

STATEMENT OF PRIORITIES

FOR THE

MURRAY AND MALLEE REGION OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA

2013

**COMPILED BY:
THE MURRAY AND MALLEE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION**

**ON BEHALF OF:
THE EIGHT LOCAL GOVERNMENT AUTHORITIES IN THE REGION**

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FOREWORD

This Regional 'Statement of Priorities' has been prepared by the Murray and Mallee Local Government Association (MMLGA), on behalf of the eight Local Government authorities in the Murray and Mallee region ie

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

The Statement of Priorities is intended to clearly and concisely list those actions necessary to ensure both the ongoing prosperity of the Murray and Mallee Region, and the health and wellbeing of the communities which reside and do business there.

The Statement will be used to:

- identify the major issues and needs of the Region *from a Local Government perspective*;
- provide an outcome based agenda for communication with other governments and agencies including the making of representations on specific issues; and
- set out the shared vision of the 8 MMLGA Councils for the Region, on behalf of the communities they represent.

The Priorities listed are derived from existing strategic planning documents relevant to the Region, including Council Strategic Management Plans, the Strategic Plans of RDA Murraylands and Riverland, the Regional NRM Plan, the State Government's Regional Planning Strategy, and the MMLGA's own Strategic Plan. A full list of all resource documents appears in the Appendix.

All of these resource documents are subject to statutory periods of public consultation, and / or some form of ongoing reporting of progress to the public or its elected representatives. This provides a mandate for all of the matters addressed in the Statement of Priorities.

The Statement will be reviewed and updated on at least an annual basis. The primary 'trigger' for review will be the holding of a priority setting workshop involving the representatives of MMLGA Member Councils, the Regional NRM and RDA, relevant State and Federal Government agencies, and selected representatives of the private sector. The workshop will receive and discuss progress reports on the listed priorities, and set new priorities for the coming year, where necessary.

Reviews may also be triggered by the completion of specific strategic planning projects or documents, some of which are listed in the Appendix.

Mayor David Burgess
MMLGA President

ABOUT THE MURRAY AND MALLEE REGION

The Murray and Mallee Region comprises an area of approximately 36 500 sq km, located in the central eastern part of the State of South Australia.

The topography of the Region is typically characterised by gently undulating land, containing a mixture of land uses including dry land and irrigated farming, native Mallee scrub, and numerous small townships.

The Region is traversed from approximately northeast to southwest by South Australia's portion of Australia's longest river, the River Murray. In the southwest the Murray meets the ocean and the Coorong, a coastal reserve containing rich and diverse marine and freshwater ecosystems which are of international significance.

The largest towns in the Region including Renmark and Murray Bridge are located along the Murray River, reflecting the major role which the River has played in the economic development of the Region since European settlement as a water source, a transport route, and a place for recreation and leisure activities.

The Region's economy produces goods and services to the value of \$2.244 b per annum, and is dominated by primary production including grains, horticulture, fruit, nuts, viticulture and livestock. Tourism is an important secondary source of income for the Region.

The maintenance of a 'clean, green environment' including a sustainable good quality water supply, and the effective management of insects, diseases and other pests, is critical to the ongoing success of both the primary production and tourism sectors. Natural resources are the foundation of future economic and social benefits within the Region.

The Region's population is currently estimated at around 70 500, and is expected to grow to approximately 75 000 by 2026. Most of this growth is anticipated to occur in areas nearest to Adelaide, especially in and around Murray Bridge. It is likely that this population growth will trigger increased demand for skilled labour and tradespersons in the building and construction sector, as well as a need for greater investment in health services and education.

Key opportunities and challenges for the future of the Region include:

- strengthening the 'clean and green' marketing brand of local agricultural products;
- further developing and strengthening the tourism sector;
- marketing the lifestyle advantages of living in the Region;
- maintaining and improving freight and passenger transport networks;
- exploring and exploiting low cost alternative energy sources; and
- developing skills and training programs targeted at the needs of the Regional economy.

INTERPRETATION

The matters addressed by this Statement of Priorities are grouped for the sake of convenience and ease of interpretation, under the following four headings;

- A. Economic
- B. Environmental
- C. Social
- D. Governance

The use of these four headings is often referred to as a 'quadruple bottom line' approach to strategic planning, because the headings act as a checklist to ensure that all main issues are addressed. Inevitably there is some overlap between the headings, and therefore each issue is placed under only one heading, according to 'best fit'.

