

Murray Darling Association Inc.

# VISION 2025

Strategic Plan 2020-25



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# FOREWORD

We are pleased to introduce to you the Murray Darling Association's five-year Strategic Plan: **Vision 2025**.

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

Our Strategic Plan builds on the foundations established by the 2016-19 Strategic Plan, and confirms our place as the Basin's primary driver in local leadership and policy development.

The strategies we commit to delivering in this Plan address the unique and diverse regional interests of local government and communities across the Basin. The Plan addresses our members' top three priorities:

- ▶ **Murray Darling Basin Local Government & Community Centre of Excellence:** providing a space for local government and stakeholders across the Basin to collaborate and innovate.
- ▶ **Project development** – developing and delivering projects and initiatives that deliver value for Basin communities.
- ▶ **Tools for regions** – ensuring our members have the products and tools they need to lead with strength and authority.

This Strategic Plan sets our continuing course for the delivery of efficient and sustainable services and programs which support our members across the Murray-Darling Basin, providing value for our members, government and our partners.

Please join us on this journey in leading the way to achieving a healthy, vibrant and thriving Murray-Darling Basin.



**David Thurley**  
National President



**Emma Bradbury**  
Chief Executive Officer





# LOCAL LEADERSHIP: A NATIONAL PRIORITY

The world is looking to the communities of the Murray-Darling Basin to lead the way in water management, agriculture, energy efficiency and innovation.

We are tireless in seeking the right balance between valuing, sharing and protecting our incredible natural assets, our infrastructure and our local economies.

Severe drought and bushfires, evolving water markets, climate change, emerging developments in energy, agriculture, water infrastructure and now COVID-19 all form the backdrop to these extraordinary times.

Now, more than ever before, local government has a critical role to play in the management of Basin resources if we are to ensure the sustainability, vibrancy and prosperity of our local communities for future generations.

With bold thinking and ambitious planning, we can transform some of the great challenges of our time into the opportunities of tomorrow.

Basin governments already have some extraordinary plans on the national agenda for 2020 and for a generation beyond.

- ▶ The **Murray-Darling Basin Plan** seeks to utilise, honour and protect one of the biggest and most diverse river systems in the world.
- ▶ The **National Water Infrastructure Development Fund** will identify and build the water infrastructure of the 21st century.
- ▶ The **2030 Agriculture Plan** will grow farm gate output to more than \$100 billion in the next decade.
- ▶ The **National Energy Plan**, including **Snowy 2.0**, will deliver a 40 pc boost in the production of cleaner, more reliable energy to power Australia.

- ▶ And our **National Climate Resilience and Adaptation Strategy** will enable our people, environment and economy to survive and thrive through climate extremes.

The success of these courageous initiatives, and the communities which rely on them, depends on these plans working together, operating in harmony and without conflict. And that will require that we, too, work hard and work together.

It's about local councils and communities working together with first nations, with governments and agencies across the Basin, showing leadership and localism to benefit the entire Murray-Darling Basin.

It's about local government providing effective leadership and representation at state and federal levels in the management of Basin resources.

You can help shape this vital dialogue.

Our members know the strengths. We know the opportunities. We know our local communities.

Our knowledge will shape our future. This is where leadership begins. There is only one way to secure the Murray-Darling Basin's place as a world leader in sustainability and prosperity – and that is to make *local leadership a national priority*.

# OUR PURPOSE, VISION, MISSION AND VALUES

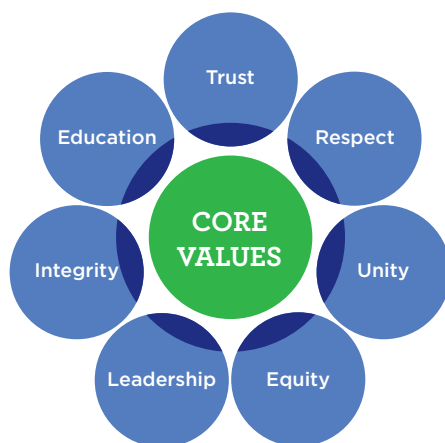
The Murray Darling Association is the peak body for local government in the Murray-Darling Basin. It has been informing policy and contributing local knowledge and regional solutions since 1944.

There are 167 councils over four states that sit within the Murray-Darling Basin and whose communities rely on water from within it.

The management of water and other Basin resources is a matter of significant interest to local government. Councils need certainty and reliability to support the communities they lead and serve.

The allocation, sustainability, availability and affordability of water resources is recognised as a critical factor in the environmental, social, cultural, and economic health and stability of our nation, as a whole.

This is particularly important across the rural and regional communities of the Murray Darling Basin.



## OUR PURPOSE

**Our purpose** is to provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by providing information, facilitating discussion and seeking to inform government policy.

## OUR VISION

**Our vision** is for local government and communities to work together to achieve a healthy, vibrant and thriving Murray-Darling Basin.

