's 2035 emission reduction target (62-70%)

To help drive the transition to net zero, the Australian Government has set a target to reduce emissions to 62-70% below 2005 levels by 2035.
Net Zero - DCCEEW

They have also developed 6 Sector Plans. One sector is: Agriculture & Land. A link to the plan is below as an example:
Agriculture and Land Sector Plan - DAFF

- **For a link to other consultation items, please visit:**

Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

9 CONVERSATION WITH MEMBER FOR CHAFFEY

Welcome Member for Chaffey, Mr Tim Whetstone MP.

Shadow Minister for Police
Shadow Minister for Correctional Services
Shadow Minister for Emergency Services

Discussion

Item 9.0 is open for discussion.

Some optional topics are offered below for Board members to raise:

- **Water Recovery - Sustainable Communities Program** – Applications were submitted in March. There is not a commitment to any specific timeframe. If timeframes were understood it can assist organisations to plan, budget and allocate resourcing. It would also be helpful to understand if the program is oversubscribed or undersubscribed.

- **Data Centres & Ai** – How do you see the regions / Chaffey being proactive in planning for the future.

- **Economic Partnership Accord (State & Local Government)** – Has there been any early thinking around priority projects for regions?

- **Rural Industry Adjustment and Development Fund** ($28M)
  Our understanding is that *“key management personnel of the Fund include the Minister who has responsibility for the strategic direction and management of the Fund.”*
  In the absence of a clear plan that has been carefully designed and consulted on, this money is at-risk of being *spent for sake of spend* and squandered.
  What are your views on:
  - Using $100k to:
    - inform a strategic plan for grants under the fund?
    - Identify opportunities that could partner with the Economic Partnership Accord
  - Seeking a strategic direction that is more clear with its intended use – otherwise it may remain a savings account in perpetuity, or dissolved and funds reallocated.

- **Disaster Ready Funding Agreement (DRFA) Reform -** As Shadow Minister for Emergency Services we observed only one project (valued at $60k) funded from “betterment” after the River Murray Flood that strongly advocated for build back better. The Commonwealth Government is proposing reform to DRFA, what do you see as key for SA in the reform ?

- **Council Rates, Electricity Generator Bill** – We welcome Mr Whetstone’s view and position to support changes for rating of electricity generators by Councils?
  SA Councils face a financial disadvantage compared to Victorian and Queensland counterparts of their ability to levy appropriate general rates fairly and equitably on electricity generators. The Equitable Rating of the Energy Sector Report stated - *Potential rate revenue gains for Councils in regional SA (i.e., excluding Adelaide metropolitan areas) of $27.85 million per annum..* This figure compounded (ie since 2020 when infrastructure and land use emerged) has created a disadvantage, inequity and loss to regional economies and communities. In light of SA’s goal to have 100% renewable energy by the end 2027 – this Bill is critical to see reform happen now, in an expanding and compounding environment.

- **Future Drougt Fund – Regional Drought Resilience Program**
  We welcome Mr Whetstone’s view and position on why the State Government is yet to confirm its co-contribution for Regional Drought Resilience program given the program is now in Year 2 of a 4 Year Program?

	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	Total
Federal Funding to SA	$1.7 M	$1.8 M	$1.6 M	$1.5 M	$6.8 M
State Funding	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc	tbc

Note: this funding is then divided into 6 regions.

Department of Primary Industries and Regions	South Australia	s21(1)(c) – Carrying out a project that is directed towards achieving drought resilience	Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program (foundational) *The Australian Government is working with state and territory governments to support regions to develop regional drought resilience plans to prepare for and manage future drought risks.*	$1,180,535.00	$1,180,535.00	02/06/2021	$1,180,535.00
			Regional Drought Resilience Planning Program (extension) *The Australian Government is working with state and territory governments to support regions to develop regional drought resilience plans to prepare for and manage future drought risks.*	$3,049,657.00	$3,049,657.00	07/03/2025	$1,243,370.50
						03/04/2025	$1,524,828.50
						26/06/2025	$281,458.00

- **Revenue from Ai Road Cameras (NSW $400M)**
  The New South Wales government has raked in more than $400 million in penalties after rolling out AI-assisted road cameras, but the state is now eyeing an automated fines enforcement system in a proposal that was released to industry this week. Side step, we see SA State Government receive revenue of over $100m - $120m each year from fines. It's our understanding that road fines do not simply go into general government revenue. Fine payments are distributed across several components, including:
  - the prescribed expiation fine;
  - the Victims of Crime Levy (currently added to most expiations);
  - administration and enforcement costs; and
  - in some cases, funding for road safety initiatives.

  Observing this cyclical approach, we welcome your views on how the State Waste Levy (that accrues approximately $120–140 million per year) can be greater used to support regional (waste management and resource recovery / circular economy) infrastructure and services as opposed to the majority going to general revenue?

  FYI :
- Regional Composting Facility : MRLGA is working with GISA to develop an options paper for Riverland composting and hope to secure partnerships with State Government for a regional facility that can deliver diverse and multiple benefits from the regions resilience to fruit fly impacts, workforce, reducing emissions and more.
- Extreme Sand Drift : Councils have experienced extreme sand drift as part of the drought and are writing to its Landscape Board to understand if/how more early monitoring, detection and intervention can be done where there are extreme locations – particularly those that risk regional road networks. The recovery from these impacts remain a significant cost to regional and rural councils.
- Local Government Elections are now scheduled in April 2027.

10 MRLGA : Quarterly reflections and/or current and emerging items

The following items have been extracted from the Annual Business Plan for highlights, awareness, endorsement or discussion as part of progressing its identified initiatives.

10.1 Adopt 2026 / 27 Annual Business Plan & Budget

The draft 26/27 MRLGA Annual Business Plan & Budget was released to Councils on 5 May 2025. No objections to the Annual Business Plan and Budget were received, although the following written feedback was received for consideration:

- Coorong District Council request minor title changes to Acting Mayor and Interim Ceo positions.
- From Renmark Paringa Council :
  - Notes the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association Draft 2026/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget.
  - Supports the proposed focus on regional strategic planning in 2026/27, including the review of the MRLGA Strategic Plan, Regional Transport Plan, Regional Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, and Circular Economy / Regional Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy.
  - Advises the MRLGA that Renmark Paringa Council considers the comprehensive review of the MRLGA Strategic Plan to be the highest priority strategic planning task for 2026/27, given the current opportunities and challenges facing the Murraylands and Riverland region.
  - Requests that the MRLGA Board consider reallocating additional funding to the MRLGA Strategic Plan review, including by reducing or staging expenditure on priority planning projects, such as the Regional Public Health and Wellbeing Plan, while still meeting any statutory obligation.

All items of feedback from Renmark Paringa Council are supported and will inform sequencing and priority of work.

A copy of the 2026/27 Draft Annual Business Plan and Budget is at **Attachment 9.**

<u>Motion</u>

"The Board note the feedback from Councils and accept the 26/27 draft Annual Business Plan & Budget as the final version for adoption."

Moved, *Seconded*

10.2 MRLGA Ceo Network Forum

A MRLGA Ceo Forum was held at Mannum on Monday 29 June where the following items were discussed:

- Joint Procurement Opportunities for 2026/27
  - Plant and Fleet
  - Road Reseal
  - Corporate Systems
- ALGA
- Benefits of a comparable data set to benchmark Council business models relating to rates, finance, employees, LTFP, AMP, average residential valuation etc.
- Strategic Efficiencies and how this can be shaped in the Strategic Plan
- General risks, strengths, opportunities and vulnerabilities across the workforce
- Early thoughts on the considerations for strategic planning towards 2031
- DRFA Reform – Update from LGA
- R&D grant options
- Deferral of the LG Elections
- FDF – Regional Drought Resilience program – Update and resource allocation

10.3 MRLGA Website

The website will be relaunched in August 2026.
Notice of when its live will be emailed on the day.

10.4 Regional Transport & Assets

MRLGA Ceo will be attending the 2026 LGA Roads & Works Conference on:

Wednesday 2 to Friday 4 September 2026
Tanunda Show Hall, Barossa Valley
LGA Roads and Works Conference 2026

MRLGA Ceo has liaised with Limestone Coast LGA (LCLGA) Ceo, and jointly they will convene their Transport Committee Members to discuss opportunities that can be achieved for joint procurement towards a 4 yearly road condition audit (and the relevant technology and system options available at that time).

10.5 Future Drought Fund - Regional Drought Resilience Program (MR Plan)

Background

This item has been reported on in previous agenda papers, this is therefore an update on-top of the earlier reports.

Seed Funding

Landscape Board (Murraylands and Riverland), RDA (Murraylands and Riverland) and MRLGA were each successful in receiving $100k of seed funding to deliver regional drought resilience projects. MRLGA will deliver two projects : 1) Green Waste to Bio-Char to Green Fields Pilot and 2) Mapping Extreme Sand Drift and piloting a solution(s).

Participation Moving Forward

Discussion

The RDR Program has several positive design components including:

- Regional decision making (as opposed to State and Federal decision making)
- Regional selection of gaps and priorities
- A chance to deliver a broad range of initiatives that might not normally be undertaken as they fall outside of one organisations 'wheel-house' or responsibility, but in partnership can be delivered.

However the roll out of the program has challenges that present risks to MRLGA outlined as follows:

Governance

- MRLGA Board or constituent Councils did not endorse the regions (MR Plan) before it was sent to the Commonwealth.
- There is no formal correspondence, agreement, partnership MOU or the like binding local government to the program or 'regional consortium' (with the exception of the single grant agreement above).
- Regional Consortiums are notional (ie they are an idea not a formal instrument or partnerships).
- There is no provision or dispersion of administration fees (with regional partners) that the State has itself received from the Commonwealth to administer the program.
- It is believed that the State will release funds for RDRP in the future, and this will require one organisation from the regional consortium (ie LB, RDA or MRLGA) to host the umbrella agreement. There is currently no governance or structure in place to support this.
- Our position has been that this program would have been better led by the SA Drought Hub, supported by dedicated funding to resource central coordination and facilitate separate regional stakeholder working groups. Under this model, MRLGA would participate as a stakeholder rather than the lead organisation. This approach would have strengthened regional coordination while retaining decision-making authority within each stakeholder group. Given its oversight of Future Drought Fund initiatives, the SA Drought Hub is also well placed to ensure greater alignment across

projects, minimise duplication, and foster collaboration between Regional Drought Resilience Planning and other FDF programs.

Process

- The process has limited to no information, milestone dates, engagement, webinars, or face to face meetings with the State.
- It has been advised that each consortium will receive funding to support 'work', however this figure and any conditions are not yet provided.
- The requirements from the State to identity, score, deliver and report on projects and activities lack efficiency.
- The process to identify, scope and score projects and activities is being done without an indication of budget.
- The Program is now in Year 2 of a 4 Year Program and we have no confirmed budget, process, reliability of when we can apply and access funding. Without this information we are in a reactive environment, unable to be a planned and prepared partner while we manage everyone's own capacity, priorities and budgets.
- The scale and frequency of monthly reporting is considered onerous.

In-Kind time, resources and equipment - monitoring and limitations

- MRLGA Ceo has provided a minimum of 50 hours over 4 months as in-kind to be a consortium partner. This must be measured as 50 hours of time we are not focusing on ABP activities. Extrapolating this, we would forecast a minimum of 150-170 hours a year of that is unrecognized and unfunded time.
- While in-kind time, resources and equipment may be appropriate, a limit will be important to set, monitor and adhere to.

Central Resource

A central resource was trialed at the Landscape Board to support the 'doing work' required in the program and to develop an Implementation Plan. The Landscape Board has advised it would be unlikely to host a central role like this moving forward.

Implementation Plan Priorities

The Implementation Plan will be delivered on time for the program, however the process has resulted in ideas and initiatives that have a lean to (environmental) regional drought resilience pursuits at this time. This is not fixed, but local government will need to determine its capacity to support the program and priority to allocate in-kind resources.

Board Direction

The MRLGA Ceo is open for questions to support the Board in determining the priority and importance rating for this program.

10.6 MRLGA Policy Updates

MRLGA has updated its internal Policies.

A copy of updated Policy's 1 to 15 can be found at **Attachment 10.**

Motion

"The MRLGA Board note an adopt updated Policies 1 - 15 as provided in Attachment 10."

Moved, *Seconded*

10.7 Murray Bridge Life Saving Club

Erin Scammell, President, Murray Bridge Life Saving Club has contacted MRLGA to discuss the potential for establishing additional river life saving clubs throughout the Murraylands and Riverlands.

As they approach their fourth season at the Murray Bridge Life Saving Club, they are eager to expand efforts and lead the way for inland life saving clubs across South Australia.

Its model has proven successful, and they believe now is the ideal time to collaborate with other river locations to achieve zero preventable drownings along the Murray River.

> **Board Direction**
>
> *Would the Board like:*
> - *An online meet and greet with Erin Scammell, President of Murray Bridge Life Saving Club to understand the model and how collaborative growth could look moving forward.*
> - *No action needed or*
> - *Other*

10.8 Items Underway

For the Boards awareness, the following items are complete or underway:
- The subsidiary's application to the Minister for an exemption from establishing an Audit Committee was approved on 29 June 2026.
- Accru Harris Orchard has been appointed as the subsidiary's external auditor for 2025/26.
- The external audit process will begin July 2026 and go through to Aug/Sept 2026.
- The MRLGA Charter review is 90% complete. The current program has paused to see if advocacy on the election process can be resolved.
- Priority for the MRLGA Strategic Plan will commence after the 26/27 Annual Business Plan and Budget is adopted with a view to having it endorsed before 2027 LG Elections.
- Despite several visits to BankSA and online inquiries - we have yet to be able to submit an application for Credit Card facility. Efforts to do so will continue nonetheless.
- MMC has Acting Ceo, Andrew Aitken until its new Ceo Dr Andrew Johnson starts on 10 August.
- CDC has appointed a new Ceo, Scott Reardon to commence in the coming months.
- DCKEM will farewell its Ceo, Scott Reardon and begin the Ceo recruitment process.

11 FINANCIAL

11.1 Quarterly Financial Statements

Quarterly Financial Statements can be found at **Attachment 11**.

> **Motion**
>
> *"That the MRLGA Board accept the financial statements submitted for the quarter ending 30 June 2026.*
>
> *Moved,* *Seconded*

12 CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

10.1 Confidential Item

Pursuant to Section 90(2) of the Local Government Act 1999 its recommended the Board considers the Ceo Performance Review item as confidential pursuant to Section 90(3) (d)(i), (d)(ii), (h), (j)(i) and (j)(ii) of the Local Government Act 1999, and that the information to be received, discussed or considered in relation to agenda item is:
(a) information the disclosure of which would involve the unreasonable disclosure of information concerning the personal affairs of any person (living or dead).

Motion

"The Board accept the item be treated as confidential.

Moved, *Seconded*

13 APPOINTMENT FOR THE POSITION OF PRESIDENT

Position is declared vacant and MRLGA CEO will temporarily assume Chairperson to conduct the nomination process.

Nominations for position of President is called for (and includes self nominations).

A person seeking to nominate may wish to provide a brief explanation (of no more than 3 minutes) as to why they are nominating and the skills, qualifications and experience they bring to the position.

Chair to list each and all nominations for President before commencing voting.

If only one nomination is received, Chair announces the sole nomination and will ask for a Member to move a motion in relation to the item.
If more than one nomination is received, individual single votes are to be submitted during the meeting via (closed) written ballot papers (provided on the table).

Votes will be collected, read and calculated by the Chair and an independent Council Officer (in private) before the name is announced.

Motion

"Mayor ' x ' is appointed as President of the Subsidiary.

Moved, *Seconded*

MRLGA CEO will step aside as Chairperson and invite the MRLGA President to conduct the remainder of the meeting.

14 APPOINTMENT FOR THE POSITION OF VICE PRESIDENT

The Chair calls for nominations for position of Vice President (and includes self nominations).
A person seeking to nominate may wish to provide a brief explanation (of no more than 3 minutes) as to why they are nominating and the skills, qualifications and experience they bring to the position.
If only one nomination is received, Chair announces the sole nomination and will ask for a Member to move a motion in relation to the item.

Motion

"Mayor ' x ' is appointed as Vice President of the Subsidiary.

Moved, *Seconded*

15 ADVISORY COMMITTEE'S & MEMBERSHIP FOR 2026/27

Pursuant to the Charter, Clause 3.8.1.4 and Clause 7.10.2, Advisory Committee Membership.
A member of a committee established under this Clause holds office at the pleasure of the Board
A list of committees and membership is provided at **Attachment 14.**

Motion

"The MRLGA Board note and endorse the MRLGA Committees and Members as declared in Attachment 14.

Moved, *Seconded*

16 ROUND TABLE

16.1 Berri Barmera Council
Any items from Mayor Ella Winnall.

Past items included:
- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good meeting and are hopeful that the issues were understood in order to see improved responses.
- BBC is developing wording for its rates notice to expressly reference the Landscape Levy as a State Government tax that they are required to collect on their behalf and may possibly refer inquiries to their State Member or Landscape Board for questions about the tax. SMDC asked if they would circulate their final wording with the group.
- RLGF: Letter from Minister for Infrastructure and Transport regarding the maintenance of a navigable channel on the River Murray.
- Update post visit with RDA Murraylands & Riverland Board on 23 October 2025.
- RLGF has issued a letter to Minister(s) if the River Murray is 'navigable' and are waiting a reply. The reply will be shared with the group.
- The background to this issue relates to obstructions in the river and responsibility.
- Office of Small and Family Business
- Asked the MRLGA Ceo inquire with Office of Small and Family Business if it would consider altering its (closed) delivery partner program to other
- Bank stabilisation learnings for Ski Club
- Asked if others have had success with bank stabilisation to pass back on to its ski club (in terms of products, design, specification or contacts). MRLGA offered to email the Infrastructure committee on their behalf and advise.

16.2 Coorong District Council
Any items from Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch.

Past items included:
- The impact to Council roads from heavier (and larger) freight vehicles is becoming an issue (at scale) and seek support to cover the increase in costs and seek MRLGA to help advocate.
- Tailem Bend Community Centre and its associated State contract to deliver community transport services in the region and its need for state funding (one example being to support council fleet that they have access too) and
- Wild dog impacts and the high numbers coming across the border.
  Due to the Board having no information on the issue relating to wild dogs, Acting Mayor Pietzsch offered to withdraw this item and return to the group with information for the Board to consider and vote on.
  CDC reported they have also:
- had their Health Committee meet as part of pursuing better regional health outcomes for its communities.
- Released its draft ABP and Budget
- Update on SA Water partnership at Wellington East
- Reviewing how to fund jetty upgrades
- Impacts from Drought
- Delivering "Unbreakable Farmer" sessions
- Liaising with the PHN on local issues
- CDC has reviewed its hardship policy
- Impacts of Little Corellas are ongoing and growing, including that on mental health.
- Further work and advocacy is being led by Council in light of the withdrawal of health services, and the following challenges and impacts that ensue. 40 submissions from community have been received to support Councils advocacy

16.3 District Council of Loxton Waikerie
Any items from Mayor Trevor Norton

Past items included:
- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good session and a lot of representation and a good facilitator.
- That Council had a briefing from Alex Zimmerman as Drought Commissioner.

Noted this role is ending this month.
- Rural Aid has reached out and Council may put them on contact with local providers to assess need in the area (as it relates to their support products).
- Councils levels of support and/or facilitation of Justice of the Peace services
- Spoke to the outcome of the South Australian Boating Facility Advisory Committee (SABFAC) panel recruitment
- LGA Visit
  LGA Ceo, Clinton Jury and a bus of visitors came to DCLW to see a stormwater / cwms project of theirs.
- Changing Places Public Toilet
  Promoted a recent project of Council to build a changing places toilet facility. Stated there are only 20 in SA but that they were able to receive 50% funding to build it.

16.4 District Council of Karoonda East Murray
Any items from Mayor Caroline Philips.

Past items included:
- Council has been continuing advocacy regarding Sand-Drift with its State MP and is hopeful there is some funding support on the horizon to keep roads open.
- Council is reviewing its road and assets with particular focus on sporting facilities.
- Council has completed the Murraylands Drought Survey and will be available in May
- She has advised chambers that she will not be standing for Mayor in the upcoming LG election and feels that proving this notice will support the election process come October/November.
- Recent events (like Mindarie races drew 3000 people and it is having a Kick off Your Boots visit, that are all helpful for community spirit during drought).
- DCKEM is initiating a local Murraylands Drought Survey (12 months on) and invited others to express interest if they wish to undertake it in unison
- Murraylands Drought Survey - It consulted with Preventive Health about the drought survey and it was a productive conversation around community comments in public surveys. They were supportive of the survey work Council(s) had done.
- 40 Year Anniversary for Farm Fair
  Proud to have a farm fair that's been going on for so long, although they may consider scaling it back to 1 day.
- General Practitioner
  A Doctor may be coming in April.

16.5 Mid Murray Council
Any items from Mayor Simone Bailey.

Past items included:
- Council is pursuing a lot of advocacy at the moment including:
  - Safety of towns located on the High Productivity Vehicle Network and adequate funding for maintenance, upgrades and safety improvements
  - Advocating to the Federal Government for a fairer distribution of Federal Assistance Grants
  - Advocating to the State Government for a review of rating arrangements for energy-producing infrastructure
  - Advocating to the State Government for reform of Landscape Levies.
- Referenced the EPLGA Annual Conference that hosts all EM's, Gov Rep, Staff and could be a consideration for MRLGA after the elections as a method to connect everyone and begin the next 4 year term.
- Financial Sustainability Round Table
- River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve
- Rating pressure – a story was shared about rate rise pressures to community's and vulnerable (agricultural) areas.
- Foundation SA
- Standpipes Funding
  It is anticipating success via a strengthening industry grant program for funding

associated with 14 standpipes and getting them automated.
- Regional Partnership Funding
  They hope some good news is coming soon.
- LGA OGM
  Reiterated that MMC is advocating for adjustments to the FA Grants formula and will be looking forward to the discussion at the upcoming LGA OGM.

16.6 Renmark Paringa Council
Any items from Mayor Peter Hunter.

Past items included:
- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good session and hopes there will be outcomes from it.
- Council has had great progress with land release for rural living area.
- Renmark Club has new riverfront features and welcomes everyone down to enjoy the area.
- Council continues to keep private levies on the State Government's radar, including maintenance rules and responsibilities, as the condition of the levies located on private land is integral to the town's flood protection measures.
- Council has reviewed its rating model between rural and township
- Council has reviewed the resources it needs to deliver the services required and finds this is well beyond their ability having regard for financial sustainability limits and ESCOSA outcomes.
- RPC presented to the RDA Murraylands and Riverland Board on 23 October about its Jane Eliza development.
- It will sit on the Flood Warning Committee.
- It hosted the last SAROC meetings and LGA Board meetings in Renmark and included a local river cruise to show its recently completed wharf redevelopment and highlights other initiatives of RPC
- Cr Howie advised she is a representative on the SA Recreation and Boating Safety Committee. It has recently released its Strategy (2025-2030) https://www.marinesafety.sa.gov.au/south-australia-recreational-boating-safetystrategy
- Mayor Hunter met with the SA Mental Health Commissioner in January 2025.
- Navigation of the River will table at the next Riverland Forum for discussion.
- Awareness about limitations of Mental Health Services in regional, rural and remote areas.
- Murray, Mallee and Riverland - Local Health Network
  They are seeking an update from Wayne Champion / LHN on the status of the 30 recommendation made in the Mental Health Services review.
- Insurances
  They remain disappointed in the insurance support and process post flood.

16.7 Rural City of Muray Bridge
Any items from Mayor Wayne Thorley.

Past items included:
- The Labor Package announced for Murray Bridge in February was well received and will bring good outcomes for the community
- Attended the LGA elected members workshop and was disappointed at the low numbers, advocating that we need to create good conditions to that invite people to want to put their hand up to be an elected member.
- Confirmed it has/will be making a submission to the renumeration tribunal
- It noted the recent article about State Government Board Member renumeration (adding up to circa > $12m)
- Advised that the sector needs more training for elected members as the content provided at the beginning of his mayoral role did not suffice.
- Boating Safety. What groups currently exist and how can be more work be done to improve river safety (particularly in light of events from Australia Day long weekend).
- Seeking to do more that supports the River Murray to be a tourism icon, and subsequently see more tourism products come to market (such as the possibility of river cruising and connecting with Journey Beyond).

- Grants. Concerns expressed about the outlay Councils have to do as part of the process of applying for grants, and the time it is taking to receive outcomes and subsequent funding.
- Expressed interest in having more online sessions.
- Police Commissioner
  A recent meeting with the Police Commissioner went very well. Some items discussed included a strategy for river safety and change for the better. This was timely given recent incidents on the river over the public holiday long weekend.
- Federal Grants
  They are experiencing long time frames with federal grant programs at the moment.
- MDBA Conference
  Promoted the next MDBA conference on 29 and 30 July will be held at Murray Bridge and invited everyone to get their tickets and come along.

16.8 Southern Mallee District Council
Any items from Mayor Ron Valentine

Past items included:
- Council has public consultation on a proposal to transition the Council from 2 > 1 Offices, however it was not well supported by community.
- SafeCom withdrew its offer to purchase the building pre-election
- Sent letters (post election) to Premier, LG Minister and Minister King about the outcome of the State Election. It has received a reply from all, except Minister King at this time.
- Reported the Councils main focus remains on financial sustainability and there will be more news emerging in 6 weeks to share with the subsidiary.
- Financial Sustainability – still the main focus for the Council
- Decommissioning Assets
- Dentist closed

17 CLOSE AND NEXT MEETING

Note: A date for October had not originally been set due to the unknown dates for caretaker period, however since the Elections Bill has now been amended and elections deferred to April 2026, we can schedule the next meeting date(s).

2026 Meeting Schedule :

Meeting Type	Month	Venues (tba)
Board Meeting	October 2026	TBA The provisions for caretaker period will be reviewed before this meeting is scheduled.
	November	
	December	*LGA AGM*

2027 Meeting Schedule – Open for Input

Meeting Type	Month	Venues (tba)
	January	
Board Meeting	February	*Monarto Zoo / Swan Hill Hotel* *28 Feb LGA – Items of Business Due*
	March	
	7-10 April	*Election Outcome*
Board Meeting	May	*Renmark* *LGA OGM*
	June	
Board Meeting	July	*Karoonda*
	August	*24 Aug LGA – Items of Business Due*
	September	
Board Meeting	October	*Tailem Bend / Mannum*
	November	*LGA AGM*
	December	

Appendix 1

Previous General Board Meeting Minutes from 24 April 2026

Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association

Date Friday 24 April 2026
Venue Southern Mallee District Council Offices
Railway Terrace North, Lameroo, SA 5302

Prior to the meeting commencing the MRLGA Board met with new MP's from 10am to 11am including:

- Jason Virgo, Member for MacKillop (One Nation)
- Robert Roylance, Member for Hammond (One Nation)

DRAFT Minutes General Board Meeting

9:45am	**Arrival, Registration + Tea and coffee**
11:00am	**Meeting Opened**
2:00pm	**Meeting Closed**

Being a unified local government sector
working in the best interest of the region and our communities.

MINUTES FROM THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE MURRAYLANDS & RIVERLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION

CONTENTS

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1	Minutes from Previous Board Meeting
ATTACHMENT 2	Quarterly Financial Statements

1 WELCOME

Acknowledgment of Country

Presidents Welcome

Chairperson, Mayor Ella Winnall opened the meeting.

No apologies were registered at the time of the agenda being prepared.

Noting:
- Mayor Caroline Phillips was in attendance via online
- Mayor Simone Bailey has returned from leave and resumed duties as Mayor for Mid Murray Council, as well as her role as Vice President for MRLGA and the regions SAROC representative
- Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch has returned from leave and resumed duties as Acting Mayor of Coorong District Council.
- Samantha Killington, Director People and Culture and Michael McCarthy, Manager of Governance represented LGA online.

