



Australian Government



MURRAY-DARLING  
BASIN AUTHORITY

# MDBA Recruitment

## Candidate information pack

APS 4, APS 5, APS 6, EL 1, EL 2

Salary range \$70,716 - \$148,121

July 2021

*The MDBA is a diverse group of passionate experts working across science, policy, river operations, engagement, corporate services and more. Regardless of our role and which of our 8 offices we work from, we relish the challenge of developing new skills, and meaningful work that is making a difference in our communities across the Murray–Darling Basin. With competitive remuneration and a work-life balance that works for us, we are serious about valuing and supporting all members of the MDBA team. We are always looking out for talented and motivated people to join us on the journey towards world-leading water reform and management.*

# Work where it matters

The Murray–Darling Basin Authority has a critical role in the management of the Murray–Darling Basin’s water resources. More than 3 million people across four states and one territory rely on the Basin for their drinking water.

To maintain a healthy river system, water resources in the Murray–Darling Basin need to be managed carefully to meet the challenges of agricultural growth, population changes and increasing climate variability.

You will play a critical part in achieving the MDBA’s objectives and ensure we continue to fulfil an important role leading the sustainable collective Basin-wide approach to planning and management of Basin water resources. We provide a rewarding and stimulating work environment that values and embraces efficient and innovative work practices. Stakeholder engagement is a critical element of our work. The MDBA is supportive of flexible working arrangements. We embrace diversity, both in our employees and the range of opportunities available. We offer excellent working conditions and attractive salaries and superannuation as well as a range of other benefits ([www.mdba.gov.au/careers](http://www.mdba.gov.au/careers)).

The Murray–Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) is the Australian Government agency responsible for planning and leading the integrated management of the water resources of the Murray–Darling Basin, in collaboration with state governments, industries and communities.

## Our people

The MDBA’s workforce consists of around 300 people. We have offices located in Canberra as well as regional offices in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria.

We are committed to delivering our statutory responsibilities and we support and value our people, their skills and diversity. We are a professional, expert-based organisation that values and encourages work-life balance.

If you want to work with people who embrace and lead change, are passionate about what they do, and deliver results – the MDBA is for you!

If you have further questions that are not addressed in this information pack, please contact the Recruitment Coordinator at [peopleandculture@mdba.gov.au](mailto:peopleandculture@mdba.gov.au)

## Our values

CREATE is the organisational culture we use to meet the expectations of our stakeholders and deliver on our commitment to lead the planning and management of the Murray–Darling Basin.

**C**ommitted, connected and collaborative: we feel a shared responsibility to delivering our vision for the future

**R**espectful and rewarding: we are respectful, rewarding and supportive of others

**E**ngaged and encouraged: we are motivated, courageous, inspiring and encouraging

**A**gile and adaptable: we welcome change and are progressive, innovative and willing to take risks

**T**rustful: we are honest, direct, transparent and accountable

**E**xperts: we are confident, visible and respected for our expertise.

## Enhancing the MDBA regional presence

We are committed to strengthening its connections with communities right across the Basin. The Basin Plan is a significant, long-term water reform in Australia and greater community involvement is essential to its successful implementation.

In recent years, we have invested in building a strong stakeholder engagement capability and regional presence, employing Regional Engagement Officers and opening offices in Adelaide, Albury–Wodonga, Toowoomba and Goondiwindi. Effective engagement is an ongoing core capability for us.

On 12 March 2019, the Australian Government committed to the further regionalisation of the MDBA as part of its broader decentralisation agenda. The then Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources, the Hon David Littleproud, announced 103 MDBA positions would be located in regional areas of the Basin with new offices to be established in Griffith, Mildura and Murray Bridge, and the Goondiwindi office to be expanded.

Our increased regional presence will promote job creation and boost economic diversification in Australia's regions. Importantly, it will also allow us to develop a greater understanding of stakeholder concerns, improve stakeholder relationships and enhance its regional water management connections.

