



# South Australia

# River Murray Water Resources Report



ISSUE 25: 17 October 2008

## Observations at a glance

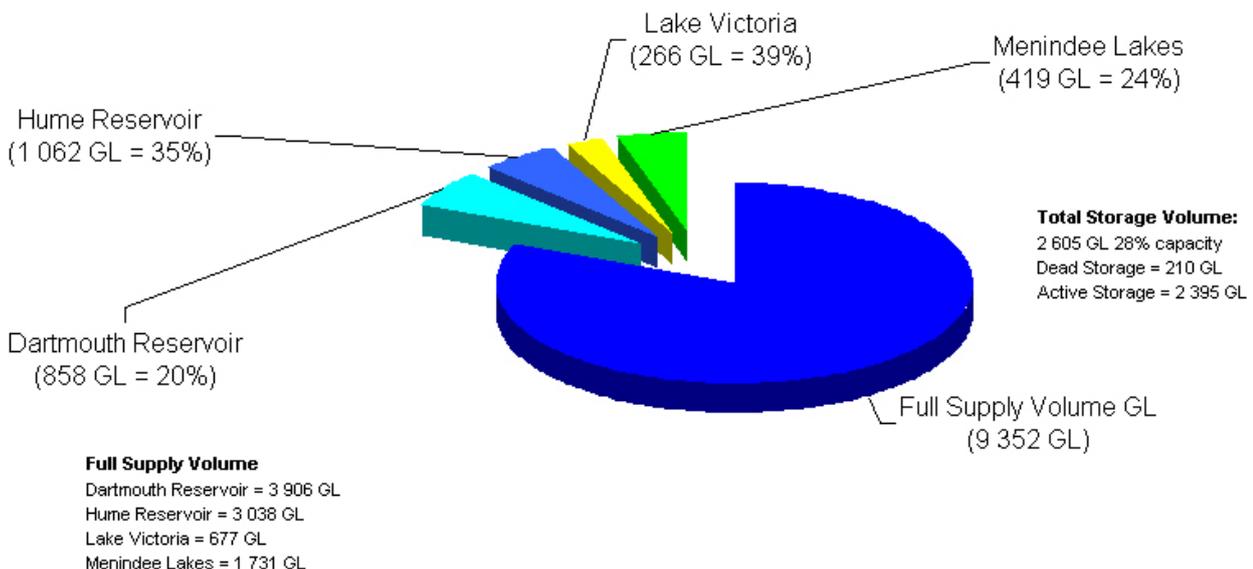
- River Murray irrigation allocations will increase from 11% to 15% on 1 November 2008 following a slight improvement in water availability to South Australia.
- Allocation announcements have also been made in New South Wales and Victoria.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 2 605 GL (28% capacity), compared to about 2 107 GL (23 % capacity) at the same time last year.
- Flows to SA have been increased from 3 400 ML/day to 3 500 ML/day to prevent weir pool levels dropping during the current warmer weather.
- Below Lock 1 water levels remain low and salinity levels remain high due to reduced flows into South Australia.

## Murray-Darling Basin storages

The volume of water in storage in Hume and Dartmouth Reservoirs, Lake Victoria and Menindee Lakes is currently 2 605 GL (28% capacity), compared to about 2 107 GL (23% capacity) at the same time last year. The long-term average volume held at this time of year is 7 130 GL (76%), and the storages usually peak by the end of October at 7 190 GL (77%). Current storage levels are shown in **Figure 1**.