2 DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

Pursuant to Clause 3.3.1 of the Charter and Section 75 of the Local Government Act 1999 (SA), board members are required to declare any potential conflict of interest(s).

Mayor Winnall and Mayor Bailey declared that they sit on the Country Arts SA Board.

Mayor Bailey declared that she has employment at Senator Karen Grogan's Office.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

A copy of the General Board Meeting Minutes was provided at **Attachment 1** (including attendance register).

Berri Barmera Council identified a typo on page 16 (item 12.1) using the word 'surmised' and should have been 'summarised'. The minutes have been updated accordingly in the version attached.

Motion

"Minutes from the MRLGA General Board Meeting held at the Murraylands Skills Centre in Murray Bridge on 5 February 2026 be taken as read and confirmed."

*Moved, **Mayor Thorley (RCMB)** Seconded, **Mayor Hunter (RPC)*** ***Carried***

4 ACTIONS REGISTER

- There were 26 board actions from 23/24 and 1 item remains pending.

	20 October 2023 - General Meeting	
	Action:	
1	**Charter Review** *It would be best to align the MRLGA voting processes with the sector. MRLGA Ceo to research other lga's voting procedures. Agreed that the item is brought back to the Board Meeting in February 2024.* That the MRLGA Board support the proposed changes to the Charter and ask the MRLGA CEO to have them reviewed legally and any feedback brought back to the board before proceeding.	This was temporarily on hold until the LGA constitutional review was completed. Councils voted at the LGA AGM November Minutes. AGM-2024-Minutes-22-November-2024.pdf MRLGA has recommenced the review and will table a draft set of changes at the July meeting.

- 1 item remains pending from 24/25 board actions including:

	7 August 2024 – Annual General Meeting	
	Action(s)	
3	**Regional Drought Resilience Plan**	– The Consortium (Landscape

	The MRLGA re-engage PIRSA and Ministers (Scriven's) Office regarding MRLGA's role in relation to MR Plan, Drought Resilience and Drought Response.	Board and RDAMR) has been working to address this with PIRSA as a MR consortium. A request was submitted in January, and while the initial March meeting was cancelled by PIRSA, it has now been rescheduled for 7 May 2026.

- There are 22 board actions emerging from 25/26 meetings. 7 items are active and pending.

	31 July 2025	
	Action(s)	
6	**Item of Business to LGA AGM re: Collection of Landscape Levy** The MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to liaise with Mayor Thorley on a potential motion to the LGA AGM (from Rural City of Murray Bridge) about advocacy towards the withdrawal of Council collecting State levy charges, and the concept of an alternative rate notice format for the sector that separates charges.	– Completed
7	**SAROC Groupings** MRLGA Ceo to confirm the groupings representation clauses (including change in regional lga president, vice president and proxy (either specific or flexible nomination).	– Completed. Regional LGA's cannot conduct voting (it must be done by LGA and SAROC Reps cannot have proxy's).
8	**Procedure for items of business to National Ministerial Meetings** LGA to advise of the process to achieve item(s) of business for Minsters Meetings (such as the ones highlighted below). • Local Government Ministers' Forum • Infrastructure and Transport Ministers' Meeting National Emergency Management Ministers' Meeting	– Completed. LGA responded on 21/10 and the information was disseminated.
9	**Letter to LGA in support of Mayor Simmons being a nominated representative on the SA Drought Advisory Group** The MRLGA Board agree to co-sign a letter from MRLGA to LGA in support of Mayor Simmons as nominee for the role LGA representative on the SA Drought Advisory Working Group.	– Completed
10	**Invite new Landscape Board Ceo** MRLGA Ceo to invite the new Landscape Board Ceo (when known) to an MRLGA meeting, and inform them of a desire to discuss the region having the States highest landscape levy.	– Completed. New Ceo will visit Councils separately.
11	**RDRP** That the MRLGA Board: Support the MRLGA Ceo to pursue an agreement with consortium partners that establish a 12 month shared role for drought resilience coordination using the $140k Implementation Funding.	– Completed
12	**RDRP** That the MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to negotiate for equal division of delivery funding to each three consortium partners, and for it to progress drought resilience initiatives and report back to the Board on its progress".	– A meeting with PIRSA is scheduled for 7 May 2026
13	**RDRP** The Board support the MRLGA Ceo as the signing officer on funding proposals associated with RDRP funding."	– Completed
14	**Personnel Changes** The Board approve for its banking systems and forms to remove Mayor Phillips and add Mayor Bailey to the Banks SA and BBO system in line with President and Vice President appointments following the AGM.	– Underway, but is currently stalled with BankSA.
15	**Flood Funding** MRLGA Ceo to liaise with Mid Murray Council about the financials of flood funding and if it can write to the crarp to access the remaining funds.	– MRLGA Ceo met with MMC Ceo 13 Jan. MMC will review more of the financials and be in touch if further advocacy is needed. – Completed

16	**MMC requested** MRLGA Ceo to invite Hon Kirsty McBain to tour the Murraylands and Riverland.	– Not yet commenced.
17	**RPC requested**: The need to list an agenda item for the Adelaide Freight Bypass (and risks/ potential impacts from the delivery stages of this project)	– Item raised with Ceo Network on 6 Nov '25 during its meeting with Senior Executives of DIT. While early concept design work is progressing, the State seeks 80/20 funding arrangements with Feds before further design work. – Completed

	30 October 2025	
	Action(s)	
18	**SAROC Reps Attendance** The MRLGA Board temporarily suspend having delegates attend SAROC meetings until LGA can demonstrate confidence in governance, democratic process, value and outcomes back to the regional grouping, and ask SAROC Chair to speak with regional grouping about solutions for improvement.	– Completed.
19	**One Basin CRC** Ceo to inquire about CRC's acting arrangements.	– Avril Hogan Chief Operating Officer One Basin CRC Email | avril.hogan@onebasin.com.au Ph | 0400 628 257 Web | www.onebasin.com.au – Completed
20	Ceo to see if more updates/information on CRC can be shared with the Board.	– MRLGA Ceo met with One Basin CRC Coo on 3 Feb. Details tbc.
21	**Sustainable Communities Program** The MRLGA Board support the MRLGA Ceo to prepare a submission to the SCP in accordance with the scope parameters outlined in agenda Item 8.4.	– MRLGA has identified an alternative partnership pathway outside of the grant program and it therefore did not make a submission.
22	**Administration fees for regional delivery on behalf of PIRSA** That the MRLGA Ceo liaise with PIRSA Ceo about agenda Items 8.5 with a view to structuring an arrangement that supports regional local government associations to participate in drought prepared opportunities, but not at the expense of the councils operational and regional priorities that support the sustainability of local government.	– In line with item 3 and 12 – this action is underway.

	5 February 2026	–
	Action(s)	–
23	**Feedback to LGA** The MRLGA Ceo to provide feedback to the LGA about the process for advocacy in the lead up to future (State and Federal) Elections	– Completed
24	**Reintstaement of SAROC Reps** The MRLGA Board support SAROC representatives to attend meetings at times when items are pertinent to regional priorities. It supports the MRLGA Ceo, President and SAROC Representatives to continue dialogue with the LGA Ceo and President to advocate for improved engagement and advocacy frameworks with all Councils.	– Completed MRLGA (President, Ceo and Saroc Rep) met with LGA (President, Ceo and SAROC Chair) on 25 March accordingly.
25	**Call for there to be a SA Commissioner for Agriculture** The MRLGA Board, support (in-principle) the LCLGA proposal to investigate a Commissioner for Agriculture in South Australia, amidst growing challenges facing the regional and rural areas and the need for an expert, independent role to act in the best interest of South Australian Agriculture. Further support would be subject to the scope, powers and functions of the role.	– Completed
26	**States withdrawal to prepare a Digital Connectivity Plan** The MRLGA support the MRLGA Ceo to refer the regional digital connectivity matter to relevant state and federal members	– Temporarily on hold while the SA State Election was underway. – Item will be delivered in May.
27	**Audit Committee Exemption** The MRLGA Board support the continuation of the exemption for MRLGA from having a risk and audit committee, given the subsidiary is externally and independently audited each year to	– Requests were sent to Councils in February. To date we have received 7 endorsements and are waiting on the 8th

	the same standard as Councils.	
28	**Storage of Records** The MRLGA Board support the Ceo to release an EOI to (constituent) Councils who can perform records management services to scan all documents and register them in Sharepoint, as well as organise all documents pre-1980 in categories for MRLGA Ceo and President to determine their value for long term archival and report back to the Board (before any permanent documents are destroyed). If a Council is unable to deliver the service, the MRLGA will seek an external provider.	- Not yet started. To commence in May.

Questions

- Item 10 - Members were asked if they have met with the Ceo Landscape Board. Most indicated they have not had a meeting yet.
  Action : MRLGA President asked if Ceo can extend an invite to the Landscape Board Ceo.

- Item 21 – Ceo was asked to comment on the outcome of this action, which was provided. MRLGA President referenced the letter sent to PIRSA about SCP (R2) to both advocate and inform them that several projects remain possible and aligned to SCP objectives but for a variety of reasons did to meet the criteria or deadline. It was also mentioned that MRLGA may be a carrier for future applications in light of it not submitting in this round. No further action needed.

Motion

"That the MRLGA Board note the actions completed and those underway from the previous meetings.

Moved, ***Mayor Hunter(RPC)*** *Seconded,* ***Mayor Bailey (MMC)*** ***Carried***

5 LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATIONS

5.1 ALGA

- **Current Policy Work**
- **How 'we' represent local government**
- **Advocacy, Events & News**
  - **ALGA President Updates**
  - **National General Assembly (Canberra)** **23 to 25 June 2026**

> **Motion**
>
> *"The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to LGA asking if it would invite the Chair of the Committee, Mrs Fiona Phillips to an online webinar after the committee has finalised the inquiry to discuss the findings and be open to queries."*
>
> *Moved,* ***Acting Mayor Peitzsch (CDC)*** *Seconded* ***Mayor Thorley (RCMB)***
>
> ***Carried***

  - **National Roads Congress (Cairns)** **Late August tbc 2026**
  - **Online Webinars**
  - **Submissions**
  - **Fuel supply pressures highlight critical role of local government – ALGA**
  - **ALGA calls for urgent action on National Packaging Reform – ALGA**
  - **ALGA welcomes the national solar panel recycling pilot – ALGA**
  - **Reinstatement of the national inquiry into local government sustainability – ALGA**

> **Motion**
>
> The MRLGA Ceo write to the respective Federal Ministers to seek meetings on Housing and Planning and a separate meeting for Roads and LG Sustainability and that the MRLGA Ceo consider attending ALGA in Canberra to support advocacy."
>
> *Moved* ***Mayor Thorley (RCMB)*** *Seconded* ***Mayor Valentine (SMDC)***
> ***Carried***

  - **Council voices heard in Government's $5 million response to Rex shutdown – ALGA**
  - **ALGA welcomes the passage of EPBC Act reforms – ALGA**
  - **ALGA welcomes the National Climate Change Partnership – ALGA**
  - **Webinar : National Rural Health Alliance**
  - **2024 National State of the Assets Report – ALGA**

> **Motion**
>
> *"The MRLGA Ceo will write to ALGA to seek advice if/when a 2025 National State of the Assets Report will be released to support ongoing advocacy."*
>
> *Moved,* ***Mayor Thorley (RCMB)*** *Seconded,* ***Mayor Norton (DCLW)*** ***Carried***

5.2 LGA of SA

- **Topical Update**

Samantha Killington attended the general meeting online and provided updates on :

- ESCOSA – It acknowledged the letter received by MRLGA on 20 March 2026 and indicated the groupings will likely stay the same and the fees will stay the same, however a report is coming Monday (27 April) that will provide more details and a consultation opportunity for Councils. There is also a plan to house a person at the LGA who will be available to support Councils in asset management and financial planning.
  A statement was made that they understood Escosa were open to charging LGA and it could then determine the fee structure, but LGA stated that method had not been tabled with them at this time but that method may be difficult, citing metropolitan councils would subsidised regional. However MRLGA stated that the flat rate is already a subsidised approach if measured by population (ie regions subsidises metropolitan rate payers)
  Mayor Bailey requested a copy of the letter sent to LGA re: Escosa (as she was on leave at the time the letter was issued).
- Fuel Supply – Councils are encouraged to fill out the survey sent to Ceo's so they can accumulate all the required data and insights to support their advocacy. LGA has been participating on the fuel supply roundtables and will continue to monitor, advocate and report of the issues to Councils.
- A query was tabled if the LGA was aware SAPOL has been reaching out to regional Councils asking about their fuel storage capacity? LGA advised it was not, but to include it in the survey response.
- R&D Strategic Review – confirmed that this is underway and will come back to MRLGA with timeframes on the process.
- Level 3 Fuel Supply – LGA to ascertain if Council services are / will be included as essential services and come back to MRLGA.

- **LGA Strategic Plan**
- **LGA Road Advocacy**

MMC asked for more information on road advocacy.
Sarah Wozniak joined the meeting online and reaffirmed the meetings with State and Federal Ministers and Advisors had been successful due to the verbal support received in support of the proposal and rational presented, but advised the outcomes remain unknown until the federal budget is released (circa 12 May).

Motion

"The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to Ministers King and McBain (cc LGA and SA Grants Commission) outlining strong support of the LGA's supplementary road funding advocacy and that the need is critical."

Moved, ***Mayor Valentine (SMDC)*** *Seconded* ***Mayor Hunter (RPC)*** ***Carried***

- **LGA Board Meetings**
- **Local Government Ministers Forum**
- **LGA Events**

5.3 SAROC

Meetings, Agenda and Minutes
Governance update

Mayor Simone Bailey has returned from leave. As one of the region's SAROC representatives, the position was vacant during that time. She has now resumed responsibilities as SAROC Representative.

SAROC Representatives Update

SAROC representative Mayor Caroline Phillips :

- provided a report from the March 2026 SAROC Meeting referencing a need to continue drought updates, action items, sand drift and reported another webinar will be coming.

- provided an update on MRLGA's meeting with LGA President, Ceo and SAROC Chair (from 25 March) following the October motion.

- **DROUGHT INFORMATION**

  State Government Support Package
  SA Drought Loan Scheme is open
  Advocacy

Council rate deferral scheme	*Led by LGA*
SA Drought Advisory Group Meeting	*Led by PIRSA*
Extreme sand drift	*Led by Councils and MRLGA*

  Grant Information
  RBS March Update

> **Board Direction: Yes**
>
> In light of the Drought Loan Scheme being introduced, does the Board seek drought as an ongoing agenda item or have it removed going forward?

- **FUEL SUPPLY**
  What the Australian Government is doing
  What the Government of South Australia is doing
  Fuel Surcharge Requests
  Increase costs to deliver essential services (ie Waste Services) + NSW Advocacy
  Australian Government Treasurer Forecast
  Australia 'won't be spared' from economic shock of Middle East war, says Treasurer | Accounting Times
  Timing

> **Board Direction: Yes**
>
> Would the Board be interested in an online presentation on Energy from Waste technologies, including an overview of the various energy products that can be derived from selected waste streams and its potential role towards Green Urea, Synthetic Fuels, AdBlue and others?
> MRLGA Ceo believes a presentation would provide valuable shared insight into emerging opportunities and how its regional waste management network could assess and strengthen supply chain resilience, particularly as these initiatives are, and will be, a focus for State and Federal Governments.

  Preparedness

> **Board Direction: No**
>
> Would the Board like MRLGA to facilitate any cross-council preparedness discussions with the CEO Network to consider what service adjustments each council may implement should Level 3 restrictions emerge or be introduced?

- **LGA BOARD NOMINATIONS INTERFACING WITH ELECTIONS**

  The term for current LGA Board and SAROC Members will end November 2026. Local Government Elections will be held in November 2026 and the appointment of new LGA Board and SAROC representatives will be advised by the LGA.
  The group discussed the challenges that the process has not been resolved over the 3 years.

> **Board Direction: NA given the constitutional process**

Would the Board like to consider any planning towards having the region represented on the LGA Board and/or Saroc for 2026-2030?

- Sam Killington left the meeting at 12:04 pm

6 REGION WIDE AGENCY UPDATES

Reports from region-wide organisations, partners and stakeholders are below:

6.1 Zone Emergency Management Committee (ZEMC)

The last ZEMC meeting was held online on 11 February 2026. Some of the meeting highlights are listed below.

- **New SAFECOM Ceo** Ms Hannah Wandel OAM, commenced
- **Disaster Ready Fund** (R3 / $200M) 7 SA Projects supported (DRF Projects)
- **Regional Capability Community Fund**
- **30Days30WaysAUS campaign**
- **A (non funded) Recovery Role**

Discussed the importance of recovery and that ZEMC / Chair, Heather Barclay (RCMB) is best positioned to continue advocating about recovery arrangements and responsibilities are retained but not cost shifted to Councils.

Board Direction: No

Would the Board like to understand more about how additional recovery responsibilities are being proposed by DPC at ZEMC for the region?

6.2 Murray Darling Association

Next Conference
82nd National Conference -"Working Together for our Basin Future"
82nd National Conference — Murray Darling Association
Greater Shepparton City Council, VIC
24 – 27 August 2026
Strategic Plan
Region 5
Region 6
MDB Plan Submissions

6.3 SA Drought Hub

The February 2026 newsletter can be found below:
SA Drought Hub Update – February 2026
The hub began engagement webinars late last year (50mins):
Friday 27 March 2026

- Regional Engagement Update: A webinar for SA Drought Hub Members and Network Partners - SA Drought Hub

November 2025

- Regional Engagement webinar for SA Drought Hub partners (Nov 2025) - SA Drought Hub

6.4 One Basin CRC (Loxton)

The Regional Hub Loxton Ceo role remains vacant and is being performed by Chief Operating Officer, Avril Hogan.
Its current projects are listed below and can be found at Projects - One Basin CRC :

6.5 PIRSA

Note: PIRSA has advised that the Murraylands & Riverland Regional Principal Regional Advisor, Barb Cowey is currently engaged in a range of other priority projects across the agency. Accordingly, for matters relating to the Riverland and Murraylands, the following PIRSA contacts are advised to be used in the interim:

- Jennifer Schilling, Acting General Manager, Regions – for ongoing matters previously supported or overseen by the Principal Regional Advisor.
- Rachael Kelly, Manager, Drought and Resilience – for matters relating to the Sustainable Communities Program.
- Geoff Cowey, Senior Industry Advisor – for grape and wine-related matters.

6.6 SAPOL

Encouraged to follow its Facebook page for live updates and initiatives:
https://www.facebook.com/SouthAustraliaPolice/

6.7 Country SAPHN

A link to the April 2026 Newsletter is below:
April 2026 Volume 12 Issue 3 - Country SA PHN

6.8 SA Cross Border Commissioner

Victorian & South Australian Cross Border Commissioners decided to postpone the upcoming Local Government Vic | SA Forum scheduled for the Thursday 7 & Friday 8 May 2026 in Naracoorte and instead has been altered to:

a) A short online session on Friday 8 May 2026 and
b) A revised date of Thursday 13 and Friday 14 August 2026 as the new dates for the forum in Naracoorte

6.9 Country Arts

News :

- *Riverland artists invited to exhibit at Chaffey Theatre - Country Arts*
- *Country Arts SA brings home fundraising gold - Country Arts*
- *Apply now for Intersection 2026 - Country Arts*
- *Submissions open for 2027 Breaking Ground Award - Country Arts*

Motion
"That the MRLGA Board note and accept the regional stakeholders written reports and/or minutes shared."

Moved, ***Mayor Bailey (MMC)*** *Seconded* ***Mayor Norton (DCLW)*** ***Carried***

7 STATE NEWS & STRATEGY'S

An overview of State Government strategy's, plans or news are provided below for information:

7.1 State Government Elections

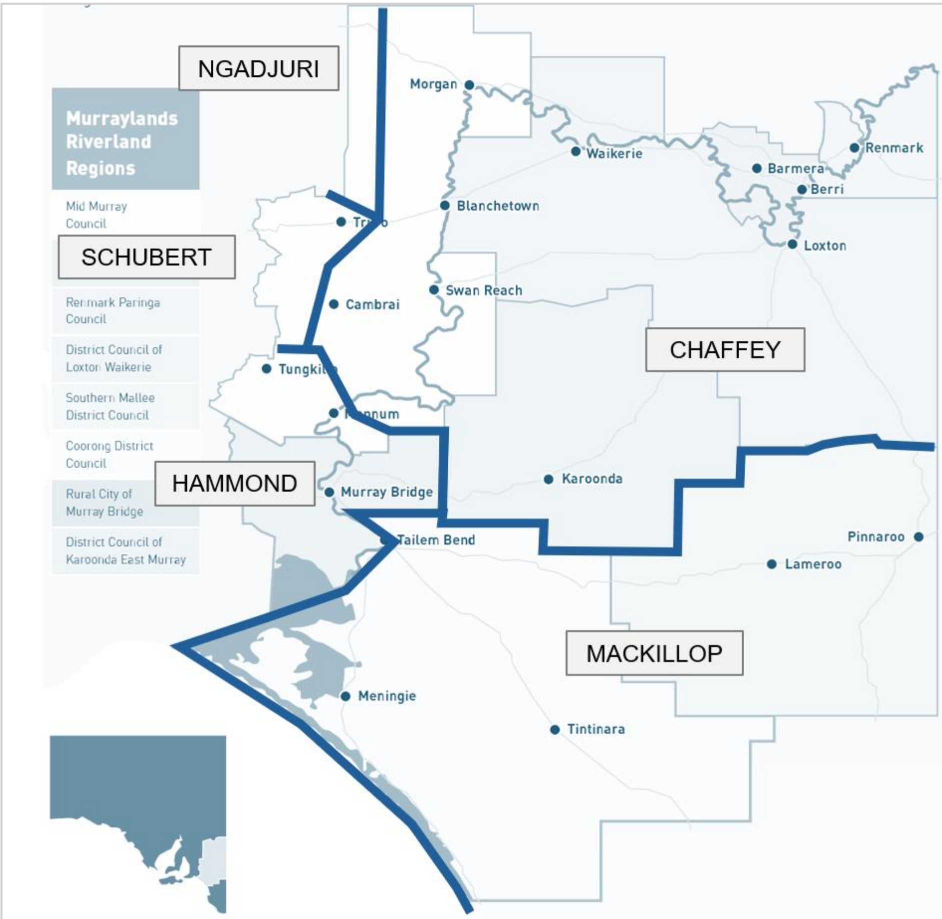
The SA State Government elections went to the polls on 21 March 2026. The current Ministers are as stated: The team | Premier of South Australia

New Local Government Minister

Following the 2026 SA State Elections a new Minister for Local Government has been appointed, Rhiannon Pearce MP Rhiannon Pearce MP | Premier of South Australia
She is the :
Minister for Emergency Services
Minister for Local Government
Minister for Recreation, Sport and Racing
Member for King

State Members

- Member for Chaffey — Tim Whetsone (LIB) — Tim Whetstone
- Member for Hammond — Robert Roylance (ONP) — Link
- Member for Mackillop — Jason Virgo (ONP) — Link
- Member for Ngadjuri — David Paton (ONP) — Link
- Member for Schubert — Ashton Hurn (LIB) — Ashton Hurn MP



* Shared boundaries are approximate only.

7.2 The Government confirmed the parliamentary sitting calendar 2026

Getting on with business | Premier of South Australia

7.3 Community Cabinet – Murray Bridge - Thursday 5 February
7.4 State & Local Government - Economic Partnership Accord
7.5 Gather Round – Spin Offs

Health Check Promotion

Footy fans urged to get free health checks at AFL Gather Round | Premier of South Australia

Government hosting more than 120 interstate investors looking for business opportunities in SA

Investors gather for business opportunities | Premier of South Australia

7.6 State Waste Strategy
7.7 State Public Health Plan
7.8 *State 30 Year Public Transport Strategy*
7.9 Regional Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Plan
7.10 Council Rates, Electricity Generator Bill

It was commented that Frank Pangallo may not be pursuing the bill at the moment, but One Nation State Members may.

8 FEDERAL NEWS & STRATEGY'S

Department of Infrastructure, Transport Regional Development, Communication , Sport and the Arts

- **More than 280 road safety upgrades coming:**
- **Strengthening online safety for Australians**
- **New National Fuel Security advertising campaign**
- **Fuel excise and Heavy vehicle Road User Charge relief for Australian drivers**
- **New factsheet on EME exposure limits now available**
- **2026 National Local Government Awards open for entries**
- **Australia's 2035 emission reduction target (62-70%)**
- **For a link to other consultation items, please visit:** Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications, Sport and the Arts

9 MRLGA : Quarterly reflections and/or current and emerging items

The following items have been extracted from the Annual Business Plan for highlights, awareness, endorsement or discussion as part of progressing its identified initiatives.

9.1 Regional Public Health & Wellbeing

Regional Public Health & Wellbeing Plan – (Stage 1) Review commencing soon

Advocacy for funding

Motion

"The MRLGA Ceo prepare a letter for signing by the President to the LGA outlining the valid reasons why regional councils should be provided with an appropriate level of funding and support to deliver regional public health plan reviews and updates."

*Moved, **Mayor Bailey (MMC)** Seconded **Mayor Thorley (RCMB)** **Carried***

9.2 Regional Waste Management & Resource Recovery

Strategy - A Move Towards Strategic Partnerships & Shared Planning

Note:
Mayor Thorley left the room at 12:50pm to avoid any potential conflict of interest between this agenda item and their association with Adelaide Hills Regional Waste Management Authority (AHRWMA).

Proposal
MRLGA Ceo has met with Green Industries Ceo to discuss circular economy opportunities in the region. Currently the Murraylands and Riverland region contributes approximately $750,000 - $800,000 through the State Waste Levy. As a method to reduce the number of duplicatory plans, its proposed that MRLGA liaises with GISA to work towards one update of the Circular Economy Strategy - that encompasses the targets regional local government need to meet in the State Strategy.

Motion
"The MRLGA Ceo undertake liaison with GISA and appropriate stakeholders to ascertain interest from partners for a joint approach to a single strategy, pursuant to the conditions outlined in Item 9.2 of the Agenda and report back to the board before next steps."

*Moved, **Mayor Valentine (SMDC)** Seconded **Mayor Hunter (RPC)** **Carried***

Note:
Mayor Thorley returned to the room at 1:02pm.

Shared Services Pilot (via 2 Waste Levy's)

Background
The Regional Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy and Implementation Plan was/is visionary in its approach but lacked funding and resourcing to deliver initiatives. As a bridge to this gap, the MRLGA consulted with Councils on a proposal to undertake a shared service model, hosted through the subsidiary's platform. Feedback was positive and it translated into two waste levy's (for 5 Councils linked to a joint Waste Services Contract – BBC, DCLW, RPC, RCMB and CDC) :

1) Contract Administration Support and
2) Waste Education Support.

The pilot for these shared services resulted in valuable insights and lessons for Councils and MRLGA but is unsustainable for MRLGA, particularly given alterative models exist that may have greater chance of output, outcomes whilst allowing MRLGA to retain efficiency and equity for members whilst also leaning to its strengths.
This was a low-cost low-risk exercise for Councils as :

1) Contract Administration Support was $12k p.a and
2) Waste Education Support was a credit back from the service contract at $20k p.a.

Update and notice to transition support to new model(s)
For the Boards awareness, some of the alternative models that will be preliminarily discussed with Councils include a) External Service Provider b) a 'Host' Council and c) Professional Development Program. Whilst there is the option to retain a shared service for 5 Councils under one governance membership model, there is also a modified model that is smaller in management (ie 3 Riverland Councils and 2 or 3 Murraylands Councils) that will be open for consideration and input.

Kerbside Review – Draft Report Complete

9.3 Regional Transport & Assets

Special Local Roads Program –Closed

Regional Transport Strategy - Update

9.4 Future Drought Fund - Regional Drought Resilience Program (MR Plan)

Background
The Future Drought Fund has entered a new 4 year chapter of funding. The table below provides an overview of the FDF programs in regards to the RDR Program.