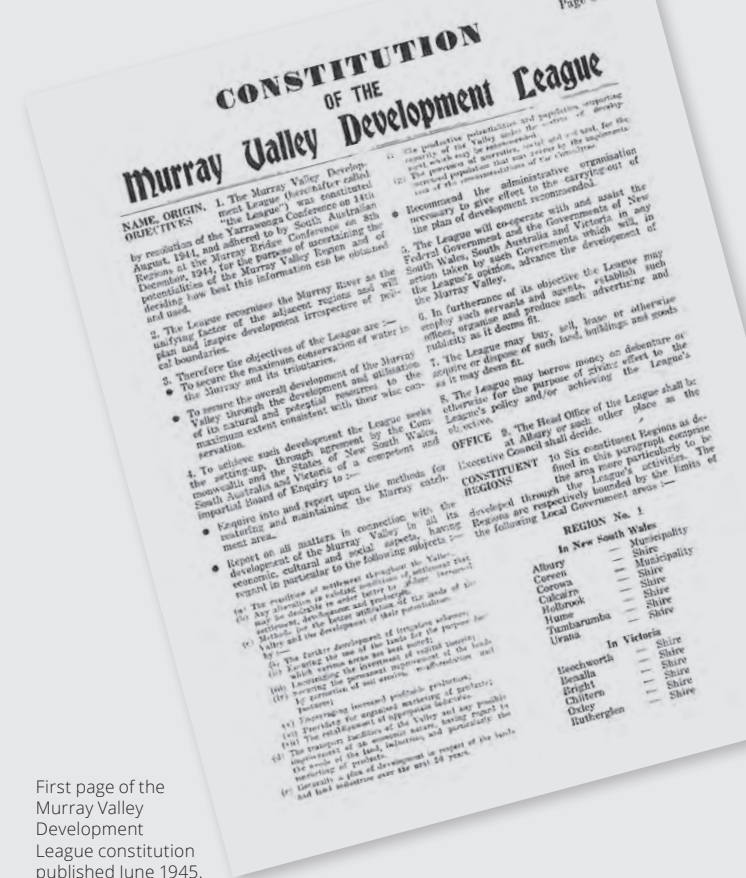
## OUR MISSION

**Our mission** is to provide high value services to our local government members, and deliver quality projects and products, all of which provide enduring value to Basin communities and governments.

## OUR VALUES

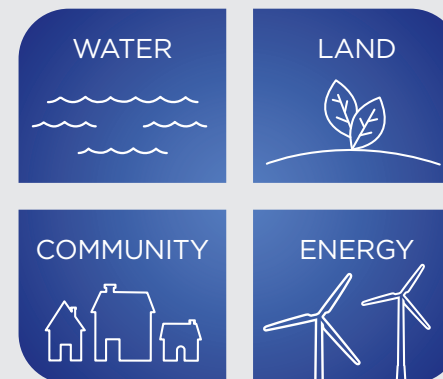
**We value** honesty, integrity and collaborative communication, based on mutual respect for our members, our environment and the communities we serve.

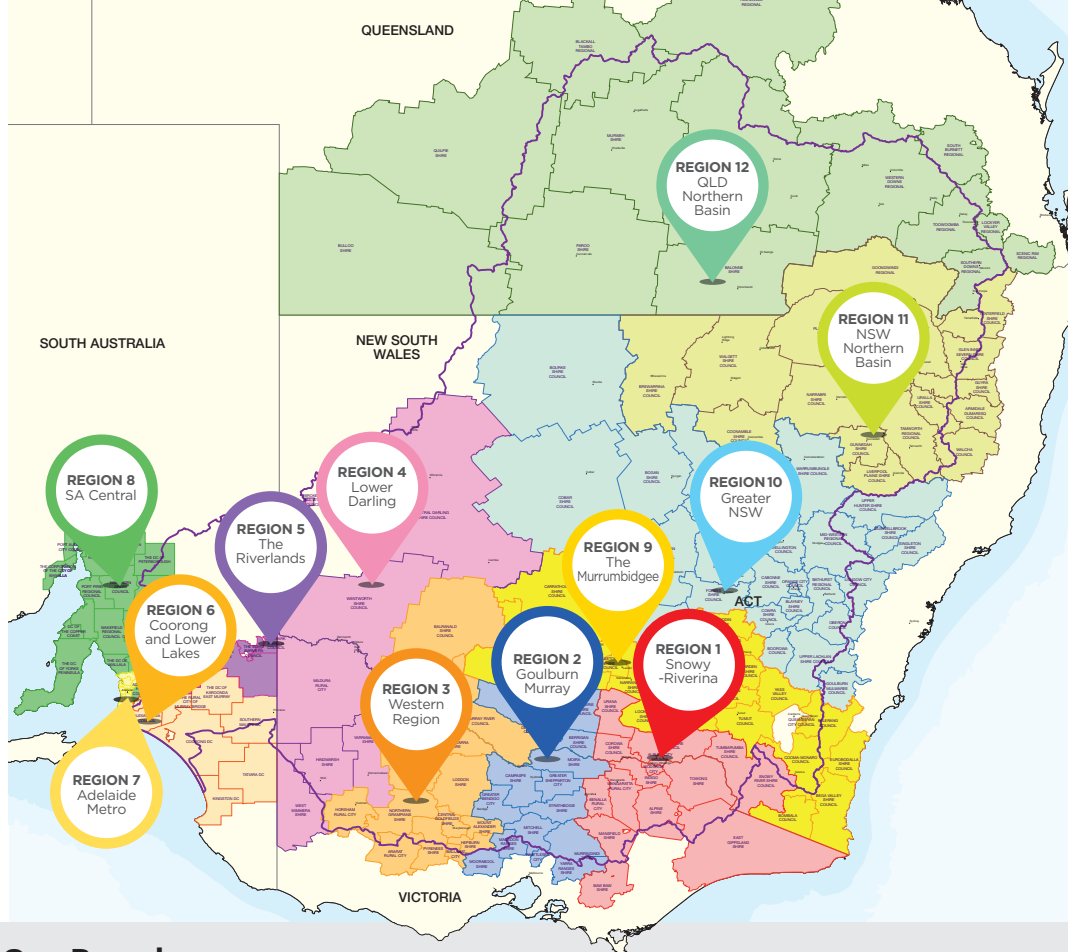
We also value evidence-based and informed decision-making and intelligent inquiry, in all that we do.



First page of the Murray Valley Development League constitution published June 1945.

## BASIN RESOURCES





## THE MDA STRUCTURE

Murray Darling Association is governed by a Board which meets monthly, and is comprised of the Chairs of our 12 regions.

Our regions meet four times per year, providing a platform for members to identify local and regional challenges and opportunities, and to develop content to inform better state and national policy.

We work with and for member councils, engaging with national and state-based local government associations, regional organisations of councils, community members and leaders, governments and agencies to understand local issue and identify regional solutions.

The MDA is parliamentary in nature, having the executive power vested in a board composed of members of the regions, individually and collectively responsible to the membership, and each of whom is democratically elected.

