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MEDIA RELEASE

Councils unite to strengthen their influence on Basin management decisions.

Regional executives of the Murray Darling Association from across the Murray-Darling Basin have met in Albury this week to collaborate on strategies for local government to inform the decisions that impact their local communities in the management of Basin water resources.

The annual workshop, now in its third year, is an opportunity for the MDA regional executives to meet face to face to share ideas, discuss the different challenges to their regions posed by changing water availability, and to provide support for their fellow councils across the Basin.

The workshop, which also focuses on good governance, featured a presentation from the Australian Institute of Company Directors, a strong supporter of the MDA. The event follows the success of the MDA's 73rd National Conference in Renmark last year, which attracted council delegates from across the Basin.

"These leadership meetings are essential to providing councils across the Basin with an understanding of the issues facing other councils and regions," said MDA National President, Cr David Thurley.

"We recognise that every region has different priorities and challenges under the Basin Plan and we don't shy away from that," he said.

"Our role is to ensure local government is properly informed and coordinated in our approach to influencing the decisions that will get the best outcomes for our regions – whatever that looks like."

2018/19 is shaping as pivotal in the delivery of the Basin Plan, as the MDBA completes its Southern Basin Review, state water resource plans are prepared, and the Sustainable Diversion Limit Adjustment Mechanism is implemented.

"Our association is in a unique position to provide representation for all Basin councils and ensure that local government has a role in informing state and federal policy," Cr Thurley said.

MDA CEO Emma Bradbury was pleased with the attendance and calibre of discussion at the workshop, with 11 of the MDA's 12 Basin regions represented.

"The Association has strong leadership and rapidly growing member numbers," she said.

"Member councils have never been in a better position to represent the interests of their community at state and national level, and influence the decisions that impact their region," she said.

Councils and individuals interested in joining the MDA can contact the office on 03 5480 3805, or go to www.mda.asn.au

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For more information, contact MDA CEO Emma Bradbury on 0429 905 017 or MDA National President Cr David Thurley on 0419 510 274. All Region Chairs are also available for comment.

Contact information for the Chairs of the Murray Darling Association

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