## What do our staff think about working in our regional offices?

*What originally attracted me to the MDBA were community and environmental factors as well as the benefit of a regional lifestyle. I love that the work I do directly impacts on the community and environment in which I live and therefore I strive to do my best each day so that my efforts can be of benefit to all. I enjoy my short 10 minute (door to door) commute to the office and the flexibility the MDBA offers with regard to working flexible hours and from home as required. I encourage anyone who is looking to further their career while maintaining work/life balance in a regional location to apply for opportunities at the MDBA.*

*Our community is definitely impacted by anything related to water – the economy, the community, the environment, the lifestyle and it's future is impacted on water availability, specifically water for irrigation. Why did I want to work for MDBA – I wanted to contribute to the regional voice of the community. Our community has an amazing food and wine scene – it has a passionate group of community members and businesses that sponsor and support many of the food festivals and events staged throughout the year. Living in our community is not just about the food and wine, it's about the culture and lifestyle. It has multiple well-established sport participation groups, new 50m pool complex, new sports precincts, new Hospital, many multi-cultural and diverse community groups and great school education choices. It's a special place to live and begin your career with the MDBA. The Agency highly values and supports its employees so come and take advantage of the many opportunities available – certainly a wonderful opportunity to be able to live and work in the Basin.*

*Growing up in the country, I was always told that the best career opportunities were in the city. But after spending some time in the city I missed my home. I felt that I had to sacrifice career aspirations to be close to my family and friends. Thanks to the regionalisation of MDBA I now have my dream job in my hometown, and I have to pinch myself to check I'm not dreaming!*

*I was attracted to the MDBA as it was the perfect niche for my interests in environmental conservation and socio-economic development. It's great to be able to work in a smaller office with a mix of teams – not only do you get to know everyone well, there's opportunities to collaborate with and learn from staff in completely different sections from you.*

*I was excited to be part of the regionalisation of MDBA. I believe that with technology our jobs can be taken anywhere and we have seen that shining through the teams at MDBA. We are able to adapt our days around the conditions that we work under.*

*My role allows me to make a genuine difference in a field that I am passionate about. There are significant benefits of living regionally- a 5-minute commute, free parking, lower cost of living, amazing restaurants that have been around longer than your grandparents, fresh air, lovely people, more time to spend with loved ones and the actual opportunity to own real estate.*

*What attracted me to the MDBA was the opportunity. The chance to be seen, make a difference and have career progression is exciting. Federal departments in smaller towns are a fantastic way to entice people to these towns, provide skilled people already in the town with new opportunities and provide that connection back to our communities that we are representing. My family love the slower pace of life in general and appreciate holidays away to the city and beach as a real adventure. The opportunities afforded to children is on par, if not greater, than their city counterparts. It is a tight knit community with many connections formed over generations. It takes no more than 10 minutes to drive anywhere in town and there is no such thing as a traffic jam.*

# Working for the MDBA

## Shaping your career

The MDBA offers exciting work opportunities at the forefront of water resource management. Our principal aim is to manage the Basin's water resources in the national interest. We are the single agency responsible for planning integrated management of the water resources of the Basin.

In addition to new and exciting opportunities in water management, we offer excellent employment conditions in a relationship-based environment. We engage staff across a range of capabilities including:

- environmental/biological sciences
- natural resource management
- water resources modelling and engineering
- communications and engagement
- research and knowledge
- corporate and business services.

## Office locations

The MDBA has long been committed to developing and maintaining strong regional links with communities as it allows the MDBA to develop a greater understanding of stakeholder concerns, improve stakeholder relationships and enhance our regional water management connections.

From 2017, the MDBA has opened regional offices in Adelaide, Albury-Wodonga, Goondiwindi and Toowoomba. From 2019, the MDBA has opened regional offices in Griffith, Mildura and Murray Bridge.

# Goondiwindi

## Goondiwindi snapshot



Population: **5,500**



**5** childcare and **2** before/after school care,  
**4** primary schools, **2** high schools



**1** hospital  
**2** medical centres



Median 3 bedroom house price: **\$300,000**  
Median 3 bedroom house rent: **\$318 per week**

Goondiwindi located on the northern side of the Macintyre River border between New South Wales and Queensland. The name Goondiwindi is a derivative of a local Bigambul Aboriginal word Gundawinda meaning 'a resting place for the birds'. Goondiwindi produces some of Australia's best wheat, beef cattle, wool, cotton and chickpeas. Goondiwindi is also home to the old Carbeen gum 'Tree of Knowledge', a local marker which was used as a meeting place to discuss and observe the possible severity of flooding prior to the levee being built in 1956.