### Our Board

●	Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	Chair Region 1 - President
●	Cr Dennis Patterson	Shepparton City Council	Chair Region 2
●	Cr Jane MacAllister	Wentworth Shire Council	Chair Region 4
●	Cr Peter Raison	Mid Murray Council	Chair Region 5
●	Cr Melissa Rebeck	Alexandrina Shire Council	Chair Region 6
●	Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham	Chair Region 7
●	Cr Brian Lockyer	Burunga West Council	Chair Region 8
●	Cr Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council	Chair Region 9
●	Mayor Phyllis Miller	Forbes Shire Council	Chair Region 10
●	Cr John Campbell	Gunnedah Shire Council	Chair Region 11
●	Mayor Samantha O'Toole	Balonne Shire Council	Chair Region 12
	Pete George	M&S Group	Treasurer
	Emma Bradbury	Murray Darling Association	Chief Executive and Public Officer



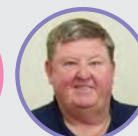
Cr David Thurley



Cr Dennis Patterson



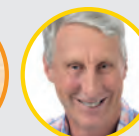
Cr Jane MacAllister



Cr Peter Raison



Cr Melissa Rebeck



Cr Andrew Tilley



Cr Brian Lockyer



Cr Paul Maytom



Mayor Phyllis Miller



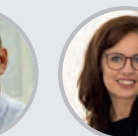
Cr John Campbell



Mayor Samantha O'Toole



Pete George



Emma Bradbury



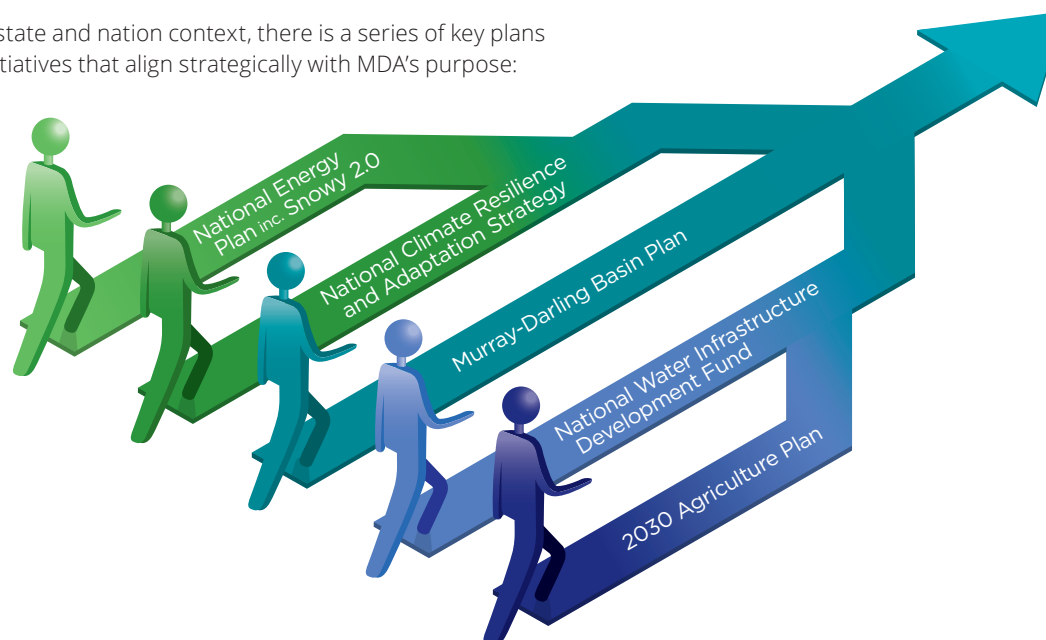
# OUR STRATEGIC PLAN IN CONTEXT

This Strategic Plan exists to drive the delivery of services to our MDA members, and it sits within a broader planning context:

- ▶ At a local level, our member councils (through strategic community and land-use planning) champion the priorities and programs that resonate with those communities.
- ▶ Regionally, Joint Organisations and other regional local government organisations have identified their key environmental, economic and social focus through statements of strategic regional priorities.



In the state and nation context, there is a series of key plans and initiatives that align strategically with MDA's purpose:



This Strategic Plan seeks to distil and synthesise the priorities and drivers from that broad planning context into a strategic direction that guides and supports the MDA over the next five years. It will also serve to articulate our purpose and priorities for our members, our partners and other stakeholders across the Murray Darling Basin.

A key focus of this Strategic Plan will be to ensure local government's contribution to regional, state and federal planning to ensure better alignment of our national priorities. Our communities are at the forefront of change. In order for our communities to thrive in the face of this change we must

ensure the Murray-Darling Basin Plan, the 2030 Agriculture Plan, our National Water Infrastructure Investment Strategy and our national energy plans are operating consistently, and are not conflicting at the expense of our Basin communities.

Our annual operational planning and resource allocations will cascade from this plan, always ensuring that our projects, programs and activities work collectively to achieve the strategic objectives identified in this Plan.