Several Priorities are shown under each heading, and each of these has a short list of Actions and Timeframes to help achieve the Priority under which they appear. The Priorities and the Actions are worded as briefly and simply as possible, for ease of interpretation.

At the start of each Action the key responsible agency or agencies are identified, with support agencies listed in brackets. A desired timeframe is provided after each Action.

It is not the purpose of this Statement of Priorities to provide detailed justification for the Actions listed. Further information on specific Actions can be found in the relevant Strategic Plans and other planning and resource documents listed in the Appendix.

A - ECONOMIC PRIORITIES

1. Infrastructure and Utilities

1.1 DPTI / RDA / COUNCILS should lobby for and provide infrastructure and utilities necessary to encourage timely development of appropriately zoned land
ONGOING

1.2 RDA should continue to investigate, encourage, and help develop alternative energy sources, (including renewable energy projects) in appropriate locations within the Region. Projects for consideration include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Biomass Fuel
- Cherokee Power Station
- Solar power
- Wind Farms

ONGOING

2. Transport and Communications

2.1 MMLGA should prepare and implement a Regional Transport Plan which recognises the key strategic role which transport infrastructure plays in Regional economic development, and includes funding opportunities and a schedule for:

- Undertaking major road upgrades including the Sturt Highway
- Identifying heavy vehicle transport routes
- Upgrading and maintaining the Renmark and Murray Bridge Airports
- Encouraging the development of the next 'non metropolitan' airport within the Murraylands
- Constructing the Adelaide Hills Rail Freight Bypass
- Expanding Community Passenger Networks
- Developing a north / south freight Corridor
- Continuing existing River Murray ferry services

DECEMBER 2013

2.2 MMLGA / COUNCILS should maintain existing community transport subcommittees, to evaluate service gaps, make funding submissions, and promote existing and new services

ONGOING

2.3 MMLGA / RDA / COUNCILS should strongly lobby to improve electronic communications in the region, including expediting the NBN rollout and improvements to mobile phone coverage

ONGOING

3. Primary Industry

3.1 PIRSA should continue to find and develop overseas markets for SA produce including the Murray and Mallee Region

ONGOING

- 3.2 PIRSA should develop and implement a 'Buy Local' Campaign to support local industry and retain markets against cheaper products from overseas (promoting the advantages of local products eg freshness, local jobs, clean and green environment)
ONGOING
- 3.3 PIRSA should appoint 5 Regional Managers to be located in the Region, acting as a conduit to PIRSA and State Government task forces
IMMEDIATE
- 3.4 PIRSA should appoint 7 Account Managers to work with Industry Sectors, acting as a conduit to PIRSA and supporting innovation, growth and development
IMMEDIATE
- 3.5 RDA should continue to work with producers and investors to promote diversification and innovation in response to climate change and changing investment patterns
ONGOING
- 3.6 DPTI should initiate changes to the Development Act and Regulations to allow Councils to quickly adapt planning rules to meet the changing requirements of Primary Industry, in response to market trends
IMMEDIATE

4. Tourism

- 4.1 SATC (COUNCILS / RDA / DTPI) should implement the Tourism Destination Action Plans for the Murraylands and Riverland
TIMEFRAMES AS SHOWN IN PLANS
- 4.2 RDA / COUNCILS / SATC should facilitate the establishment, maintenance and promotion of 'destination' type tourist attractions including but not limited to:
 - Tailm Bend Motor Sports Precinct
 - Great River Murray Trail
 - Riverland Food and Wine Hub
 - Indigenous and nature based attractions*ONGOING*
- 4.3 COUNCILS / SATC / DPTI should ensure the provision, maintenance and upgrade of riverside reserves and boat ramps, and provide other tourism facilities which cater for the needs of the users of motor homes and caravans, plus campers and day trippers
ONGOING

5. Education, Training, and Skills Development

- 5.1 DFEEST / RDA (COUNCILS) should maintain and support existing relationships and networks among regional stakeholders, to promote communication and foster innovation in the areas of skills development and productivity
ONGOING

