

RIVER MURRAY FLOW ADVICE

Flow to South Australia

Issued 10:00, 28 October 2011

This supersedes the previous flow advice update issued by the Department for Water on 21 October 2011. A further flow advice will be provided on Friday 4 November 2011.

FLOW OUTLOOK

The flow to South Australia is currently in the region of 14,260 megalitres per day (ML/day). Flow over the coming week will be in the range of approximately 12,000 – 14,000 ML/day.

Lake Victoria is currently being refilled in accordance with the Lake Victoria Operating Strategy. Flow at the inlet regulator is 7,400 ML/day and flow at the outlet regulator is 800 ML/day. The current storage volume in Lake Victoria is 621 gigalitres (91% capacity). Lake Victoria is expected to be full during November 2011.

Unregulated flow to South Australia is expected to cease in early November 2011, unless further rainfall and high flow occurs and irrigation demands upstream are lower than forecast.

The flow over Lock 1 is currently around 12,300 ML/day.

River Murray water users should note that water levels are returning to normal pool level and adjustments to pumping infrastructure may be required to maintain access to water. As the water level reduces, boat owners should be mindful of changed river conditions and may need to regularly check mooring ropes.

Over the coming months a multi-site environmental watering event may be implemented, which will require bulk water releases from upstream storages. The objective of this multi-site watering is to build upon the benefits of the previous high flow event and associated inundation during late 2010 and early 2011. During the multi-site environmental watering event, along with other probable transfers of environmental water from upstream storages, environmental water will bypass Lake Victoria to provide environmental benefits in South Australia. Updates on the projected flow rates will be provided in future flow advices.

The proposed delivery of environmental water will not create the high flow rates at the South Australian border as observed in February 2011. Delivery of environmental water is based on a coordinated release strategy to maintain flow at a certain level for a period of time, rather than providing one large pulse.

This year is likely to be the first time since 2001-02 where the majority of South Australia's Entitlement Flow over summer and autumn will be supplied, in large part, from water transferred from Menindee Lakes to Lake Victoria via the Lower Darling River. As a result, turbidity and salinity levels will be higher than have been observed in recent years but these are expected to remain within normal operating range.

Increased turbidity may require some River Murray water users to implement appropriate treatment measures.

SALINITY OUTLOOK

As water levels return to the normal height, some locations along the River Murray will experience higher salinity. Salinity increases will be particularly noticeable in areas adjacent to the main channel.

During a high flow event that results in overbank flow, salt can be mobilised into the main channel of the River Murray from the floodplain, wetlands, creeks and groundwater as the flow recedes. During the drought salinity levels remained relatively low because water was being provided from the headwater storages and tributaries and the flow remained in channel.



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The Additional Dilution Flow that is currently expected to continue until at least mid December 2011 will help mitigate some of the impact of localised salinity increases. To further reduce potential saline inflows, some drainage basins and other infrastructure are being closed.

The Department for Water is increasing salinity monitoring and will undertake detailed modelling of the salt loads.

Irrigators are reminded to regularly check the salinity level at their pump sites and to also access the Department for Water's River Murray Water Data website to obtain real-time salinity data from locations where monitoring sites are established. The data may be accessed via the following link:

<http://data.rivermurray.sa.gov.au/Telemetry/Default.aspx?App=RMW>.

BARRAGE OPERATIONS AND WATER LEVELS IN THE LOWER LAKES

The water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.76m AHD and the water level in Lake Albert is approximately 0.74m AHD. Barrage gates will be operated to maintain the water level in Lake Alexandrina at approximately the current target water level of 0.8m AHD. This will continue to facilitate the freshening of Lake Albert.

Water levels and barrage operations are continually monitored by the Department for Water, SA Water and the Department of Environment and Natural Resources.

It is important to note that water levels in the Lower Lakes may vary considerably with wind speed and direction. This, when combined with the high water level or high tides, could result in seawater backflow events and/or some inundation of low-lying areas around the edges of Lake Alexandrina, Lake Albert or the Goolwa Channel. Barrage operations are being monitored by SA Water to minimise the impacts of any forecast backflow events.

The Department for Water is responsible for monitoring salinity in the Lower Lakes and maintains a network of salinity recording devices at a number of locations. Data collected from this monitoring network assists the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and the Government of South Australia in determining barrage operations, conducting scientific analysis and formulating policy positions.

RIVER MURRAY WATER LEVELS

SA Water and the Department for Water have developed a River Murray Water Level chart (attached) to provide water levels at a number of locations from Lock 10 (near Wentworth) to Murray Bridge.

FURTHER INFORMATION

The Department for Water has published a series of inundation maps for the River Murray. They are available at:

www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au

Up-to-date River Murray flow and water level information can be accessed at the Department for Water, SA Water and Murray-Darling Basin Authority websites:

<http://data.rivermurray.sa.gov.au>

www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Environment/TheRiverMurray/River+Murray+Levels.htm

<http://www.mdba.gov.au/water/live-river-data>

Details of river height and rainfall information in the River Murray within Victoria and New South Wales are available at the Bureau of Meteorology website:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood>

Information on the discharge of acid drainage water into the Lower River Murray can be accessed online at www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au



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River Murray Water Levels as at 26 October 2011

Location	River Km	Normal Pool Level	Current Level (m AHD)
Lock 10	825.0	30.80	30.84
Lock 9 Kulnine	764.8	27.40	27.55
Lock 8 Wangumma	725.7	24.60	24.70
Lock 7 Rufus River	696.6	22.10	22.44
Lock 6 Murtho	619.8	19.25	19.28
Renmark	567.4	-	16.31
Lock 5	562.4	16.30	16.32
Lyrup	537.8	-	13.40
Berri	525.9	-	13.37
Lock 4	516.2	13.20	13.27
Loxton	489.9	-	10.37
Cobdogla	446.9	-	9.86
Lock 3	431.4	9.80	9.85
Overland Corner	425.9	-	6.68
Waikerie	383.6	-	6.43
Lock 2	362.1	6.10	6.26
Cadell	332.6	-	N/A*
Morgan	321.7	-	3.43
Lock 1 Blanchetown	274.2	3.20	3.24
Swan Reach	245.0	0.75	0.96
Mannum PS	149.8	0.75	0.80
Murray Bridge	115.3	0.75	0.72

*N/A – reading not available.

Note that water levels do not take into account local wind conditions.

Regularly updated daily water level information can be found at the following websites:

SA Water

www.sawater.com.au/SAWater/Environment/TheRiverMurray/River+Murray+Levels.htm

Department for Water

<http://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/RMWD/Pages/default.aspx>

Information is also available from the SA Water Hotline on **08 8595 2299**

UPDATES- This advice remains current until the Department for Water notifies otherwise.



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