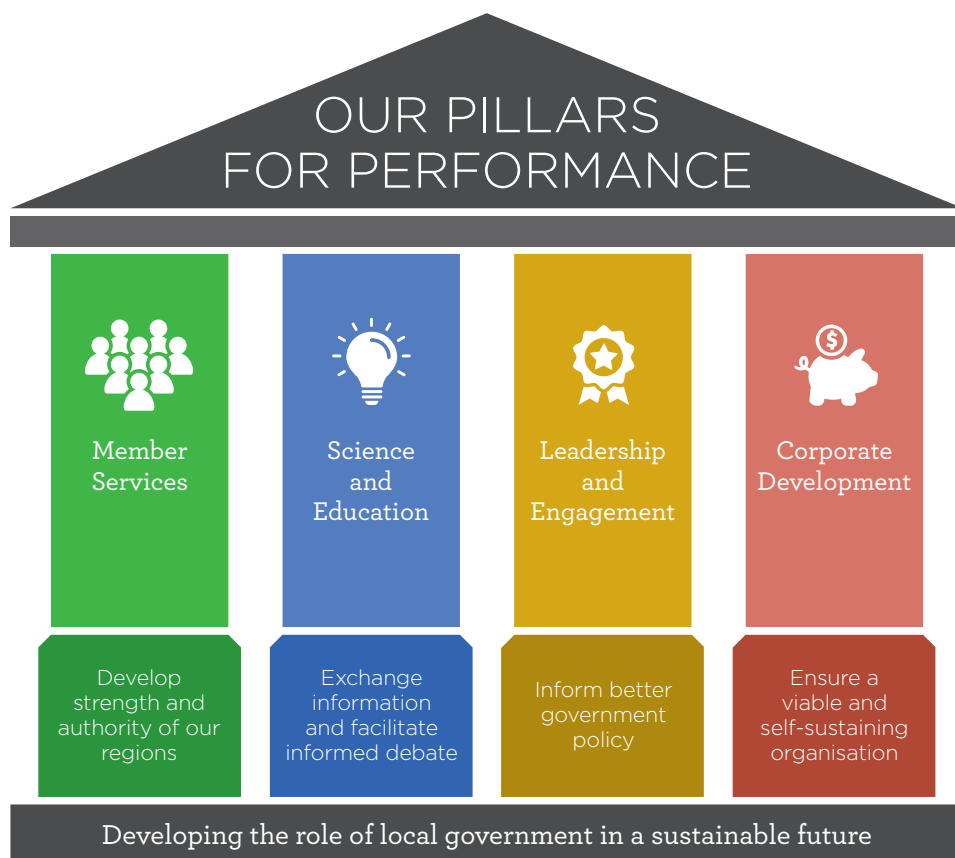
## OUR PARTNERSHIPS

The MDA is uniquely positioned to act as a conduit between local communities and Murray-Darling Basin governments, to promote the responsible management of Murray-Darling Basin resources. We recognise that we have more things in common with our partners than divide us.

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

OUR PARTNERS	OUR INTENT
▶ Basin LGAs including regional and state local government organisations	Collaborate effectively and respectfully to maximise efficiencies for local government and their peak agencies by avoiding duplication and providing multi-jurisdictional perspectives.
▶ Basin Governments ▶ Murray Darling Basin Authority ▶ National Water Grid Authority ▶ Climate Change Authority ▶ Australian Energy Market Authority ▶ Commonwealth Environmental Water Office	Fairly and frankly represent the interests and priorities of local government at the Basin scale on positions of common interest. Collaborate and exchange information and advice to improve knowledge and awareness of Basin issues, and of the impacts of policy and decisions to create better outcomes for local government and communities.
▶ State and national peak bodies and other agencies	Consult and work with State and national peak bodies and other agencies to foster a stronger relationship to local government of sector-specific perspectives and issues.
▶ First Nations organisations	That we learn from, respect and treasure the natural resource management practices of First Nations custodians.
▶ Regional Development Australia	Work together to maximise benefits and value for all, and progress the relationship ensuring that our roles are clear and our collaboration adds value to the work we do. Through our partnership we aim to avoid unnecessary duplication.
▶ Universities	Partner with universities to enhance water literacy, and provide practical application of academic research for the benefit of local government and community.
▶ CSIRO	Establish a framework under which we will collaborate on research projects to conduct research, development and related activities to overcome the key challenges of resource management in the Murray Darling Basin and turn them to the Basin community's unique advantage.
▶ Media	Promote the interests and achievements of our Basin communities through the media.

# OUR PILLARS FOR PERFORMANCE



## PILLAR 1: MEMBER SERVICES

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

- ▶ Providing value to our members
- ▶ Delivering quality products, programs and services.



## PILLAR 2: SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

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

- ▶ Making a trusted contribution
- ▶ Developing policy and position statements built on evidence
- ▶ Sharing knowledge and enabling enduring impacts.

## PILLAR 3: LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

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

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

## PILLAR 4: CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

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

- ▶ Good governance and financial sustainability
- ▶ Effective communications
- ▶ Being an employer of choice.



# VISION 2025: OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

This Strategic Plan has been prepared under our four pillars for performance:

**Pillar 1: Member Services**

**Pillar 2: Science and Education**

**Pillar 3: Leadership and Engagement**

**Pillar 4: Corporate Development**

The Strategic Plan sets the organisation's direction for the next five years, and provides guidance to our members and stakeholders about our priorities and what we intend to deliver during this time.

To promote accountability, and enable us to track our progress and performance over time, the Plan has established targets and includes measures to enable ongoing monitoring and review.

This Plan will be supported by annual Operational Plans which will operationalise the higher order strategies in this Plan, assigning responsibilities and resources for the achievement of our objectives. This Strategic Plan provides an indication of the timing for the delivery of our strategies over the life of the Plan.

The Board will receive regular reports of our progress and performance in relation to the objectives of this Plan, and an Annual Report will be published for our members and other stakeholders to keep us accountable for our performance and to share our achievements in delivering on the priorities for the Basin.





# PILLAR 1: MEMBER SERVICES

## GOALS & ACTIONS:



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
1.1 MEMBER VALUE							
1.1.1	Our members value their membership of MDA and the support it provides them.	► Explore new and innovative ways to support our membership including project development (concept design, application support, budget development, letters of support, research and collaboration).	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
1.1.2	Our members have access to up-to-date information that provides value for their membership.	► Implement a relationship management platform (CRM) and a member-only portal.					
1.1.3	MDA provides products and services tailored to its members.	► Launch a detailed products and services online page (accessed via the member-only portal).					
1.1.4	Projects are successfully delivered by the MDA.	► Deliver tailored projects and initiatives which meet the current and emerging needs of the Basin.					
1.1.5	We are responsive to members' needs and demands.	► Enhance and expand the resources, materials and products available for our members ► Design and develop content such as videos, web pages, Delegates' Report template.					
1.2 PRODUCTS, PROGRAMS AND SERVICES							
1.2.1	The MDA provides an attractive range of free and costed services.	► Conduct member survey to prioritise service types most sought by members. ► Maintain, enhance or develop member services in response to survey outcomes.	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
1.2.2	MDA templates and reports provide efficiencies for members.	► Develop products, templates and reports as current issues and processes evolve.					
1.2.3	The MDA has an accessible register of adopted policies and position statements that reflect the diverse interests and the shared objectives of Basin communities.	► Rely on legitimate stakeholder contributions and perspectives in the development of position statements. ► Create and utilise a standard format for position statements that captures research and Board resolutions, and articulates clearly the MDA's position.					
1.2.4	All Basin communities have participated in our leadership program.	► Deliver the Basin Communities Leadership Program. ► Secure further funding for subsidised placements. ► Develop a fee-for-service program.					
1.2.5	Our regional economic diversification program delivers regional plans.	► Secure funding for the continued roll-out of the regional economic diversification program. ► Provide resources and a template to support our regions to develop economic diversification plans.					



