



The Murraylands and Riverland  
Local Government Association

# MURRAYLANDS & RIVERLAND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION ANNUAL REPORT 2015 to 2016



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## PRESIDENTS ANNUAL REPORT 2015 - 2016



I am very pleased to provide the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA) Presidents Annual Report on the work and operations of the Subsidiary for the financial year 2015-2016 in accordance with Clause 28, Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act (1999).

This being my fourth term as President of the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association (formerly the Murray and Mallee LGA), it has been an immense honour to have served the needs of our Constituent Councils through the MRLGA Board over the last 12 months.

Our vision is to be **'a successful region led by progressive and responsive local governments'** and our ability to deliver this vision has been enhanced significantly through the year with the release of the MRLGA's updated Strategic Plan 2016-2020. The Strategic Plan was adopted by the MRLGA Board in April 2016 after a considerable engagement program with our Constituent Councils and key stakeholders. Our way forward will focus predominantly in the formation of partnerships that will add strength to the resolution of regional issues and provide for the most effective mechanisms to deliver regional programs.

My role as President of the MRLGA has more recently been paralleled with the role of President of LGA of SA. This duplicate role has provided me a clear understanding of the range of issues and opportunities that exist both within our Murraylands and Riverland region, as well as within the rest of the State.

During the course of my term as President, I have met with a range of State/Federal Ministers and Members of Parliament to discuss a range of regional issues pertinent to our region. Such issues have included in part, Local/State Government Reform, the Federal Election Campaign, Planning Reform, Rubble Royalties, Transfer of Housing Stock to Community Housing, Pensioner Concessions, Supplementary Road Funding, Reinstatement of Automatic Enrolments as well as representing our region strongly on the 2015 Shandong Delegation to promote economic opportunities into our region and South Australia.

The role of President to the MRLGA and my more recent elevation to LGA President on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015 has in my view provided for a higher profile for issues facing the regions. The duplicate roles have also allowed me to let State Government know the strength there is in the regions.

In closing I sincerely thank all constituent Councils and MRLGA Board Delegates for the opportunity afforded to me being your President again for the past year. I also wish to thank our CEO, Peter Bond for his commitment and support provided to me and the Association over the past year; in particular the role he took in leading the strategic review process that will be vital in the rental of the Subsidiary over the next few years.

Mayor Dave Burgess  
President

## INTRODUCTION

This document is the Annual Report of the Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA) for the period 1<sup>st</sup> July 2015 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2016. This report must be submitted to the Constituent Councils by 31 October in each Financial Year in accordance with Clause 28 to Schedule 2 of the Local Government Act (1999) on the work and operations of the Subsidiary detailing achievement of the aims and objectives of its Annual Business Plan and incorporating the audited Financial Statements of the Subsidiary and any other information or reports required by the Constituent Councils.

The Board shall present financial statements in accordance with the Local Government (Financial Management) Regulations 2011 to the Constituent Councils at the end of each Financial Year and before the 31<sup>st</sup> October of the year.

This Report details the activities of the Association to represent and serve our Constituent Councils and to advance the Murraylands and Riverland communities through effective advocacy, facilitation and innovation.

The Annual Report articulates clearly the alignment of the Subsidiary with its role and purpose as outlined below;

Role	MRLGA will provide for ...
<b>Leadership and Advocacy</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiate action and lead regional activity</li> <li>• Set the agenda and direction</li> <li>• Represent the region, and pursue outcomes on behalf of the Constituent Councils and the region</li> </ul>
<b>Capacity Building</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with member Councils to build capacity and increase sustainability</li> <li>• Provide for integrated and coordinated regional collaboration for Constituent Councils</li> <li>• Act as the central organisation for shared Local Government responsibilities</li> <li>• Join with other stakeholders to deliver a service or project</li> </ul>
<b>Continuous Improvement through Best Practice</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate continuous improvement for our Constituent Councils</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborative Partnerships</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Join with other stakeholders to build the capacity of the region</li> </ul>

## MURRAYLANDS AND RIVERLAND LGA IN PROFILE

The Murraylands and Riverland Region covers over 36,000 kilometres<sup>2</sup> (third largest region in South Australia) spanning eight Constituent Councils. It is home to around 69,000 people and some 5,000 businesses. The major economic output is primary production accounting for 34% of all GRP generated, 20% of jobs and 15% of household incomes. Our region has the highest proportion of agriculture dependence for any region in South Australia.

The Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association (MRLGA) operates as a Regional Subsidiary under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1999.

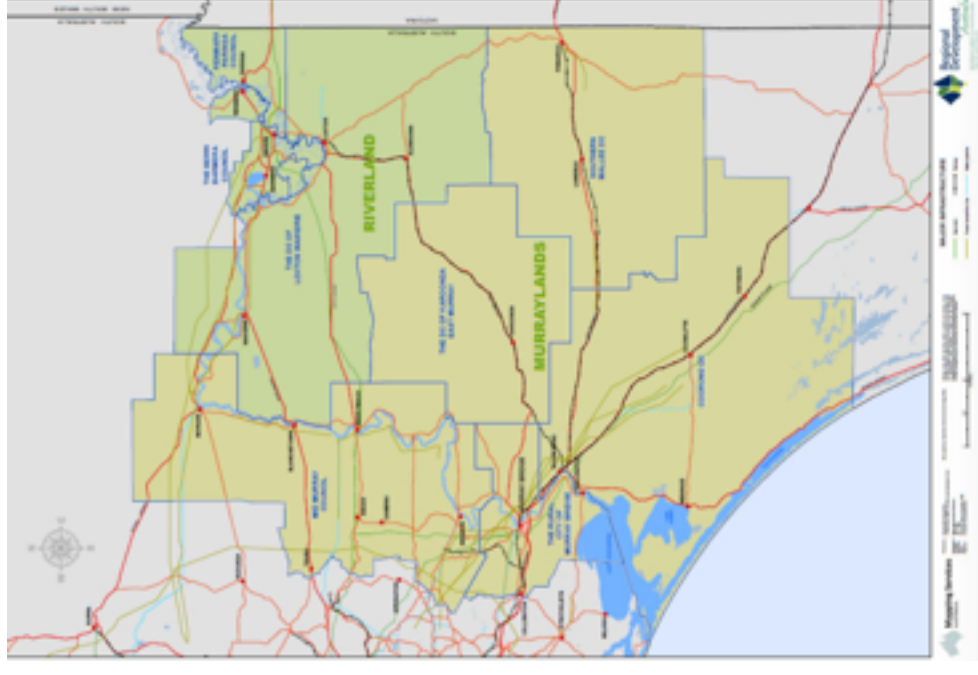
MRLGA is comprised of eight Constituent Councils from within the region: the Berri Barmera Council, Coorong District Council, District Council of Karoonda East Murray, District Council of Loxton Waikerie, Mid Murray Council, Renmark Paringa Council, Rural City of Murray Bridge, and Southern Mallee District Council.

As a Regional Subsidiary the Association has as its governing document a Charter as provided for under the Local Government Act 1999 which came into effect on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2001.

The MRLGA Charter identifies a broad range of roles to deliver the objectives of the Association. Given our limited resources, it is necessary to closely define the role of MRLGA in delivering the five regional strategies. The Charter defines the Associations role as follows;

- To undertake coordinating, advocacy and representational roles for its constituent Councils at a regional level
- To facilitate and coordinate activities of local government at a regional level on behalf of our constituent Councils.
- To develop, encourage, promote, foster and maintain consultation and cooperation and to strengthen the representation and status of local government
- To develop further cooperation between its constituent Councils for the benefit of the communities in the region.
- To develop and manage policies which guide the conduct of programs and projects in the region
- To undertake projects that benefit the region and its communities

The Charter requires the MRLGA to prepare a Strategic Plan every three (3) years. This Strategic Plan sets the activities and outcomes for the work of the MRLGA for the financial year 2016 - 2017. The direction of the Association is now governed by the current Strategic Plan 2016 – 2020 adopted by the MRLGA Board in April 2016 and identifies the Subsidiaries' Vision, Mission, Commitment and Role over the next 5-years.



## THE MRLGA BOARD

The MRLGA Board comprises representatives from each of the Constituent Councils and is chaired by the MRLGA President. Historically each Constituent Council could nominate up to two voting members to the Board. At the General Meeting of the Subsidiary held on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015 the Board resolved to reduce voting representation at MRLGA Board meetings to one vote per Council (being a total of eight voting delegates).