**Figure 1: Storage levels at 17 October 2008**

**Storage volumes at 17 October 2008**



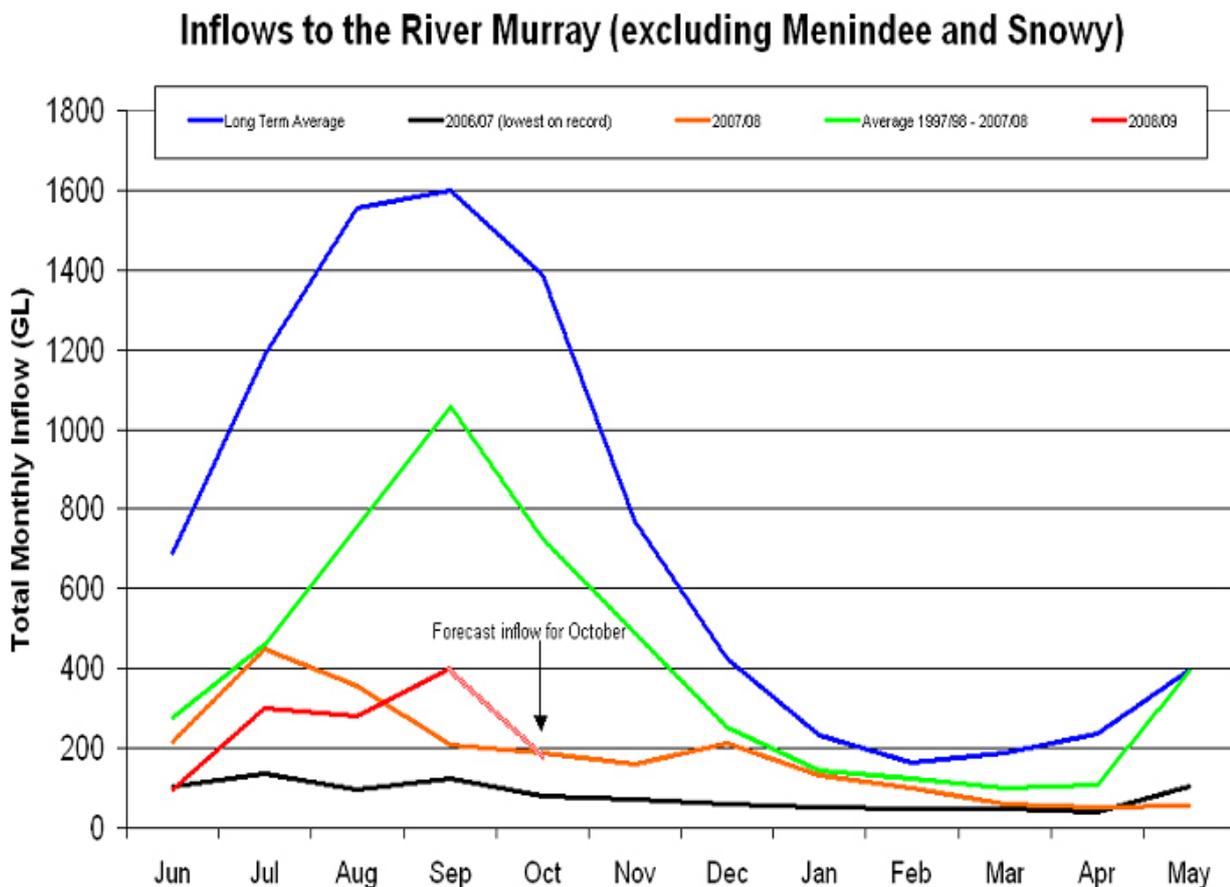
## River Murray inflows

About 400 GL flowed into the River Murray system during September 2008 (excluding Snowy Hydro and Menindee Lakes), compared to 210 GL received in September 2007. But the figure was still well below the long-term September average of 1 600 GL.

The July to October period is critical for River Murray system inflows, because about 65% of the total annual inflow is received during these months. From July to September this year 980 GL of inflows have been recorded. The Murray-Darling Basin Commission predicts about 175 GL will be recorded this month, which would give a total of 1 155 GL for this critical period. The long-term average for the period July-October is 5 740 GL.

Figure 2 shows River Murray inflows in selected years against the long-term average.

Figure 2: River Murray inflows



## River operations

Flows to SA have been increased from 3 400 ML/day to 3 500 ML/day to prevent weir pool levels dropping during the current warmer weather. This warmer weather has resulted in higher evaporation and increased water use for irrigation.

## Salinity and water levels

Water levels in the weir pools above Lock 1 are being maintained at, or very close to, full supply levels and salinity remains fairly low.

Downstream of Lock 1 salinity levels remain high due to low water levels. Salinity in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently 4 447 EC compared to about 2 415 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently 5 309 EC compared to about 2 647 EC at the same time last year.