### How to get there

Goondiwindi is located at a major transport nexus between the southern states and Queensland. The Newell, Leichardt, Gore, Cunningham, Barwon and Bruxner Highways all merge at Goondiwindi or close by. While there are no direct flights to Goondiwindi, you can fly to nearby Moree or Toowoomba and travel from there by car. Goondiwindi is serviced by one bus service to Brisbane. There is no train station in town but station services are available at two nearby locations.

- 221 km from Toowoomba
- 358 km from Brisbane
- 124 km to Moree

### Other services

- Medical – there is 1 hospital, 2 medical centres / practitioners and 3 dentists
- Employment – there are 3 different employment agencies / services to help identify opportunities in the area
- Shops – main shopping precincts are located on Marshall and Herbert streets
- Multiple sport and recreation facilities

### If you want to know more about Goondiwindi

- [Goondiwindi Regional Council](#)
- [Places - Goondiwindi](#)
- [Real Estate Goondiwindi](#)
- [Compare schools - Goondiwindi](#)
- [Goondiwindi Hospital](#)

## Griffith

### Griffith snapshot



Population: **26,000**



**6** preschools, **12** primary schools,  
**3** high schools and **3** TAFE/AECs



**2** hospitals  
**6** medical centres



Median 3 bedroom house price: **\$310,000**  
Median 3 bedroom house rent: **\$330 per week**

Located in South-Western NSW, Griffith is the regional capital of Western Riverina and in turn, a major service centre for around 52,000 people from the catchment area. In the heart of Wiradjuri Country, the area is known as 'the land of three rivers'. Like Canberra, Griffith was designed by Walter Burley Griffith to be a garden city of wide tree-lined streets, parks and ring roads. It has a population of 26,000, and is a blend of more than seventy nationalities. Griffith is an agricultural powerhouse, making it a foodie's paradise. Enough wine is produced each year to fill 45 Olympic swimming pools and all of McDonald's gherkins come from Griffith.

### How to get there

Griffith is ideally located between the major cities.

- 573km south-west of Sydney
- 463km north of Melbourne
- 350km north-west of Canberra

Daily coach/rail services connect Griffith with Melbourne, Canberra and Sydney via NSW Train Link and V-Line. There's also a weekly rail service which operates from Sydney to Griffith on a Saturday, returning on Sunday. Griffith is well serviced by air from Sydney with Regional Express (REX) Airlines offering daily flights and is now also serviced by EastWest Airlines from Melbourne Essendon Airport. Griffith Airport is located 5km from Griffith CBD.

### Other services

- Medical – there are 2 hospitals, 6 medical centres / practitioners and 5 dentists in Griffith
- Employment – there are 9 different employment agencies / services to help identify opportunities in the area
- Shops – main shopping precincts are located in Banna Ave and Yambil street
- Multiple sport and recreation facilities, including dance academies are available

### If you want to know more about Griffith

- [Visit Griffith NSW](#)
- [Why Griffith?](#)
- [Country Change](#)
- [Real Estate Griffith](#)
- [Compare schools - Griffith](#)
- [Griffith Base Hospital](#)
- [Griffith Visitor Information Centre](#)

## Mildura

### Mildura snapshot



Population: **33,000**



**13** Child care centres and **12** school care/preschools, **4** kindergardens and **7** primary schools, **4** high schools, **4** super schools



**1** hospital  
**14** medical centres



Median 3 bedroom house price: **\$291,750**  
Median 3 bedroom house rent: **\$320 per week**

Located in North-western Victoria, Mildura sits on the banks of the Murray River. It is a major service centre for around 60,000 people from the catchment area. Mildura is home to many Aboriginal tribes, including the Latje Latje and Paakantyi people. The area is known by some dialects as 'Red earth and dust'. It is a paradise for anyone who loves the outdoors. Mildura is a premier food production area with over 98 per cent of Australia's dried vine fruit and the internationally acclaimed gourmet pink Murray River salt coming from the region.

### How to get there

Mildura is ideally located between the major cities.

- 400km from Adelaide
- 550km from Melbourne
- 1000km from Sydney
- 800km from Canberra
- Mildura is well serviced by flights, coaches and taxis.