All voting delegates shall be the Mayor of each Council and proxy representatives shall be Council Members with CEO's encouraged to attend as observers. This will ultimately require amendment of the Subsidiaries Charter under Clause 4.2 Membership of the Board where it states;

*“the Board shall consist of two (2) persons from each Constituent Council appointed by the Constituent Council and each Constituent Council shall, following every periodic Local Government election, appoint, and give notice in writing to the Chief Executive Officer of the Subsidiary, of those persons who are its Board members, of whom one shall be an elected member of the Constituent Council and one may be the Chief Executive Officer or other officer of the Constituent Council.”*

### MRLGA Board Members from 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015

Council	Voting Delegate	Non-Voting Proxy Delegate
Berri Barmera Council	Mayor Peter Hunt - Vice President	Cr Andrew Kassebaum, Deputy Mayor
Coorong District Council	Mayor Neville Jaensch	Cr Sharon Bland, Deputy Mayor
District Council of Karoonda East Murray	Mayor Kevin Burdett	Cr Caroline Phillips, Deputy Mayor
District Council of Loxton Waikerie	Mayor Leon Stazinowski	Cr Michael Vowles, Deputy Mayor
Mid Murray Council	Mayor Dave Burgess - President	Cr Mardi Jennings, Deputy Mayor Cy Kevin Myers
Rural City of Murray Bridge	Mayor Brenton Lewis	Cr Fred Toogood, Deputy Mayor
Renmark Paringa Council	Mayor Neil Martinson	Cr Peter Hunter, Deputy Mayor
Southern Mallee District Council	Mayor Andrew Grieger	Cr Neville Pfeiffer, Deputy Mayor

Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council was re-elected President at the Annual General Meeting held at Berri on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> December 2015 and Mayor Peter Hunt, Berri Barmera Council was re-elected Vice President both for a full annual term of office.

## MRLGA DELEGATES TO THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION OF SA (LGA SA)

Under the Constitution of the Local Government Association of South Australia (LGA SA) regions are represented via appointed members to serve on the LGA Board and the South Australian Regional Organisation of Councils (SAROC).

Mayor Dave Burgess and Mayor Peter Hunt served on the LGA Board (previously termed the State Executive of the Local Government Association of South Australia), with Mayor Neville Jaensch Coorong District Council as proxy member representing the Associations at the LGA Board and the SAROC Committee.

The South Australian Regional Organisation of Councils (SAROC) is an important committee of the LGA that focuses on key issues affecting country Councils. Membership is drawn from each of the six non-metropolitan Regional Local Government Associations with members meeting bi-monthly to discuss key issues affecting non-metropolitan Councils.

The MRLGA supports the Governance process by contributing to agenda items for SAROC meetings, the distribution of Key Outcomes Statements of meetings to MRLGA Board meetings and collegiate support to prepare submissions on behalf of country Councils that included:

- Continuing lobbying and input into the ongoing review of the business plans, administrative fee and levy proposals of the Natural Resource Management Boards
- Continuing lobbying for a more balanced & nationally consistent approach to planning, regulation for rural and regional road safety & speed limits
- Lobbying and continuing the development of a balanced and consistent policy approach to Council sustainability, finances and rate revenue in the face of the call for a State Rate Capping policy.
- Further Development of a Mining Engagement Protocol and implementation of a pilot program
- Lobbying on Emergency Services Levy impacts
- Input into the LGA submissions on Planning Reform
- Input into the draft Local Nuisance and Litter Control Bill 2015

Consideration of the Removal of Local Government Natural Resource Management (NRM) Levy Collection requirement

## ASSOCIATION COMMITTEES AND WORKING PARTIES

The following were the Association Committee Members up until the AGM of the 26<sup>th</sup> June, 2015, noting that some representatives came into their role in November 2014 as an outcome of the Local Government elections held in that month:

### **LGA Board (Formerly State Executive Committee):**

- President, Mayor David Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Vice President, Mayor Peter Hunt, Berri Barmera Council (*by virtue of position held*).
- Mayor Neville Jaensch, Coorong District Council (*by virtue of position held*).
- Deputy Member for President or Vice President, Mayor Leon Stasinowsky, District Council of Loxton Waikerie.

### **South Australian Regional Organisation of Councils (SAROC):**

- President, Mayor David Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Vice President, Mayor Peter Hunt, Berri Barmera Council (*by virtue of position held*).
- Proxy for President and or Vice President, Mayor Leon Stasinowsky, District Council of Loxton Waikerie.
- CEO MRLGA - Peter Bond (*by virtue of position held*).