	2024 - 2028				2028-2032						
	24/25	25/26	26/27	27/28	28/29	29/30	30/31	31/32		**FDF Investment Programs**	**Delivery Agent**
$28,000,000	1	2	Pending $104,000,000							Drought Resilience Adoption and Innovation Hubs.	**SA Drought Hub**
$83,200,000	1	2	3	4	5					Farm Business Resilience program (incl Drought Resilience Scholarships).	
$67,000,000		1	2	3	4					**Regional Drought Resilience Planning program (4 Years)**	**Regional Consortia**
$60,300,000	1	2	3	4	5	6				Long-Term Trials program	
$40,000,000	1	2	3	4	5	6				Resilient Landscapes program	
$37,000,000		1	2	3						(New) Scaling Success program	
$36,000,000	1	2	3	4						FDF Communities program	
$20,000,000		1	2	3						Innovation Challenges Pilot	
$17,200,000	1	2	3	4						Climate Services for Agriculture Program (and 'My Climate View').	
$15,000,000	1	2	3	4						Place-based and First Nations-led activities (incl $ for FN Advisory Group)	
$11,400,000	1	2	3	4						Support monitoring, evaluation and learning (MEL)	

A draft funding agreement has been provided by PIRSA but a final version is pending (therefore no projects have commenced).

Motion
"The MRLGA Board issue delegation to the Ceo to sign and execute the grant funding agreement with PIRSA (to receive approximately $100,000 income) to deliver projects in the region under the Regional Drought Resilience Program."

Moved, ***Mayor Hunter (RPC)*** *Seconded,* ***Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC)*** ***Carried***

9.5 Future Drought Fund - fRRR – Community Impact Program ($900k in 26/27 + 27/28)

fRRR will fund a Regional Coordinator (to the value of $150k over two years) to support the projects that are ultimately funded by the $900k.
The organisation to 'host' the regional coordinator role is yet to be determined and will receive income for the position. Organisations can express interest now if they seek to be host.

Board Direction: Yes

Would the Board like to receive a list of the opportunities and risks if MRLGA was to put forward itself as Regional Coordinator for the fRRR Community Impact Program?

9.6 Murray Darling Basin - Water Recovery – Round 1 SCP

Sustainable Communities Grant Program – Round 1 Closed

MRLGA Submission – Did not proceed
Whilst MRLGA investigated opportunities to submit an application for this funding, it identified alternative pathways to progress outcomes (ie Item 9.2) and therefore did not make a submission to this grant program (that required 30% co-contribution).

Round 2 – Idea gathering now
PIRSA advised that whilst the Federal guidelines limit this in Round 2 they would like all proposals tabled for their awareness.
MRLGA on-shared this with Council Ceo Network and any project ideas it receives will be passed back to PIRSA.

9.7 Items Underway

For the Boards awareness, the following items are underway:

- 2026/27 Draft Annual Business Plan is under development and MRLGA Ceo will undertake consultation shortly.
- Ceo Performance Panel met in April and will be continuing the process in April / May followed by a report to the July meeting.
- The MRLGA Charter review is 90% complete and a draft will be circulated outside of a board meeting for review before being tabled at the July meeting.
- MRLGA Policies are 90% updated and will be circulated outside of a board meeting for review before being tabled at the July meeting.
- The subsidiary's application to the Minister for an exemption from establishing an Audit Committee has progressed, with support received from six of the eight Councils. The remaining two endorsements are expected by the end of April, after which the application will be finalised and submitted to the Minister in May.
- MRLGA Ceo has not planned to attend ALGA in June 2026.

10 FINANCIAL

10.1 Quarterly Financial Statements

Quarterly Financial Statements were tabled late electronically on the day as **Attachment 2** and are issued as part of the meeting minutes.

Motion

"That the MRLGA Board accept the financial statements submitted for the quarter ending 31 March 2026.

Moved, *Seconded*

Queries:

1. Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC) queried the reference that BBC has paid its full year's subscription but that it also has an outstanding balance. MRLGA Ceo advised this amount was appearing because the invoice had been raised and recorded as an accrual but would review the item and report back to the group with clarity as it was not coming through in that format for all Councils.
2. Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC) queried the cash balance of $34,000 as of 31 March. MRLGA Ceo advised this reflected the balance at that date only and not the current position, noting its cashflow forecast included Q3 and Q4 subscription income. Ceo stated the balance was appropriate given its low operating expenses and income for that month.

11 ROUND TABLE

11.1 Berri Barmera Council

Mayor Ella Winnall shared:

- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good meeting and they are hopeful that the issues were understood in order to see improved responses.
- BBC is developing wording for its rates notice to expressly reference the Landscape Levy as a State Government tax that they are required to collect on their behalf and may possibly refer inquiries to their State Member or Landscape Board for questions about the tax. SMDC asked if they would circulate their final wording with the group.

Past items included:

- RLGF: Letter from Minister for Infrastructure and Transport regarding the maintenance of a navigable channel on the River Murray.
- Update post visit with RDA Murraylands & Riverland Board on 23 October 2025.
- RLGF has issued a letter to Minister(s) if the River Murray is 'navigable' and are waiting a reply. The reply will be shared with the group.
- The background to this issue relates to obstructions in the river and responsibility.
- Office of Small and Family Business
- Asked the MRLGA Ceo inquire with Office of Small and Family Business if it would consider altering its (closed) delivery partner program to other
- Bank stabilisation learnings for Ski Club
- Asked if others have had success with bank stabilisation to pass back on to its ski

club (in terms of products, design, specification or contacts). MRLGA offered to email the Infrastructure committee on their behalf and advise.

11.2 Coorong District Council

Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch raised three unscheduled items for the Board's consideration. Stating on behalf of Coorong District Council they seek MRLGA's support and resource to advocate on the following items of concern:

- The impact to Council roads from heavier (and larger) freight vehicles is becoming an issue (at scale) and seek support to cover the increase in costs
- Tailem Bend Community Centre and its associated State contract to deliver community transport services in the region and its need for state funding (one example being to support council fleet that they have access too) and
- Wild dog impacts and the high numbers coming across the border.
  Due to the Board having no information on the issue relating to wild dogs, Acting Mayor Pietzsch offered to withdraw this item and return to the group with information for the Board to consider and vote on.

CDC reported they have also:

- had their Health Committee meet as part of pursuing better regional health outcomes for its communities.
- Released its draft ABP and Budget

> **Motion**
> *"*That MRLGA write to relevant Ministers and the Premier about community transport and the impacts of heavy vehicles on Council impacted roads.*"*
>
> *Moved,* ***Acting Mayor Pietzsch (CDC)*** *Seconded,* ***Mayor Hunter (RPC)*** ***Carried***

Past items included:

- Update on SA Water partnership at Wellington East
- Reviewing how to fund jetty upgrades
- Impacts from Drought
- Delivering "Unbreakable Farmer" sessions
- Liaising with the PHN on local issues
- CDC has reviewed its hardship policy
- Impacts of Little Corellas are ongoing and growing, including that on mental health.
- Further work and advocacy is being led by Council in light of the withdrawal of health services, and the following challenges and impacts that ensue. 40 submissions from community have been received to support Councils advocacy

11.3 District Council of Loxton Waikerie

Mayor Trevor Norton shared :

- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good session and a lot of representation and a good facilitator.
- That Council had a briefing from Alex Zimmerman as Drought Commissioner. Noted this role is ending this month.
- Rural Aid has reached out and Council may put them on contact with local providers to assess need in the area (as it relates to their support products).

Past items included:

- Councils levels of support and/or facilitation of Justice of the Peace services
- Spoke to the outcome of the South Australian Boating Facility Advisory Committee (SABFAC) panel recruitment
- LGA Visit
  LGA Ceo, Clinton Jury and a bus of visitors came to DCLW to see a stormwater / cwms project of theirs.
- Changing Places Public Toilet
  Promoted a recent project of Council to build a changing places toilet facility. Stated there are only 20 in SA but that they were able to receive 50% funding to build it.

11.4 District Council of Karoonda East Murray

Mayor Caroline Philips shared :

- Council has been continuing advocacy regarding Sand-Drift with its State MP and is hopeful there is some funding support on the horizon to keep roads open.
- Council is reviewing its road and assets with particular focus on sporting facilities.
- Council has completed the Murraylands Drought Survey and will be available in May
- She has advised chambers that she will not be standing for Mayor in the upcoming LG election and feels that proving this notice will support the election process come October/November.

Past items included:

- Recent events (like Mindarie races drew 3000 people and it is having a Kick off Your Boots visit, that are all helpful for community spirit during drought).
- DCKEM is initiating a local Murraylands Drought Survey (12 months on) and invited others to express interest if they wish to undertake it in unison
- Murraylands Drought Survey - It consulted with Preventive Health about the drought survey and it was a productive conversation around community comments in public surveys. They were supportive of the survey work Council(s) had done.
- 40 Year Anniversary for Farm Fair
  Proud to have a farm fair that's been going on for so long, although they may consider scaling it back to 1 day.
- General Practitioner
  A Doctor may be coming in April.

11.5 Mid Murray Council

Mayor Simone Bailey shared

- Council is pursuing a lot of advocacy at the moment including:
  - Safety of towns located on the High Productivity Vehicle Network and adequate funding for maintenance, upgrades and safety improvements
  - Advocating to the Federal Government for a fairer distribution of Federal Assistance Grants
  - Advocating to the State Government for a review of rating arrangements for energy-producing infrastructure
  - Advocating to the State Government for reform of Landscape Levies.
- Referenced the EPLGA Annual Conference that hosts all EM's, Gov Rep, Staff and could be a consideration for MRLGA after the elections as a method to connect everyone and begin the next 4 year term.

Past items included:

- Financial Sustainability Round Table
- River Murray International Dark Sky Reserve
- Rating pressure – a story was shared about rate rise pressures to community's and vulnerable (agricultural) areas.
- Foundation SA
- Standpipes Funding
  It is anticipating success via a strengthening industry grant program for funding associated with 14 standpipes and getting them automated.
- Regional Partnership Funding
  They hope some good news is coming soon.
- LGA OGM
  Reiterated that MMC is advocating for adjustments to the FA Grants formula and will be looking forward to the discussion at the upcoming LGA OGM.

11.6 Renmark Paringa Council

Mayor Peter Hunter shared:

- The Riverland ThinkTank was a good session and hopes there will be outcomes from it.
- Council has had great progress with land release for rural living area.
- Renmark Club has new riverfront features and welcomes everyone down to enjoy the area.

- Council continues to keep private levies on the State Government's radar, including maintenance rules and responsibilities, as the condition of the levies located on private land is integral to the town's flood protection measures.
- Council has reviewed its rating model between rural and township
- Council has reviewed the resources it needs to deliver the services required and finds this is well beyond their ability having regard for financial sustainability limits and ESCOSA outcomes.

Past items included:

- RPC presented to the RDA Murraylands and Riverland Board on 23 October about its Jane Eliza development.
- It will sit on the Flood Warning Committee.
- It hosted the last SAROC meetings and LGA Board meetings in Renmark and included a local river cruise to show its recently completed wharf redevelopment and highlights other initiatives of RPC
- Cr Howie advised she is a representative on the SA Recreation and Boating Safety Committee. It has recently released its Strategy (2025-2030) https://www.marinesafety.sa.gov.au/south-australia-recreational-boating-safetystrategy
- Mayor Hunter met with the SA Mental Health Commissioner in January 2025.
- Navigation of the River will table at the next Riverland Forum for discussion.
- Awareness about limitations of Mental Health Services in regional, rural and remote areas.
- Murray, Mallee and Riverland - Local Health Network
  They are seeking an update from Wayne Champion / LHN on the status of the 30 recommendation made in the Mental Health Services review.
- Insurances
  They remain disappointed in the insurance support and process post flood.

11.7 Rural City of Muray Bridge

Mayor Wayne Thorley shared:

- The Labor Package announced for Murray Bridge in February was well received and will bring good outcomes for the community
- Attended the LGA elected members workshop and was disappointed at the low numbers, advocating that we need to create good conditions to that invite people to want to put their hand up to be an elected member.
- Confirmed it has/will be making a submission to the renumeration tribunal
- It noted the recent article about State Government Board Member renumeration (adding up to circa > $12m)
- Advised that the sector needs more training for elected members as the content provided at the beginning of his mayoral role did not suffice.

Past items included:

- Boating Safety. What groups currently exist and how can be more work be done to improve river safety (particularly in light of events from Australia Day long weekend).
- Seeking to do more that supports the River Murray to be a tourism icon, and subsequently see more tourism products come to market (such as the possibility of river cruising and connecting with Journey Beyond).
- Grants. Concerns expressed about the outlay Councils have to do as part of the process of applying for grants, and the time it is taking to receive outcomes and subsequent funding.
- Expressed interest in having more online sessions.
- Police Commissioner
  A recent meeting with the Police Commissioner went very well. Some items discussed included a strategy for river safety and change for the better. This was timely given recent incidents on the river over the public holiday long weekend.
- Federal Grants
  They are experiencing long time frames with federal grant programs at the moment.
- MDBA Conference
  Promoted the next MDBA conference on 29 and 30 July will be held at Murray Bridge and invited everyone to get their tickets and come along.

11.8 Southern Mallee District Council

Mayor Ron Valentine shared

- Council has public consultation on a proposal to transition the Council from 2 > 1 Offices, however it was not well supported by community.
- SafeCom withdrew its offer to purchase the building pre-election
- Sent letters (post election) to Premier, LG Minister and Minister King about the outcome of the State Election. It has received a reply from all, except Minister King at this time.

Past items included:

- Reported the Councils main focus remains on financial sustainability and there will be more news emerging in 6 weeks to share with the subsidiary.
- Financial Sustainability – still the main focus for the Council
- Decommissioning Assets
- Dentist closed

12 CLOSE AND NEXT MEETING

2026 Meeting Schedule :

Meeting Type	Month	Venues (tba)
Board Meeting	July 2026 (AGM)	TBA
Board Meeting	October 2026	TBA The provisions for caretaker period will be reviewed before this meeting is scheduled.

Note: The July AGM will require voting for MRLGA President and Vice President.

Attendance Register

24 April 2026

MRLGA BOARD MEMBERS

Berri Barmera Council (BBC)	Mayor Ella Winnall (President)
Coorong District Council (CDC)	Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch
District Council Karoonda East Murray (DCKEM)	Mayor Caroline Phillips (Online)
District Council Loxton Waikerie (DCLW)	Mayor Trevor Norton
Mid Murray Council (MMC)	Mayor Simone Bailey (Vice President)
Renmark Paringa Council (RPC)	Mayor Peter Hunter
Rural City of Murray Bridge (RCMB)	Mayor Wayne Thorley
Southern Mallee District Council (SMDC)	Mayor Ron Valentine

MRLGA

Ceo	Carron McLeod

CEO NETWORK

Coorong District Council (CDC)	Myles Somers
Southern Mallee DC	Jason Beaton

Deputy Mayors

Berri Barmera Council	Cr Trevor Scott

ATTENDING & INVITED GUESTS

LGA	Sam Killington (Online)
LGA	Michael McCarthy (Online)
State Member for Hammond	Robert Roylance (One Nation)
State Member for MacKillop	Jason Virgo (One Nation)
Coorong District Council (CDC)	Mayor Paul Simmons

APOLOGIES

Appendix 2

Grant Data for Drought Response

Council	On Farm Infrastructure Rebate	Connecting Communities Events
Total	**4864**	**238**
Kangaroo Island Council	240	4
Tatiara DC	238	6
Naracoorte Lucindale Council	233	5
Yorke Peninsula Council	225	15
Coorong District Council	215	13
The DC of Loxton Waikerie	184	7
Alexandrina Council	174	8
Wattle Range Council	171	7
The DC of Mount Remarkable	161	9
Mid Murray Council	158	4
Northern Areas Council	146	18
The Regional Council of Goyder	145	10
Clare And Gilbert Valleys Council	128	5
Wakefield Regional Council	125	10
Adelaide Hills Council	119	2
Light Regional Council	115	1
The Berri Barmera Council	115	2
The Barossa Council	105	4
Renmark Paringa Council	103	3
The DC of Grant	96	2
City of Onkaparinga	95	1
Lower Eyre Council	90	1
Southern Mallee DC	88	7
The DC of Tumby Bay	86	2
The DC of Cleve	85	5
The DC of Karoonda East Murray	85	10
Pastoral Unincorporated Area	83	3
The DC of Streaky Bay	78	6
The Rural City of Murray Bridge	76	7
Mount Barker District Council	75	2
The DC of Ceduna	75	3
The DC of Orroroo Carrieton	73	7
Kingston DC	70	3
City of Playford	67	0
DC of Elliston	61	2
The DC of Yankalilla	56	3

Port Pirie Regional Council	54	9
Wudinna District Council	50	6
Adelaide Plains Council	47	1
The DC of Kimba	47	0
Barunga West Council	39	4
City of Victor Harbor	39	4
The DC of Franklin Harbour	36	1
The Flinders Ranges Council	35	3
The DC of Peterborough	23	1
Copper Coast Council	13	4
DC of Robe	12	0
Uia Northern	9	6
City of Salisbury	6	0
City of Mount Gambier	5	0
Uia Riverland	4	0
City of Tea Tree Gully	2	0
Town of Gawler	2	0
Port Augusta City Council	1	0
The Corporation of The City of Whyalla	1	0
City of Port Lincoln	0	1
The DC of Mallala	0	1

Appendix 3

PIRSA, Principle Regional Advisor - Update

PIRSA Updates – Riverland & Murraylands 21.07.2026

Avian Influenza (Bird Flu)

- PIRSA continues preparedness, surveillance and awareness activities relating to avian influenza (bird flu).
- If queried by members of the public, stakeholders are encouraged to share the following information:
  - Avoid contact with sick or dead birds and other animals.
  - Record what you see, including location, date, time and species (if known).
  - Take photographs or video where possible.
  - Report observations to the **Emergency Animal Disease Hotline** on **1800 675 888**.
- PIRSA encourages local government, industry and community stakeholders to share information from official sources and follow PIRSA social media channels for updates.
- **SA Information and Resources:** https://birdflu.sa.gov.au
- **National Information:** https://birdflu.gov.au

Australian Plague Locust Update

- The Department of Primary Industries and Regions (PIRSA) is preparing a coordinated response to the increased risk posed by Australian plague locusts across parts of regional South Australia.
- PIRSA will undertake further surveillance in the Flinders North and pastoral zones in early spring to identify where locust populations are emerging and determine whether treatment is necessary. Any control activities will be targeted according to the local environment, land use, locust density and potential risks to agricultural production, communities and sensitive sites.
- Under the *Plant Health Act (2009)*, landholders are primarily responsible for controlling locusts on their properties; however, PIRSA will continue to support landholders through surveillance, advice, monitoring and control guidance.
- Locusts are highly mobile pests and could fly in to previously unaffected areas with little warning. PIRSA can't survey or treat all parts of the State and we need your help to monitor and respond.
- As part of a combined response, PIRSA is engaging with landholders, local government, industry representatives and the Australian Plague Locust Commission to support planning and share information.
- Australian Plague Locusts are a notifiable pest and landowners or producers are required to report any sightings by calling the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline **1800 084 881** or via PIRSA's online plant-pest reporting form.
- For more information or to report any locust activity, visit pir.sa.gov.au/locusts

Wild Dog Management Update

- The SA-Victoria border remains a priority wild dog management area for the South Australian Government.
- Following the Victorian Government's decision to protect dingoes in north-west Victoria in March 2024, reported livestock attacks in border regions have increased significantly.
- The rate of dingo attacks on livestock in north-west Victoria has more than doubled since March 2024, with 236 attacks recorded in the first six months of 2025-26, compared with 244 attacks during all of 2024-25.
- Wild dog attacks on livestock on the South Australian side of the border have also increased, including a recent incident involving five sheep mauled south-east of Ngarkat Conservation Park.
- Wild dog activity has been regularly detected within Ngarkat Conservation Park since October 2024.
- The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) Chief Executive's Control Notice requires baiting by all land managers in the region until no further evidence of wild dogs is detected.
- DEW is updating its Ngarkat baiting program, which is expected to significantly increase baiting activity in line with the Control Notice.
- PIRSA's recently responded to enquiries raised by MRLGA regarding wild dog management and understands the matter has also been raised with the Cross Border Commissioner.

Drought PIRSA and partner agencies continue to deliver support for producers, farming businesses and regional communities.

Support Available Includes:
- Rural Financial Counselling Service (RFCS)
- Family and Business (FaB) Mentors
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Support
- PIRSA Recovery Hotline
- Emergency Services Levy Rebate (for eligible producers)

South Australia Drought Loan Scheme
- Loans of up to $250,000 are available to eligible primary producers.
- Supports cashflow, working capital and business continuity during drought conditions.
- Features concessional interest rates and flexible repayment arrangements. https://pir.sa.gov.au/regions-and-support/apply-for-funding/south-australia-drought-loan-scheme

Useful Links
- **Drought Support Hub:** https://pir.sa.gov.au/regions-and-support/drought
- **Rural Business Support:** https://www.ruralbusinesssupport.org.au
- **Recovery Hotline: 1800 931 314**

Sustainable Communities Program
- The Sustainable Communities Program is a $20 million Australian Government grant program delivered by PIRSA.
- The program aims to help mitigate the social and economic impacts of Australian Government water recovery for the environment.
- Grants support projects that drive economic diversification, innovation and growth, enhance liveability, and strengthen community resilience in South Australia's most affected River Murray communities.
- Round 1 closed on 31 March 2026, with up to $14 million available for eligible projects.
- Assessment is currently underway, with applicants expected to be notified of outcomes during July 2026.
- Any unallocated funding from Round 1 will be added to the $6 million allocated for Round 2.
- Investment is targeted and outcome-focused to address the unique needs of impacted River Murray communities. https://pir.sa.gov.au/regions-and-support/apply-for-funding/sustainable-communities-program

PIRSA Regional Initiatives (Riverland Transition and Economic Diversification)
Economic Diversification and Transition Workshop
- On 22 April 2026, PIRSA and the Mayors of the Berri Barmera, Renmark Paringa and Loxton Waikerie Councils convened a one-day collaborative Think Tank workshop involving government agencies, councils, regional organisations and industry leaders.
- The workshop explored the regional impacts resulting from the decline in the wine and grape industry associated with global oversupply.
- Discussions focused on understanding current impacts and identifying opportunities to support transition and diversification of the Riverland economy, building on existing regional strengths.
- Key priorities identified included:
    - Housing and land use planning, Diversification and investment attraction
    - Circular economy and waste opportunities, Strengthening tourism and the visitor economy

Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop
- On 4 June 2026, PIRSA and the Riverland Council Mayors convened a Riverland Mental Health and Wellbeing Workshop at the Loxton Research Centre.
- The workshop brought together SA Health, Preventive Health SA, local government, wine industry representatives and local service providers.
- Discussions focused on the impacts of ongoing industry and seasonal challenges on community wellbeing, particularly within the grape and wine sector.

- Participants identified opportunities to strengthen mental health and wellbeing support through more locally embedded and practical approaches.
- Key themes included:
    - Peer support and community connection
    - Local events and industry activities
    - Grower meetings and existing communication channels
    - Improved awareness and access to wellbeing services

Primary Industries Future Forward Fund

- The South Australian Government is investing $8 million over four years to advance the prosperity, sustainability and resilience of South Australia's primary industries.
- The fund:
    - Supports research and development, innovation and adoption of emerging technologies across the grain, livestock, dairy, seafood, wine, horticulture and timber sectors.
    - Assists industries to improve sustainability, respond to market and environmental pressures, strengthen supply chains and improve preparedness for biosecurity threats and environmental disruptions.
    - Builds on the successful South Australian Wood Fibre and Timber Industry Master Plan model and expands support across a broader range of primary industries. More information on the Future Forward Fund will be available soon. Primary Industries Future Forward Fund - PIRSA.

Regional Leadership Development Program (RLDP) 2026-2028

- The RLDP is kicking off again following the success of the 2024/2026 Program. The program:
    - Supports the development of current and emerging regional leaders across South Australia.
    - Builds leadership capability, strengthens community networks and supports long-term regional capacity. Encourages collaboration and strategic leadership across regional industries, businesses and communities. https://regionaldevelopment.sa.gov.au/regional-leadership-development-program

South Australian Crop and Pasture Report: 2025–26 Crop Emergence

- The report provides an overview of crop establishment, pasture growth and seasonal conditions across South Australia. https://pir.sa.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0007/484063/sa-crop-pasture-report-2025-26-crop-emergence.pdf

PIRSA News and Opportunities

Industrial Hemp Industry Development

- The South Australian Government is investing $500,000 to support industrial hemp production through new research trials and industry support grants. The initiative aims to support industry growth, encourage diversification opportunities and strengthen market development across South Australia. https://pir.sa.gov.au/news/primary-industries/new-trials-to-boost-emerging-hemp-industry

SARDI PestFacts Webinar

- Recent PestFacts webinars have provided seasonal updates on green peach aphid management, turnip yellows virus, establishment pests and Australian plague locust monitoring.
- Producers are encouraged to access recordings and seasonal advice through the SARDI PestFacts service. https://pir.sa.gov.au/news/pestfacts/watch-the-pestfacts-may-webinar

Agricultural Town of the Year

- The 2026 Agricultural Town of the Year Awards continue to celebrate excellence in agriculture, innovation and community leadership across regional South Australia.
- *Waikerie has been recognised as one of the Top 10 finalists for 2026*. https://agtown.com.au

South Australian Regional Showcase

- Celebrates outstanding regional achievements, innovation and leadership across South Australia.
- Provides an opportunity to highlight regional success stories, investment opportunities and community achievements. https://regionalsa.com.au/showcase

Appendix 4

RDA, Murraylands & Riverland - Update

An Australian Government Initiative

Regional Development Australia

MURRAYLANDS AND RIVERLAND

RDAMR Update for MRLGA Board

July 2026

Leadership & Organisational Stability

RDAMR has maintained strong organisational momentum over the past six months, continuing to deliver significant outcomes for the Murraylands and Riverland while progressing a broad portfolio of regional initiatives and partnerships.

In accordance with the Australian Government's Better Practice Guidelines for Regional Development Australia committees, the RDAMR Board has commenced an open, transparent, merit-based and competitive recruitment process for the Chief Executive | Director of Regional Development position. Throughout the recruitment process, RDAMR continues to operate as normal, maintaining its commitment to supporting regional development through strong collaboration with local government, industry, community organisations and all levels of government.

Importantly, both the Australian and South Australian Governments have confirmed ongoing core funding for Regional Development Australia until 30 June 2030, providing long-term certainty for RDAMR to continue delivering regional leadership, strategic advocacy, workforce development, economic diversification and collaborative initiatives that strengthen the Murraylands and Riverland. This funding certainty enables the organisation to work alongside councils with confidence, supporting long-term regional planning and investment while delivering practical outcomes for our communities.

Project Delivery & Regional Impact (Completed / In Delivery)

- **Regional Leadership Development Program (RLDP) -Round 3**
  Funding has been secured for another 2 year program. The program identifies the region's leadership development needs and delivers a training program that supports participants' capacity-building journey. The aim is to develop a pipeline of future leaders who represent the diverse people living across the region. Initial planning and training gap analysis is underway.

- **Building Bright Futures – Flying Start Workforce Project**
  Delivery has commenced. Working closely with Childcare Centres, focused on attracting, training and retaining early childhood education and care professionals. The project is operating across the region. The Project Lead will engage directly with councils regarding participation in upcoming skilled worker tours with Study Adelaide.

- **Connected Mallee Project**

On-ground rollout has recommenced for the Connected Mallee Project, improving digital confidence, safety and skills for adult Mallee farmers across relevant council areas, supporting productivity, safety and digital inclusion. In-region digital upskilling is taking place in August.

- **Drought Proof Futures – Small Business Fundamentals** continues delivery across the Murraylands and Riverland, supporting drought-impacted businesses to build capability and resilience. In 2025-26, 35 businesses undertook 1:1 mentoring sessions and 56 businesses attended workshops.

