River Murray
Water Resources Report

South Australia

Government of South Australia

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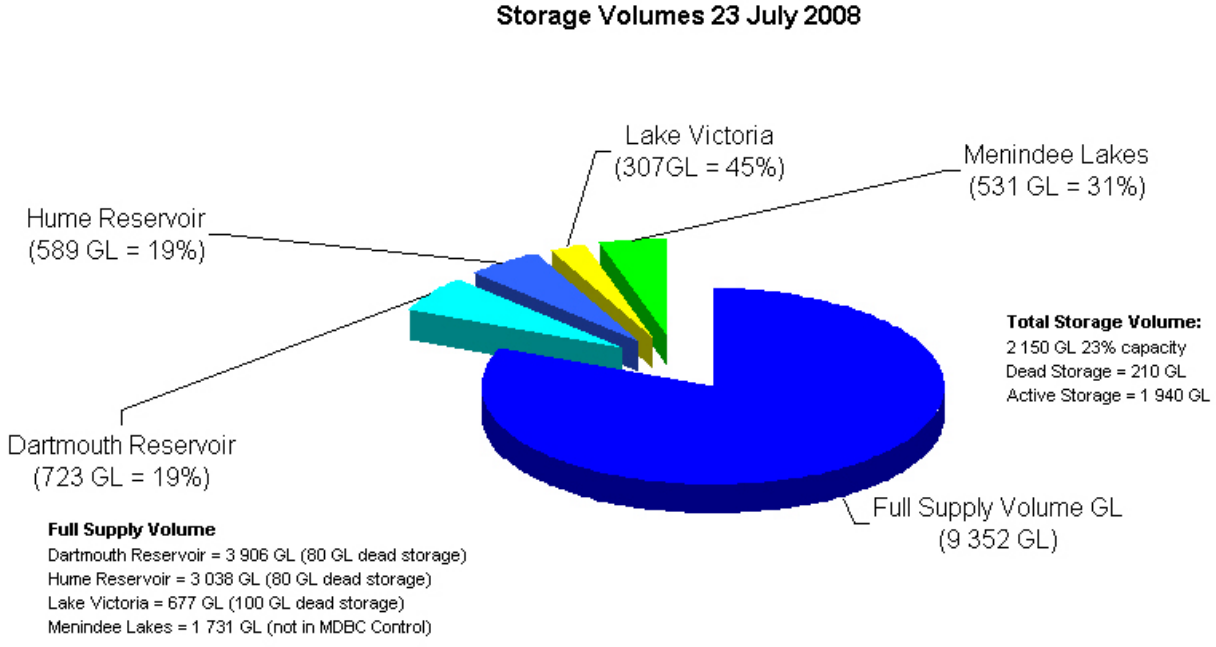
Observations at a glance

- Just 95 GL of inflows were recorded during June 2008, which sets a new minimum low inflow for June.
- River Murray storage volumes remain low, with a total storage of 2 150 GL (23% capacity).
- Salinity and water levels remain relatively stable upstream of Lock 1. However, low flows into South Australia mean that below Lock 1 water levels remain low and salinity levels remain high.
- Irrigators in South Australia began the new water year on 1 July 2008 with a 2% opening allocation and access to 50% of their approved carry-over water.
- A series of projections have been produced showing possible increases to River Murray water allocations under various water availability scenarios for South Australia during 2008-09.

Murray-Darling Basin storages

The main Murray-Darling Basin storages remain at low levels for this time of the year. **Figure 1** shows that the volume of water currently in storage is about 2 150 GL (23% capacity), compared to 1 586 GL (17% capacity) at the same time last year. The long-term average storage volume for this time of the year is about 6 455 GL (69% capacity).

Figure 1: Storage volumes at 23 July 2008



The current storage volume includes:

- Water held in Menindee Lakes (531 GL, all of which is under NSW control);
- Water set aside from 2007-08 for delivery and use in 2008-09 for critical human needs and irrigation carry-over; and
- Water released from the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme during 2007-08 for use in 2008-09.

Table 1 shows the approximate storage volume for this time of the year for the past eight years.

Table 1: July storage levels since 2001

Date	Storage Volume
July 2008	2 150 GL (23% capacity)
July 2007	1 586 GL (17% capacity)
July 2006	3 829 GL (41% capacity)
July 2005	3 766 GL (40% capacity)
July 2004	2 976 GL (32% capacity)
July 2003	2 260 GL (24% capacity)
July 2002	4 860 GL (52% capacity)
July 2001	6 950 GL (75% capacity)

River Murray inflows

River Murray system inflows remain at historically low levels with only about 95 GL received during June 2008. This was less than the previous recorded minimum of 105 GL in June 2006, highlighting the fact that the River Murray system remains in serious drought. Inflows of about 220 GL were recorded in June 2007 while the long-term average inflow for June is 680 GL.

Last week the Murray-Darling Basin Commission reported that inflows to the Murray system (excluding Darling inflows and Snowy releases) during the period 1 –17 July 2008 were 110 GL. The minimum inflow for July is about 130 GL, recorded in 2006 compared to the long-term average for July of about 1 200 GL.

Salinity and water levels in South Australia

Table 2 shows the current water levels and salinity at selected locations. Salinity at Lock 2 (upstream of Morgan) is currently 437 EC, compared to an average of about 597 EC at the same time last year.