### **Regional Development Australia (Murraylands and Riverland) Board.**

- Mayor Neil Martinson, Renmark Paringa Council (*by virtue of position held as Chairman*).
- President, Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Cr. Andrew Kassebaum, Berri Barmera Council (*by virtue of position held*).

### **Murraylands and Riverland (previously Murray and Mallee) Local Government Association Regional Transport Strategy Committee:**

- Vacant, Chair (*by virtue of position held*)
- President, Mayor David Burgess, Mid Murray Council (President, Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio)
- Peter Bond, CEO MRLGA
- Paul Day, Director Infrastructure & Environmental Services, Renmark Paringa Council (Geoff Meaney - proxy)
- Greg Perry, Manager Infrastructure Services, Berri Barmera Council
- Greg Hill, Director, Infrastructure, Mid Murray Council.
- Tim Tol, Director of Infrastructure, District Council of Loxton Waikerie, (Domenic Perre - proxy)
- Peter Smithson, CEO, District Council of Karoonda East Murray
- Simon Bradley, GM Infrastructure and Environment, Rural City of Murray Bridge (Matt James - proxy)
- Matthew Sherman, Works Manger, Southern Mallee District Council
- David Mosel, Director Infrastructure and Assets, Coorong District Council
- Harry Du, Asset Management Engineer, Berri Barmera Council
- Jo Podoliak, Chief Executive, Regional Development Australia - Murraylands and Riverland
- DPTI - 2 nominees (external appointment)



**MRLGA Transport Reference Group. - Community Transport:**

- President, Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Peter Smithson, CEO, District Council of Karoonda East Murray.
- Cr. Mike Fuller, Berri Barmera Council.

**Murraylands and Riverland Regional Coordination Network:**

- President, Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Peter Smithson, CEO, District Council of Karoonda East Murray.

**Murray and Mallee Zone Emergency Management Committee:**

- Deputy Mayor Kevin Myers, Mid Murray Council, Chair.
- President, Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Mayor Peter Hunt, Berri Barmera Council.
- Michael Sedgman, CEO, Rural City of Murray Bridge (Ros Kruger – Proxy).
- Tim Tol, Director Infrastructure Services, District Council of Loxton Waikerie.
- David Mosel, Director Infrastructure and Assets, Coorong District Council.
- Harc Wordsworth, Manager, Environment and Planning, Southern Mallee District Council.
- Matthew Sherman, Works Manager, Southern Mallee District Council.

**River Murray Ferries Working Group:**

- President, Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Russell Peate, CEO, Mid Murray Council,
- Tony Siviour, CEO, Renmark Paringa Council,
- Vincent Cammell, CEO, Coorong District Council,
- Dept. of Planning, Transport and Infrastructure representatives.

**Murraylands and Riverland CEO's Network Group:**

- Tony Siviour, CEO, Renmark Paringa Council,
- Michael Sedgman, CEO, Rural City of Murray Bridge,
- Russell Peate, CEO, Mid Murray Council,
- Mia Dohnt, CEO, Southern Mallee District Council,
- Peter Ackland, District Council of Loxton Waikerie,
- David Beaton, CEO, Berri Barmera Council.
- Vince Cammell, CEO, Coorong District Council
- Peter Smithson, CEO, District Council of Karoonda East Murray
- Peter Bond, CEO, MRLGA

**Murraylands and Riverland (previously Murray and Mallee Regional Public Health Plan Committee):**

- President, Mayor Dave Burgess, Mid Murray Council (ex-officio).
- Kelvin Goldstone, Mid Murray Council, Chair
- Caroline Thomas, Mid Murray Council,
- Garry Brinkworth, Berri Barmera Council,
- Harc Wordsworth, Southern Mallee District Council and District Council of Karoonda East Murray,
- Jim Quinn, Coorong District Council,
- Katina Nikas, Renmark Paringa Council,
- Phil Eckert, Rural City of Murray Bridge,
- Stephen Bateman, District Council of Loxton Waikerie.

## ASSOCIATION MEETINGS

During 2015-2016, the Association met on five occasions on:

- 5<sup>th</sup> August 2015 - General Meeting - Mid Murray Council, 49 Adelaide Road, Mannum,
- 2<sup>nd</sup> October, 2015 - General Meeting - Renmark Paringa Council, 61 18th Street, Renmark,
- 9<sup>th</sup> December, 2015 - General Meeting - Rural City of Murray Bridge, Second Street, Murray Bridge,
- 10<sup>th</sup> February 2016 - General Meeting - District Council of Karoonda East Murray Council Offices, 11 Railway Terrace, Karoonda, and
- 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 - General Meeting - District Council of Karoonda East Murray Council Offices, 11 Railway Terrace, Karoonda.

