

RIVER MURRAY FLOW ADVICE

Flow to South Australia

Report #2/2012

Issued at 10:00 a.m. 13 January 2012

This supersedes the previous flow advice issued by the Department for Water on 6 January 2012. A further flow advice and water resource update will be provided on Friday 20 January 2012.

FLOW OUTLOOK

The flow to South Australia is currently being maintained at 16,500 megalitres per day (ML/day) and is expected to remain around this rate for the next one to two weeks in order to assist with the delivery of environmental water to the Lower Lakes to support ongoing freshwater releases into the Coorong. The flow includes Entitlement Flow of 7,000 ML/day plus Additional Dilution Flow of 3,000 ML/day and environmental water of 6,500 ML/day. The flow to South Australia is now completely regulated and the period of unregulated flow, which commenced in mid-November 2011 and ceased on Monday 10 January 2012.

The flow over Lock 1 is currently 17,800 ML/day and is likely to gradually reduce to around 14,000 ML/day over the coming week.

The majority of the current, and any future, environmental water received will flow through South Australia to the Lower Lakes and Coorong. This will assist in the maintenance of barrage releases over summer, improve and maintain salinity levels in the Lower Lakes and to maintain connectivity between Lake Alexandrina and the Coorong. In addition, environmental water from The Living Murray is being delivered to wetlands on the Chowilla Floodplain to enhance floodplain vegetation and wildlife habitat, building on the benefits from the 2011 high flow events. The delivery of environmental water will continue over the next few months.

Additional Dilution Flow is expected to continue into autumn 2012, based on forecast inflows into Menindee Lakes from recent floodwater flowing down the Barwon-Darling River system. This is a forecast only and the flow continues to be subject to weather conditions and operations upstream. Currently the flood peak on the Darling River is at Bourke, where flows of 73,500 ML/day are causing moderate rural flooding. As this flow moves further downstream it is expected to produce a peak flow of 30,000 ML/day at Wilcannia, which is upstream of Menindee Lakes. The flow at Wilcannia is currently 25,200 ML/day. As the flood peak arrives at Menindee Lakes the water levels will again rise above full supply during February 2012.

The NSW Office of Water, together with the State Water Corporation, is continuing to actively manage releases from Menindee Lakes and the peak will be re-regulated in order to minimise potential flooding impacts on downstream communities along the Lower Darling River. Releases from Menindee Lakes were 24,000 ML/day earlier this week and have now been reduced to 18,000 ML/day with further reductions planned to target a normal regulated release of 9,000 ML/day by the end of January 2012.

SALINITY OUTLOOK

The continuation of Additional Dilution Flow will help mitigate some of the impact of localised salinity increases. The Department for Water continues to undertake detailed modelling of the salt loads. Irrigators are reminded to check the salinity levels regularly at their pump sites and also to access the Department for



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WATER IS GOOD

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 0.68m AHD and the water level in Lake Albert is slightly lower at approximately 0.65m AHD. Barrage gates are currently being operated to provide a release in the order of 5,000 to 6,000 ML/day. This rate is expected to be maintained over the coming week. Lake levels should continue to remain in the order of 0.55m to 0.75m AHD over the coming weeks. 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



River Murray Water Levels as at 11 January 2012

Location	River Km	Normal Pool Level	Current Level (m AHD)
Lock 10	825.0	30.80	30.86
Lock 9 Kulnine	764.8	27.40	27.45
Lock 8 Wangumma	725.7	24.60	24.75
Lock 7 Rufus River	696.6	22.10	22.25
Lock 6 Murtho	619.8	19.25	19.28
Renmark	567.4	-	16.33
Lock 5	562.4	16.30	16.32
Lyrup	537.8	-	13.33
Berri	525.9	-	13.27
Lock 4	516.2	13.20	13.22
Loxton	489.9	-	10.58
Cobdogla	446.9	-	N/A*
Lock 3	431.4	9.80	9.77
Overland Corner	425.9	-	6.89
Waikerie	383.6	-	N/A*
Lock 2	362.1	6.10	6.19
Cadell	332.6	-	N/A*
Morgan	321.7	-	3.56
Lock 1 Blanchetown	274.2	3.20	3.31
Swan Reach	245.0	0.75	1.04
Mannum PS	149.8	0.75	0.93
Murray Bridge	115.3	0.75	0.86

*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.