- The **Equip Program** continues delivery in the Riverland, designed to strengthen mental preparedness, resilience, and wellbeing in regional communities exposed to natural disasters.

- The **Early Childhood Education Supply Study** is complete, with reporting submitted to the Office of Early Childhood Development for review. Once approved, RDAMR will forward reports to all Councils.

Regional Investment Pipeline

The April–June 2026 Investment Pipeline Report has been submitted, identifying:

- Public investment pipeline: over $1 billion
- Private investment pipeline: over $18.1 billion across the Murraylands and Riverland

The regional investment pipeline continues to grow in most quarters, with significant levels of private investment in renewable energy, housing, and AI factories, reinforcing the need for coordinated regional planning, enabling infrastructure, workforce readiness and strong collaboration between councils, industry and government to maximise regional opportunities.

Forward-Looking Priorities (Next Quarter)

RDAMR's focus for the coming quarter is maintaining delivery momentum, progressing the recruitment process for the Chief Executive | Director of Regional Development, strengthening local government engagement, and preparing the organisation for the next phase of strategic planning.

- **RDAMR Strategic Direction 2027+**
  Development of RDAMR's Strategic Direction 2027+ has been temporarily paused while the Chief Executive | Director of Regional Development recruitment process is completed. The Board considers it important that the successful appointee has the opportunity to lead the development of the organisation's next strategic direction.

  Work will recommence immediately following the appointment, with councils a key engagement stakeholder.

- **Monitoring disruption impacts**
  RDAMR will continue monitoring emerging regional risks and disruption events—including biosecurity threats, climate impacts and international market influences—and will work collaboratively with councils, industry and government to advocate for support where required.

- **Ongoing Council Engagement**
  RDAMR will continue structured engagement with Council Mayors, CEOs and senior staff to ensure regional priorities remain aligned, strengthen collaboration and identify opportunities to jointly advocate for investment and improved regional outcomes.

Contact

RDAMR welcomes ongoing communication and collaboration with councils.

Julie Bates, Chief Executive | Director of Regional Development 📞 0458 505 169

Appendix 4

Regional Development Australia (RDA) Murraylands and Riverland

Letter from President regarding CEO Recruitment Process

An Australian Government Initiative

Regional Development Australia

MURRAYLANDS & RIVERLAND

17th July 2026

Dear Stakeholders,

RE: Chief Executive | Director of Regional Development Recruitment

I am writing to advise that the position of Chief Executive | Director of Regional Development for Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland (RDAMR) will shortly be publicly advertised.

In accordance with the Australian Government's Better Practice Guidelines for Regional Development Australia committees, the RDAMR Board is undertaking an open, transparent, merit-based and competitive recruitment process to appoint the organisation's Chief Executive | Director of Regional Development.

Following the departure of former Chief Executive Ben Fee in October 2025, Julie Bates was appointed to the role on a 12-month contract to provide leadership continuity and maintain momentum across RDAMR's strategic priorities. Under Julie's leadership, RDAMR has continued to deliver significant outcomes for the Murraylands and Riverland, and the Board is committed to ensuring this momentum continues throughout the recruitment process.

The position will be publicly advertised and assessed against clearly defined selection criteria in accordance with governance and probity requirements.

Throughout this process, RDAMR will continue to operate as normal, maintaining its commitment to supporting economic growth, regional resilience and prosperity through strong collaboration with government, industry, local government and community stakeholders.

Further information, including the position description and application information, will be available once the advertisement is released.

Should you have any questions regarding the recruitment process, please do not hesitate to contact me on 0438 704 229.

Thank you for your continued support of RDAMR and our shared commitment to the future of the Murraylands and Riverland.

Yours sincerely,

Jodie Hawkes
Chair
Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland

PO Box 134 MURRAY BRIDGE SA 5253
Phone: (08) 8535 7170 | (08) 8580 8500 | Email: info@rdamr.com.au

Appendix 6

Landscape Board, Murraylands & Riverland - Update

Update for the Murraylands and Riverland LGA – July 2026

Launch of the Regional Landscape Plan

The Murraylands and Riverland Regional Landscape Plan 2026–2031 is now available, providing a shared roadmap for the management and stewardship of our region's landscapes over the next five years. Developed through extensive engagement with community members, First Nations peoples, industry, landholders, governments and key partner organisations, the plan sets out the priorities and actions needed to support healthy landscapes, sustainable water resources, productive agriculture and resilient communities.

The plan reflects a strong commitment to collaboration and recognises that achieving lasting outcomes for our region depends on working together. It will guide the Board's investment, decision-making and partnerships, ensuring efforts are focused on the issues that matter most to our communities and the long-term health and productivity of the region.

A short new video on the region, the landscape board and the new plan is available here.

Landscape Board Implementation Planning

Following the release of the Regional Landscape Plan, the landscape board is now undertaking a comprehensive implementation planning process to translate the plan's priorities into targeted actions and investment across the region. This process includes reviewing current programs and activities to ensure available resources are directed to the highest-priority areas, delivering value for money, improving operational efficiency and maximising outcomes for communities and landscapes.

This work will help ensure the landscape board's efforts remain strategic, evidence-based and aligned with the priorities identified through the Regional Landscape Plan and the needs of our communities, councils and other stakeholders. It will also provide a clear framework for how the Board invests in and delivers outcomes over the life of the plan.

Marne Saunders Catchment Report Card

The landscape board recently launched the Marne Saunders Catchment Report Card, in response to ongoing community interest in the condition of local water resources and the need for clear, accessible reporting on catchment health. The report card brings together water and ecosystem monitoring data, citizen science and community contributions to provide an evidence-based assessment of catchment condition.

While the report card highlights a number of challenges, including the declining condition of some aspects of the catchment, it has been positively received by the community as a transparent and accessible communication tool that reflects their lived experience and observations. The 2026 report card includes data from 2023, 2024 and 2025, with updated indicators, improved reporting methods and trend analysis where data are available. Presenting three years of information together provides a more comprehensive picture of catchment health and helps build a stronger understanding of changes occurring over time across the Marne Saunders catchment.

Growing Regional Urban Biodiversity

Growing Regional Urban Biodiversity (GRUB) is a Landscape Board initiative that supports the use of native plants in public spaces to improve biodiversity, enhance liveability and build climate resilience across the Murraylands and Riverland region. Key projects include the Woody Meadow Trial and the Plan to Plant Native initiative.

The **Woody Meadow Trial** is a partnership between the Landscape Board, the Rural City of Murray Bridge, the University of Melbourne and Treenet. As South Australia's first woody meadow, the five-year trial is testing a dense native planting model in local conditions, with a focus on plant performance, water requirements and maintenance needs. The site has become a valuable demonstration project, attracting strong interest from councils, practitioners and the community. The project has helped raise awareness of innovative urban greening approaches and has already inspired similar trials in other council areas.

Through the **Plan to Plant Native** initiative, the Landscape Board has developed region-specific native plant lists for each of the eight council areas in the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Region. Developed with input from local experts, the lists identify hardy, low-maintenance and climate-resilient native species suited to local soils and urban environments. The resources have been shared with councils to support public space plantings and inform future development projects.

The Landscape Board is also developing a community native planting guide to encourage residents to incorporate attractive, water-wise and biodiversity-friendly native species into home gardens and landscapes.

The project team welcomes opportunities to discuss GRUB initiatives with interested councils and explore partnerships that support urban greening and biodiversity outcomes across the region.

Regional Drought Resilience Planning Implementation Grant

The landscape board has secured funding through the Regional Drought Resilience Planning Implementation Grant program to deliver three projects that will support drought preparedness and strengthen resilience across the Murraylands and Riverland:

- **Project 1:** *Reading the Water Market: The Signals That Matter*
- **Project 2:** *Future Proofing Horticultural Soils*
- **Project 3:** *Roots for Resilience: Strengthening Drought Resilience through Paddock Tree Renewal in the Murraylands and Riverland*

These projects focus on improving access to information that supports decision-making around water availability and market conditions, enhancing soil health and water-use efficiency in irrigated horticulture, and strengthening the resilience of grazing enterprises through paddock tree renewal. Collectively, they will help landholders and communities adapt to increasing climate variability while supporting the long-term productivity, sustainability and resilience of the region's agricultural landscapes.

This investment builds on priorities identified through the Murraylands and Riverland Regional Drought Resilience Plan and demonstrates a continued commitment to supporting practical, on-ground actions that enhance the region's capacity to prepare for and respond to drought conditions.

Education program update

The landscape board's education program continues to work with young people and educators across the region.

In addition to school education sessions on a wide range of environmental topics, the education team has focussed on delivering a range of Young Environmental Leaders Forums for primary school-aged children on topics including the importance of native pollinators, exploring fungi and contributing to regent parrot revegetation projects.

The River Murray Youth Council is also planning a trip to continue visiting The Living Murray Icon sites along the Murray. On their spring camp they will continue to develop their leadership and environmental skills, while deepening their understanding of the Murray as a system.

Riverland Aboriginal Rangers program

The Riverland Aboriginal Rangers Program is a partnership between the Landscape Board, the River Murray and Mallee Aboriginal Corporation, and the Australian Landscapes Trust. The program employs two teams of Aboriginal Rangers who work across the Riverland and Mallee areas.

The work of the ranger teams includes environmental projects such as delivering environmental water into wetlands, revegetation activities, and pest plant and animal control. The teams also undertake cultural heritage protection projects, including stabilising eroding burial sites and monitoring and protecting other heritage sites, such as scar trees along the river.

The teams continue to develop partnerships with a range of organisations and are keen to establish closer relationships with local councils across the Riverland and Mallee.

Bird flu

H5 bird flu has been confirmed in South Australia from a southern giant petrel collected by a wildlife rescue organisation at Knight Beach in Port Elliot on 14 June 2026. There have now been

5 confirmed cases across SA, including Yorke Peninsula, Kangaroo Island and Robe SE. SA has also had one confirmed case in a resident sea bird (Robe).

The Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board is working closely with DEW and PIRSA as the lead agencies on surveillance and response to H5 bird flu as a part of the broader national initiative. Observation and monitoring remain the main response along with building general community awareness. The key message for the community is that if you notice sick or dead birds, you should not touch them. If there are dead birds, take photos or a video.

Record your location and report it to the **24-hour Emergency Animal Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888.**

Murraylands and Riverland District Program

With the early and sustained rainfall across the region, there has been an increase in weed activity, particularly grassy summer weeds. Control works across a variety of weeds have continued and field days have been undertaken to demonstrate control options and tools. Of particular interest was an Opuntia control field day where the team demonstrated multiple bio control options including the new stem boring beetles we are trialling in partnership with CSIRO. African Boxthorn control tools were also demonstrated, and equipment has been loaned to landholders.

Wild dog baiting was carried out in Ngarkat Conservation Park in May as part of our role in supporting National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Yellow water lily infestations in Caurnamont Lagoon, Sunnyside Wetland and Zaddow's Landing that were inaccessible by boat were controlled with a spray drone. This is part of the River to Recovery project and includes liaison with multiple councils to identify assets for additional control works as part of the continued flood recovery. Recent works include Spiny Rush control at Barmera and Lower Lakes sites.

The board has supported the implementation of the PIRSA Drought Support program which included rabbit baiting and ripping across the region. The program has a handful of sites for ripping work remaining to be completed.

Key vacancies and recruitment

The Board recently acknowledged the departure of longstanding Board member Mr Greg Cock who has retired from the Board. Advertising is underway to seek new nominations to join the Board with the intention of attracting experienced and emerging community leaders apply.

The Sustainable Landscapes team within the Murraylands and Riverland Board has had two notable retirements and is recruiting against key positions in the wetlands team (Team Leader and wetland ecologist roles) and districts team (senior and entry level District Officer roles) to secure capacity.

To keep up to date with the latest information from the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board, subscribe to Murraylands and Riverland Landscape News. Distributed weekly, The News includes updates on our work across the region, along with upcoming events, funding opportunities and more! **https://www.landscape.sa.gov.au/mr/subscribe**

Appendix 7

Cross Border Commissioner - Update

Government of South Australia
Cross Border Commissioner

Cross Border Commissioner Update- July 2026

This update covers activities undertaken in June and July 2026. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association members for their ongoing dialogue and cooperation in many of the following activities.

South Australian / Victorian Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Local Government Cross Border Forum

We have rescheduled the LGA CEO Local Government Cross Border Forum in Naracoorte Lucindale (and surrounds) to 13/14 August 2026. Speakers and participants will include:

- PIRSA Deputy Chief Executive
- CEO of Regional Development Victoria
- Limestone Coast LGA (on tourism)
- Great Ocean Road Tourism
- SA and Victorian Small and Family Business Commissioner and equivalent Victorian representation
- National Emergency Management Agency and South Australian Fire and Emergency Services Commission
- Forestry representatives from SA & Vic
- Respective transport department representatives.

Australian Local Government Association (ALGA) Cross Border Commissioners' breakfast

The annual Cross Border Commissioner (CBC) breakfast was held on Tuesday 23 June 2026 in Canberra, proceeding ALGA's regional council forum. Our guest speakers included:

- Pat Hetherington, Interim Coordinator-General, National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA)
- Lynda McAlary-Smith, Australian Small Business and Family Enterprise Ombudsman

National Emergency Management Agency- Operation Nexus

In early June I had the privilege of joining a small South Australian contingent at Operation Nexus in Canberra. Led by NEMA, the exercise focused on national responses when there are multiple events occurring at one time modelling simultaneous scenarios spanning health, nuclear, landslide, technology failure, flood, earthquake and other major incidents across the country. The exercise was the first time all offices of CBC's were invited and included specific cross border emergencies on the NT/ SA border and in the Riverland.

Submissions and Advocacy

In the latest period the Office of Cross Border Commissioner has presented to National Competition Council on their review of Mutual Recognition and provided a submission to the Murray Darling Basin Review.

Government of South Australia
Cross Border Commissioner

Recent key meetings include presentations to Riverland Transition Planning Day, Limestone Coast Regional Workforce Forum, Border Rotary Clubs, Australian Emergency Recovery CEOs Forum (represented by CBC colleagues), SA River Murray Commissioner, Riverland Irrigation Trust, Central Irrigation Trust, Citrus SA, Inspector-General of Water Compliance, Infrastructure Australia, Minister Scriven's Forestry Fuel Roundtable, joint meetings with South Australia Forest Products Association and Victorian Forest Products Association, APY Executive Board and various Ministers associated with country cabinet.

2026- 27 Key Activities

As a key deliverable in the 2026-27 Office of Cross Border Commissioner I have proposed to complete a situational analysis which will assess the potential for harmonisation of economic drivers and policy settings along the Murray River, with a focus on tourism, supply chains and water-based vessel activity. This week I have been in the Riverland meeting with key stakeholders to assist in the refining of the scope and will be engaging directly on local government as this work begins.

I look forward to working with you in 2026-27 financial year and would be pleased to answer any questions in relation to this information, and/or any cross border matters.

Document Information

Date	Topic	Author
22/07/2026	Cross Border Commissioner Update- Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association	Kelly-Anne Saffin- Cross Border Commissioner (South Australia)

Appendix 8

MRLGA Supplementry Submission to Federal Inquiry for Local Government Funding & Fiscal Sustainablity

This report will be circulated shortly.

Appendix 9

2026/27 Draft Annual Business Plan & Budget

DRAFT Annual Business Plan

2026-2027

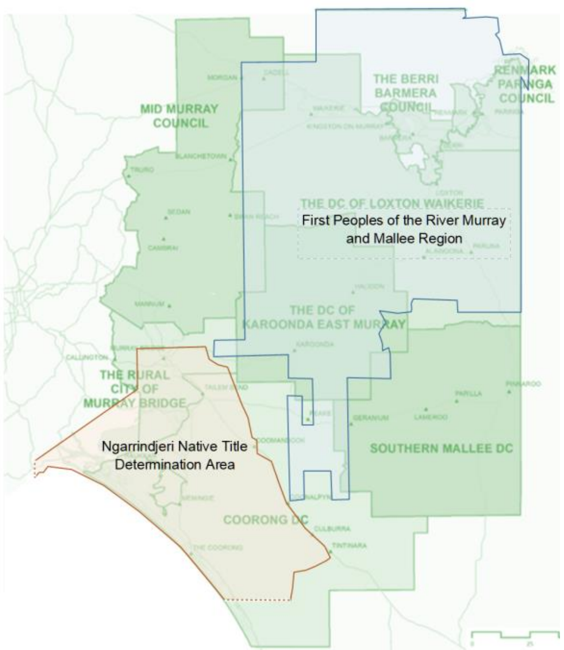
Being a unified local government sector working in the best interest of the region and our communities.

Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association

VISION, MISSION AND CHARTER

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

"We would like to acknowledge the traditional land and waters of the First Peoples of the River Murray and Mallee Region. We pay respect to their Elders past, present and emerging, and acknowledge that their cultural and heritage beliefs are important to the Ngarrindjeri, Ngaiawang (Nigh-uh-won), Ngawait (Nar–wait), Nganguruku (Nun-guh-rah-ku), Erawirung (Era-wirung), Ngintait (Nin-tait), Ngaralte (Nar-alte), and Ngarkat (Nar-kat) people. We also pay respects to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and acknowledge the deep feelings of attachment and relationship to country."



VISION

Attractive, Liveable Region, Prosperous Communities.

MISSION

Being a unified local government sector working in the best interest of the region and our communities.

LINKS WITH OUR CHARTER

- Speaking with one voice
- Building partnerships
- Working with the LGA
- Planning for and with the region
- Coordinating resources and representation
- Enhancing efficiencies

VALUES & BEHAVIOURS

Integrity, Leadership, Collaboration, Credibility, Unity

ROLE

Working to the MRLGA Charter, the Association motivates, advocates and represents its eight constituent Councils to advance cooperation, strategic partnerships and governance arrangements that oversee programs and projects in the region.

Through its coordination of effort, the Association leads and assists its councils with evidence-based approaches to high level planning, communication and representation.

The MRLGA works closely with its major regional partners including Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland (RDA MR), the Murraylands & Riverland Landscape Board, the Local Government Association SA and Australian and State Governments.

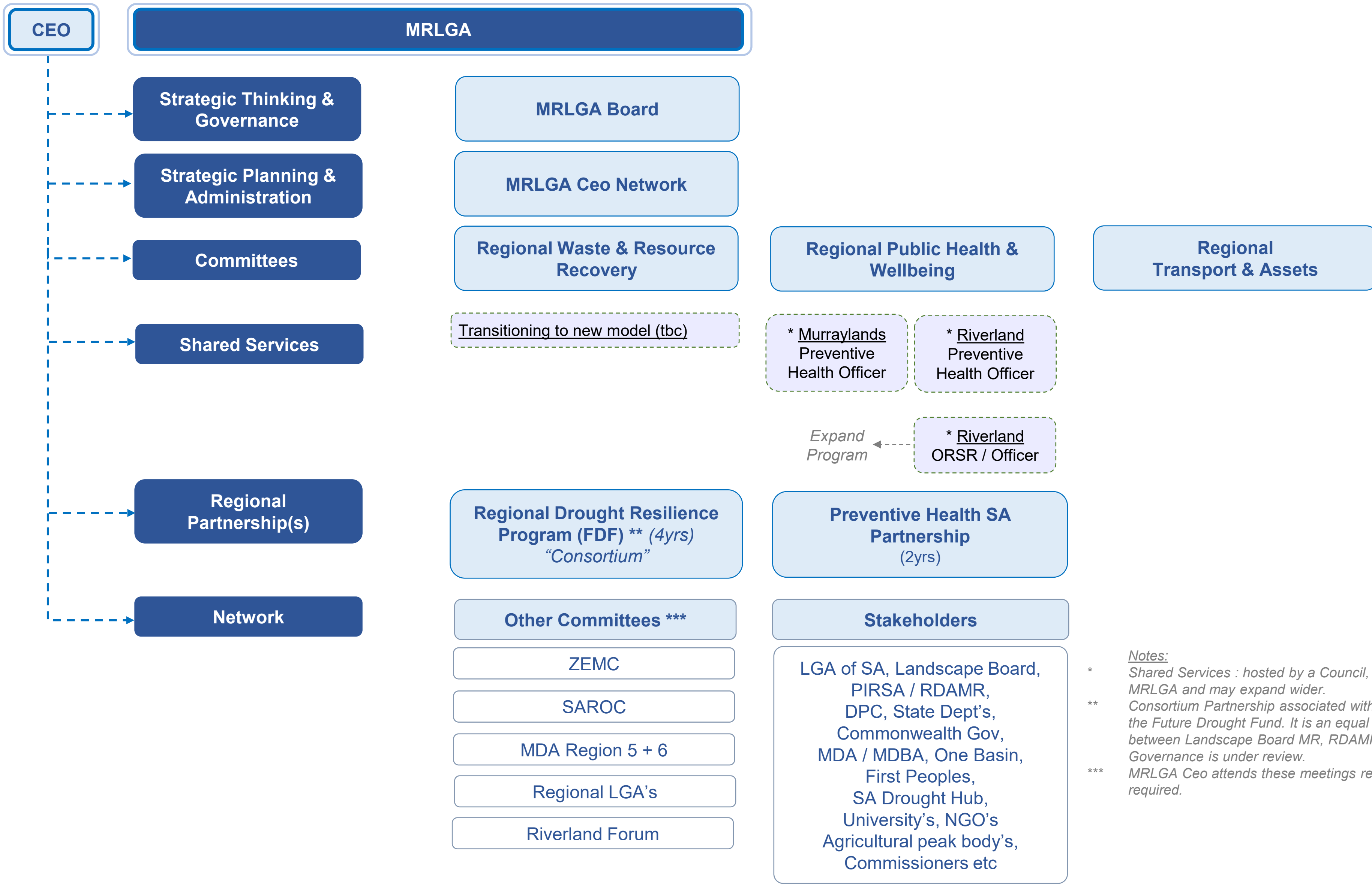
The MRLGA selects the most efficient role on key issues that is; Support (**S**) other lead agencies, Partner (**P**) or take the Lead (**L**) – to deliver the region the greatest return with limited resources.

MRLGA BOARD AND CEO NETWORK

	President				Vice President			
	Berri Barmera Council	**Coorong District Council**	**District Council of Karoonda East Murray**	**District Council of Loxton Waikerie**	**Mid Murray Council**	**Renmark Paringa Council**	**Rural City of Murray Bridge**	**Southern Mallee District Council**
BOARD	 Mayor Ella Winnall +8 Councillors	 Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch +7 Councillors	 Mayor Caroline Phillips +6 Councillors **SAROC Rep**	 Mayor Trevor Norton +10 Councillors	 Mayor Simone Bailey +8 Councillors **SAROC Rep**	 Mayor Peter Hunter +8 Councillors	 Mayor Wayne Thorley +9 Councillors	 Mayor Ron Valentine +6 Councillors
CEO NETWORK	CEO  Tim Pfeiffer	Acting CEO  Myles Somers	CEO  Scott Reardon	CEO  David Beaton	CEO  Ben Scales	CEO  Tony Siviour	CEO  Heather Barclay	CEO  Jason Beaton
MRLGA CEO	**Murraylands and Riverland LGA**  Carron McLeod							

Note: President and Vice President roles are voted by the Board at each AGM (July 2026). SAROC Reps are in a two-year appointment until Nov 2026.

ORGANISATIONAL & GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE



Notes:

* *Shared Services : hosted by a Council, brokered by MRLGA and may expand wider.*

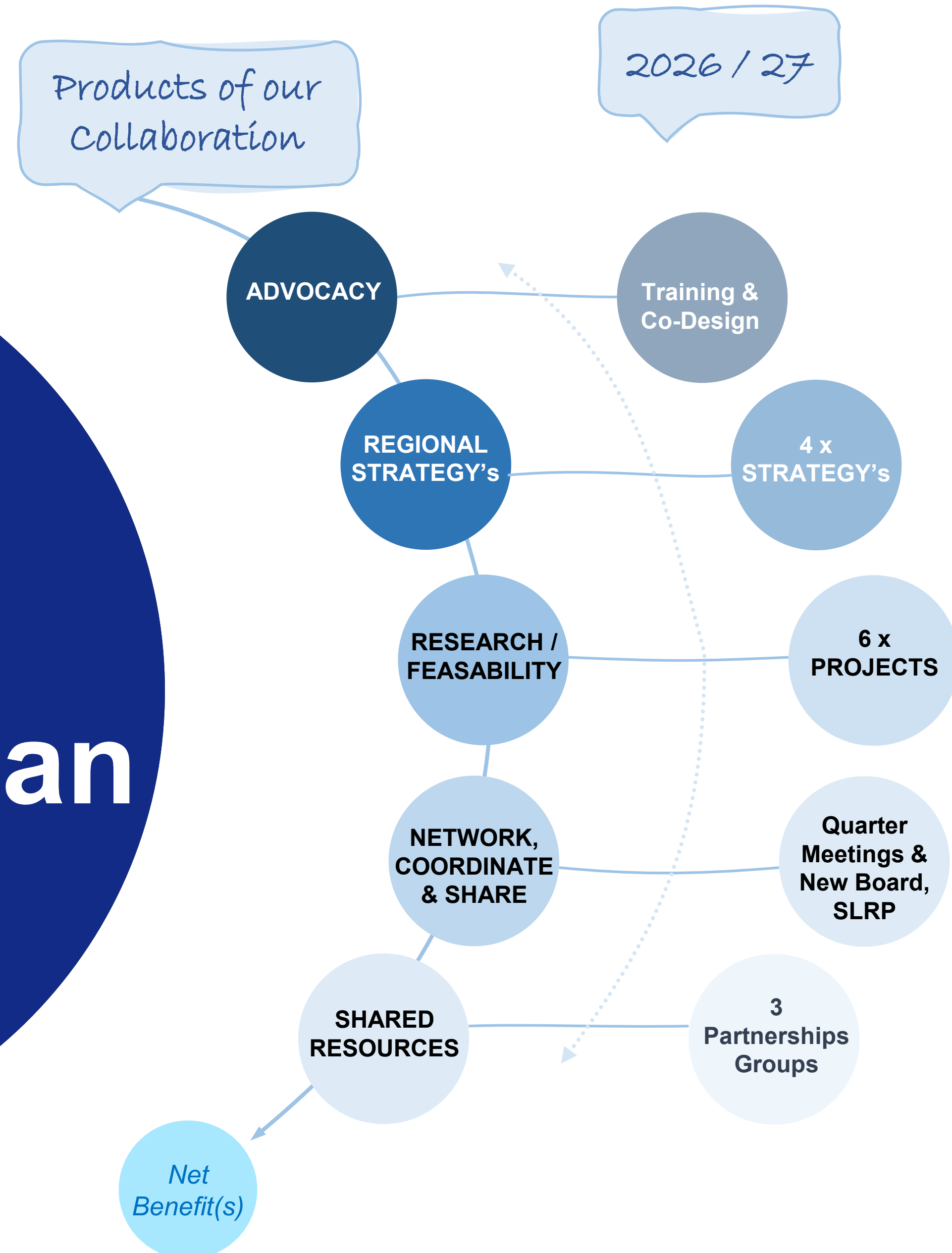
** *Consortium Partnership associated with the Future Drought Fund. It is an equal collaboration between Landscape Board MR, RDAMR and MRLGA. Governance is under review.*

*** *MRLGA Ceo attends these meetings regularly or as required.*

DRAFT

Annual Business Plan

2026-2027



2026 / 27 PLANNED ACTIVITIES

Significant resource will go towards updating 4 strategic documents for the region this year, while transitioning to a new term with the Board post Local Government Elections. Whilst several initiatives will fall out of the future strategic work, we are keeping progress with several live projects as listed below for continuity.