All Association Meetings, including Committee Meetings Agendas and Minutes are available for viewing and or downloading from the Association's website at [www.mmlga.sa.gov.au](http://www.mmlga.sa.gov.au)

A number of guest speakers and attendees have made presentations/addresses to the Association meetings throughout the year. They include:

- Hon Geoff Brock MP, Minister for Local Government,
- Mr Wayne Lyons, The Ombudsman SA,
- Dr Ann Herraman, Chaffey Learning Exchange and Schools and Beyond,
- Doug Schmidt, General Manager, Network Management and Alexandra Lewis, Vegetation Strategy Lead, SA Power Network,
- Paul Gelston, Chief Operating officer, DPTI

Representatives of the LGA SA, RDA MR, SA MDB NRM, SAPOL and PIRSA attended each meeting and took the opportunity to brief the Association of the relevant matters being addressed by their respective bodies.

We acknowledge the support of outgoing CEO of the LGA, Matt Pinnegar, Jo Podoliak, CEO, RDA Murraylands and Riverland, Sharon Starick SA MDB NRM Board Presiding Member, James Blandford, SAPOL and Tim Smythe, PIRSA who have been ready to assist the region and ensure a presence at our meetings. The Association has also enjoyed a close working relationship with its State and Federal Members of Parliament, a number of whom have been regular attendees at our meetings.

The President has continued the practice of giving each of our guests the opportunity to address our meetings briefly about matters and issues before them that may be of interest to the Association and Member Councils. The contribution from all of the speakers, presenters and guests has kept the Association and the Delegates abreast of a wide ranging number of issues that impact on Local Government and the communities in the Region.

## STRATEGIC ACTIVITIES 2015-2016

The Subsidiary undertakes a coordinating role, in conjunction with Constituent Councils on their issues and those raised by the Local Government Association of South Australia, the community and other key stakeholders.

State and Federal Members of Parliament representing our Region have been briefed and support has been sought for issues raised.

Submissions and briefings undertaken during the reporting period include:

- **Planning, Development and Infrastructure Bill 2015** - provided a submission outlining the MRLGA's concern that the timing of the debate on the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Bill 2015 provides very little opportunity for Local Government and the community to provide meaningful input into any discussion.
- ♦ **Review of SA Road Safety Strategy 2020; Towards Zero Together** - provided a submission to the State Government in response to the Review of SA Road Safety Strategy 2020; Towards Zero Together.

The Association has provided support and representation on the following external Committees:

The Murray and Mallee Zone Emergency Management Committee including provision of the Chairperson.

The CEO has also attended Forums, Workshops and Briefings throughout the year regarding evolving issues and to make contribution on behalf of the Association.