### Other services

- Medical – there is 1 hospital, 14 medical centres / practitioners and 19 dentists in Mildura
- Employment – there are 11 different employment agencies / services to help identify opportunities in the area
- Shops – main shopping precinct is located in Langtree Avenue
- Multiple sport and recreation facilities

### If you want to know more about Mildura

- [Visit Mildura](#)
- [Real Estate Mildura](#)
- [Compare schools - Mildura](#)
- [Preschools and Day care - Mildura](#)
- [Mildura Base Hospital](#)
- [Mildura Sport and Recreation](#)

## Remuneration and relocation package

The MDBA offers competitive commencement salaries, determined by classification under the MDBA [Enterprise Agreement 2017-2020](#), plus 15.4% Superannuation.

If you are relocating, financial assistance may be provided which may include:

- travel expenses for the new employee and their dependents
- removal and/or storage costs, including personal effects, household goods and motor vehicles
- short term accommodation for up to three weeks.

## Benefits

The MDBA offers a range of benefits which are outlined in the [Enterprise Agreement 2017-2020](#) and may include:

- study assistance (if applicable)
- health and wellbeing programs
- eyesight testing
- flexible working hours and arrangements (work/life balance)
- generous leave entitlements
- annual salary increases and progression (if applicable)
- salary packaging.

## Our expectation of candidates

The MDBA's workforce is flexible, dynamic and responsive, with the capacity to respond quickly to emerging issues and rapid change. We are looking for candidates with well-rounded skills who are keen to develop and become part of our team.

Ideal candidates:

- have outstanding skills in communication, liaison, collaboration, leadership, and critical self-awareness
- have the ambition and passion to help achieve the sustainable management of the Murray–Darling Basin
- relish the opportunity to work in a dynamic and relationship-oriented environment
- embody our values
- show a strong interest in learning our business.

## Diversity in the MDBA

An inclusive and diverse workplace recognises and respects individual differences and fosters a work environment free from discrimination and harassment. Valuing our differences enriches our working lives and our professional relationships with stakeholders.

The MDBA is committed to embracing the principles of equity and diversity in its daily business. We aim to:

- respect diversity and provide a fair, harmonious and safe work environment where all employees have opportunities to achieve their full potential.

We value the diversity of the wider Australia community. We encourage and welcome applications from people with disability, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, LGBTIQ+ people, people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds and mature age people.

# The Recruitment Process

The following information is designed to provide candidates with a general overview of the MDBA's recruitment process.

When conducting recruitment exercises, the MDBA prides itself on adhering to the APS Employment Principles as outlined in the [Public Service Act 1999](#) and the [Australian Public Service Commissioner's Directions 2016](#).

## Applying for a vacancy and eligibility

The requirements to apply for a role with the MDBA are outlined in the position description. At a minimum, candidates must be an Australian Citizen. Where mandatory qualifications or affirmative measures apply, candidates may be required to provide the relevant information at the time of applying.

The Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) has a range of useful information about jobs in the APS and applying for them as well as information about interviews and assessments. Click [here](#) for more information.

## Selection criteria

The selection criteria describe factors you need to perform effectively in a role. These factors are based on the Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) Work Level Standards which can be found on the [APSC's](#) website. It is strongly recommended that you read the APSC's detailed version of these standards before completing the application form.

## Applications close and shortlisting

Once advertising has closed, the selection panel commences shortlisting. Shortlisting is an assessment based on the candidate information and responses provided based on the selection criteria via the online application form. Panel members review the applications individually and come together to agree on the final short list of candidates to progress to interview and/or further assessment activities.

**Successful at shortlist** – Candidates successful at shortlisting will be contacted to participate in the next stage of the recruitment exercise. This may be an interview or in some cases candidates will advance through the selection process based on a written application.

**Unsuccessful at shortlist** – Candidates not shortlisted to advance through the recruitment exercise will receive notification of the unsuccessful outcome at the finalisation of the selection process.

## Interview

Once all shortlisted applicants have participated in the interview process, the panel will assess the relative suitability of the candidates to perform the position duties, seek referee reports and finalise the selection report.

## Referee reports

Referee reports are one of the ways to assess the suitability of a candidate. Generally, where a candidate may be found suitable, comments are sought from two nominated referees, which should include a current manager. For some candidates there may be sensitivities around approaching current employers. A decision can be made not to request a report unless the candidate is likely to be recommended for a job.