The water level in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently -0.28m AHD, compared to about 0.23m AHD at the same time last year. The water level in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently -0.28m AHD, compared to about 0.21m AHD at the same time last year.

**Table 1** shows the current water levels and salinity at selected locations.

**Table 1: Water and salinity levels at selected locations**

|   | Actual Water Levels at 17/10/08 |           | 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         |                  |
| <b>Lock 6</b>   | 19.24                           | 16.26     | 19.25                   | -0.01                     | 236              |
| <b>Lock 5</b>   | 16.28                           | 13.21     | 16.30                   | -0.02                     | 262              |
| <b>Lock 4</b>   | 13.15                           | 10.10     | 13.20                   | -0.05                     | 349              |
| <b>Lock 3</b>   | 9.76                            | 6.20      | 9.80                    | -0.04                     | 436              |
| <b>Lock 2</b>   | 6.08                            | 3.30      | 6.10                    | -0.02                     | 567              |
| <b>Lock 1</b>   | 3.18                            | -0.15     | 3.20                    | -0.02                     | 613              |
| <b>Lake Alexandrina (Milang)</b>  | -0.28                           |           |                         |                           | 4 447            |
| <b>Lake Albert (Meningie)</b>   | -0.28                           |           |                         |                           | 5 309            |
| <b>Goolwa</b>   | -0.22                           |           |                         |                           | 15 466           |
| <a href="#">Lake Alexandrina and Albert water and salinity Levels based on 5 day average</a>    |                                 |           |                         |                           |                  |
| <a href="#">Water levels below Lock 1 are affected by wind and will vary throughout the day</a> |                                 |           |                         |                           |                  |
| <a href="#">EC Readings below Lock 1 are daily averages and will vary throughout the day</a>    |                                 |           |                         |                           |                  |

## Water allocations in South Australia and interstate

### South Australia

Minister for the River Murray Karlene Maywald announced on 15 October 2008 that River Murray irrigation allocations are to increase from 11% to 15% from 1 November 2008 due to a slight improvement in water availability to South Australia.

Additional inflows into the River Murray system during September has resulted in sufficient water being available for South Australia to make this further allocation and to reserve some water for critical human needs in 2009-10.

The increase compares to the 16% allocation available to irrigators in November 2007. For further information, see the Minister's full announcement at [www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/assets/files/MR\\_allocations15Oct2008.pdf](http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/assets/files/MR_allocations15Oct2008.pdf)

### NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee

Murray High Security allocations have increased from 80% to 95%, and a General Security allocation of 2% has also been announced. This is the first time since 2006 that a General Security allocation announcement has been made.

Murrumbidgee High Security allocations remain at 95% and General Security allocations have increased from 5% to 9% (with 7% available now and 2% after February 2009).

The full announcement from the NSW Department of Water and Energy can be viewed at [www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mm20081015\\_3941.html](http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mm20081015_3941.html)

### Victoria

Goulburn-Murray Water has announced increased seasonal allocations in the Murray and Goulburn Systems. Murray High Reliability Water Shares have increased from 13% to 17% and Goulburn High Reliability Water Shares have increased from 9% to 12%.

The full announcement from Goulburn-Murray Water can be viewed at [www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/allocations20081015.html](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/allocations20081015.html)

## Weather outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology has released its rainfall and temperature outlook for October to December 2008. It shows there is a 40-55% chance of exceeding median rainfall over the southern Murray-Darling Basin and a 55-65% chance of exceeding median rainfall in the northern Murray-Darling Basin.

The latest temperature forecast for October to December 2008 shows a strong shift towards warmer conditions over the southern Murray-Darling Basin, where there is a 65-80% chance of exceeding median maximum temperatures. In the northern Murray-Darling Basin there is a 60-70% chance of exceeding median temperature.

**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](http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au)

SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board [www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au](http://www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au)

Murray-Darling Basin Commission [www.mdbc.gov.au](http://www.mdbc.gov.au)

SA Water Daily Reports [www.riverland.net.au/~heinz/mdbcrep.htm](http://www.riverland.net.au/~heinz/mdbcrep.htm)

Bureau of Meteorology [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)

Queensland Department of Primary Industry [www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au](http://www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au)

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