		Description of the Activity	Budget
Ceo	Advocacy	Feedback in 2022 from incoming Mayors said Advocacy training opportunities were helpful as they commenced in the role and during the River Murray Flood event. Formal training will be offered for new and returning members as an initial step to induction post lg elections.	$5,000
		Co-design the regions advocacy needs with the new Board (post local government elections) including strategies, delivery, framework and papers.	$5,000
		Allowance for responsive or unplanned advocacy that may arise and warrants MRLGA resourcing.	
	Regional Strategy's	Update the MRLGA Strategic Plan, improving awareness about its value proposition and together design its focus areas to support targeted collaboration with Councils through 2026 to 2031. Further consultation with the Board, Committees, Constituent Councils and regional stakeholders will be undertaken.	$15,000
		Review and update the MRLGA Regional Public Health & Wellbeing Plan 2026 to 2031, including further consultation with the Board, Committees, Constituent Councils and regional stakeholders, as well as advocating for State funding to support this additional legislative task placed on Councils.	$30,000 (Note 5)
		Continue liaison with GISA towards a joint update of the regions Circular Economy Strategy, encompassing the update will be to meet the needs of the Regional Waste & Resource Recovery Strategy (targets and initiatives). Further consultation with the Board, Committees, Constituent Councils and regional stakeholders will be undertaken in a manner that builds shared investment and partnership for regional solutions.	$15,000
		Continue the review and schedule an update of the Regional Transport Plan, including further consultation with Board, Committees, Councils and LCLGA.	$40,000
	Research & Feasibility	Research Projects: Kerbside (Waste Services) Review – complete the kerbside (waste services) review project with Councils. Riverland Composting – continue progress towards the feasibility of a Riverland Composting facility. Energy from Waste – continue work towards energy from waste opportunities and use it to inform strategic targets and initiatives	-
		Future Drought Fund - MR Drought Resilience Plan: MRLGA achieved $100k in grant funding for small-pilot projects under RDRP : (1) Managing sand drift on rural roads (2) Community Foundation Trial and (3) BioChar Pathways for Ag and green waste. Projects (1) and (2) are being done in consultation with LB and other key regional stakeholders.	$100,000 (Grant)
	Network, Coordinate + Share	Continue to convene, plan, prepare, chair and/or facilitate Board Meetings, support SAROC Reps, liaise with LGA, CEO Network, Committees, Regional LGA's, and all other working relationships (as identified in the governance structure).	$2,000
		MRLGA is a partner in the FDF / RDRP 'Consortium' providing in-kind resource and will continue its role to attract funding from this program into the region.	
		Special Local Roads Program. Continue work with 8 Councils to prepare, coordinate, scope and prioritise roads packages for SLRP.	$5,000
		New Initiatives: Organise LGA Procurement and 8 Council Ceo's for a review of ABP to scope shared procurement opportunities for 26/27 that could yield efficiencies, savings or improved outcomes.	-
	Shared Resources	1 x Partnership with 3 Councils and Office of Recreation, Sport & Racing. MRLGA to advocate for the continuation and expansion of the program.	-
		2 x Partnerships across 6 Councils and Preventive Health SA. Continue as a working group member and support the partnership reach the desired benefits, with a view to advocating for its continuation and regional investment.	-
		Regional Capacity Building – apply for grant funding to support a pilot for regional capacity building models (ie similar to train the trainer). Grant TBC	$10,000
		Support transition of shared services for Waste Services Contract Admin support (+ Waste Education) following MRLGA trial and expand from 5 to 6 Councils.	
	EFT	(1) Ceo	

ADMINISTRATION & OPERATING

The Association will continue to operate in accordance with the MRLGA Charter and Act as it continues its mission to *'being a unified local government sector working in the best interest of the region and our communities'*. It will operate, promote and grow a culture that supports - Integrity, Leadership, Collaboration, Credibility, Unity. And it will continue the Associations objectives that seek to - Speak with one voice, plan for and with the region, build partnerships, coordinate resources and representation and work with the LGA.

		Description of the Activity	Budget
Ceo	**MRLGA Charter**	Review the Charter and carry out any changes approved by the Board where necessary (including a legal review if changes are made).	$5,000
	Strategic Plan (2031)	In consultation with the Board and Ceo Network, develop a project plan and carry out an update to the MRLGA Strategic Plan for 2026-2031. The program will include a method for constituent Councils to review a draft and submit feedback and input.	$15,000
	Advocacy Training	As part of transitioning a board through an election cycle, we will offer new and returning board member advocacy training and planning strategies	$8,000
	Audit	Liaise with appointed consultants to undertake an annual audit and incorporate the audit into the Annual Report.	
	Annual Report	Prepare an Annual Report for the previous financial year.	-
	Board / Committees	Convene Quarterly Board Meetings and Chair Committees (RPH&WC, RT&AC, RW&RRC).	$2,000
	Ceo Network	Convene online and in person meetings for presentations on emerging issues / opportunities relevant to a Ceo of a regional Council.	-
	Conferences	President and Ceo (and possibly VP) to attend relevant local government forums and conferences where appropriate and able	$3,000
	Insurances	Keep insurances active and paid.	$12,000
	Fleet	Prepare a feasibility assessment to compare the cost of purchasing/leasing a fleet car (inclusive of on road costs and insurance) versus car allowance(s) and present it to the Ceo Network and Board for consideration.	$35,000
	Policies	Updates scheduled for July 2026.	-
	Records Management	Secure professional support to transition archives to electronic copies and identify an appropriate long term solution for archive items	$5,000
	Regional LGA	Attend Regional LGA meetings to stay connected with projects/initiatives/challenges in other regions.	-
	Staff Management	Undertake all Management and Human Resource related matters to employed staff under contract.	-
	Subscriptions	Monitor inflation as it relates to subscriptions.	-
	Webpage review	Maintain a webpage (with operating costs of <$1,000 p.a).	$1,000

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Background

In 2019/20 the MRLGA Business Plan set a new direction for setting subscriptions for the Association.

The plan followed a decision of the Board and consultation with constituent councils to align subscriptions to those charged by LGA SA. The decision of the Board endorsed the method for a 3 year subscription period, which then expired in 2021/22.

In light of dwindling income from other sources, including the ceased Rubble Royalty Scheme and LGA SA Outreach Program, a further review of MRLGA subscriptions then was overseen by the Association's CEO Network in April 2022. The review considered the longer term sustainability of the following options:

1. Raising subscriptions using annual Local Government Price Indexes,
2. Aligning to the LGA SA subscriptions paid in the previous 12 months by constituent councils and reviewing the model within 3 years
3. Using the model (20% flat rate and 80% weighting against population and revenue) employed by LGA to set subscriptions (establishing budgeted total operating expenses as the cost recovery baseline) and using a three year period to phase in the new system.

On 6 May 2022 at the General Meeting, the Board supported the recommendation of the CEO Network and endorsed Option 2. This was applied in 22/23 and 23/24.

2024 / 2025

In preparing the 24/25 budget, the subscriptions charged by LGA to its Councils was reviewed and would (on average) be a 6.2% increase to MRLGA constituent Councils. MRLGA has been reducing its operational costs over time, and as part of running a more efficient model it was able to offer its constituent Council's a 1.9% increase, thus creating a 4.3% savings and the 24/25 budget was adjusted accordingly.

2025 / 2026

In preparing the 25/26 budget, the subscriptions charged by LGA to its Councils was reviewed and would (on average) be a 7.58% increase to MRLGA constituent Councils. MRLGA has been reducing its operational costs over time, and as part of running a more efficient model it was able to offer its constituent Council's a 1.9% increase, thus creating a 5.68% savings and the draft 25/26 budget is adjusted accordingly.

The combined costs from 24/25 and 25/26 (of 4.3% and 5.68%) offers a 9.98% savings back to Councils over the two financial years.

2025 Annual General Meeting

At the General Meeting on 10 April 2025, the Board advised a subscription review will not be required every three years if annual increases remain under inflation.

2026 / 2027

In preparing the 26/27 budget, the subscriptions charged by LGA to its constituent Councils was reviewed and, on average would be a 4.04% increase (the highest being 7.6% and the lowest being -0.5%). Pursuant to the above, MRLGA can provide constituent Council's a 2.5% increase, thus creating a 1.54% overall savings and the draft 26/27 budget is adjusted accordingly.

The combined savings from 24/25, 25/26 and 26/27 (of 4.3% and 5.68% and 1.54%) offers a cumulative savings of 11.52% back to Councils over the three financial years.

26/27 Annual Budget and 5 Year Plan

	Previous Year	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	
Income	**25/26 Adopted Budget**	**26/27 Draft Budget**	**27/28 Forecast Budget**	**28/29 Forecast Budget**	**29/30 Forecast Budget**	**30/31 Forecast Budget**	*Note*
Council Subscriptions	1.90%	2.50%	2.50%	2.00%	2.00%	2.00%	
Berri Barmera Council	$25,302	$25,935	$26,583	$27,114	$27,656	$28,209	*1*
Coorong District Council	$21,385	$21,920	$22,468	$22,917	$23,375	$23,842	
DC of Karoonda East Murray	$11,962	$12,261	$12,567	$12,818	$13,074	$13,335	
DC of Loxton Waikerie	$28,722	$29,440	$30,176	$30,779	$31,394	$32,021	
Mid Murray Council	$27,859	$28,555	$29,268	$29,853	$30,450	$31,059	
Renmark Paringa Dist Council	$23,609	$24,199	$24,803	$25,299	$25,804	$26,320	
Rural City of Murray Bridge	$45,244	$46,375	$47,534	$48,484	$49,453	$50,442	
Southern Mallee DC	$13,954	$14,403	$14,763	$15,058	$15,359	$15,666	
Total Council Subscriptions	**$198,037**	**$203,088**	**$208,162**	**$212,322**	**$216,565**	**$220,894**	
LGA of SA							
Regional Capacity Building	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	
Total Local Govt Assoc of SA	**$40,000**	**$40,000**	**$40,000**	**$40,000**	**$40,000**	**$40,000**	
Other Income							
Public Health & Wellbeing Levy	$0	$0	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	$0	*UR A*
Waste Contract Management Levy	$65,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	*2*
Waste Education Levy	$100,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	*2*
SLRP Surcharge	$25,000	$40,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	$25,000	
RDRP Grant		$100,000					
Other surcharges and/or external funds							
Investment LGFA Interest	$47,956	$45,000	$45,000	$40,000	$40,000	$40,000	
Total Local Govt Assoc of SA	**$237,956**	**$185,000**	**$110,000**	**$105,000**	**$105,000**	**$65,000**	
Total Income	**$475,993**	**$428,088**	$358,162	$357,322	$361,565	$325,894	
Expenditure							
Admin Expenses							
Allowances (President)	$5,300	$5,400	$5,500	$5,600	$5,700	$5,800	
Allowances (Vice President)	$1,280	$1,380	$1,480	$1,580	$1,680	$1,780	
Audit and Accounting Fees	$7,500	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,500	
Bank and Govt Fees	$120	$120	$120	$120	$120	$120	
Insurances	$12,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000	$10,000	*3*
Legal expenses	5000	$5,000	$0	$0	$0		
Meeting Expenses	$6,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	*4*
Travel and Accommodation	$6,500	$6,500	$6,500	$6,500	$6,500	$6,500	
Sundry Expenses	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	
Office expenses	$4,400	$6,000	$6,000	$6,000	$6,000	$6,000	
Fleet expenses	$35,000	$35,000	$1,750	$1,750	$1,750	$2,500	
Website Maintenance	$1,000	$3,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,000	$1,500	
M365/SharePoint Tenancy and Support	$2,751	$2,900	$2,900	$2,900	$2,900	$3,000	
Total Admin Expenses	**$89,851**	$94,300	$54,250	$54,450	$54,650	$56,700	
Operational Expenses							
Acc Services: Payroll + Acc	$2,500	$2,500	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,500	
Home office and equipment	$5,140	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	$3,000	
Admin/Project Support Other	$25,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	$35,000	
Salaries and Superannuation	$455,834	$210,000	$220,000	$225,000	$230,000	$235,000	
Total Operating Expense	**$488,474**	$250,500	$261,000	$266,000	$271,000	$276,500	

FY 26/27

1. The annual subscription increase for 26/27 is 2.5% and is proposed to remain under inflation for future years. Adelaide CPI for March ‘26 is 4.6%.
2. The levy will not be charged further, as support to Councils will transition to a new model.
3. Insurance costs have decreased in line with a reduced staffing profile.
4. An allocation has been included within this budget as a new initiative for new and/or returning board members on advocacy (combined training and strategy).

UR A *Under Review* – The Regional Public Health and Wellbeing Levy is under review while the strategy is developed.

Expenditure	Previous Year 25/26 Adopted Budget	Year 1 26/27 Draft Budget	Year 2 27/28 Forecast Budget	Year 3 28/29 Forecast Budget	Year 4 29/30 Forecast Budget	Year 5 30/31 Forecast Budget	Note
Resilient Community							
Regional Public Health & Wellbeing Strategy	$0	$30,000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$15,000.00	5
Community Wellbeing Alliance/ Public Health and Wellbeing Coordination	$0	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
Implementation of Regional Public Health Plan	$30,000	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
Regional Drought Resilience Projects	$0	$100,000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	6
Resilient Community Total	**$30,000**	**$130,000**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$15,000**	
Connected Region							
Project 1 - Review 2030 Transport Plan	$40,000	$40,000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$20,000.00	7
Project 2 - Update regional road action plans	$5,000	$0	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	
Project 3 - Creation of roads data base	$5,000	$0	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	
Project 4 - Heavy Freight Route Intersection	$0	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
Regional Road Hierarchy	$5,000	$0	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	$5,000	
Roads Personnell Capacity Buildling	$8,000	$0	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	$8,000	
Connected Councils	$0	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
Connected Region Total	**$63,000.00**	**$40,000.00**	**$23,000.00**	**$23,000.00**	**$23,000.00**	**$43,000.00**	
Healthy Environment							
Waste and Resource Recovery Strategy	$0.00	$15,000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	8
Reg Waste Manage Initiatives	$10,000	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
Regional Climate Change Adaptation	$0.00	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
Healthy Environment Total	**$10,000**	**$15,000**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	
Economic Opportunity							
New Initative for Shared Services	$5,000	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
New Initative for Sustainbility	$10,000	$0	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	
Update to MRLGA Strategic Plan	$5,000	$15,000	$0.00	$0.00	$0.00	$7,500.00	
Economic Opportunity Total	**$20,000**	**$15,000**	**$0**	**$0**	**$0**	**$7,500**	
Total Project Expenses	**$123,000**	**$200,000**	**$23,000**	**$23,000**	**$23,000**	**$65,500**	
Total Expenditure	**$701,325**	**$544,800**	**$338,250**	**$343,450**	**$348,650**	**$342,000**	
Operating Profit (Loss)	-$225,332	-$116,712	$19,912	$13,872	$12,915	-$16,106	
Other Reserves							
Carry Forward Grant, Subsidy or Contribution	$118,000	$115,000	$0	$0	$0	$0	
Forecast Balance Total Reserves (Profit/Loss)	$1,100,415	$983,703	$1,003,615	$1,017,487	$1,030,402	$1,014,296	

Financial Notes:
FY 25/26

- Carry forwards from 25/26 to 26/27 resulted in the following areas:
  - $5k associated with an allowance for legal fees to review any changes that may result from a review of the Charter. Also refer to Item 6 below.
  - $75k associated with a Strategic Plan, Transport Plan and Regional Public Health & Wellbeing Plan. Instead of procuring consultants, we have performed research, project scoping and early engagement work in house, therefore project budget has carried forward.
  - $35k to review fleet and vehicle allowance options
- A higher interest was returned on LGFA cash as a result of an adjusted cashflow model at the subsidiary.

FY 26/27

5. MRLGA is advocating for funding support from State Government given this is an additional legislative requirement on local councils in SA.
6. Regional Drought Resilience Program - Grant $100k to deliver three pilot projects across the region.
7. The Regional Transport Plan is due for a 10 year review. Funding from slrp surcharge will be applied to carry out the review and updates. The strategy must be in place to access future SLRP funding and will be critical for future advocacy and initiatives now the State has released its plan.
8. Office expenditure includes a small records management project to digitise archives and identify housing for hard copy boxes.

APPENDIX 1 : REGIONAL LGA HISTORY

EARLY BEGINNINGS

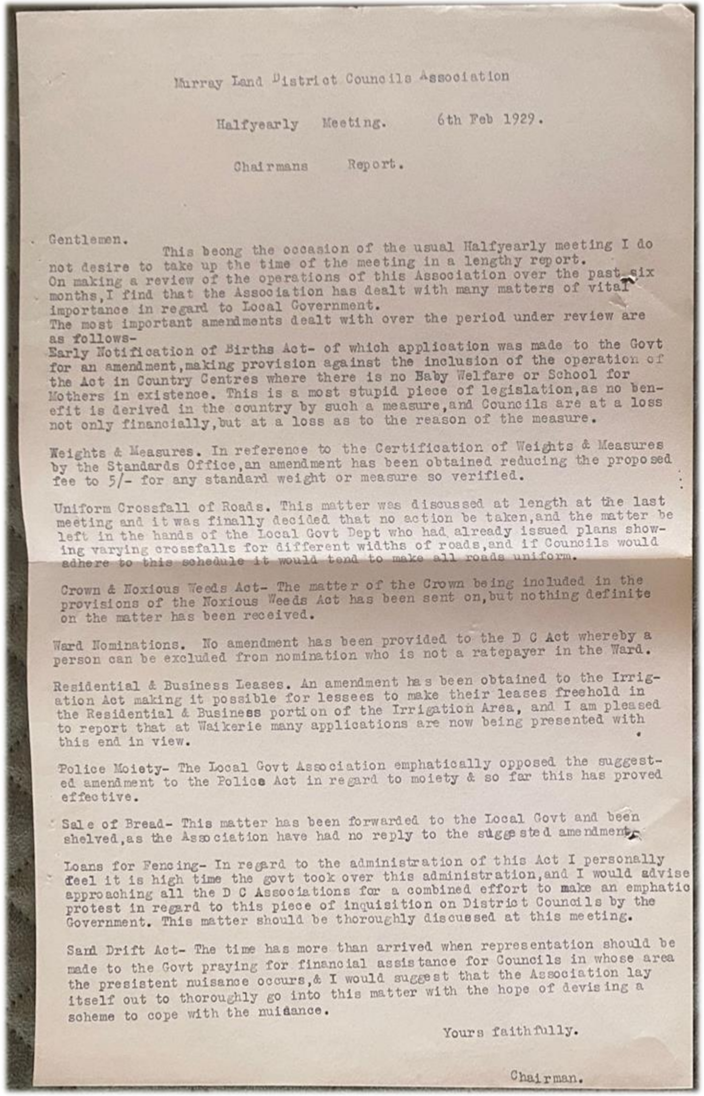
From its earliest beginnings, local government has pursued a shared commitment to collaboration and serving community to the best of its abilities as required under legislation. Through bringing community leaders together to champion regional interests, unite on common challenges, and seize collective opportunities for the greater good.

THE LEGACY

For nearly a century, since before 1927, Councils have stood strongest not in isolation but in partnership, proving that co-operation contributes to a continuing foundation of effective governance and a principle that must be upheld to meet the challenges of today and tomorrow.

SUCCESSION PLANNING

Succession planning is our commitment to continuity, ensuring the next generation sustains a collaborative, unified local government sector that acts decisively in the best interests of our region and communities. As we approach an election cycle, this years draft Annual Business Plan allows for continuity and transition.



Murray Land District Councils Association

Halfyearly Meeting. 6th Feb 1929.

Chairmans Report.

Gentlemen.
This beong the occasion of the usual Halfyearly meeting I do not desire to take up the time of the meeting in a lengthy report.
On making a review of the operations of this Association over the past six months, I find that the Association has dealt with many matters of vital importance in regard to Local Government.
The most important amendments dealt with over the period under review are as follows-
Early Notification of Births Act- of which application was made to the Govt for an amendment, making provision against the inclusion of the operation of the Act in Country Centres where there is no Baby Welfare or School for Mothers in existence. This is a most stupid piece of legislation, as no benefit is derived in the country by such a measure, and Councils are at a loss not only financially, but at a loss as to the reason of the measure.

Weights & Measures. In reference to the Certification of Weights & Measures by the Standards Office, an amendment has been obtained reducing the proposed fee to 5/- for any standard weight or measure so verified.

Uniform Crossfall of Roads. This matter was discussed at length at the last meeting and it was finally decided that no action be taken, and the matter be left in the hands of the Local Govt Dept who had already issued plans showing varying crossfalls for different widths of roads, and if Councils would adhere to this schedule it would tend to make all roads uniform.

Crown & Noxious Weeds Act- The matter of the Crown being included in the provisions of the Noxious Weeds Act has been sent on, but nothing definite on the matter has been received.

Ward Nominations. No amendment has been provided to the D C Act whereby a person can be excluded from nomination who is not a ratepayer in the Ward.

Residential & Business Leases. An amendment has been obtained to the Irrigation Act making it possible for lessees to make their leases freehold in the Residential & Business portion of the Irrigation Area, and I am pleased to report that at Waikerie many applications are now being presented with this end in view.

Police Moiety- The Local Govt Association emphatically opposed the suggested amendment to the Police Act in regard to moiety & so far this has proved effective.

Sale of Bread- This matter has been forwarded to the Local Govt and been shelved, as the Association have had no reply to the suggested amendment.

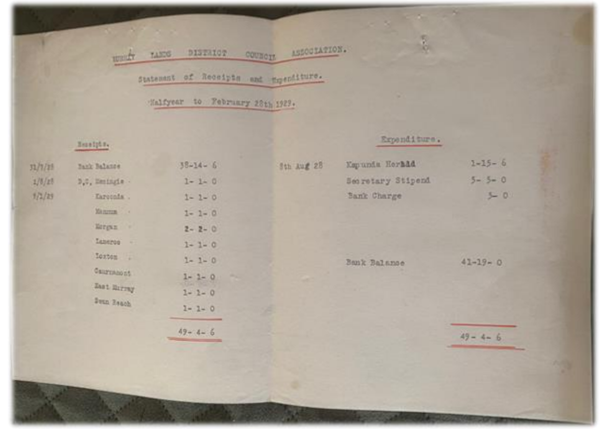
Loans for Fencing- In regard to the administration of this Act I personally feel it is high time the govt took over this administration, and I would advise approaching all the D C Associations for a combined effort to make an emphatic protest in regard to this piece of inquisition on District Councils by the Government. This matter should be thoroughly discussed at this meeting.

Sand Drift Act- The time has more than arrived when representation should be made to the Govt praying for financial assistance for Councils in whose area the presistent nuisance occurs, & I would suggest that the Association lay itself out to thoroughly go into this matter with the hope of devising a scheme to cope with the nuisance.

Yours faithfully.

Chairman.

Feb' 1929 Chairmans Report



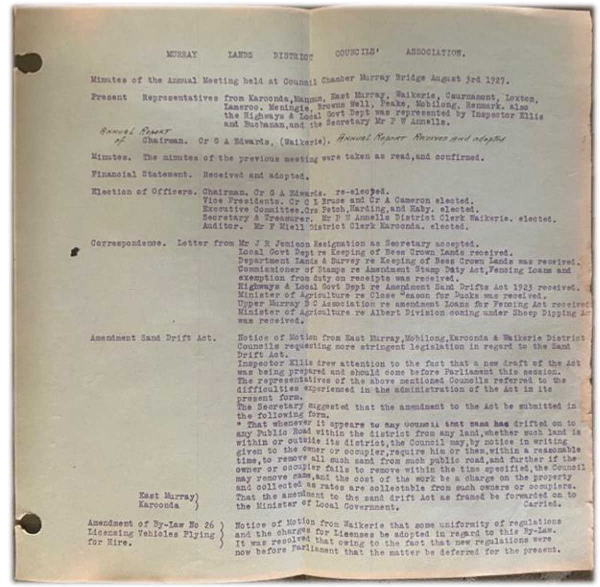
MURRAY LANDS DISTRICT COUNCIL ASSOCIATION.

Statement of Receipts and Expenditure.

Halfyear to February 28th 1929.

Receipts.				Expenditure.	
31/7/28	Bank Balance	38-14- 6	8th Aug 28	Kapunda Herald	1-15- 6
1/8/28	D.C. Meningie	1- 1- 0		Secretary Stipend	5- 5- 0
9/2/29	Karoonda	1- 1- 0		Bank Charge	5- 0
	Mannum	1- 1- 0			
	Morgan	2- 2- 0			
	Lameroo	1- 1- 0			
	Loxton	1- 1- 0		Bank Balance	41-19- 0
	Caurnamont	1- 1- 0			
	East Murray	1- 1- 0			
	Swan Reach	1- 1- 0			
		49- 4- 6			49- 4- 6

1929 Financials



MURRAY LANDS DISTRICT COUNCILS' ASSOCIATION.

Minutes of the Annual Meeting held at Council Chamber Murray Bridge August 3rd 1927.

Present Representatives from Karoonda, Mannum, East Murray, Waikerie, Caurnamont, Loxton, Lameroo, Meningie, Browns Well, Peake, Mobilong, Renmark. also the Highways & Local Govt Dept was represented by Inspector Ellis and Buchanan, and the Secretary Mr F W Annells.

Annual Report of Chairman. Cr G A Edwards, (Waikerie). Annual Report Received and adopted

Minutes. The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read, and confirmed.

Financial Statement. Received and adopted.

Election of Officers. Chairman. Cr G A Edwards. re-elected.
Vice Presidents. Cr C L Bruce and Cr A Cameron elected.
Executive Committee. Crs Petch, Harding, and Haby. elected.
Secretary & Treasurer. Mr F W Annells District Clerk Waikerie. elected.
Auditor. Mr F Miell District Clerk Karoonda. elected.

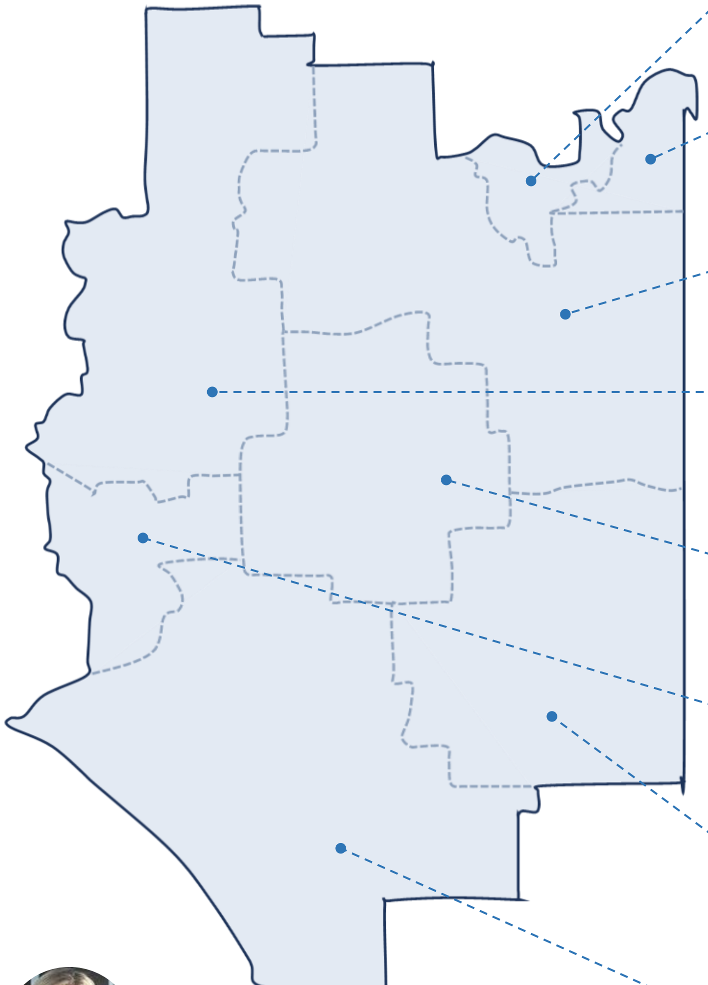
Correspondence. Letter from Mr J R Jemison Resignation as Secretary accepted.
Local Govt Dept re Keeping of Bees Crown Lands received.
Department Lands & Survey re Keeping of Bees Crown Lands was received.
Commissioner of Stamps re Amendment Stamp Duty Act, Fencing Loans and exemption from duty on receipts was received.
Highways & Local Govt Dept re Amendment Sand Drifts Act 1923 received.
Minister of Agriculture re Close Season for Ducks was received.
Upper Murray D C Association re amendment Loans for Fencing Act received.
Minister of Agriculture re Albert Division coming under Sheep Dipping Act was received.

