



South Australia

River Murray Water Resources Report



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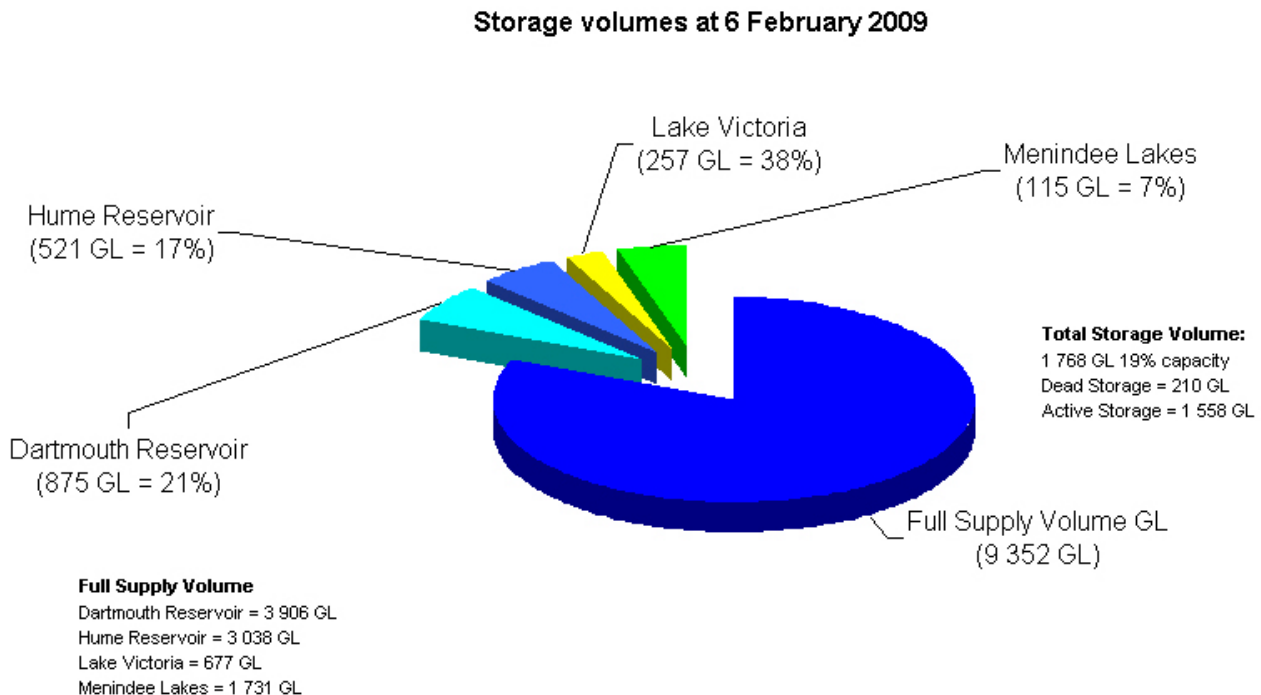
Observations at a glance

- River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia increased to 18% from 1 February 2009.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 1 768 GL (19% capacity), compared to about 1 868 GL (20% capacity) at the same time last year.
- River Murray irrigators can again carry-over water for use next financial year, but applications must be received by 27 February 2009.
- 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 1 768 GL (19% capacity), compared to about 1 868 GL (20% capacity) at the same time last year. Current storage levels are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Murray-Darling Basin storages



River Murray inflows

Inflows into the River Murray system remain extremely low. From June 2008 to the end of January 2009 the total inflow was just 1 660 GL, compared to 1 930 GL for the same period last year, and the long-term average of 7 850 GL.

Just 70 GL flowed into the system in January 2009, compared to 132 GL in January 2008. The long-term January average is 234 GL.

The prospect of any significant improvement in River Murray water resources over summer remains low.

River operations

Due to hot weather over the last two weeks the flow to SA was originally set at 5 000 ML/day from 1 February, however the flow has been increased to 5 500 ML/day until 10 February to maintain flows over Lock 1. All weir pools are slightly below their normal full supply level and while dry conditions remain SA Water and DWLBC have agreed to keep all weir pools at selected levels, which are outlined below:

- Lock 6 = 19.18m (FSL = 19.25m)
- Lock 5 = 16.26m (FSL = 16.30m)
- Lock 4 = 13.10m (FSL = 13.20m)
- Lock 3 = 9.77m (FSL = 9.80m)
- Lock 2 = 6.06m (FSL = 6.10m)
- Lock 1 = 3.15m (FSL = 3.20m)

There is insufficient water available to ensure all weir pools are maintained at the normal full supply level and to maintain flows over Lock 1 to allow for extractions and to provide for a flow during the year of 350 GL past Wellington.

Salinity and water levels

Salinity levels above Lock 1 remain fairly low. However, downstream of Lock 1 salinity levels remain high due to low water levels. Salinity in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently 5 863 EC compared to about 3 619 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently 8 729 EC compared to about 4 460 EC at the same time last year.

The water level in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently -0.80m AHD, compared to about -0.31m AHD at the same time last year. The water level in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently -0.48m AHD, compared to about -0.51m AHD at the same time last year.

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

Table 1: Salinity and water levels at selected locations

	Actual Water Levels at 5/02/09		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	19.17	16.33	19.25	-0.08	285
Lock 5	16.26	13.25	16.30	-0.04	309
Lock 4	13.10	10.25	13.20	-0.10	344
Lock 3	9.74	6.13	9.80	-0.06	378
Lock 2	6.02	3.23	6.10	-0.08	469
Lock 1	3.14	-0.60	3.20	-0.06	495
Lake Alexandrina (Milang)	-0.80				5 863
Lake Albert (Meningie)	-0.48				8 729
Goolwa	-0.85				29 063
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					

Water allocations in South Australia and interstate

River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia increased to 18% from 1 February 2009. Further information about River Murray allocations in SA is available at www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html#RiverMurraywaterrestrictions

The latest information about allocations in New South Wales is available at www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mr_toc_currnr.html

The latest information about allocations in Victoria is available at www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/

Carry-over option again available to irrigators

South Australian irrigators will be able to carry over all of their allocations not used in 2008-09 into the 2009-10 water year. This includes water previously carried forward from 2007-08 that remains unused at 30 June 2009. However, unused critical water allocations granted for the survival of permanent plantings cannot be carried over.

Carry-over application forms must be lodged with the Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation on or before 27 February 2009. Late forms will not be accepted.

The carry-over policy, application forms and further information is available at www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html#Carryoverwater

Weather outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's outlook for February to April 2009 shows there is a 50-60% chance of exceeding median rainfall over the Murray-Darling Basin. It also shows there is a 60% chance of exceeding median maximum temperatures.

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

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