- 5.2 DFEEST (RDA / COUNCILS) should maintain Career Development Centres in Murray Bridge and Renmark
ONGOING
- 5.3 DFEEST / RDA / COUNCILS should continue to develop the Murraylands and Riverlands Education Precincts
ONGOING
- 5.4 DFEEST / RDA should continue to undertake skills development programs to support workforce participation by under-represented groups and improve productivity in selected industry sectors
ONGOING
- 5.5 FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENTS should develop a program to re-invigorate the long term unemployed providing opportunities and encouragement for a return to the workforce
AS SOON AS POSSIBLE
- 5.6 RDA / COUNCILS should compete with other regions to encourage skilled migrants to come to and remain in the Murray and Mallee Region
ONGOING
- 5.7 DFEEST / RDA / COUNCILS / LGA should implement a program for providing training courses within the region via video conferencing, when face to face training is not feasible
DECEMBER 2013

B - ENVIRONMENTAL PRIORITIES

1. Water Security

1.1 DEWNR (NRM / COUNCILS / RDA) should implement the Murray Darling Basin Plan, including:

- Develop an Environmental Watering Plan
- Develop a Water Quality and Salinity Management Plan
- Establish Water Trading Rules
- Develop and accredit Water Resource Plans
- Develop a Sustainable Diversion Limits Adjustment Mechanism
- Deliver a Constraints Management Strategy
- Secure appropriate environmental flows in the River Murray System

ONGOING

1.2 DEWNR (NRM / COUNCILS) should improve salinity levels in Lake Albert

ONGOING

1.3 RDA (NRM / DEWNR) should lobby to enforce sanctions on cross regional water allocation transfers

ONGOING

2. Natural Resource Management and Sustainability

2.1 NRM (COUNCILS / COMMUNITY) should achieve the Management Action Targets in the Regional NRM Plan, which will help support viable primary production and tourism industries and retain the Region's natural assets and character

TIMING AS PER THE REGIONAL NRM PLAN

2.2 MMLGA / COUNCILS (LGA / LGAMLS / NRM / DEWNR) should improve controls and funding for riverbank collapse and levee bank maintenance to reduce the financial impact on local Councils and communities: and investigate if a single authority could be made responsible for these issues

DECEMBER 2013

2.3 NRM should identify and reward good farming practice in the region, and reduce bad land management by the use of education programs and prosecution where necessary

ONGOING

2.4 RELEVANT COUNCILS / DEWNR / NRM should respond to and implement the recommendations of the Lower Murray Flood Plain Report

TIMEFRAMES AS SHOWN IN REPORT

3. Disaster Management

3.1 NRM / COUNCILS (LGA / LGAMLS / DEWNR) should complete and implement Stage Two of an Integrated Regional Vulnerability Assessment Plan addressing climate change, changed river flows, and impacts on public and private infrastructure *DECEMBER 2013*

- 3.2 SAFECOM (CFS / SAPOL / COUNCILS) should provide adequate and continuing funding for the successful operation of Zone Emergency Management Committees, to support the State Emergency Management Plan
ONGOING

4. Waste Management

- 4.1 MMLGA / COUNCILS should implement the Regional and Sub Regional Waste Management Plans
ONGOING

- 4.2 COUNCILS (LGA) should continue to reform the management and cost structures of CWMS Schemes to ensure ongoing financial viability and effective management of community assets
ONGOING

C - SOCIAL PRIORITIES

1. Human Services

- 1.1 ALL STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES should complete Regional Impact Statements as required by State Cabinet, and consult with Councils/MMLGA before withdrawing or reducing any service
ONGOING
- 1.2 CHSA should strengthen Regional GP services by retaining and expanding the Rural Doctor Training Program
ONGOING
- 1.3 CHSA / COUNCILS / RDA / MMLGA should strive to obtain and retain a broad range of health services and funding, to ensure that residents of the Region (including Aboriginal people) are not disadvantaged in their access to necessary emergency and clinical services
ONGOING

2. Housing and Population Growth

- 2.1 MMLGA / COUNCILS / RDA (DPC / DPTI / LGA) should lobby for and facilitate specific projects to provide a range of housing types and affordability in the Region, including low cost worker accommodation
ONGOING
- 2.2 RDA / DPTI / COUNCILS should identify and promote the development of suitable land to help maintain and strengthen existing townships within the Region
ONGOING
- 2.3 DPTI / RURAL CITY OF MURRAY BRIDGE should work together to facilitate the orderly and economic growth of that Council area, associated with implementation of the 30 year Plan for Greater Adelaide
ONGOING