### Key Activities for 2015-16

- ★ **Pensioner Concessions** - continued to advocate for the retention of pensioner concessions by the State Government
- ★ **Review of Rural Speed Limits** - Advocated that any review of rural speed limits on Council and arterial roads must be based on information, evidence and statistics on reported road accidents and their contributory factors and include consultation with Council and reaffirmed the LGA Policy on rural speed limits to the State Government.
- ★ **Strategic Review** - conducted a review of future direction of the Association. Planning for the future of the region and in particular the role the MRLGA was considered an imperative if the Association is to have relevance into the future.
- ★ **Lake Albert** - Lobbied for an urgent review or update on the status of Lake Albert in consideration of the situation low flows entering the catchment and the impact further depletion of flows in the River Murray system will have on Lake Albert.
- ★ **Regional Road Action Plans and 2015 SLRP Roads Database Update** - Finalised the report for the Regional Road Action Plans and 2015 SLRP Roads Database Update project.
- ★ **Murraylands Regional Collaboration Pilot** - secured \$10,400 towards the cost of the Regional Collaboration Pilot for the Murraylands Councils.
- ★ **LGA Outreach Services Project** - secured \$50,000 towards the LGA Outreach Services Program to be delivered as part of the 2015/16 Annual Business Plan.
- ★ **Long Nosed Fur Seals** - supported action to write to the Minister for Environment, Hon Ian Hunter, seeking assistance with the problems experienced by our communities in relation to long nose fur seals.
- ★ **Draft Local Nuisance and Litter Control Bill 2015** - highlight through SAROC the additional responsibility and cost implications that will be imposed upon regional and rural Councils should the draft Local Nuisance and Litter Control Bill 2015 be ratified.
- ★ **Management of off road Recreation Vehicles in SA** - liaised with SAPOL Murray Mallee LGA requesting their involvement in a joint program with the MRLGA that deals with the ongoing breaches in compliance and environmental impact of off road recreational vehicles.
- ★ **Review of SA Road Safety Strategy 2020; Towards Zero Together** - provided a submission to the State Government in response to the Review of SA Road Safety Strategy 2020; Towards Zero Together.
- ★ **Planning, Development and Infrastructure Bill 2015** - provided a submission outlining the MRLGA's concern that the timing of the debate on the Planning, Development and Infrastructure Bill 2015 provides very little opportunity for Local Government and the community to provide meaningful input into any discussion.
- ★ **SA MDB NRM Levy** - provided a submission rejecting the SA MDB NRM levy increases proposed within the Draft SA MDB NRM Business Plan 2016/17.
- ★ **Murray and Mallee Zone Emergency Management Committee (ZEMC)** - made application to the Local Government Association of SA (LGA) to seek feedback from the Local Government sector about the provisions and arrangements of Emergency Management with the intent to submit findings as part of the review of the SEMP.
- ★ **Regional Public Health Plan** - As required under the Act, the Association's Regional Public Health Plan report to SA Health has been compiled and submitted by the Association's Regional Public Health Plan Committee. That committee provided for the implementation and monitoring of a Regional Public Health Plan for MRLGA, held Working group meetings and liaised with LGA Public Health Program Manager
- ★ **River Murray Ferries** - continued to work with DPTI through the Ferry Working Party to ensure the ongoing viability and operation of the River Murray Ferry Fleet,
- ★ **SLRP Funding** - through the Murraylands and Riverland Regional Transport Strategy (RTS) Committee set the priorities for 2016/2017 SLRP be adopted and referred to the LGTAP for funding.
- ★ **Murray-Darling Plan** - Provided a submission in to the Senate Select Committee inquiry into the Social, Economic and Environmental impacts of the Murray-Darling Plan on Regional Communities.

## EXECUTIVE OFFICER SERVICES

The Chief Executive Officer services for the Association for the year were again provided by Peter Bond under a contract arrangement.

In accordance with a resolution of Member Council Delegates, the Chief Executive Officer was subject to performance review following the conclusion of the Strategic Review process and 12 months of service with the Association.

The Review Panel consists of the President of the Association, and four CEO's appointed from Constituent Councils within the Association.

## FINANCES

The Annual Business Plan for each year balances the objective of ensuring the MRLGA's long-term financial sustainability whilst increasing investment in key projects and preparing for future development and improvement opportunities.

Income for the Murraylands & Riverland Local Government Association is derived from three main sources:

1. Subscriptions from Constituent Councils of MRLGA;
2. Funding from the LGA SA for Regional Capacity Building and R&D Projects; and
3. Project funding through partnerships with external organisations.

A small amount of income is derived from interest and project management fees.

Annual expenditure is divided between two main areas:

1. Operating – expenditure required to employ a Chief Executive Officer, and general costs for administration, Board expenses and other general operating expenses;
2. Projects – expenditure required to deliver specific projects, including where applicable the engagement of external resources.

Financial reports are considered by the MRLGA Board at each meeting. The Audited Financial Statements for 2015-2016 are included in **Appendix 1** of this report.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

MRLGA acknowledges the Constituent Council Mayor's, Elected Members, Chief Executive Officers and staff for the ongoing support of the regional role of the Association.

The Local Government Association SA has continued to provide strong support to the MRLGA and is members throughout the year. MRLGA acknowledges the contribution of SAROC members, Chief Executive Officer Matt Pinnegar and the many LGA staff that have supported MRLGA throughout the year.

The Local Government Research and Development Scheme funding has enabled MRLGA to undertake a range of additional projects throughout the year, both through additional Research and Development Fund projects and also via the Regional Capacity Building Grants. MRLGA enjoys a close working relationship with Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland and SA MDB NRM Board members and staff.

Peter Bond  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association**

August 2016

## **Appendix 1**

Audited Financial Statements 2015 -16