# PILLAR 1: MEMBER SERVICES MEASURES & INDICATORS:



We will use the measures and indicators below to monitor and report on our progress and performance.

Ref	Measure/Indicator of progress or performance
	Number of members, and proportion compared to all councils in our membership catchment.
	Status of member-only portal.
	Proportion of members who report satisfaction with information provided via member portal.
	Proportion of our member resources that have been updated within the last three years.
	Utilisation of our free services.
	Utilisation of our costed services.
	Number of annual downloads of our templates and other reports.
	Proportion of our policies and positions statements developed with our members.
	Status of our Basin Communities Leadership Program.
	Proportion of our Regions with an adopted and current economic diversification plan in place.
	Proportion of our members who agree our projects meet current and emerging needs.
	Proportion of our members who agree we are innovative in our support for addressing current and emerging needs.



## OUR MEMBERS ARE OUR PRIORITY – THEY ARE THE REASON WE ARE HERE.

Membership is voluntary and we work to ensure every Basin council and community can rely on effective representation and leadership of local issues by the MDA within a united Murray-Darling Basin.

Effective leadership and representation of local government and the communities of the Murray-Darling Basin, and the

development of good policy can only occur with strong and disciplined alignment of our values, processes and our governance framework.

Our focus is on developing policy positions and solutions to address complex issues across diverse and discrete communities that share an interest in a healthy working Basin.

The MDA is committed to sound and consistent process delivering effective policy.

We value policy over politics.

# PILLAR 2: SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

## GOALS & ACTIONS:



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
2.1 TRUSTED CONTRIBUTION							
2.1.1	State and federal governments rely on MDA's policy, advice and contributions.	▶ Prepare high quality evidence-based, stakeholder- driven position statements and promote their use in decision-making forums.	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
2.1.2	MDA policies contribute to Australian agriculture's plan for a viable and regenerative agricultural sector.	▶ Work with regions to identify strategies and targets for submission to national agricultural planning.					
2.1.3	MDA is an active contributor in reviews and forums relating to the Basin.	▶ Participate and contribute toward Basin committees, reviews, commissions, inquiries and other interrogative forums.					
2.1.4	MDA submissions to Murray-Darling Basin-related inquiries are considered, balanced and synthesised across the regions.	▶ Utilise the time available when drafting submissions to seek regional input and direction into the process.					
2.2 BUILT ON EVIDENCE							
2.2.1	Regional profiles and priorities are documented and well understood (see also 3.7).	▶ Support each region to develop a regional profile and priorities.	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
2.2.2	Programs and initiatives delivered by MDA are built upon evidence and science.	▶ Work with universities and the academic community to apply science and deliver practical solutions to local and regional problems.					
2.2.3	Our Regions' diverse needs and experience is reflected in the development of our policies and position statements.	▶ Utilise our member and Region engagement tools to identify and prioritise our annual activities.					
2.2.4	The diverse needs and experience of our Regions is reflected in our Climate-Ready Communities Strategy.	▶ Undertake a project to capture our members' diverse views and concerns in relation to climate change, and identify agreed role for MDA.					
2.3 SHARING KNOWLEDGE							
2.3.1	The MDA's Local Government Centre for Excellence is established and well-utilised.	▶ Pursue and secure state and federal support to establish the Centre. ▶ Engage key partners (agencies, universities and other key stakeholders) to collaborate and build on existing initiatives. ▶ Bring relevant parties together to occupy the Centre.	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				



## PILLAR 2: SCIENCE AND EDUCATION

### GOALS & ACTIONS CONTINUED:



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
2.3.2	We will have evidence-based, researched knowledge to share with our members on issues that are important to them.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Continue to build our partnerships with agencies and organisations that contribute to the evidence on matters that are important to our members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Climate change</li> <li>- Floodplain harvesting</li> <li>- Legislative change</li> <li>- ACCC/market impacts</li> <li>- National Agricultural Plan</li> <li>- National Water infrastructure investment.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>					
2.3.3	MDA events educate, inform, build trust and shared understanding. Our events are well attended providing opportunities to bring our members and their communities together to develop a shared understanding of the issues that are important to all.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Develop and implement the Connecting Catchments &amp; Communities education and engagement program.</li> <li>▶ Host a calendar of events which focus on providing opportunities for learning about and sharing contemporary and emerging issues.</li> <li>▶ Design and develop resources in collaboration with authorities and other agencies.</li> </ul>					
2.3.4	Water literacy and natural resource management is a recognised part of the primary and secondary school curriculum.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Engage with schools to encourage water literacy and natural resource management content within the curriculum.</li> </ul>					
2.3.5	MDA has fostered active relationships and learns from First Nations peaks and individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Establish a First Nations Advisory Committee.</li> <li>▶ Support our Regional Chairs to foster relationships with their First Nations peak body (NBAN, MLDRIN, Yorta-Yorta, Barka).</li> </ul>					
2.3.6	Our annual Conference programs showcase and hear from others with an interest in the Basin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Sponsor identified delegation registrations for First Nations representatives.</li> <li>▶ Ensure presentations or sessions from First Nations organisations are included in each annual Conference program.</li> </ul>					
2.3.7	Our annual bursary program encourages innovation and evidence-gathering to support policy and processes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Actively seek out and attract bursary sponsors.</li> <li>▶ Award bursaries annually.</li> </ul>					
<b>2.4 ENDURING IMPACTS</b>							
2.4.1	MDA's facilitation and provision of projects and initiatives has real and enduring impacts in the Basin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Through planning and stakeholder engagement, identify the short- and long-term outcomes being sought, and consider social, economic and environmental issues equitably.</li> </ul>					
2.4.2	MDA's work in collaboration with CSIRO creates positive outcomes for the Basin.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Partner with CSIRO on appropriate projects and opportunities including 'Basin Outlook 2050'.</li> </ul>					

Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.

Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.

## PILLAR 2: SCIENCE AND EDUCATION MEASURES & INDICATORS:



We will use the measures and indicators below to monitor and report on our progress and performance.

Ref	Measure/Indicator of progress or performance
	Proportion of MDA submissions made (to Government and other stakeholders' policies and plans) that were reflected in the final outcome.
	Number of Basin-related forums that MDA participates in (see also Pillar 3).
	Average number of members who provide feedback on draft submissions.
	Proportion of our members who agree our initiatives are creating long-term positive outcomes.
	Number of our Regions with a current, documented Regional Profile.
	Number of our Regions with a current adopted Statement of Priorities.
	Number of projects undertaken in partnership with the CSIRO over the last five years.
	Number of policies, position statements and submissions prepared in collaboration with tertiary institutions over the last five years.
	The number of educational events the MDA held each year.
	Proportion of participants who agreed that MDA educational events achieve a shared understanding of the issues being discussed.
	Number of activities undertaken within the school system each year.
	Number of Regions with First Nations members and guests attending meetings.
	Number of sponsored First Nations delegates to the annual conference.
	Number of First Nations presentations on the annual conference program.
	Proportion of State and national Basin-related policies adopted in the last 12 months that reflect the MDA's policy position.





# PILLAR 3: LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

## GOALS & ACTIONS:



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	How will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
3.1 ENGAGED IN THE POLICY PROCESS							
3.1.1	The MDA is the 'go-to' for government when considering Basin policy issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Provide support to key stakeholders in the development of positive and effective Basin policy (eg National Carp Control Plan, Productivity Commission Stakeholder Advisory Group, NSW Aquatic Sub-Committee, Murray-Darling Basin Authority Peak Bodies Group).</li><li>▶ Prepare and submit high quality documents to key Basin stakeholders.</li><li>▶ Participate effectively in Basin forums.</li><li>▶ Initiate member-driven discussion with MPs as emerging issues arise.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
3.1.2	The management of shared resources of the Murray-Darling Basin is a joint responsibility of all Basin governments: local, State and Federal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Continue to push for local government's seat at the table when Basin resource management is discussed.</li></ul>					
3.1.3	MDA provides an effective and authoritative platform for our members to raise and address Basin issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Undertake a membership promotion to ensure that our members reflect the breadth and diversity of our constituency.</li><li>▶ Utilise annual conference motions as the basis for our policy and position development.</li><li>▶ Meet regularly with State and Federal parliamentarians to promote Basin issues identified by our members.</li></ul>					
3.1.4	The MDA National Conference delivers motions that inform our annual priorities and the development of position statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Provide issues/discussion papers and templates for members' conference motion development.</li><li>▶ Balance competing needs and perspectives by allowing time, research, content development, fact checking and distribution of information.</li></ul>					
3.2 STRONGER REGIONS							
3.2.1	All our Region Chairs are appropriately skilled, actively engaged, progressive and innovative, providing active leadership for their region.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Work with our member councils to ensure their delegates are confident in their roles.</li><li>▶ Provide training to our Chairs to support them in their roles.</li><li>▶ Facilitate effective reporting from Regional Chairs about their participation in Basin-related events and activities.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				

# PILLAR 3: LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

## GOALS & ACTIONS CONTINUED:



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	How will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
3.2.2	The MDA's regional boundaries reflect communities of interest and maximise efficiencies of strategic alignments (MDA/LGA/RDA/JO).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Undertake an analysis of strategic regional alliances and prepare regional boundaries update discussion paper for member consideration in response.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
3.2.3	Every region has a Region Profile and a Region Statement of Priorities (see also 2.6).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Prepare templates and work with Regional Chairs to support the development of a consistent suite of Profiles and Plans.</li><li>▶ Ensure our support strikes the right balance between active information and engagement, without over-loading with content and workload.</li></ul>					
3.2.4	Region meetings deliver resolutions that contribute to policy and position statements.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Rely on resolved regional positions in the MDA's work.</li></ul>					
3.2.5	Regional diversity of local issues, knowledge and expertise is reflected in policy positions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Utilise regional forums to collate member feedback into policy development.</li></ul>					
3.2.6	Our regions prepare quality motions for the National Conference, informed by the issues and positions of their member councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Prepare templates to support conference motion drafting.</li><li>▶ Meet regularly with each Region</li><li>▶ Attend each Region's Annual General Meeting.</li></ul>					
3.3 LOCAL ACTION							
3.3.1	MDA briefings and reports are standing agenda items for tabling at Council meetings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Provide pro-forma Business Paper reports and attachments to our members to promote their inclusion at council meetings.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
3.3.2	Councils regularly submit motions, issues and agenda items for region meetings for consideration.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Provide timely advice of the focus for each meeting's agenda, and invite submissions.</li><li>▶ Provide reference material (discussion papers, media articles) to support council submission preparation.</li></ul>					
3.4 VALUED COLLABORATION							