Amendment Sand Drift Act. Notice of Motion from East Murray, Mobilong, Karoonda & Waikerie District Councils requesting more stringent legislation in regard to the Sand Drift Act.
Inspector Ellis drew attention to the fact that a new draft of the Act was being prepared and should come before Parliament this session.
The representatives of the above mentioned Councils referred to the difficulties experienced in the administration of the Act in its present form.
The Secretary suggested that the amendment to the Act be submitted in the following form.
" That whenever it appears to any Council that sand has drifted on to any Public Road within the district from any land, whether such land is within or outside its district, the Council may, by notice in writing given to the owner or occupier, require him or them, within a reasonable time, to remove all such sand from such public road, and further if the owner or occupier fails to remove within the time specified, the Council may remove same, and the cost of the work be a charge on the property and collected as rates are collectable from such owners or occupiers.
East Murray / Karoonda: That the amendment to the sand drift Act as framed be forwarded on to the Minister of Local Government. Carried.

Amendment of By-Law No 26 Licensing Vehicles Plying for Hire. Notice of Motion from Waikerie that some uniformity of regulations and the charges for Licenses be adopted in regard to this By-Law.
It was resolved that owing to the fact that new regulations were now before Parliament that the matter be deferred for the present.

3 August 1927 - Annual General Meeting Agenda

APPENDIX 2 : REGIONAL AREA




Mayor Ella Winnall
Berri Barmera Council
MRLGA President

CEO Tim Pfeiffer
Berri Barmera Council


Mayor Peter Hunter
Renmark Paringa Council

CEO Tony Siviour
Renmark Paringa Council


Mayor Peter Hunter
DC of Loxton Waikerie

CEO David Beaton
DC of Loxton Waikerie


Mayor Simone Bailey
Mid Murray Council
Vice President
SAROC Representative

CEO Ben Scales
Mid Murray Council


Mayor Caroline Phillips
DC of Karonda East Murray
SAROC Representative

CEO Scott Reardon
DC of Karonda East Murray


Mayor Wayne Thorley
Rural City of Murray Bridge

CEO Heather Barclay
Rural City of Murray Bridge


Mayor Ron Valentine
Southern Mallee District Council

CEO Jason Beaton
Southern Mallee District Council


Acting Mayor Jonathan Pietzsch
Coorong District Council

Acting CEO, Myles Somers
Coorong District Council

CEO Carron McLeod
Murraylands & Riverland LGA

APPENDIX 3 – ELECTORIAL BOUNDARIES

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<tr><th>The Local First Nations Voice
Region 4
Murraylands Riverlands and South East</th><th>Federal Electoral Division
Barker</th><th>State Election Boundaries</th></tr>
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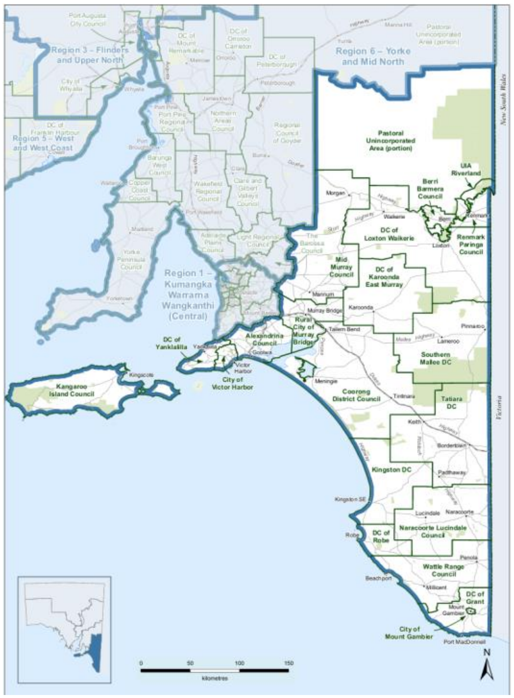

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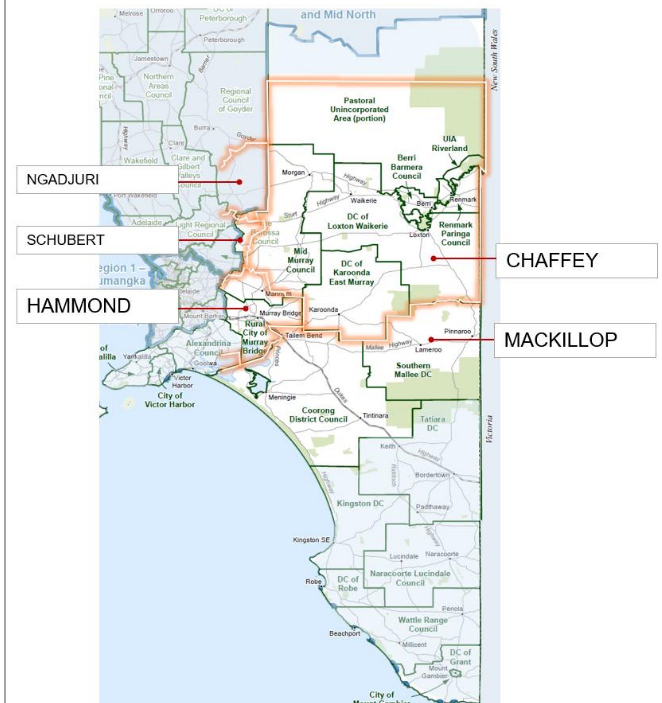

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Appendix 10

MRLGA 2026 Policy & Procedure

REGISTER

Policy No	Policy Title	
1	Acting Ceo Policy	(New)
2	Business and Bank Accounts Policy	
3	Business Credit Card Policy	
4	Budget Expenditure Policy	
5	Circular Resolution Policy	
6	Climate Adaptation Policy	(New)
7	Code of Conduct Policy	
8	Funds Management Policy	
9	Late Financial Agenda Item Policy	
10	Media Policy	
11	Public Consultation Policy	
12	Purchasing and Tendering Policy	
13	Reimbursement Policy	(New)
14	Respectful Workplace Policy	(New)
15	Travel Policy	(New)

	Procedure	
A	Procedure for Staff Complaints	(New)

DRAFT ACTING CEO POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	1
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	July 2026
Previous Review	-
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every 3 years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	Section 42 of the Local Government Act 1999

1.0 Purpose
To ensure continuity of leadership and decision-making in the absence of the CEO, this policy sets out the process for appointing an Acting CEO and delegating authority.

2.0 Scope
This policy applies to all periods when the CEO is absent, on leave, or when the position is vacant.
Section 42 of the Local Government Act 1999 and Schedule 2 (which governs subsidiaries) focus on board governance, financial accountability, and reporting, rather than mandating a CEO, and does not explicitly require an Acting CEO to always be in place.

3.0 Policy Statement
The Board may appoint an Acting CEO to perform the functions and exercise the powers of the CEO during periods of absence.
The Acting CEO will have authority as delegated by the Board and in accordance with the subsidiary's charter and any applicable legislation.
Delegations may be limited in scope or duration and must be documented in writing.

4.0 Appointment Process
The President and Vice President / Board will nominate a suitable senior officer or employee as Acting CEO.
The appointment must be confirmed in writing and include the commencement and expiry dates of the acting period.
If no internal appointment is possible, the President and Vice President / Board may engage an external officer to act in the CEO role.

5.0 Responsibilities of the Acting CEO
The responsibilities of an Acting Ceo is to ensure the subsidiary continues to operate in accordance with its charter, policies, and statutory obligations.
Make decisions within the delegated authority;
Escalate matters to the Board where appropriate or required.
Maintain records of actions and decisions taken while acting as CEO.

6.0 Availability of Policy
This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA internal records system.

7.0 Review
This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if operational requirements or legislative changes necessitate.

BUSINESS & BANK ACCOUNTS POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	2
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	3 December 2010
Previous Review	25 February 2022 (AGM)
Last Reviewed	July 2026
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every 3 years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	Chapter 9, Finances Local Government Act 1999 Financial Management Regulations 2011

1.0 Purpose

The MRLGA Business and Bank Accounts Policy document the Internal Controls adopted by the MRLGA Board to safeguard investments, secure the accuracy and reliability of banking transactions and promote operational efficiency.

2.0 Scope

2.1 This Policy covers banking activities of the Regional Subsidiary.

3.0 Definitions

3.1 Definitions within this Policy are consistent with Australian Accounting Standards.

4.0 Legislative and Corporate Requirements

4.1 The Policy is to be read and implemented in conjunction with the MRLGA's other relevant policies, strategies and documents.

5.0 Policy Statement

5.1 It is the MRLGA Board's policy to appoint the President, Vice President and the Chief Executive Officer of the MRLGA as the signatories, and authorising officers with any two to approve payments. Any payments made by electronic funds transfer (EFT) must be made in accordance with the following procedures:

5.2 Each invoice to be paid must be approved for payment by the authorisation of two signatories. Payment of an invoice via EFT will require approval via the business banking system of two authorised officers.

5.3 Each invoice is approved on the basis that it has been allocated a code from the chart of accounts that aligns to endorsed budget provisions.

5.4 Financial Statements are to be produced for each MRLGA Board ~~and CEO Network Meeting~~ throughout the year and bank reconciliation reports form part of the statements.

5.5 That the Delegates and CEOs will be provided with a listing of payments (Bank Statements) made during the period at each General Meeting upon request prior to Agenda preparation deadline.

5.6 The Chief Executive Officer shall make available a copy of all payments made over such period for perusal within 5-working days of any request arising from each General Meeting.

6.0 Application of Policy

6.1 To maximise the accuracy and reliability of MRLGA records, internal control procedures will support controls which emphasise the following:

a) Separation of roles and functions performed by the executive officer and support contractors (bookkeeping and preparation of financial statements)
b) Detecting and correcting irregularities
c) Access to, and security of, cash, and other MRLGA resources
d) Sound Budget Management including MRLGA Board review
e) Ensuring adherence to policies and procedures
f) Containing the risks faced by MRLGA to an acceptable level
g) Prudent Financial Governance

7.0 Banking

7.1 Monies received by the Chief Executive Officer of the MRLGA must be paid into a MRLGA bank account of an authorised deposit-taking institution.

7.2 Monies received by or on behalf of the MRLGA must be banked on or after the day of receipt. In case of a delay, the MRLGA Ceo must advise the President of the delay within 48 hours including an expected time of receipt. ~~or as soon as practicable.~~

7.3 Detailed records of the MRLGA's banking activities must be kept.

7.4 Banking shall be reconciled with receipts.

8.0 Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for implementing this policy.

9.0 Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer has the authority to implement this policy.

10.0 Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA internal records system.

11.0 Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Association at least every 3 years.

BUSINESS CREDIT CARD POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	3
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	26th June 2015
Prior Review	12th October 2016
Last Reviewed	July 2026
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every three years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	Chapter 9, Finances Local Government Act 1999 Financial Management Regulations 2011

1.0 Purpose

To set guidelines for the use of MRLGA issued Business Credit Cards to authorised users.

2.0 Definitions

2.1 The following definitions within this Policy will apply;
MRLGA - means the Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association.
Cardholder - The officer to whom a business credit card is issued. The card is embossed with the officer's name and bears the officer's signature on the reverse of the card for security and identification purposes.
Business Credit Card/s - All credit cards held under the Subsidiaries Council credit card facility.
Credit Card Administrator – The MRLGA Ceo is responsible for the administration of credit card expenditure.
Corporate Credit Card Provider - The Financial Institution that provides the MRLGA's Credit Card facility. Currently this is the BankSA.
Monthly Credit Limit - The dollar limit of the total value of transactions permitted on an individual cardholder's corporate credit card during the billing cycle.
Private Expenditure - Refers to any expense that is not related to the MRLGA's business operations. The purchase of gifts, food and other items in relation to non-business activities such as birthday celebrations is private expenditure.

3.0 Legislative and Corporate Requirements

3.1 The Policy is to be read and implemented in conjunction with the MRLGA's other relevant policies, strategies and documents.

4.0 Policy Statement

4.1 It is the MRLGA Board's intent that authorised users of MRLGA issued Business Credit Cards will be limited to the following:

- ~~President of the MRLGA and~~
- Chief Executive Officer of the MRLGA

4.2 Prior to release of a credit card:

- Any issued card must be approved by the MRLGA.
- Business Credit Card holders must be provided with a copy of this policy and any procedures relating to the issue and use of the card.

4.3 ~~The Business Credit Card holder must~~ and sign the declaration at the bottom of the policy to confirm~~ing~~ understanding and compliance with the policy and procedures.

4.4 Goods and Services purchased via ~~purchase~~ a credit card must be made only within authorised budget allocations having regard to MRLGA Internal Procedures regarding purchases.

4.5 The process to be followed when purchases are made with the Business Credit Card is to:

- Attach relevant tax invoice(s) and other documentation ~~as required~~
- Forward documentation to the Chief Executive Officer for review and processing.

5.0 Credit Limits

Individual monthly credit limits and transaction limits will be set by the MRLGA Board for each Business Credit Card. Monthly credit limits will be set to a maximum of $5,000. Monthly credit limits may be amended by the Chief Executive Officer to maintain MRLGA's overall credit limit as agreed with the facility provider.
A maximum transaction limit of $2,000 will be set for the MRLGA Ceo.

6.0 Application of Policy

The application of this policy will be as follows.

6.1 Qualifying for Business Credit Card

To qualify for a business credit card, MRLGA personnel must meet all of the following criteria:

- Personnel are expected to travel and/or incur significant business related expenses in the regular performance of their duties with MRLGA
- Credit card issue has been approved by the MRLGA Board
- An application has been submitted to MRLGA's approved credit card provider
- The business credit card provider has approved the issue of a business credit card
- The card holder has read and acknowledged the terms and conditions of the credit card provider

6.2. Appropriate Use of the Business Credit Card

Business Credit Cards are to be used for transactions where it is the most efficient procurement option; for example for travel and accommodation bookings, online purchases, and for purchasing goods and services of relatively low value where raising and processing a purchase order would be a costly alternative.
All payments using a Business Credit Card must comply with the MRLGA's policies relating to purchasing, travel, etc.
Use of the Business Credit Card is limited to MRLGA business related expenses including:

- Travel expenses *
- Meals *
- Incidental travel related expenses *
- Event related expenses
- Once-off expenses directly related to the duties of the card holder
- Other expenses as authorised by the MRLGA Board prior to the use of the credit card

Use of the Business Credit Card for non-MRLGA expenses is not permitted (as described under *Private expenditure*).

Arrangements must be made to immediately reimburse MRLGA for any unauthorised items inadvertently purchased using the Business Credit Card.

6.3 Responsibilities of the Business Credit Card Holder

The Business Credit Card holder will ensure that:

- The business credit card is used for official ~~Council~~ subsidiary business only;
- The business credit card is not used for any purpose that contravenes this or any other MRLGA policy;
- Every transaction processed through the business credit card is authorised by the Cardholder or investigated if unauthorised;
- A tax invoice is collected for all transactions;
- The Business Credit Card is stored safely and securely at all times;
- All documents pertaining to the transactions are made available to the Business Credit Card;
- For FBT purposes, expenses ~~relating to the provision of entertainment~~ must ~~provide details of the total number of staff who attended and~~ include the total number of attendees, and
- Upon receipt of monthly statements submit for approval by the 2 approved signatories (Other than the Business Credit Card Holders) and for full

reconciliation with ~~photocopied~~ copies of tax invoices ~~to the Finance Manager RDA MR~~ with~~in ten (10) business days from the end~~ of the statement period.

BUDGET EXPENDITURE POLICY

MRLGA

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	4
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	1 September 2001
Last Reviewed	22 October 2021
Next Review Date	
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	MRLGA Charter Clause 3.7.4

1.0 Purpose

The MRLGA Budget Expenditure Policy documents the Internal Control adopted by the MRLGA Board to safeguard investments, secure the accuracy and reliability of expenditure and promote operational efficiency.

2.0 Scope

This Policy covers all expenditure activities of the Regional Subsidiary.

3.0 Definitions

Definitions within this Policy are consistent with Australian Accounting Standards.

4.0 Legislative and Corporate Requirements

The Policy is to be read and implemented in conjunction with the MRLGA's other relevant policies, strategies and documents.

5.0 Policy Statement

It is the MRLGA Board's policy that the ~~authority~~ Association to expend funds of the MRLGA be vested in the Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with other signatories (any one of), with all expenditure to be maintained within budget allocation, unless by specific resolution. The following procedures will be followed:

- Financial Statements are to be produced for each MRLGA Board ~~and CEO Network~~ Meeting throughout the year and the statements are to include current expenditure against budget.
- Consistent with Section 9 of the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011 will provide revised budget forecasts, giving consideration against actual investment.
- The Chief Executive Officer will review the general ledger (manual journal listings). ~~prepared by the Association's bookkeeper at least annually~~.

6.0 Application of Policy

To maximise the accuracy and reliability of MRLGA records, internal control procedures will support controls which emphasis the following:

- Separation of roles and functions performed by the Chief Executive Officer and service providers and/or consultants ~~support contractors~~ (accounting, ~~bookkeeping~~ and preparation of financial statements)
- Detecting and correcting irregularities
- Access to, and security of, cash, and other MRLGA resources
- Sound Budget Management including MRLGA Board review
- Ensuring adherence to policies and procedures
- Containing the risks faced by MRLGA to an acceptable level
- Prudent Financial Governance

7.0 Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for implementing this policy.

8.0 Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer has the ~~authority~~ to implement this policy.

9.0 Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA ~~Website~~ internal records system.

10.0 Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Association ~~Authority~~ at least every 3 years.

CIRCULAR RESOLUTION POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	5
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	31 January 2020
Last Reviewed	
Next Review Date	
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	MRLGA Charter Clause 3.7.4

1.0 Objective

To objective of this policy is to clarify the actions required for a resolution of the Board to pass without the need for a meeting.

2.0 Purpose

This document sets out the MRLGA's policy for Circular Resolutions in which the MLRGA Board ~~is able to~~ can adjudicate and make decisions out of session in a manner that is deemed valid and effective as if they had been passed at a meeting of the Board duly convened and held.

To provide the procedures necessary for clause 3.7.4 of the MRLGA Charter to be administered correctly. The MRLGA Charter under clause 3.7.4 states:

"A proposed resolution in writing and given to all Board Members in accordance with procedures determined by the Board will be a valid decision of the Board and will constitute a valid decision of the Subsidiary where a majority of Board Members vote in favour of the resolution by signing and returning the resolution to the Chief Executive Officer or otherwise giving written notice of their consent and setting out the terms of the resolution to the Chief Executive Officer. The resolution will be deemed a resolution of the Board and will be as valid and effective as if it had been passed at a meeting of the Board duly convened and held."

3.0 General Principles

A circular resolution will only be used when a decision by the board is required prior to the next scheduled meeting of the board and the matter for adjudication, in the opinion of the President, does not warrant the convening of a special meeting of the Board.

4.0 Procedures

For circular resolution to be deemed valid in accordance with clause 3.7.4 of the MRLGA Charter the following must be undertaken:

- Each member must receive notice from the Chief Executive of the proposed resolution in identical terms, including by electronic means.
- A resolution will remain open for adoption for a period as is provided in the notice of the resolution.
- A Delegate may vote for a resolution by responding to the notice confirming that they are in favour of the resolution (Instrument of Resolution).
- The resolution is passed when the Chief Executive receives written consent to the Instruments of Resolution executed by a majority of Delegates entitled to vote on the resolution within the time period provided.
- A report on the ~~on the~~ outcome of the Circular Resolution will be tabled for noting at the next available Board meeting

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	6
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	Not yet adopted
Last Reviewed	Not yet adopted
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every three (3) years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	

1.0 Purpose

The South Australia State Government of declared a Climate emergency in September 2022 under the Climate Change and Greenhouse Emissions Reduction Act 2007, recognising the escalating risks of climate change and committing to stronger mitigation and adaptation actions. It subsequently established the Climate Ready Government initiative that requires public sector agencies to assess and manage climate risks to the policies, assets, services and communities they support.
This document sets out the MRLGA's commitment to proactively assess and manage climate risks as it relates to the subsidiary.

2.0 Objectives

The Subsidiary recognises that climate adaptaton presents increasing risks to infrastructure, service delivery and financial sustainability. It will :

- Have regard for the Australian Government's position on Net Zero targets.
- Have regard for the South Australian Government's position on Net Zero targets.
- Keep updated with the States register of risks :
  Department for Environment and Water - Responding to climate change…
- Take a precautionary and evidence-based approach to adaptation, embedding climate risk considerations into decision-making and strategic planning processes.
- Adopt principles including:

Collaboration	Work with member Councils, regional partners and stakeholders to share knowledge, align responses and leverage resources
Adaptive Management	Apply a flexible approach that allows for continuous improvement as climate data, projections and best practices evolve
Sustainability	Support long-term environmental, economic and community resilience

3.0 Governance and Review

Responsibility for implementation rests with the Chief Executive Officer, with oversight by the Board. Progress will be reviewed periodically, with the policy updated as required to reflect emerging risks, regulatory changes and regional priorities, or every three years.

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	7
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	12th October 2016
Last Reviewed	10 July 2020 (AGM)
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every 3 years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	Part 4 Member Integrity & Behaviour LGA Act 1999

1.0 Purpose

This Code of Conduct is consistent with the Code of Conduct for Office Bearers of the MRLGA, ~~is~~ drawn in part from section 63(1) of the Local Government Act 1999.
This Code is to be observed by all Office Bearers of the MRLGA Board.
Office Bearers of the MRLGA Board must comply with the provisions of this Code in carrying out their functions and duties under the Charter of the MRLGA.
It is the personal responsibility of Office Bearers to ensure that they are familiar with, and comply with, the standards in the Code at all times.

PART 1 – PRINCIPLES

Higher Principles – Overarching Statement

- *Office Bearers of the MRLGA Board have a commitment to consider the interests of the Constituent Councils they represent and the Board, and to discharge their duties actively, conscientiously, and to the best of their ability, for public, not private, benefit at all times.*
- *Office Bearers will work together constructively as a Board and will uphold the values of honesty, integrity, accountability, transparency, in turn fostering community confidence and trust in the MRLGA Board and Local Government.*
- *As representatives of Constituent Councils in the MRLGA region, Office Bearers are committed to considering all relevant information and opinions and giving each due weight, in line with MRLGA Board ~~and LGA of SA policies~~.*
- *Office Bearers will make every endeavour to ensure that they have current knowledge of both statutory requirements and best practices relevant to their role. ~~The MRLGA Constituent Councils and the MRLGA are expected to provide training and education opportunities that will assist the Office Bearers to meet their responsibilities under the MRLGA Charter~~.*
- *Office Bearers will comply with all requirements of their role and abide by this Code of Conduct*

PART 2 - BEHAVIOURAL CODE

Behavioural Code

In line with 'PART 1 – Higher Principles' of the Code, the following behaviour is considered essential to upholding the principles of good governance in the activities and operations of the MRLGA Board.

This Part is for the management of the conduct of Office Bearers that does not meet reasonable community expectations. It deals with conduct that does not, and is not likely to, constitute criminal matters such as those contained in the Appendix to this document.

Robust debate within the Board that is conducted in a respectful manner is not a breach of this Part.

Office Bearers must

General behaviour

1. Show commitment and discharge duties conscientiously.
2. Act in a way that generates community trust and confidence in the MRLGA Board and Local Government.

3. Act in a reasonable, just, respectful and non-discriminatory way when dealing with people.
4. Show respect for others if making comments publicly.
5. Ensure that personal comment to the media or other public comments, on MRLGA Board decisions and other matters; clearly indicate that it is a private view, and not that of the MRLGA.

Responsibilities as an Office Bearer of the MRLGA

6. Comply with all MRLGA Board policies, codes and resolutions.
7. Deal with information received in their capacity as an Office Bearer in a responsible manner.
8. Endeavour to provide accurate information to the MRLGA Board and to Constituent Councils and the public at all times.

Relationship with fellow Office Bearers

9. Endeavour to establish and maintain a respectful relationship with all Officer Bearers, regardless of differences of views and opinions.
10. Not bully or harass other Office Bearers.

Relationship with MRLGA staff

11. Direct all requests for information ~~from the MRLGA~~ to the Chief Executive Officer.
12. Direct all requests for work or actions ~~by MRLGA~~ to the Chief Executive Officer.
13. Refrain from directing or influencing MRLGA staff with respect to the way in which these employees perform their duties.
14. Not bully or harass MRLGA staff.

Use and security of confidential information

15. You must maintain the integrity and security of confidential documents or information in your possession, or for which you are responsible.
16. In addition to your general obligations relating to the use of council information, you must:
    a) protect confidential information
    b) only release confidential information if you have authority to do so
    c) only use confidential information for the purpose it is intended to be used
    d) not use confidential information gained through your official position for the purpose of securing a private benefit for yourself or for any other person
    e) not use confidential information with the intention to cause harm or
    f) detriment to your council or any other person or body
    g) not disclose any information discussed during a confidential session of a Board meeting.

Gifts and Benefits

17. Office Bearers must not:
    a) Seek gifts or benefits of any kind.
    b) Accept any gift or benefit that may create a sense of obligation on their part or may be perceived to be intended or likely to influence them in carrying out their duty.
    c) Accept any gift or benefit from any person who is in, or seeks to be in, any contractual relationship with the MRLGA Board.
18. Office Bearers may accept hospitality provided in the context of performing their duties including;
    a) Free or subsidised meals, beverages or refreshments of reasonable value provided in conjunction with:
        - the discussion of official business;
        - MRLGA work related events such as training, education sessions, workshops and conferences;
        - MRLGA functions or events; and
        - social functions organised by groups such as MRLGA committees and related bodies and organisations.
    b) Invitations to and attendance at local social, cultural or sporting events.
19. The MRLGA Board may determine a value of gift or benefit to any Office Bearer, above which details of this gift must be recorded in a gift and benefits register maintained by the MRLGA and available for inspection.

Misuse of MRLGA resource

20. MRLGA Board Office Bearers using MRLGA resources must do so effectively and prudently.
21. MRLGA Board Office Bearers must not use MRLGA resources, including services of MRLGA staff, for private purposes, unless legally or properly authorised to do so, and payments are made where appropriate.
22. MRLGA Board Office Bearers must not use public funds or resources in a manner that is irregular or unauthorised.

Complaints

23. Any person may make a complaint about an Office Bearer under the Behavioural Code, to the MRLGA President or Vice President.
24. ~~Prior to referral to the~~ The President and/or Vice President will refer the matter to the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel to ~~, it is expected that the Board (President and/or Vice President) will~~ consider the value of conciliation or mediation in seeking a resolution of the matter.
25. A report ~~of~~ from the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will be the subject of a confidential report to an MRLGA Board meeting.

Findings

26. If, following investigation by the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel, a breach of the Behavioural Code by an Office Bearer is found, the MRLGA Board may, by resolution:
    a) take no action;
    b) pass a censure motion in respect to the Office Bearer;
    c) request a public apology, whether written or verbal;
    d) request the Office Bearer to attend training on the specific topic found to have been breached; and
    e) request the Office Bearer to repay monies to the MRLGA.

An investigation under Part 2 of this Code does not preclude an investigation being launched as a potential breach of the criminal matters listed in the appendix to this document.