## The selection outcome

**Successful / merit pool** - Candidates successful at interview may be placed in a merit pool. They will be notified via email and will be offered the opportunity to seek feedback from the panel. Merit pools are valid for 12 months from the date of advertising.

Please note, once a merit pool is established the MDBA is not obligated to use this merit pool and may advertise similar vacancies within that 12 month period.

**Successful / job offer** – When one of the advertised vacancies requires filling (be it immediately or at a later date), merit pool candidates will be reviewed to determine which candidate has the experience or skillset for the particular duties to be undertaken in the vacant position.

Once identified, the candidate will be offered the role. Candidates that are currently employed by another APS Agency may need to allow up to 4 weeks from the date of notifying their current manager (unless otherwise negotiated) before commencing.

**Unsuccessful** – Unsuccessful candidates will be notified via email and will be provided the opportunity to seek feedback from the panel.

## Reviews

Any issues with a recruitment process should be raised with the panel in the first instance.

Ongoing APS employees who have been unsuccessful in their application for promotion up to APS6 level can apply for a promotion review. The only grounds for a promotion review are merit.

Promotion decisions to the Executive Level 1 and 2 classifications are not reviewable on the grounds of merit, however an existing employee can apply for a review of the process conducted on the grounds that there were substantial defects in the selection process. This review of action cannot undo the promotion decision, however may inform improvements in future selection processes.

If you are seeking to have a promotion decision reviewed please visit the [Merit Protection Commissioner's website](#).

# Frequently Asked Questions

## How long does the recruitment process take?

Recruitment processes are dependent on several factors, such as the selection panel, candidates and referees. As a guide, MDBA recruitment processes generally take 45 days from when the position was advertised, to the finalisation of the selection report. Job offers can only be made after the selection report has been approved.

Although all efforts are taken to complete the process in as short a time frame as possible, unforeseen circumstances may prolong the procedure.

## What is merit?

The MDBA recruits staff based on merit, which means that from a field of candidates, we need to select the best person for the job. To do this we compare and weigh-up the skills, experience and abilities of each candidate. We use different tools and techniques, such as written applications, interviews and/or work-sample tests, to collect the evidence we need to make a merit-based decision.

## What is a merit pool?

A merit pool is comprised of a pool of candidates who have been found suitable following a recruitment process. Merit pools are grouped by order of merit, for example, 'highly suitable' or 'suitable' candidates.

Merit pools are valid for 12 months from the date of advertising. A job offer can be made at any time within the 12 month period. The merit pool may also be used to fill similar vacancies to the position originally advertised.

Other APS Agencies are also able to use merit pools created by other agencies to fill vacant jobs where the duties are similar and certain requirements are met.

## I'm in the merit pool – will I be given a job?

Being placed in a merit pool is not a job offer. It means you have been found suitable following the recruitment process, but at that point in time you are not being offered a position. However, you could be made a job offer at any time while the merit pool is valid.

## I have a disability - will I be excluded from the recruitment process?

You cannot be excluded if your application shows you are able to undertake the inherent requirements of the job if reasonable adjustments are put in place.

Suitability is determined during the recruitment process and is based on merit and comparative assessment of candidates.

## I have a disability - how do I opt into the RecruitAbility scheme?

When you are completing the application form there is a question in the electronic form asking for you to indicate if you wish to opt into the RecruitAbility scheme. You must 'opt in' to participate into the scheme.

## How do I complete my application?

To apply for a position with the MDBA, you are required to submit a new application through our online recruitment system. You will need to:

- Address the selection criteria by providing examples of your relevant skills, capabilities, experience and qualifications to demonstrate how you meet each criterion. You may also be asked to attach a current curriculum vitae or resume that includes:
  - personal and contact details
  - employment history
  - relevant education or trade qualifications
  - equity and diversity details (optional).
- Provide the names and contact details of at least two referees who can comment on your work performance against each selection criterion.

Please give enough details to enable the selection committee to make an informed assessment of your claims. You will need to adhere to the to the word limit stipulated for the selection criteria.

You must lodge your application by the specified closing date.

## Further assistance

If you have any queries regarding the progress of your application or require further information, please email the Contact Officer listed in the position descriptions or contact the Recruitment Coordinator at [peopleandculture@mdba.gov.au](mailto:peopleandculture@mdba.gov.au).