3. Social Inclusion, Community Vibrancy and Safety

- 3.1 ALL RELEVANT AGENCIES should retain and develop arts and cultural development programs, community amenities and related infrastructure which improve the quality of life and 'livability' of the region
ONGOING
- 3.2 COUNCILS / COMMUNITY BODIES / PIRSA / ADVANTAGE SA should promote, support and undertake events, activities, and media messages which maintain and generate community morale
ONGOING
- 3.3 COUNCILS / SAPOL / AGD should investigate and implement funding and service models which reduce crime and improve community safety
ONGOING

4. Sports and Recreation

4.1 ORS / COUNCILS / LGA should provide and lobby for increased funding for sporting and recreational facilities at appropriate locations within the Region, to meet the needs of the community

ONGOING

D - GOVERNANCE PRIORITIES

1. Relationships and Cooperation

1.1 MMLGA (PIRSA) should hold an annual (or more frequent) planning forum involving all agencies working in the Region, to review priorities, report progress on specific issues, identify opportunities for cooperation, and exchange information on specific issues

NOVEMBER 2014

1.2 ALL AGENCIES should ensure that cross agency representation on specific groups, projects, and working parties continues, to facilitate a shared approach to specific issues in the Region

ONGOING

2. Strategic Planning

2.1 DPTI (NRM / RDA / COUNCILS / MMLGA) should review and rewrite the Murray and Mallee Regional Planning Strategy, to correct existing errors and omissions, better reflect land capability and address current planning issues, and help Councils to respond in a timely manner to changing land use requirements

EARLY 2014

2.2 COUNCILS / RDA / MMLGA (DPTI) should actively participate in the development of the State Government's Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy for the Region, to ensure that it accurately and effectively addresses the Region's future needs

SEPTEMBER 2013

3. Local Governance

3.1 COUNCILS should continue to work together through the MMLGA to jointly promote and progress issues of Regional significance

ONGOING

4. Community Engagement

4.1 COUNCILS (LGA) should promote and support volunteerism to assist with the provision of low cost services and make use of available skills in the community

ONGOING

4.2 COUNCILS should engage with, inform, and involve their local communities in decision making and information sharing about issues which affect them

ONGOING

APPENDIX

Resource Documents

Murray and Mallee Region Priority Setting Forum 9 November 2012 – Summary of Outcomes and Recommendations (MMLGA)

MMLGA Strategic Plan 2011-2014

SATC Destination Action Plans (Murraylands and Riverland) 2012-2015

SA Murray Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board 'Regional NRM Plan' and Management ActionTargets

Regional Development Australia (Murraylands and Riverland SA) Regional Roadmap 2012-2013

Murray and Mallee Regional Plan, 2011 (DPTI)

South Australia's Strategic Plan 2011

Strategic Plans of the eight MMLGA Member Councils

Triggers for Review

When completed, the following should trigger a review of the Priorities contained in this Statement of Priorities

Annual Regional Planning Forum – November 2013 (MMLGA / PIRSA)

Integrated Transport and Land Use Strategy – September 2013 (DPTI)

Integrated Vulnerability Assessment Project – December 2013 (NRM / LGAMLS)

Murray and Mallee Regional Plan Review – Early 2014 (DPTI)

Regional Transport Plan – December 2013 (MMLGA)

Abbreviations

AGD	Attorney-General's Department of SA
CFS	Country Fire Service
CHSA	Country Health SA
CWMS	Catchment Water Management Schemes
DEWNR	Department of Environment Water and Natural Resources
DFEEST	Department of Further Education Employment Science and Technology
DPC	Department of the Premier and Cabinet
DPTI	Department of Planning Transport and Infrastructure
LGA	Local Government Association
LGAMLS	Local Government Association Mutual Liability Scheme
MMLGA	Murray and Mallee Local Government Association
NRM	SA Murray Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board
ORS	Office for Recreation and Sport
OSLGR	Office for State/Local Government Relations
PIRSA	Primary Industries and Resources SA
RDA	Regional Development Australia (Murraylands and Riverland SA)
SAFECOM	SA Fire and Emergency Services Commission
SAPOL	South Australian Police
SATC	SA Tourism Commission

ENQUIRIES

Enquiries about this document and its contents may be directed to

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