Due to the limited water available to South Australia there is not enough water to maintain levels below Lock 1 and salinity levels remain high. Currently, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is -0.4m AHD compared to about 0.2m AHD in early July last year. Lake Albert is about -0.31m AHD. The water level in lake Albert is being maintained by pumping water from Lake Alexandrina.

Salinity at Murray Bridge averaged about 605 EC last week compared to about 505 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Alexandrina (Milang) was averaging about 4 015 EC last week.

Table 2: Salinity and water levels

	Actual Water Levels at 23/07/08		Full Supply Level Level	Variation from Pool Level	Current EC Level
	U/S mAHD	D/S m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	
Lock 6	19.20	16.27	19.25	-0.05	300
Lock 5	16.34	13.30	16.30	0.04	356
Lock 4	13.26	10.00	13.20	0.06	456
Lock 3	9.83	6.31	9.80	0.03	449
Lock 2	6.22	3.47	6.10	0.12	435
Lock 1	3.40	-0.35	3.20	0.20	460
Lake Alexandrina (Milang)	-0.40				4091
Lake Albert (Meningie)	-0.31				
Goolwa					21123
Lake Alexandrina and Albert water and salinity Levels based on 5 day average					
Water levels below Lock 1 are affected by wind and will vary throughout the day					
EC Readings below Lock 1 are daily averages and will vary throughout the day					

To view regularly updated water level, flow and salinity data visit DWLBC's new River Murray data website http://data.rivermurray.sa.gov.au
and the Murray-Darling Basin Commission's River Information Centre at:
www.mdbc.gov.au/subs/rmw_backup/riverdata/imagemaps/default.htm

DWLBC's new River Murray data website contains additional water quality information such as pH and turbidity for selected sites along the River Murray and Lower Lakes.

Water sharing rules for South Australia for 2008-09

Under the water sharing rules agreed by First Ministers, during 2008-09 South Australia will receive a one third share of the shared resource inflows (ie the unregulated inflows into Hume, Dartmouth storages and the Kiewa River along with some water from the Snowy Hydro Scheme). From its share, South Australia is required to repay its drought imbalance from 2007-08 at a rate of 50% of its share until this imbalance reaches 0 GL. The imbalance is currently 73 GL (at the end of June 2008).

South Australia has received sufficient water to provide for a small allocation of 2%, and irrigators also can access 50% of their approved carry-over volume.

Monthly updates about South Australia's water availability will be issued by the Minister for the River Murray on the 15th of each month (or the first business day thereafter).

South Australian irrigation allocation projections for 2008-09

A series of projections have been produced for irrigators, which show the likelihood of possible monthly increases to River Murray water allocations under different flow scenarios during 2008-09 (**Table 3**). The projections take into account the need to share water between irrigation, critical needs reserves for 2009-10, environmental use and flows into the Lower Lakes. If inflow conditions remain low, it will continue to be difficult to provide water for all competing demands.

Table 3: Possible irrigation allocations under different scenarios

Scenario	End September 2008	End November 2008	End January 2009	End March 2009
100% chance (minimum inflows)	2%	2%	2%	2%
95% chance	6%	6%	6%	6%
90% chance	9%	9%	9%	9%
85% chance	11%	11%	11%	11%
75% chance	12%	21%	26%	30%
50% chance	32%	56%	66%	72%

The projections are updated monthly. The latest projections can be found on DWLBC's website at www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html under the heading 'Water availability diagrams'.

River Murray drought public meetings

Six River Murray drought meetings will be held in the week commencing Monday 4 August. These meetings will provide River Murray communities with the latest information about the drought and water security measures. They will include information about recently announced Murray Futures projects. The Minister for the River Murray, Karlene Maywald, and other speakers will be at the meetings to provide advice and information and answer questions.

The general public is welcome to attend these meetings. They will be held at:
Goolwa, Monday 4 August, 7pm-9pm, Centennary Hall, Cadell Street;
Murray Bridge, Tuesday 5 August, 9.30am–11.30am, Murray Bridge Racing Club, Maurice Road;
Langhorne Creek, Tuesday 5 August, 2pm-4pm, Football Clubrooms;
Meningie, Wednesday 6 August, 11am-1pm, Meningie Bowling Club;
Waikerie, Thursday 7 August, 10am-12pm, Waikerie Club, Crush Terrace;
Renmark, Thursday 7 August, 2.30pm-4.30pm (as part of the Riverland Development Corporation's Climate Change Forum), Renmark Sport Club, Paringa Street.

For further information, contact the SA Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management (NRM) Board on 8532 1432.

Weather outlook

The national rainfall outlook over the mid-winter to early spring period (July to September 2008) shows a shift towards drier and warmer than average conditions across the southern Murray-Darling Basin. There is a 30-45% chance of exceeding median rainfall and a 55-70% chance of exceeding median maximum temperatures.

For further information visit the Bureau of Meteorology website at www.bom.gov.au

Further information on River Murray conditions and rainfall forecasts can be obtained from the following websites:

Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation **www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au**
SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board **www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au**
Murray-Darling Basin Commission **www.mdbc.gov.au**
SA Water Daily Reports **www.riverland.net.au/~heinz/mdbcrep.htm**
Bureau of Meteorology **www.bom.gov.au**
Queensland Department of Primary Industry **www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au**