Conflict of Interest

27. Office Bearers must be committed to making decisions without bias and in the best interest of the whole community.
28. An Office Bearer has an interest in a matter before the Board if there is a possibility of conflict between the Office Bearer's private interests and the impartial fulfilment of their official duties.
29. An Office Bearer with an actual or perceived interest in a matter before the Board must disclose that interest and not participate in discussions or decisions on that matter

APPENDIX 1

CRIMINAL MATTERS

- The matters within this Appendix are matters for which a criminal penalty attach. As separate legislation operates to cover such conduct; this part does not form part of the Code of Conduct for MRLGA Office Bearers.
- They are included within this document only in order to provide a complete overview of the standards of conduct and behaviour expected of MRLGA Office Bearers.
- Alleged breaches of matters outlined in this Appendix should be reported to the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption in the first instance.
- Breaches of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012 Acting in their capacity as a public officer, an MRLGA Office Bearer shall not engage in conduct, whether within, or outside the state that constitutes corruption in public administration as defined by Section 5 of the Independent Commissioner Against Corruption Act 2012, including:
    - ❖ An offence against Part 5 (Offences relating to public officers) of the Criminal Law Consolidation Act 1935, which includes the following offences:
        - committed by a public officer while acting in his or her capacity as a public officer or by a former public officer and related to his or her former capacity as a public officer or by a person before becoming a public officer and related to his or her capacity as a public officer or to an attempt to commit such an offence.
    - ❖ Any of the following in relation to an offence referred to in a preceding paragraph:
        - aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring the commission of the offence;
        - inducing, whether by threats or promises or otherwise, the commission of the offence;
        - being in any way, directly or indirectly, knowingly concerned in, or party to, the commission of the offence; and
        - conspiring with others to effect the commission of the offence.

APPENDIX 2

COMPLAINTS HANDLING PROCEDURE

1. Functions of CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel Members

- One of the functions of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel is to assist the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association Board (“the Board”) in addressing complaints about the conduct of Board Officer Bearers under the Code of Conduct for the Board Members.
- The CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel has no coercive or other powers – its function is to consider, investigate, assess and prepare reports and make recommendations or observations to the Board about possible resolutions or sanctions, or changes to policies or procedures.
- Accordingly, the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel’s functions are advisory in nature only.

2. Referral by the Board

- ~~Prior to referral to~~ The CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel, ~~it is expected that the Board (President and/or Vice President)~~ will consider the value of conciliation or mediation in seeking a resolution of the matter.
- Mediation SA provides mediation services (http://mediationsa.org.au/)
- The Board’s President is responsible for advising the person that is subject to a complaint that the matter has been referred to the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel.
- The CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will consider complaints referred to it under the Board's Officer Bearer Code of Conduct (as required by the Code).
- The CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will not act upon any complaints received directly from the public

3. Initial Assessment and Allocation

- The Chair of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will be the President of the MRLGA and will make an initial assessment of each complaint referred to the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel, to determine if the matter falls within the remit of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel, or whether the complaint should be referred elsewhere in relation to the Code (for example, to the Office for Public Integrity or to the Ombudsman).
- The Chair of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will also determine whether the matter should be dismissed on the basis that the complaint is frivolous, vexatious, misconceived or lacking in substance.
- The Chair of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will estimate the time required to undertake the investigation and prepare the report and recommendation. This will be used to provide an estimate of timeframe for dealing with the matter and shall be confirmed with the Board and affected office bearer.
- The Chair may ask the MRLGA Chief Executive Officer to seek legal advice and the costs of any legal advice required will be borne by the Board, where applicable.

4. Natural Justice

- In exercising any functions as CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel Members, all members (including the Chair) are obliged to accord natural justice and procedural fairness to any party that may be adversely or deleteriously affected by any part of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel process, whether by virtue of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel's investigation, recommendations or otherwise.
- As part of the requirements for natural justice, the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will provide a copy of the 'provisional report', on a confidential basis, to the subject of the complaint, if there are adverse comments or other adverse evidence to be included in the report and/or recommendations for the imposition of a penalty.

5. Role of the Board

- The Board is responsible for the investigation of the complaint at all times.
- The CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel is carrying out an independent investigation on behalf of the Board and the Board is ultimately responsible for the investigation outcome and any actions arising from the investigation.
- The Board must establish a secure and confidential communications conduit for communications between all the parties and the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel investigating the complaint.
- The Board's Chief Executive Officer is responsible for keeping the parties informed of the conduct of the investigation and assisting the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel to arrange interviews with the parties

6. Interviews

- The CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel will meet with the parties and interview relevant people in the course of the investigation.
- In the interest of independence, meetings with the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel and all communications between the committee, the subject of the complaint and any witnesses are to be arranged through the Board Chief Executive Officer or by mutual arrangements with the parties involved, in an independent location where possible.
- If, in the course of interviewing the parties, the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel believes that the matter could be successfully resolved by conciliation or mediation, then the investigation may be deferred to enable conciliation or mediation, provided that consent for this course of action is given by the parties.
- If conciliation or mediation fails, then the investigation may be resumed.

7. Report to be prepared by CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel

- CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel Members will prepare a written report of the investigation and assessment of the complaint, together with any recommendations as to the particular matter.
- The Chair of the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel is responsible for authorising the terms of the final report prepared by the committee and for communicating the terms of the report to the referring person(s).

8. Report to be provided to the Board

- When the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel has finalised a report, it will provide the report to the Board under cover of a letter setting out what has been found and recommendations for a penalty having been made. The breach of the Code must be the subject of a report to a public meeting of the Board.
- Where a report does not find a breach of the Code, the findings need not be made public.

9. Confidentiality and Privacy Issues

- The Chair and all CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel Members will comply with any obligations or duties of confidentiality imposed as to documents or information provided to the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel in the course of any investigation.

10. Return of Documents: Retention of Records

- The Chair and CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel should retain all relevant papers/ files/ documentation received in the course of any investigation and return the documentation to the Board's Chief Executive Officer at the conclusion of the investigation.to be retained in a secure location in the MRLGA's records management system.

11. Conflicts of Interest

- ~~CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel Members,~~
- As a guide to determining whether a conflict exits CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel members should remove themselves from a matter if:
    a. the person complaining or
    b. who is the subject of the complaint is a relative or business associate (the Local Government Act definitions shall apply in this instance).

~~**12. Enquiries**~~

- ~~In the first instance, the principal point of contact for enquiries about the CEO MRLGA Performance Review Panel is:~~

FUNDS MANAGEMENT POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	8
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	1st September 2010
Last Reviewed	15 June 2020
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every 3 years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	Section 124 (Accounting Records to be kept) of the Local Government Act 1999 Section 139 (Investment powers) of the Local Government Act 1999

1.0 Purpose

It is the MRLGA Board's policy that the authority to manage the funds of the Association be vested in the Chief Executive Officer, in conjunction with the other signatories (any one of), and in accordance with the principles of Section 139, Local Government Act, 1999.

2.0 Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for implementing this policy.

3.0 Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer has the authority to implement this policy.

4.0 Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA internal records system.

5.0 Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Association at least every 3 years.

LATE FINANCIAL AGENDA ITEM POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	9
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	6 August 2006
Last Reviewed	15 June 2020
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every 3 years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	

1.0 Policy Statement

It is the MRLGA Board's policy that issues requiring decisions on policy or financial matters not be accepted as Late Agenda Items unless details of the issue(s) are distributed to Member Councils not less than three days prior to any General or Annual General Meeting.

2.0 Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer has overall responsibility for implementing this policy.

3.0 Delegations

The Chief Executive Officer has the authority to implement this policy.

4. 0 Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA Website.

5.0 Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Association at least every 3 years.

MEDIA POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	10
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	12 October 2016
Last Reviewed	25 February 2022 (AGM)
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every 3 years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	Chapter 6, Part 3 of the Local Government Act 1999

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define roles and responsibilities within the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA) for working with the media. It will also assist the media by clarifying the level of service they can expect regarding access to the organisation through the President, Chief Executive Officer and Constituent Council members. The policy deals with the day-to-day relationship between the MRLGA and the media.

It is not the intention of this policy to curb freedom of speech or to enforce strict rules and regulations. Rather, the intention is to establish a framework for achieving an effective working relationship with the media. The MRLGA welcomes the opportunity to talk to the media and, through them, to debate issues in the public arena.

2.0 Key aims of Media Relations

2.1 The MRLGA is accountable to the Murraylands and Riverland region for its actions and this can only be achieved through effective two-way communications. Accountability relies upon a genuine understanding of the MRLGA's policies and the services it provides. The media – print, radio, TV, internet and social media – are crucially important in conveying information to the region and beyond so the MRLGA must maintain positive, constructive media relations and work with them to increase public awareness of the services provided by the MRLGA and to explain the reasons for particular policies and priorities.

2.2 ~~The media themselves have a vital role to play on behalf of the region in holding the MRLGA to account for its policies and actions. It is important that they have access to the organisation to attain background information to assist them in this role. To balance this,~~ The MRLGA will defend itself from any unfounded criticism and will ensure that the public are properly informed of all the relevant facts using other channels of communication if necessary.

2.3 To summarise, the key aims of this policy are to work with the media to:

- build up a relationship of trust and mutual understanding that will benefit both parties;
- explain the MRLGA's policies and services to the local region and beyond;
- communicate important public information messages;
- invigorate local democracy and enable people to participate in the work of the MRLGA; and
- enhance the reputation of the MRLGA.

3.0 Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association Values

3.1 The MRLGA's Strategic Plan contains objectives for how it will promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the region.

3.2 In addition the MRLGA is committed to:

- *Integrity* – we will never knowingly mislead the public, media or our Constituent Councils on an issue or news story;
- *Leadership*- we promote openness and accessibility in our dealings with the media, whilst complying with the law and maintaining confidentiality when appropriate;
- *Credible*- information provided to the media will be objective, balanced, accurate, informative and timely; and

4.0 The Legal Framework

4.1 The Local Government Act 1999 Chapter 6, Part 3 (Public Access to meetings) applies to the MRLGA Board meetings as if they were a council and the Board Members were members of a council. The MRLGA must also have regard to the Local Government Act, its own Charter and policies like the Code of Conduct for Board Members. Some aspects of the Code are relevant to this policy, in particular those relating to the Board Members actions:
- They act with reasonable care and diligence in the performance of their role, at all times
- They are courteous, respectful and sensitive in dealing with other Board Members
- They are representing the best interests of their Constituent Councils and the MRLGA rather than their own self-interest, in making decisions
- They are mindful of the image of MRLGA at all times, as reflected in their behaviour which should be above reproach
- They accept the responsibility of decisions that are arrived at in accordance with the Charter of MRLGA and the Local Government Act, 1999
- They are willing to promote the resolutions of MRLGA in the wider community
- They publicly support the President when endorsed to speak publicly ~~as the duly elected spokesperson~~ on behalf of the organisation
- They are diligent in ensuring confidentiality in all matters, until they are released into the public arena
- They commit to acting lawfully, responsibly and prudently when discharging their duties as Board Member
- They understand the responsibility of a Board Member, as described in the MRLGA Charter.
- They demonstrate a commitment to transparency of decision making and to representing the considered interests of their own Council.

4.2 The MRLGA reserves the right to withhold certain sensitive information, for example concerning commercial transactions.

4.3 When the media wish to discuss an issue that is, or is likely to be, subject to legal proceedings then advice should be taken from the MRLGA's Solicitor before any response is made.

5.0 Attendance of the Media at Meetings

5.1 The media ~~are encouraged to~~ may attend MRLGA meetings and seating ~~and workspace~~ will be made available. The President and/or relevant Board Members will be available following meetings for comment or interview if required.

5.2 Any filming or taping of meeting proceedings by the media must be with prior notice to the President.

6.0 Guidance for Members

6.1 The Code of Conduct for Board Members contains guidance for providing media publicity.

Members are advised to ensure they are properly briefed and guided by the President or Chief Executive Officer before talking to the media.

7.0 Responding to approaches from the Media

7.1 The media may contact the MRLGA for many different reasons, for example, to follow up a story after receiving agendas or minutes; to ask for the MRLGA position on a more general story affecting other authorities or organisations; to look for a local perspective on a national story; following a call from a member of the public; for an update on a long running story. These approaches are usually made by phone or in person, for example, following a meeting.

7.2 Local press and radio and TV stations may contact the President, Chief Executive Officer and Board Members directly when preparing news stories. They include:
- Local newspapers
- ABC Regional Radio
- 5MU/Power FM Radio - Murray Bridge
- 5RM - Riverland
- Adelaide and local television
- State and National radio and newspapers

7.3 Approaches from all national press, radio or TV stations or specialist press should be directed to the President and/or Chief Executive Officer who will discuss the nature of the story and then may contact the appropriate Board Member asking them to respond.

7.4 All proposals for feature articles or more lengthy broadcast interviews or debates should be made through the President and/or the Chief Executive Officer.

7.5 Investigative journalism will usually involve requests for background information and statistics, often from the archives. If the material requested is public information then every effort should be made to assist the journalist or researcher. Again, their deadlines should be respected but if it will take time to compile the information then this should be made clear from the beginning. It will usually be necessary to provide information in addition to that which is requested in order to set the facts and figures in context. It is recommended that requests for detailed information of this nature, whether from the local or national media, are made through the Chief Executive Officer.

~~7.6 It is not possible to provide hard and fast rules about who will speak to the media on behalf of the MRLGA in particular situations. The important considerations are that the person has the necessary facts and understanding, that they are available when required and that they can speak with some authority, using plain English.~~

PUBLIC CONSULTATION POLICY

MRLGA

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	11
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	26th June 2015
Last Reviewed	12th October 2016
Next Review Date	To be reviewed annually
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	Section 50 of the Local Government Act 1999

1.0 Purpose

As a regional subsidiary incorporated under the Local Government Act 1999, it is important to have a public consultation policy to assist our accountability and transparency. However, our role is quite different from our Constituent Councils in terms of our interaction with residents and ratepayers so it would be anticipated that there is a narrower list of documents that require public consultation. Principally, our consultation will be with our Constituent Councils.
This policy will set out the process to be followed, where such public consultation is required. It complies with S50 of the Local Government Act, 1999 ["Public Consultation policies"].

2.0 Procedures

a. Where Board Members believe that the public should be consulted in a matter of MRLGA policy, procedure or impending action, then a public consultation process will be determined inline with the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) which has developed a Public Participation Spectrum to demonstrate the possible types of engagement with stakeholders and communities.
b. The matter to be consulted on will be summarised in a separate document that is available from the MRLGA and in most situations, on ~~our~~ its website.
c. Notice of the terms of consultation, and the timeframe for written responses, will be clearly stated ~~advertised in all local newspapers circulating in Constituent Councils' areas~~.
d. The minimum period of consultation will be 21 days and this will be adjusted according to the circumstances at hand, including the complexity of any accompanying discussion document.
e. The Chief Executive Officer will collate the public response before communicating this to the relevant Board Members or Council personnel as determined by the Board.
f. Any decision then required will take account of the public comment received
g. An acknowledgement email will be ~~Individual letters of thanks should then be~~ sent to members of the public who have provided written comment.
h. ~~A report on the decision taken should be circulated in newspapers within the region defined in (3) above~~.

3.0 Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA internal records system.

4.0 Review

This policy shall be reviewed by the Association at least every 3 years.

PURCHASING & TENDERING POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	12
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	31 January 2020
Last Reviewed	31 January 2020
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every three (3) years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	

1.0 Purpose

This document sets out the MRLGA's policy for the acquisition of goods and services and carrying out of the procurement principles. This policy applies to the procurement of all goods, equipment and related services and contracts.

2.0 Objectives

The objective of the purchasing procedures is to:

1. Ensure all purchasing activities have a clear and logical audit trail and there is a coordinated approach to purchasing procedures.
2. Assist the MRLGA in achieving the best value for money and purchasing conditions.
3. Ensure that the MRLGA's purchasing policies, practices and procedures meet the highest level of accountability ensuring a fairness and transparency.

3.0 Scope and Procedures

This policy applies to the purchase of goods and services including consultancy contracts awarded by the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA). The policy also includes contracts awarded by the MRLGA on behalf of other parties. Policy decisions are those agreed to by the MRLGA. ~~From time to time Delegates may put forward recommendations for changes to this policy document for adoption at a full General Meeting of the Association~~.

Delegates ~~and the Association's Executive Services~~ need to be aware that expenditure is of public funds and as such ensure that best value in all purchasing activities is obtained and that all purchasing activities provide a clear and logical audit trail. Obtaining value for money means ensuring that benefits are commensurate with cost. The lowest cost choice should not be selected automatically if there is a clear and reasoned justification for not doing so.

Although price is important, other factors play an important role in the selection of goods and services. These include:

- Local Economic Benefit,
- Quality,
- Relevant Experience,
- Continuity of Supply,
- Ability to meet the MRLGA's needs,
- Reliability,
- Risks and Work, Health and Safety
- Performance (positive references)
- Appropriate business practices (an alignment between business practices and Council expectations)
- History, and,
- Compliance with the Local Government Act, Trade Practices Act, the National Competition Policy and relevant industrial awards and agreements.

Obtaining value for money is enhanced when there is open competition and the market is tested regularly. If not done appropriately, market testing processes such as tendering, can lead to poor outcomes.

As far as is legally possible, the MRLGA supports local businesses and hence buys locally where this is justifiable on a cost and delivery basis for equivalent goods or services. Recognising that the lowest price does not always equate to the highest benefit/value.

A competitive process may not always mean calling for open tenders. A variety of other competitive processes such as expressions for interest or direct negotiations (selective tendering) may also be used.

Where services can be provided by constituent councils, the MRLGA is **not** obliged to seek formal quotes and tenders on the open market. In the instance where constituent councils can and are willing to provide services to MRLGA a fee structure will be negotiated and, depending on the nature of the fee, will be presented to the MRLGA Board or CEO Networking for noting or approval.

This document must be observed and adhered to in all purchasing activities. In all circumstances, purchasing activities are to have regard to budgetary allocation as applied from year to year.

Purchasing policy varies with the value of the goods or services being purchased. Guidelines for categories of purchase are shown below. The Association may also delegate powers to the Chief Executive Officer to act according to that delegated authority.

~~Preference~~ Consideration should be given to engaging with external bodies for procurement activities valued at over $25,000.00 in an effort to:

- Reduce associated risk to the MRLGA
- Use existing managed contracts
- Leverage external expertise and networks
- Increase value of the dollar spend

Such entities can include LGA Procurement and individual council procurement officers.

3.1 Introduction

Through the promotion of fair and open competition, the MRLGA is committed to achieving quality services and best value for money and will:

- Implement competitive procurement to help ensure value for money without compromising quality or responsiveness;
- Provide services at the highest standard in the most cost effective manner;
- Monitor and fulfil the needs and expectations of the constituent Councils and their communities within the limits of the budget provided;
- Provide an environment which gives the opportunity to be innovative;
- Manage contracts to ensure they meet legislative requirements and focus on improving the efficiency and effectiveness of services;
- To ensure the integrity of all procurement processes conducted by the MRLGA;

3.2 General Principles

All tendering processes conducted by the MRLGA will be based on the following principles:

- Tendering at all levels shall be conducted honestly and in a manner that is fair to all parties involved;
- Parties shall comply with all legislative obligations including those required by trade practices and consumer affairs legislation;
- Shall have regard to the costs of bidding and the number of tenderers;
- The MRLGA will only call tenders after it has made a firm commitment to proceed with the project;
- The conditions of tendering shall be the same for each tenderer.
- Parties shall not engage in practices such as collusion on tenders, inflation of prices to compensate unsuccessful tenderers, hidden commissions, or any other such secret arrangements;
- The MRLGA is prepared to attest to its probity, if necessary, by statutory declaration or other reasonable means;
- Tender documents shall specify the MRLGA's requirements as clearly and precisely as possible and, when documents are altered, sufficient time shall be allowed for all tenderers to review and revise their tenders;
- Any party with a conflict of interest shall declare those interests; and
- A conflict in itself does not necessarily exclude a submission from consideration; and

- MRLGA shall retain the right to intellectual property unless otherwise negotiated.

3.3 Funding Allocation

Before steps can be taken to purchase goods or services, funds must be available in the approved MRLGA budget. Once the MRLGA has adopted the budget, it becomes a legal document, which must be adhered to. In circumstances where funds are not available for the purpose within the appropriate budget line, an alternative source of funds must be approved by the MRLGA.

3.4 Unbudgeted Procurement and Expenditure

The MRLGA Board must approve any unbudgeted procurement and expenditure.

3.5 Method of procurement of goods and services

A competitive method of obtaining goods or services for the MRLGA will generally be adopted in relation to the estimated gross value of the expenditure.

3.6 Method

Where it is estimated that the cost for the supply of goods or a service will fall outside the limits as detailed, the method of procurement will be:

- $10,000 or less – informal quotation process to be undertaken
- $10,001 to $80,000 – formal quotation process to be undertaken for not less than three quotations
- >$80,001 – formal tender process to be undertaken

Tenders for the supply of goods and/or services are to be presented to the MRLGA in the following instances:

- For tenders > $150,000 to be presented to the MRLGA Board for decision
- Contracts $50,000 to $150,000 to be presented to the MRLGA Board for information purposes only (provided approved in budget and annual work plan).
- When a tender contains information which has been determined by the Chief Executive Officer to be potentially sensitive or controversial.

3.7 The MRLGA Order Forms

All goods or services must be procured by purchase order, with the exception of goods valued at less than $200 or credit card purchases. Documentation must be provided for reimbursement of expenses paid by staff.

Splitting of amounts and/or purchase orders to bring expenditure within lower limits is not permitted.

3.8 ~~Credit Card~~

~~The MRLGA has a business credit facility with the Bank of South Australia. This facility entitles the MRLGA to a $3,000 credit facility. The MRLGA authorises the Chief Executive Officer to use the corporate credit card for MRLGA business only. Main uses will be for travel, accommodation and meal purposes and other minor purchases. At the end of each monthly period, all purchases will be reconciled with evidence of purchase to be attached to reconciliation. (Refer MRLGA Purchasing Policy and Procedure”).~~

3.9 Receipt of Goods

Unfilled orders should be regularly followed up to provide completion of procurement process.

4.0 QUOTATIONS

4.1 Informal Quotation Process

Where the gross value of goods or services are required which are estimated to cost $10,000 or less, a reputable trades person or supplier, who has a history of cost effective work or supply for the MRLGA, may be asked to undertake the work or supply the goods which will include an immediate completion requirement. Reasons must be recorded documenting this course of action.

4.2 Formal Quotation Process

Where the estimated gross value of the goods or services is greater than $10,000 but less than $80,000, the method of procurement will be by formal written quotation. A minimum of three quotations must be sought, with these quotations to be submitted in writing.

Provided that a provision exists within the budget, approval to commit expenditure by formal written quotation can be authorised by the Chief Executive Officer.

The formal quotation process will not apply if:

- It is impracticable to call for quotations in the circumstances of a particular case (i.e. single supplier etc.), or
- The MRLGA resolves for some other good cause that quotations need not be called for in the circumstances of a particular case.

5.0 TENDER PROCESS

5.1 Monetary Limit

The monetary limit for the provision of goods or services above which tenders must be called is $80,000 and above.

The monetary limit will not apply if:-

- It is impracticable to call for tenders in the circumstances of a particular case, or
- The MRLGA resolves for some other good cause that tenders need not be called for in the circumstances of a particular case, or
- the goods are second hand/used that would make it impracticable to tender. In this instance a formal quotation process should be undertaken.
- The market is known and due to the nature of goods or services it is unreasonable to call for tenders.
- Tender Options
- The tender process can be initiated by one of the four tender procedures as detailed:
- Open Tenders – All interested parties are invited through open public advertisement to tender on a common basis.
- Open Tenders called through a recognised third party arrangement such as LGA Procurements Managed Contracts.
- Selected Tenders – A limited number of organisations are directly invited to tender because of their proven experience or recognised ability to undertake particular work. A minimum of three organisations must be invited to tender.
- Pre-registered Tenders – Expressions of Interest are invited for a project. Applicants are evaluated with a small number meeting the required criteria then being invited to tender.

5.2 Advertising

Invitations to tender shall be advertised on at least one occasion. Advertising may be electronic, through print media or both. Wherever possible stakeholders should be provided with details in a format that allows for local promotion such as council social media and websites.

All invitations to tender for the provision of goods or services to the MRLGA shall require prospective suppliers to register their details, list a contact person for enquiries and specify a closing date. The MRLGA may, at its discretion, extend a closing date to all registered suppliers. A risk assessment should be conducted prior to extending any closing date to determine the appropriateness and any perceived advantage that may be provided to individual entities.

All advertisements or invitations to tender will indicate neither tender nor the lowest tender necessarily accepted".

5.3 ~~Deposit~~ Lodgment

Tenders must be lodged electronically to allow for electronic time and date records to validate any opening process. Responses must be clearly marked with the Tender details, the closing time and the submitting entity details.

The MRLGA reserves the right to consider late submissions but must record reasons for doing so.

5.4 Opening

The submissions shall be opened by the responsible person only, at the time specified in the invitation to tender as the time for the closing of the tender, or at such later times as may be necessary.

A tender opening form should be completed, detailing the entity providing the submission, the contact details, the total value of the submission and the time that the submission was opened.

Details of all tenders received shall be entered in the Register of Tenders. The Tender Register shall record the following details:-

- a brief description of the item or service to be tendered
- tender number
- date tender called
- date and time tender closes
- date and time tender opened
- name and address of all tenderers
- gross/trade-in/net values and brief details for each tender
- successful tenderer
- central records management file location

6.0 EVALUATION OF TENDERS & QUOTATIONS

6.1 Qualifications – Formality of Tender

A tender which does not comply with the tender documents may be rejected.

6.2 Alternative Offers

Alternative offers may be considered at the sole discretion of the MRLGA. Provision must be made for such offers within the tender documents.

6.3 Evaluation methodology

Evaluation criteria should be determined before viewing any submissions. Criteria may include:

- technical, management, physical and financial capacity;
- current commitments;
- standing within the industry;
- record of performance;
- ability to perform the works;
- work health, safety and welfare systems management
- Tender price
- Level and quality of goods or services to be provided
- References for previous dealings of a similar nature

6.4 Acceptance of Other than the Lowest

Where it is intended that the lowest tender will not necessarily be accepted then such information should be provided to all prospective tenderers.

6.5 Confidentiality

Safeguards will apply to secure the confidentiality of tenderers. All information provided between the tenderers and the MRLGA will be treated as commercially in confidence and both the tenderer and the MRLGA will maintain it as such.

7.0 ENVIRONMENTAL PURCHASING POLICY

There is growing public awareness of the need to protect the environment by discontinuing the manufacture of certain products which are harmful to the environment and by the conservation of scare resources and by recycling used materials where applicable.
The MRLGA is committed to supporting the market for recycled and environmentally sensitive products by increasing both supply and demand where practical and effective, and by encouraging economic growth and development in recycling and related industries.
Those who are responsible for the sourcing and procurement of the MRLGA's materials requirements, are encouraged to protect the environment by discontinuing the purchase of products which are harmful to the environment and to promote the preservation of the environment by increasing recycling activity where practicable.
This can be achieved through promotion of the collection of otherwise reusable or recyclable products for recycling and to purchase these products where it is efficient to do so, to increase market viability by increasing demand.
Therefore, preference is to be given to the purchase of products containing 50% or more of recycled material from Australian waste, provided the product is fit for the purpose and is comparable in price to the new or replacement material alternatives.

8.0 BUY LOCAL

Preference for the provision of goods and services will be given to local suppliers only where the price, quality, availability and service provision is comparable to other suppliers or where an economic benefit will accrue to the MRLGA or the region.
This preference will be included in all future tender documents for the provision of the MRLGA goods and services which are contracted out.

9.0 WORK HEALTH, SAFETY & WELFARE POLICY

The MRLGA believes that a bi-partisan approach to workplace health and safety is beneficial to all persons at the workplace.
All purchasing contracts will be endorsed with the requirement that all prescribed standards of the Work Work Health and Safety Act and Regulations (2012) are met.

10.0 COMPLIANCE WITH ALL AUSTRALIAN STANDARDS

The MRLGA will ensure that the delivery of all goods and materials satisfies all of the requirements of all relevant Australian Standards.

11.0 QUALITY ASSURANCE ENDORSED COMPANIES

The MRLGA will ensure that where practical, preference is given to suppliers and manufacturers who are quality endorsed and accredited to the SA 3900/ISO 9000 Quality Standard.

