
**NARROMINE SHIRE COUNCIL
ORDINARY MEETING BUSINESS PAPER – 12 NOVEMBER 2025
COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORT**

1. MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE

Cr Davies has submitted a report for the Murray Darling Association Annual General Meeting and Conference held on 30 September 2025 – 2 October 2025 **(See Attachment No. 1).**

As Cr Roberts was unable to attend, Cr Davies attended this event on his behalf.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information be noted.

2. ALLIANCE OF WESTERN COUNCILS CRITICAL HUMAN NEEDS WATER

Cr Davies has submitted a report for the Alliance of Western Councils Critical Human Needs Water Meeting held on 21 October 2025 **(See Attachment No. 2).**

Cr Davies attended the event, having been involved in its organisation during his tenure as Council's delegate to the Murray–Darling Association. Cr Roberts was unavailable to attend.

RECOMMENDATION

That the information be noted.



COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

COUNCILLOR REPORT ON ATTENDANCE AT: Murray Darling Association Annual General Meeting and Conference

COUNCILLOR: Cr Craig Davies

DATE ATTENDED: 30 September 2025 – 2 October 2025

1. Main Purpose of Conference/Meeting

To keep abreast of developments and opportunities within the water space in NSW and Australia generally.

The study tour on 30th September included visits to Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) headquarters in Griffith from where the 178,000 megs of entitlement is managed. This high-tech management system can be controlled by four operators replacing what was once a labour-intensive operation involving over 40 staff in the field.

With over 2300 customers, the MI operation is a highly automated operation that allows telemetry to undertake the vast majority of management functions across this vast network. Due to the massive upgrades and investment over 50 gigalitres have been returned to the environment.

Kooba Station, situated between Griffith, Darlington Point and Whitton is a 20,000ha holding owned by AFF with an entitlement of 87,000 megs and farms annually, approx 5000ha cotton, 4000ha wheat, 1400ha almonds along with a feedlot. An example of corporate agriculture at its most efficient.

Whitton Malt house was the next stopover featuring a whisky distillery utilising local products along with a cotton gin built by local growers about 10 years ago.

The study tour moved onto Aquana Fish farm. This operation is one of nine properties that collectively grow 3000 tonnes of Murray Cod annually. It is aiming at increasing its throughput to 10,000 tonnes in coming years. The farms are responsible breeding, genetic improvement, and growing out where the fish can be prepared for markets from 600 grams to 3 kg.

Leeton rice mill was the last stop and provided an overview of how rice is taken from its raw state to a mix of products including par boiled, standard rice of varying varieties and also stock feed the Coprice subsidiary.



2. Key Messages/Highlights of Relevance to Council

Various speakers including Minister Jackson who mentioned the Productivity and Equality Commissioners report .

- acknowledgement of CSO principles being included in potential future funding models
- the imperative of council/state relationships, the need to work collaboratively
- an acknowledgement of PFAS having an impact in a limited number of urban water systems
- 10-year council plans vital to state knowledge bank
- Northern basin Toolkit has been varied due to urgent consultation with the Minister against the advice of staff.
- looking to ways to drive the Carp Eradication Program and discussion on ways to move it forward effectively.

Senator Ross Cadell

- Water is Life and Critical Human Needs water is the lifeblood of western NSW.
- The basin plan has lost its human contact due to political interference but sees opportunities to work with current Fed Minister Murray Watt
- \$1.3 trillion on green energy projects and yet no current funding for water projects.

Jaqui Hickey Acting CEO MDBA

- 10-year review of Basin plan due end of 2026
- acknowledged the improvement in irrigation efficiency
- looking forward to further consultation such as NSC Roundtable on 21st October.

Troy Grant. Inspector General of Water

- Legislators are less inclined to act on issues relating to Critical Human Needs Water in times of significant flows and then act in haste and waste capital in drought times.
- little substantive progress on Northern Basin Toolkit which was meant to be finalised by June 2024.
- other speakers included Dr Simon Banks , CEO of CEWH, Matt Dadswell DEECCW,
- Mayor Doug Curran, Griffith City Council, Steph Cooke, Opposition water Spokesperson NSW.



3. Benefits to Narromine Shire Council

Maintains knowledge base and currency with water issues. Further develops vital relationships with industry and bureaucracy.

4. Suggestions for Future Action (if appropriate)

Maintain membership of this vital Organisation linking over 100 Councils in MDB and providing information and advice on matters relating to Water.

Cr Craig Davies

Date: 9 October 2025



COUNCILLOR REPRESENTATIVE REPORT

COUNCILLOR REPORT ON ATTENDANCE AT: Alliance of Western Councils - Critical Human Needs Water (CHNW)

COUNCILLOR: Cr Craig Davies

Mayor Ewen Jones and Cr Brian Leak also in attendance

DATE ATTENDED: 21 October 2025

Attendees

CEO MDBA and travelling party

CEO CEWH and staff

CEO NSW Water Directorate

Senior adviser in Federal DCCEEW

CEO MDA

Director NSW DCCEEW

INSPECTOR General water representatives

Member Councils of AWC

1. Main Purpose of Meeting

Purpose of the meeting to discuss the dilapidated state of water infrastructure and lack of coherent plan to resolve CHNW crisis across western NSW.

Speakers included:

Mayor Ewen Jones- Welcome

GM Bourke Shire Council

Mayor Warren Shire Council

CEO MDBA

CEO NSW Water Directorate

Director of Utilities DCCEEW NSW

Cr C Davies NSC

Manager Utilities- Narromine Shire Council



2. Key Messages/Highlights of Relevance to Council

KEY DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Western Weirs program to continue to provide certainty to communities along the Darling River along with other infrastructure projects to enhance storage capacity.
2. Flood Mitigation Zone at Burrendong Dam be raised to 115% of current full capacity and the extra water be dedicated to CHNW.
3. Gin Gin Weir be reinstated with a Fish Ladder as critical Infrastructure project to deliver water savings of 15 GL p.a. and open up 140 kms of river to native fish.
4. Test private enterprise costings for Wilcannia Weir and pipeline to Nyngan.
5. Community Service Obligations as raised by productivity and Equality Commissioner be raised in view of royalty flow from both Bogan and Cobar Shires.
6. CHNW be enshrined into new Northern Basin Water Sharing Plan due late 2026.
7. Communique from Roundtable to include all attendees.
8. Bio-Diversity Offset Scheme not apply to all CHNW Projects.
9. Depreciation Allowance on WATER infrastructure be the responsibility of NSW Government.
10. Meet with Inspector General of Water to further the issue of Community Service Obligations.

3. Benefits to Narromine Shire Council

Ensure recognition and support for the needs of Critical Human Water supply.
Ensure sustainable water supply.

4. Suggestions for Future Action (if appropriate)

Delegation to meet with NSW Minister For Water, The Hon. Rose Jackson, MLC.

Cr Craig Davies

Date: 27 October 2025