# PILLAR 3: LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT

## GOALS & ACTIONS CONTINUED:



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	How will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
3.4.1	The MDA is a valued development and delivery partner in local and regional projects and initiatives.	▶ Work with Regional Chairs to identify opportunities for MDA contributions to projects and initiatives.	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
3.4.2	MDA has a strong working relationship with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority based on agreed principles.	▶ Maintain a Memorandum of Understanding with the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA). ▶ Annually develop, implement and report on the MDBA/MDA Collaborative Activities Plan.					
3.4.3	MDA is a valued partner and sponsor to others delivering projects in support of Basin outcomes.	▶ Support key external stakeholders in the delivery of commonly-aligned projects and initiatives throughout the Murray-Darling Basin.					
3.5 STRONG STAKEHOLDER RELATIONSHIPS							
3.5.1	MDA has external partnerships across local government and with community stakeholders.	▶ Identify all existing and proposed partnership arrangements and formalise these with a Memorandum of Understanding or similar.	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
3.5.2	Continued engagement with Basin, State and Federal governments demonstrates value and efficiencies in local and peak local government participation.	▶ Partner with Government agencies in the design and delivery of projects. ▶ Exhibit annually at the Australian Local Government Association conference. ▶ Exhibit and present at State Local Government Associations' conferences. ▶ Identify partnerships for exhibition, presentation and engagement at other community, government and industry events.					
3.5.3	First Nations culture is reflected in and supported by MDA policy and position statements.	▶ Develop relationships with First Nations organisations. ▶ Grow MDA membership of First Nations organisations to ensure their representation in the decision-making process. ▶ Foster strong and active relationships with First Nations peak agencies across the Basin.					
3.5.4	Opportunities exist for inter-regional discussion and collaboration.	▶ Hold regular inter-regional meetings. ▶ Deliver the Connecting Catchments and Communities program.					

# PILLAR 3: LEADERSHIP AND ENGAGEMENT MEASURES & INDICATORS:



We will use the measures and indicators below to monitor and report on our progress and performance.

Ref	Measure/Indicator of progress or performance
	Number of MDA regional boundaries that align with other geographic or issues- based regional configurations.
	Proportion of our members who participated in at least 75% of their regional meetings.
	Proportion of our Regional Chairs who participate in MDA National Board Meetings.
	Number of external events that Regional Chairs participate as representatives of MDA in per annum.
	Proportion of our members who were represented at our annual conference each year.
	Proportion of our member councils with MDA as a standing agenda item in their Council business papers.
	The average proportion of member councils attending each Region meeting.
	Proportion of Region Meetings and AGMs attended by MDA CEO.
	Number of our Regions with a current adopted Regional Profile and Statement of Priorities, received by the National MDA Board.
	Total annual number of regional projects and initiatives that MDA is a partner.
	Number of regions where partnership initiatives occurred.
	Proportion of MDA members who are satisfied with MDA's contribution to regional initiatives.
	Proportion of published state and national Basin policies that MDA contributes.
	Proportion of annual conference motions that progress to be the basis of MDA priorities, policies or position statements.
	Proportion of our policies/position statements that have their genesis in Region meeting resolutions.
	Proportion of our members who agree that issues important to them are reflected in MDA policy.
	Average number of our members who provide feedback on draft policies and position statements.
	Number of Basin-related forums to MDA contributes to (see also Pillar 2).
	Number of external partnerships in place (formalised with a written agreement or MoU).
	Proportion of members who are satisfied that MDA's work with all levels of government achieves value and efficiencies.
	Number of First Nations organisations or representatives who are MDA members.
	Status of Memorandum of Understanding with the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.
	Number of annual conference program presentations from First Nations organisations.
	Number of inter-regional meetings held per annum.
	Average number of participants represented at inter-regional meetings.



# PILLAR 4: CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

## GOALS & ACTIONS:



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
4.1 GOOD GOVERNANCE							
4.1.1	Our Board is a board of choice, where a diversity of views and perspectives is valued, and the right mix of skills and experience is attracted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Develop a Board information and induction kit.</li><li>▶ Promote leadership development opportunities to Board members.</li><li>▶ Provide and promote leadership development opportunities for our members.</li><li>▶ Establish a Regional Executive Committee framework.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
4.1.2	All our Board members are members of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Work with councils to identify councillors for nomination to the Australian Institute of Company Directors (AICD).</li><li>▶ Sponsor one Board member per year to complete the AICD course.</li></ul>					
4.1.3	Our Board is well supported by a number of technical and skills-based sub-Committees that provide guidance and advice.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Establish Science &amp; Education, Audit &amp; Risk, and Finance sub-Committees.</li><li>▶ Maintain the Strategic Advisory Committee.</li></ul>					
4.1.4	Our planning and reporting provides us with clear direction and makes us accountable to our members.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Maintain a strong Strategic Advisory Committee to support our planning and reporting functions.</li><li>▶ Proactively engage our members and other stakeholders in setting our strategic direction and prioritising our annual programs and activities.</li><li>▶ Ensure our annual planning cascades directly from our adopted Strategic Plan.</li><li>▶ Provide regular reports on our progress and performance to our Board and our members.</li></ul>					
4.1.5	Our technology supports us to achieve effective outcomes and be flexible in our mode of delivery.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Acquire assets and implement software platforms, including Salesforce CRM.</li></ul>					
4.1.6	Our Governance Framework is robust, and reflects and supports our organisation’s processes and accountabilities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Complete and adopt our Governance Framework</li></ul>					

Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.



## PILLAR 4: CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

### GOALS & ACTIONS CONTINUED



Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
4.2 FINANCIAL SUSTAINABILITY							
4.2.1	Membership revenues are sufficient to fund recurrent business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Develop and implement a membership strategy, supported by robust internal communications.</li><li>▶ Implement a continuous business improvement program to identify efficiencies.</li><li>▶ Prepare an annual budget.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
4.2.2	Our membership and business enterprises generate sufficient income to meet our operational expenditure, while grant funding supports projects and initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Adopt a modular and sustainable business model</li><li>▶ MDA maintains submission-ready project proposals that reflect the needs of our member councils and communities</li><li>▶ Consult with our members and stakeholders to identify key community needs and project opportunities</li><li>▶ Actively seek funding for the submission-ready proposals.</li><li>▶ Prepare quality projects proposals that are well-developed and meet funding opportunities.</li></ul>					
4.2.3	Our membership revenue increases by 10% per annum (with ultimate goal of \$570,000 in membership revenue).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Review membership fees and charges annually. Grow our membership to enhance our revenue base.</li></ul>					
4.2.4	MDA has sufficient resources to respond to all opportunities that fall within its remit.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Utilise financial resources to source additional expertise and capacity as required.</li></ul>					
4.2.5	We will have 167 member councils.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Develop, promote and distribute a new member information kit to all eligible councils.</li><li>▶ Encourage membership renewal through robust internal communications. Follow up with non-renewing councils to identify reasons for non-renewal.</li></ul>					
4.2.6	Project revenues are modular and contribute to scalable projects and initiatives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Utilise our library of scalable, submission-ready projects to rapidly and effectively tap into grants programs.</li></ul>					
4.2.7	Remain at the forefront of the local government and community sector as a competitive business.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Apply a robust and effective system for successful grant and funding applications.</li></ul>					