Note: A catalogue of certified companies is available from Quality Assurance Services, a division of Standards Australia.

12.0 DELEGATION

The following the MRLGA officers are authorised to procure goods or services within budget area limitations, and with compliance to all parts of this policy: The Chief Executive Officer

Area of Responsibility	**Level of Responsibility Per Item**
Organisational	

Chief Executive Officer	$250,000 or within budget constraints and compliance with Tender & Purchasing Policy

Sub-Delegation: Delegation made to a specific position (including Chief Executive Officer) extends to any person appointed to act in the position.

In the absence of the Chief Executive Officer, delegation extends to the President.

Legislation: Local Government Act 1999, Work Health and Safety Act 2012;

Documentation: Australian Standard Code of Tendering (SA4120 (INT)-1993); SA 3900/ISO 9000 Quality Standard

REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	13
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	Not yet adopted
Last Reviewed	
Next Review Date	To be reviewed every three (3) years
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	

1.0 Purpose

This policy establishes the framework for reimbursement of expenses incurred by employees and authorised representatives of the Subsidiary in the course of performing official duties.

The policy ensures:

- Expenditure is lawful and for a proper purpose;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation;
- Adequate internal controls are maintained; and
- Financial accountability obligations under applicable legislation are met.

2.0 Legislative Context

The financial management and internal control requirements under the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011 (SA), including requirements relating to proper accounting records, internal controls, and authorisation of payments.

3.0 Scope

This policy applies to:

- The Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
- Employees of the Subsidiary; and
- Board Members;
- Any other person authorised by the Board to incur expenditure on behalf of the Subsidiary.

4.0 General Principles

4.1 Reimbursement will only be made where the expense:

- Was incurred in the course of official duties;
- Was reasonable and necessary;
- Represents value for money; and
- Is supported by appropriate evidence.

4.2 Personal, private or unauthorised expenses will not be reimbursed.

4.3 All reimbursements must be processed through the Subsidiary's financial management system to ensure proper recording in the accounting records.

5.0 Eligible Expenses

Subject to approval, the following may be reimbursed:

- Travel and accommodation associated with approved meetings, conferences or official business;
- Training and professional development approved in advance;
- Meals reasonably incurred while undertaking approved duties;
- Minor incidental expenses directly related to official functions.
- All expenditure must comply with any applicable Board resolutions or approved budget allocations.

6.0 Approval and Authorisation

6.1 Pre-Approval

Where expenses are incurred that would be considered beyond items listed in 5.0, prior approval is preferred in advance by:

The CEO (for employees); or

The Chair (for the CEO); or

The Board (for Board Members where required).

6.2 Authorisation of Payment

Reimbursements must be authorised in accordance with the Subsidiary's approved delegations and internal controls framework.

6.3 Separation of Duties

A person must not approve their own reimbursement claim. Claims submitted by:
The CEO must be approved by the Chair (or delegate);
The Chair must be approved by Ceo or delegated Board Member;
Employees must be approved by the CEO (or delegate).

7.0 Documentation Requirements

7.1 All claims must be submitted within three ~~one~~ weeks of the end of the last financial quarter.

7.2 Claims must include:
Copy of ~~Original~~ tax invoices or receipts (~~or certified copies where originals are unavailable~~);
A completed reimbursement claim form;
A description of the business purpose of the expense.

7.3 Where a receipt cannot be produced, a statutory declaration may be required, subject to Board or CEO discretion.

8.0 Payment Processing

8.1 Approved reimbursements will be processed through the Subsidiary's accounts payable system.

8.2 Payments will be made by electronic funds transfer (EFT) unless otherwise approved.

8.3 All reimbursements must be properly recorded in the Subsidiary's accounting records and be available for audit review.

9.0 Reporting and Transparency

9.1 Reimbursement payments will be reported in accordance with financial reporting obligations to the Board.

9.2 The Subsidiary will ensure transparency and accountability consistent with its charter.

10.0 Compliance and Review

10.1 Failure to comply with this policy may result in refusal of reimbursement and, where appropriate, further action.

10.2 This policy will be reviewed at least every three years, or earlier if legislative or operational changes require amendment.

DRAFT RESPECTFUL WORKPLACE POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	14
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	Not yet adopted
Previous Review	
Last Reviewed	
Next Review Date	
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	

1.0 Purpose

The MRLGA is committed to fostering a safe, inclusive, and respectful workplace. This policy outlines expectations for behaviour, reinforces a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment, and supports a culture where all staff, contractors, and stakeholders are treated with dignity and respect.

2.0 Policy Statement

All individuals associated with the Subsidiary must act in a manner that promotes respect, professionalism, and equity. Sexual harassment, any form of inappropriate behaviour, or conduct that undermines the wellbeing of others will not be tolerated. The Subsidiary is committed to taking prompt and fair action in response to any breaches.

3.0 Key Principles

- **Zero Tolerance:** Sexual harassment, assault, or any form of intimidation or coercion is strictly prohibited.
- **Respectful Conduct:** Interactions must be professional, courteous, and free from discrimination, bullying, or harassment.
- **Early Reporting and Support:** Staff or Members are encouraged to raise concerns promptly. Confidential support and guidance will be provided.
- **Accountability:** All MRLGA Staff and Members are responsible for promoting a respectful workplace and responding appropriately to reports of misconduct.

4.0 Implementation

The Subsidiary will provide guidance and clear reporting pathways to ensure all personnel understand their rights and responsibilities. Complaints will be handled promptly, confidentially.

5.0 Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA internal records system.

6.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective, aligns with legislative requirements, and reflects best practice in workplace behaviour, or at least every 3 years.

DRAFT TRAVEL POLICY

POLICY DETAILS

Policy No.	15
Authority	MRLGA Board
Adoption Date	Not yet adopted
Previous Review	
Last Reviewed	
Next Review Date	
Responsible Officer	Chief Executive Officer and President MRLGA
Legislation	

1.0 Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to ensure official travel undertaken on behalf of the Subsidiary is necessary, cost-effective, safe and provides value for money. The Policy supports prudent expenditure of public funds while enabling employees and Board Members to effectively represent and deliver the objectives of the Subsidiary.

2.0 Scope

This Policy applies to:

- the Chief Executive Officer (CEO);
- employees; and
- any other person travelling on behalf of the Subsidiary where travel costs are funded by the Subsidiary.

3.0 Principles

Official travel will:

- support the strategic objectives and operational requirements of the Subsidiary;
- be undertaken only where there is a clear business purpose;
- represent value for money, considering total cost, efficiency and time;
- comply with applicable legislation, policies and budget allocations; and
- be conducted with appropriate regard for health, safety and wellbeing.

4.0 Approval

All travel requiring expenditure by the Subsidiary must be within the annual approved budget.

Travel within the State and region for meetings, events, conferences do not require prior approval and is at the discretion of the Ceo considering capacity, priorities, relevance, timing and value for money.

Interstate or overseas travel must demonstrate a clear organisational benefit and be specifically approved by the President & Vice President, Board or CEO Performance Panel.

5.0 Travel Arrangements

Travellers should select the most practical and economical travel option, having regard to:

- total cost;
- travel time;
- safety;
- operational efficiency; and
- environmental considerations where appropriate.

Reasonable costs associated with transport, accommodation, meals, parking and other necessary business expenses may be reimbursed where supported by appropriate documentation/receipts (pursuant to the MRLGA Reimbursement Policy).

Where practical, bookings should be made sufficiently in advance to obtain competitive pricing.

Where long distance travel in a car occurs, the preference is for the Traveller to :

- carry a mobile phone and phone charger
- carry a first aid kit in the vehicle
- avoid travel at night/dawn/dusk (and associated risks from wildlife)

7.0 Accommodation and Meals

Accommodation should be safe, appropriate and represent value for money.
Meal and incidental expenses should be reasonable and directly related to approved travel.
Alcohol and personal expenses will not be reimbursed.

8.0 Travel Expenses

Claims for reimbursement must:

- be submitted in the timeframe outline in the MRLGA Reimbursement Policy
- include supporting tax invoices or copies of receipts wherever possible; and
- relate only to reasonable business expenses incurred whilst undertaking approved travel.

Personal expenditure incurred during business travel is the responsibility of the traveller.

9.0 Combining Business and Private Travel

Private travel may be combined with approved business travel where it does not result in additional cost to the Subsidiary.
This should be approved by President & Vice President, Board or CEO Performance Panel.
Any additional costs arising from personal travel are to be met by the traveller.

10.0 Responsibilities

Travellers are responsible for:

- complying with this Policy;
- exercising sound judgement and appropriate stewardship of public resources;
- ensuring expenditure is reasonable and defensible; and
- maintaining appropriate records to support reimbursement claims.

Approving officers are responsible for ensuring travel is necessary, appropriately authorised and consistent with the Subsidiary's budget and strategic objectives.

5.0 Availability of Policy

This Policy will be available on the Murraylands & Riverland LGA internal records system.

6.0 Review

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective, aligns with legislative requirements, and reflects best practice in workplace behaviour, or at least every 3 years.

What to do if you're experiencing work place issues?

If a staff member is experiencing work place bullying, harassment or other work place concerns by their immediate supervisor, the following people can be contacted in confidence.

Contact Details for :

President	Mayor Ella Winnall mayorwinnall@bbc.sa.gov.au 0403 420 139
Vice President	Mayor Simone Bailey mayorbailey@mid-murray.sa.gov.au Please note this email is not confidential and goes to the Councils record-keeping system). 0438 858 439
Rural City of Murray Bridge	Heather Barclay, Ceo H.Barclay@murraybridge.sa.gov.au 08 8539 1166
District Council of Loxton Waikerie	David Beaton, Ceo dbeaton@lwdc.sa.gov.au 0417 853 689

Appendix 11

MRLGA Quarterly Financial Statements

Executive Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA
For the 3 months ended 30 June 2026

	APR-JUNE 2026
Cash	
Cash received	172,307.88
Cash spent	115,015.68
Cash surplus (deficit)	57,292.20
Closing bank balance	91,920.05
Profitability	
Income	113,901.59
Direct costs	-
Gross profit (loss)	113,901.59
Other income	26,000.00
Expenses	84,674.42
Profit (loss)	55,227.17
Balance Sheet	
Debtors	-
Creditors	-
Net assets	1,022,808.57
Sales	
Number of invoices issued	13.00
Average value of invoices	11,076.35
Performance	
Gross profit margin (%)	100.00
Net profit margin (%)	48.49
Return on investment (p.a.) (%)	21.60
Position	
Average debtor days	-
Average creditor days	-
Short term cash forecast	-
Current assets to liabilities	16.09
Term assets to liabilities	-

Cash Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA
For the 3 months ended 30 June 2026

	APR-JUNE 2026
Income	
Berri Barmera Council	12,651.00
Coorong District Council	10,692.50
DC of Karoonda East Murray	5,981.00
DC of Loxton Waikerie	14,361.00
FDF Regional Drought Resilience Grant	26,000.00
Mid Murray Council	13,929.50
Renmark Paringa Council	11,804.50
Rural City of Murray Bridge	22,622.00
SLRP Surcharge	(4,090.91)
Southern Mallee DC	6,977.00
Waste Contract Management Levy	31,625.00
Total Income	**152,552.59**
Less Expenses	
Accounting Services (Payroll, BAS and General Accounting)	1,450.00
Accruals	(5,471.66)
Bank Fees	30.00
Insurance	3,095.10
M365/SharePoint IT and Support	1,057.23
Meeting Expenses	2,490.49
Office Expenses	858.63
PAYG Withholdings Payable	(12,222.00)
Regional Public Health Plan	18,181.82
Regional Waste Management Initiatives	1,596.00
Superannuation	5,682.00
Superannuation Payable	9,574.72
Vice President (Allowance)	1,083.00
Wages and Salaries	47,350.15
Website Maintenance	1,800.00
Total Expenses	**76,555.48**
Surplus (Deficit)	**75,997.11**
Plus Tax Movements	
Tax Collected	15,664.38
Tax Paid	(34,369.29)
Net Tax Movements	**(18,704.91)**
Net Cash Movement	**57,292.20**
Summary	
Opening Balance	34,627.85

	APR-JUNE 2026
Plus Net Cash Movement	57,292.20
Cash Balance	91,920.05

Profit and Loss

Murray and Mallee LGA
For the 3 months ended 30 June 2026

	QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE	25/26 ANNUAL BUDGET	VARIANCE
Council Subscriptions				
Berri Barmera Council	-	25,302.00	25,302.00	-
Coorong District Council	10,692.50	21,385.00	21,385.00	-
DC of Karoonda East Murray	5,981.00	11,962.00	11,962.00	-
DC of Loxton Waikerie	14,361.00	28,722.00	28,722.00	-
Mid Murray Council	13,929.50	27,859.00	27,859.00	-
Renmark Paringa Council	11,804.50	23,609.00	23,609.00	-
Rural City of Murray Bridge	22,622.00	45,244.00	45,244.00	-
Southern Mallee DC	6,977.00	13,954.00	13,954.00	-
Total Council Subscriptions	**86,367.50**	**198,037.00**	**198,037.00**	-
Other Income				
Regional Capacity Building	-	-	40,000.00	(40,000.00)
SLRP Surcharge	(4,090.91)	17,459.09	25,000.00	(7,540.91)
Interest Income	-	-	47,956.00	(47,956.00)
Waste Education Levy	-	-	100,000.00	(100,000.00)
Waste Contract Management Levy	31,625.00	31,625.00	65,000.00	(33,375.00)
Total Other Income	**27,534.09**	**49,084.09**	**277,956.00**	**(228,871.91)**
Gross Profit	**113,901.59**	**247,121.09**	**475,993.00**	**(228,871.91)**
Other Income				
FDF Regional Drought Resilience Grant	26,000.00	26,000.00	-	26,000.00
Total Other Income	**26,000.00**	**26,000.00**	-	**26,000.00**
Expenses				
Administration Expenses				
Allowance (President)	-	5,300.00	5,300.00	-
Audit and Accounting Fees	-	4,560.00	7,500.00	(2,940.00)
Bank Fees	30.00	100.00	120.00	(20.00)
Insurance	3,095.10	14,067.37	12,000.00	2,067.37
Legal expenses	-	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00)
Meeting Expenses	2,490.49	8,074.17	6,000.00	2,074.17
Office Expenses	858.63	3,713.77	4,400.00	(686.23)

	QUARTER	YEAR TO DATE	25/26 ANNUAL BUDGET	VARIANCE
M365/SharePoint IT and Support	1,057.23	3,090.51	2,751.00	339.51 ↑
Sundry Expenses	-	100.00	3,000.00	(2,900.00) ↓
Travel & Accommodation	-	-	6,500.00	(6,500.00) ↓
Website Maintenance	1,800.00	1,800.00	1,000.00	800.00 ↑
Total Administration Expenses	**9,331.45**	**40,805.82**	**53,571.00**	**(12,765.18)**
Operational Expenses				
Accounting Services (Payroll, BAS and General Accounting)	1,450.00	2,250.00	2,500.00	(250.00) ↓
Superannuation	5,682.00	34,704.87	-	34,704.87 ↑
Wages and Salaries	47,350.15	291,883.34	455,834.00	(163,950.66) ↓
Office Equipment	-	-	5,140.00	(5,140.00) ↓
Admin Support	-	-	25,000.00	(25,000.00) ↓
Total Operational Expenses	**54,482.15**	**328,838.21**	**488,474.00**	**(159,635.79)**
Project Expenses				
Regional Public Health Plan	18,181.82	18,181.82	30,000.00	(11,818.18) ↓
Regional Road Hierarchy Plan	-	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00) ↓
Regional Waste Management Initiatives	1,596.00	9,773.45	10,000.00	(226.55) ↓
MR (Drought Resilience) Plan	-	180.00	-	180.00 ↑
Roads Database	-	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00) ↓
Total Project Expenses	**19,777.82**	**28,135.27**	**50,000.00**	**(21,864.73)**
New Initiative for Sustainability	-	-	10,000.00	(10,000.00) ↓
MRLGA Strategic Planning	-	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00) ↓
Regional Road Action Plans	-	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00) ↓
Vice President (Allowance)	1,083.00	1,083.00	1,280.00	(197.00) ↓
Regional Capacity Building Construction Roads Training	-	-	8,000.00	(8,000.00) ↓
Regional Transport Plan	-	-	40,000.00	(40,000.00) ↓
New Initiative for Shared Services	-	-	5,000.00	(5,000.00) ↓
Fleet	-	-	35,000.00	(35,000.00) ↓
Total Expenses	**84,674.42**	**398,862.30**	**701,325.00**	**(302,462.70)**
Net Profit	**55,227.17**	**(125,741.21)**	**(225,332.00)**	**99,590.79**

Balance Sheet

Murray and Mallee LGA
As at 30 June 2026

	30 JUNE 2026	30 JUNE 2025
Assets		
Bank		
Murray and Mallee LGA	91,920.05	177,436.06
Total Bank	**91,920.05**	**177,436.06**
Current Assets		
Accounts Receivable	-	25,198.80
Accrued Interest Revenue	1,389.46	1,389.46
LGFA Investment Deposits	999,038.15	1,017,038.15
Petty Cash	100.00	100.00
Total Current Assets	**1,000,527.61**	**1,043,726.41**
Total Assets	**1,092,447.66**	**1,221,162.47**
Liabilities		
Current Liabilities		
Accruals	5,471.66	-
GST	(64,145.57)	11,742.55
PAYG Withholdings Payable	88,966.00	11,312.00
Provision for Employee Leave	37,753.00	37,753.00
Superannuation Payable	-	10,081.14
Wages Payable - Payroll	(130.00)	-
Total Current Liabilities	**67,915.09**	**70,888.69**
Non-current Liabilities		
Provision for Long Service Leave	1,724.00	1,724.00
Total Non-current Liabilities	**1,724.00**	**1,724.00**
Total Liabilities	**69,639.09**	**72,612.69**
Net Assets	**1,022,808.57**	**1,148,549.78**
Equity		
Current Year Earnings	(125,741.21)	129,421.92
Retained Earnings	1,148,549.78	1,019,127.86
Total Equity	**1,022,808.57**	**1,148,549.78**

Aged Receivables Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA
As at 30 June 2026
Ageing by due date

Aged Payables Summary

Murray and Mallee LGA
As at 30 June 2026
Ageing by due date

Appendix 12

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Item not displayed.

CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Item not displayed.

Appendix 14

2026/27 MRLGA Committees and Members

Murraylands and Riverland CEO Network Group

MRLGA	Carron Mcleod	Chief Executive Officer
BBC	Tim Pfeiffer	Chief Executive Officer
CDC	Myles Somers	Interim Chief Executive Officer
DCKEM	Scott Reardon	Chief Executive Officer
DCLW	David Beaton	Chief Executive Officer
MMC	Andrew Johnson	Chief Executive Officer
RPC	Tony Siviour	Chief Executive Officer
RCMB	Heather Barclay	Chief Executive Officer
SMDC	Jason Beaton	Chief Executive Officer

MRLGA Regional Transport and Assets Committee

MRLGA	Carron McLeod	Chief Executive Officer
BBC	Tony Jordan	General Manager Infrastructure, Env. & Regulatory Service
CDC	Joel Eckermann	Director Roads & Infrastructure
DCKEM	James McInnes	Director Assets and Infrastructure
DCLW	Greg Perry	Director Infrastructure Services
MMC	David Hassett	Director Infrastructure & Field Services
RPC	Tarik Wolf	Director Environment and Infrastructure Services
RCMB	Thuyen Vi-Alternetti	GM Infrastructure and Environment
SMDC	Ben Wright	Director Infrastructure Services

MRLGA Regional Public Health & Wellbeing Committee

MRLGA	Carron McLeod	Chief Executive Officer
BBC	Alex Cannon-Leyson	General Manager Corporate & Community Services
CDC	Myles Somers (Chair)	Interim Chief Executive Officer
DCKEM	Scott Reardon	Chief Executive Officer
DCLW	Andrew Waters	Director Commercial and Community Services
MMC	Gary Mavrinac	Director Development & Community Services
RPC	Alyson Modlinski	Director Corporate & Community Services
RCMB	David Waters	General Manager Community Development
SMDC	Shilo Wyatt	Manager Property & Development Services

MRLGA CEO Performance Review Panel

MRLGA	Mayor Ella Winnall	President
MRLGA	Mayor Simone Bailey	Deputy President
Murraylands	Heather Barclay	Chief Executive Officer, Rural City of Murray Bridge
Riverland	David Beaton	Chief Executive Officer, District Council Loxton Waikerie

Regional Drought Resilience Program - Murraylands Riverland Consortium Partner

MRLGA	Carron McLeod	Chief Executive Officer

Appendix 15

Preliminary Information on Data Centers in SA

Following on from Item 7.1 in the Agenda : Data Centres in SA

***Note:** At the time this report was prepared the Commonwealth Government had not made its announcement to develop a national framework for large-scale data centres, with mandatory requirements expected to cover power, grid connection, energy efficiency and water use.*

Australian Government announces mandatory AI standards for large-scale data centres and new Office of AI

Lessons from USA:

The United States' experience with the rapid expansion of data centres offers several lessons relevant for Australia. While data centres have delivered significant economic and digital benefits, many US states have also encountered challenges relating to electricity demand, water use, planning, community expectations and taxation.

The emerging advice is that governments need to plan ahead rather than respond after demand has accelerated.

The key lessons are:

1. **Plan electricity infrastructure first**
   - Data centres can consume as much electricity as a small city.
   - Utilities in states such as Virginia and Texas have struggled to keep pace with demand, resulting in grid constraints and delays.
   - Australia should align data centre approvals with transmission, generation and storage planning.

2. **Don't underestimate water demand**
   - Large facilities may use millions of litres of water each day for cooling.
   - US communities have experienced tension where data centres compete with agriculture or residential water supplies.
   - Water availability should be assessed as part of planning approvals, particularly in regional Australia.

3. **Ensure communities receive local benefits**
   - While data centres create construction jobs, ongoing employment is relatively modest.
   - US experience shows communities are more supportive when developments contribute to local infrastructure, workforce development and community investment.

4. **Use strategic planning rather than ad hoc approvals**
   - States are increasingly identifying preferred precincts with existing infrastructure instead of allowing data centres to locate wherever land is available.
   - Co-locating facilities can reduce infrastructure costs and environmental impacts.

5. **Require transparency on energy use**
   - Several US jurisdictions now require greater disclosure of electricity demand and emissions.
   - This assists governments and network operators to plan future investment.

6. **Protect existing electricity customers**
   - One of the largest debates in the US is whether households and small businesses should subsidise network upgrades required for hyperscale data centres.
   - Australia can avoid this by ensuring costs are appropriately allocated to new developments.

7. **Maintain environmental standards**
   - Communities increasingly expect renewable energy, efficient cooling systems and lower carbon emissions.
   - US operators are investing in recycled water, liquid cooling and renewable power purchase agreements.

8. **Prepare for artificial intelligence**
   - AI workloads require substantially more electricity than traditional cloud computing.
   - Governments should plan infrastructure based on future AI demand, not today's requirements.

9. **Balance economic development with liveability**
   - While data centres attract investment, communities have raised concerns about noise, visual impact, diesel backup generators and industrialisation of surrounding areas.
   - Early community engagement and appropriate planning controls help maintain public support.

10. **Develop a national strategy**
   - US policy increasingly recognises data centres as critical infrastructure requiring coordination across energy, telecommunications, planning and economic development.
   - Australia can benefit from a nationally coordinated approach that aligns Commonwealth, state and local government responsibilities.

   Key message for Australia from the overarching lesson from the United States is:

11. **Don't simply attract data centres - plan for them.**

   The most successful jurisdictions have treated data centres as long-term strategic infrastructure by integrating land use planning, energy and water infrastructure, environmental management and community benefits. This approach helps maximise economic opportunities while minimising impacts on existing communities and essential services.

Australia does not currently have a single, national data centre strategy or master plan.

Instead, the development of data centres is governed through a combination of:
- Commonwealth digital, AI and critical infrastructure policies;
- State planning and energy policies;
- Electricity market planning by the Australian Energy Market Operator (AEMO); and
- Local government planning and development assessment.

This means Australia has **multiple policy frameworks**, but **no single national roadmap** identifying where data centres should be located, how they should be powered, or how their impacts should be managed.

- **What are States doing?**
  States are increasingly developing their own approaches:
  - **New South Wales** has designated data centres as significant employment infrastructure and is planning for precincts.
  - **Victoria** has attracted major hyperscale investment around Melbourne.
  - **Queensland** is promoting renewable-powered data centre investment.
  - **Western Australia** is positioning itself as a digital gateway to Asia.
  - **South Australia** is attracting investment through renewable energy, low-carbon electricity and submarine cable connectivity, but does not yet have a dedicated state data centre strategy.

- **What policy experts are recommending**
  Many infrastructure, energy and planning experts argue Australia should develop a National Data Centre Strategy that would:
  - identify suitable national and regional precincts;
  - coordinate electricity transmission and generation investment;
  - manage water availability and sustainability;
  - establish planning principles for all jurisdictions;
  - ensure local communities share in economic benefits;
  - support AI and sovereign digital capability; and
  - coordinate Commonwealth, state and local government investment.

- **Why this matters**
  Without a coordinated national approach, Australia risks:
  - electricity network bottlenecks;
  - competition for water resources;

- inconsistent planning rules between states;
- delays to major investments;
- higher infrastructure costs; and
- missed opportunities to direct data centres to regions with abundant renewable energy and available industrial land.

- **Implications for South Australia**
  South Australia is well placed to become a national hub for data centres because it offers:
  - one of Australia's highest shares of renewable electricity;
  - growing battery and storage capacity;
  - available industrial land;
  - proximity to Adelaide's digital infrastructure; and
  - opportunities to co-locate data centres with renewable energy generation and hydrogen projects.

Appendix 16

Letter from Coorong District Council
Matters seeking to be discussed at MRLGA Board

27 May 2026

Carron McLeod
Chief Executive Officer
Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association
E: ceo@mrlga.sa.gov.au

Dear Carron

I write on behalf of Coorong District Council following a resolution from its Ordinary Council meeting held on 19 May 2026.

Council has requested that the following matters be raised at the next meeting of the Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA), as items for advocacy by MRLGA:

- Impact of wild dogs in South Australia
- Rating of power generation facilities

Impact of wild dogs in South Australia

In relation to wild dogs, Council continues to receive concerns from residents and the Box Flat Wild Dog Coordinating Committee regarding the presence and impact of wild dogs within the region, particularly following Victoria's decision in 2024 to protect dingoes on private and public land in the north-west of the state.

As outlined in the South Australian Declared Animal Policy (Wild Dogs & Dingoes), wild dogs pose significant risks to livestock industries, with their distribution expanding further south despite ongoing control measures.

The policy also highlights the need for a coordinated, landscape-scale approach to management, including baiting, trapping and fencing, and recognises the ongoing challenges associated with maintaining effective control measures.

These measures have become more difficult for the South Australian government to implement following Victoria's decision, given much of the state borders with South Australia. Council considers that strengthened regional advocacy could support the South Australian Government's own advocacy with managing the implications of Victoria's wild dog protection.

Rating of power generation facilities

With respect to the rating of power generation facilities, Council is seeking MRLGA's support to advocate for greater clarity and consistency in how such infrastructure is valued and rated across the State, noting the potential financial implications for councils hosting these assets.

Council would welcome the opportunity to provide further background information to support discussion on both matters.

Thank you for your continued leadership and advocacy on behalf of the MRLGA member councils. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information.

Yours sincerely

Myles Somers
<u>INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER</u>

Postal Address:
PO Box 399
TAILEM BEND SA 5260
Email: council@coorong.sa.gov.au
Web: www.coorong.sa.gov.au

Coorong Civic Centre
95 – 101 Railway Terrace
TAILEM BEND SA 5260
Phone: 1300 785 277
Fax: 08 8572 3822

Meningie Information Hub
49 Princes Highway
MENINGIE SA 5264

Tintinara Customer Service Centre
37 Becker Terrace
TINTINARA SA 5266