## PILLAR 4: CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT

### GOALS & ACTIONS CONTINUED



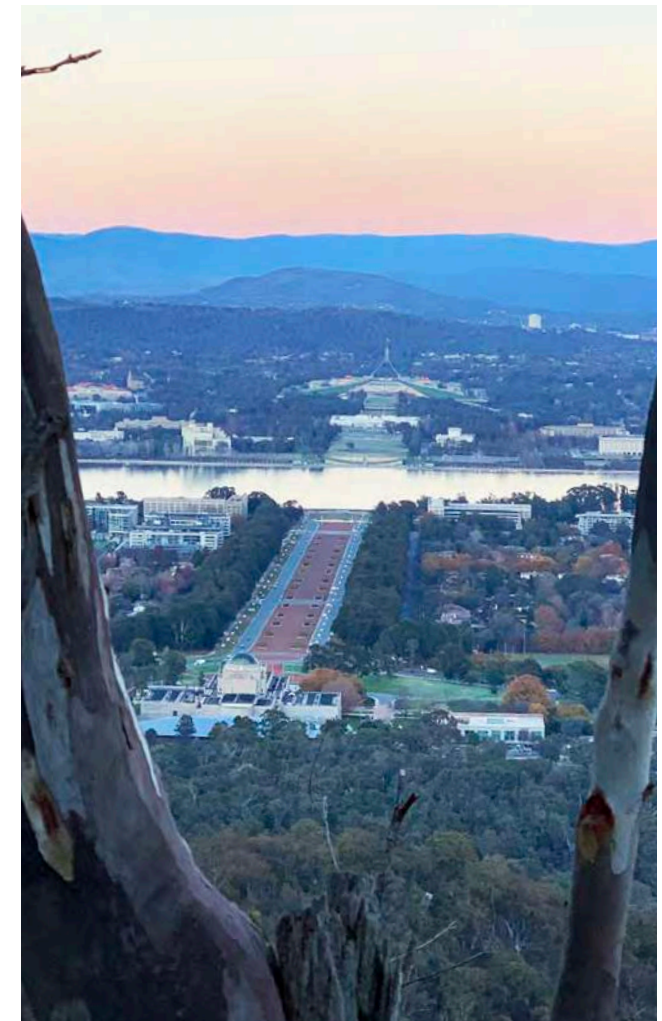
Ref	Where do we want to be by 2025?	How will we get there?	When will we get there?				
			20-21	21-22	22-23	23-24	24-25
4.3 EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATIONS							
4.3.1	We have a comprehensive Communications Plan that enables our communications to be strategic, targeted, effective and contemporary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Conduct a stakeholder mapping activity.</li><li>▶ Develop a social media strategy.</li><li>▶ Create key messages to support our corporate communications.</li><li>▶ Maintain a relationship with media outlets across the regional footprint.</li><li>▶ Institute an annual member survey to ensure our work continues to reflect our members’ needs and expectations.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
4.3.2	MDA’s brand reflects our vision.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Undertake an identity and branding review to determine if the MDA’s current identity and brand meets our current and emerging vision/requirements.</li></ul>					
4.4 EMPLOYER OF CHOICE							
4.4.1	We remain an employer of choice, fostering a positive and progressive culture in the workplace.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Employ the right people to design and deliver projects.</li><li>▶ Develop and implement succession planning for the organisation.</li></ul>	Progress toward the achievement of these goals and actions is set out in the Murray Darling Association Annual Operating Plan and will be reported on yearly in the Annual Report.				
4.4.2	MDA achieves the highest standards of corporate and operational compliance.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▶ Develop and implement an organisational business operational and policy framework, including a Code of Conduct, governance standards, and quality control mechanisms.</li><li>▶ Comply with all legislative requirements in a timely way.</li></ul>					

# PILLAR 4: CORPORATE DEVELOPMENT MEASURES & INDICATORS:



We will use the measures and indicators below to monitor and report on our progress and performance.

Ref	Measure/Indicator of progress or performance
	Proportion of Board members who are members of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.
	Proportion of Board members who report satisfaction in their role.
	Proportion of Board members who report the Board is effective and cohesive.
	Proportion of our members who agree that the Board reflects the diversity of its constituency.
	Proportion of our members who are satisfied with performance and composition of our Board.
	Number of Regions with an Executive Committee in place.
	Membership revenue.
	Proportion of recurrent business costs funded by membership revenue.
	Number of member councils.
	Number of Local Land Council members.
	Number of other organisations and individuals who are members.
	Proportion of all possible members who are financial members of MDA.
	MDA communications reflect and are supported by the adopted Communications Plan.
	Number of projects or programs of work ideally suited to MDA's remit, but passed over due to lack of resources.
	Number of submission-ready proposals on hand.
	Proportion of submission-ready proposals that respond to member-identified needs.
	Proportion of revenue generated as own-source (memberships, business enterprises, fees for service).
	Annual amount of revenue generated from external sources (grants, bequests).
	Proportion of funding applications made that were successful, and the value of funding received.
	Proportion of project funding generated from project-specific grants programs.
	Annual staff turnover.
	Staff rating of satisfaction at work.
	Proportion of our members who agree that our brand reflects our vision.
	The status of our software and technology.





# MONITORING OUR PROGRESS AND PERFORMANCE

Utilising the measures and indicators of progress and performance described for the four Pillars within this document, MDA will monitor and report on the success of its strategies in achieving our strategic objectives on behalf of our members.

We intend to prepare an annual report card which describes how much we have done, how well we have done it, and the outcomes achieved for our members and communities.



## GET IN TOUCH

MDA is committed to innovation and responsiveness.

If you or your organisation identifies issues for MDA action that should be considered in future reviews of this Strategic Plan, please get in touch:

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