

RIVER MURRAY WEEKLY FLOW REPORT

Flow to South Australia

Report #20/2012

Issued 10:00 am 25 May 2012

This supersedes the previous flow report issued by the Department for Water on 18 May 2012. A further flow report will be provided on Friday 1 June 2012.

FLOW OUTLOOK

Conditions have remained dry across most regions of the Murray-Darling Basin during May 2012.

The flow at the South Australian border is approximately 43,000 ML/day, which is likely to reduce to around 37,000 ML/day over the coming week. The flow is reducing due to lower inflows from major River Murray tributaries upstream of South Australia. Subject to further rainfall upstream, by mid to late June 2012 the flow to South Australia is expected to be less than 10,000 ML/day. As flow reduces the river will effectively “flatten out” between the locks. Water users need to be aware of the rapid recession and should modify pump and other infrastructure accordingly.

The flow over Lock 1 is approximately 51,000 ML/day, and this is likely to reduce to approximately 48,000 ML/day over the coming week.

In New South Wales, inflows to Menindee Lakes have reduced considerably and the volume of water held is presently around 2,000 GL. Releases from Menindee Lakes are being reduced progressively and the flow in the Lower Darling at Burtundy is 19,000 ML/day, after peaking at 20,000 ML/day.

South Australia continues to receive unregulated flow and the total flow to South Australia so far in 2011-12 is more than 9,300 GL.

It is important to note that flow forecasts in this advice are based on the information available at the time of preparation. They may change as new gauging information becomes available, or due to further rainfall events or changing operations upstream. Flow forecasts are dependent on predictions made by the Bureau of Meteorology, Murray-Darling Basin Authority and water management agencies in upstream jurisdictions. Forecasts will be revised as new information becomes available.

BARRAGE OPERATIONS AND WATER LEVELS IN THE LOWER LAKES

The water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.73m AHD and the level in Lake Albert is approximately 0.78m AHD.

Barrage operations are continuing to maximise the opportunities to release water from the Lower Lakes, taking into account high swells, tides and winds. Although reverse head conditions are experienced at times, there are negligible impacts on Lake Alexandrina salinity. Releases are monitored carefully and managed to minimise seawater ingress during reverse head conditions, and also to release enough water to prevent high lake levels.

Occasionally, residents and landholders located near the barrages may observe increased salinity in the area's waterways due to reverse head conditions. With large volumes of fresh River Murray water flowing into the area, any salinity spikes are likely to be short-lived.



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WATER IS GOOD

The boat locks at Tauwitchere and Goolwa will continue to operate as normal.

Water levels and barrage operations are monitored closely by the various agencies of the South Australian Government, Murray-Darling Basin Authority and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder.

CONSTRUCTION WORKS AT CHOWILLA

The construction of the Chowilla Creek Environmental Regulator has recommenced this week. Boat operators need to be aware that there is no boat passage at Chowilla Creek adjacent to the construction site.

BLACKWATER AT JUNCTION OF RIVER MURRAY AND MURRUMBIDGEE RIVER

The dissolved oxygen level in the water at the junction of the River Murray and Murrumbidgee River continues to improve and is currently around 8 mg/L. Dissolved oxygen levels at other locations upstream of the Murrumbidgee junction are now stabilising at normal readings.

Blackwater is a natural part of the ecology of lowland river systems during high flows, where accumulated organic matter decays in wetlands or waterways. As the organic matter decays, oxygen in the water is consumed, which results in low dissolved oxygen levels and the water turning black.

RIVER MURRAY WATER LEVELS

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



River Murray Water Levels as at 23 May 2012

Location	River Km	Normal Pool Level	Current Level (m AHD)	1974 Flood Level (m AHD)	1993 Flood Level (m AHD)
Lock 10	825.0	30.80	30.84	33.81	33.32
Lock 9 Kulnine	764.8	27.40	27.69	30.03	29.44
Lock 8 Wangumma	725.7	24.60	25.30	27.6	27.19
Lock 7 Rufus River	696.6	22.10	23.73	25.70	25.24
Lock 6 Murtho	619.8	19.25	19.28	21.03	20.50
Renmark	567.4	-	16.48	18.54	18.04
Lock 5	562.4	16.30	16.31	18.07	17.50
Lyrup	537.8	-	14.31	16.85	16.26
Berri	525.9	-	14.03	15.81	15.74
Lock 4	516.2	13.20	13.58	15.65	15.08
Loxton	489.9	-	12.29	15.05	14.12
Cobdogla	446.9	-	-	13.44	12.38
Lock 3	431.4	9.80	9.94	13.16	12.02
Overland Corner	425.9	-	8.88	12.73	11.58
Waikerie	383.6	-	7.75	11.26	10.24
Lock 2	362.1	6.10	6.94	10.28	9.30
Cadell	332.6	-	-	9.17	8.08
Morgan	321.7	-	5.05	8.85	7.65
Lock 1 Blanchetown	274.2	3.20	3.50	6.81	5.38
Swan Reach	245.0	0.75	2.09	6.06	4.51
Mannum PS	149.8	0.75	0.94	3.15	1.90
Murray Bridge	115.3	0.75	0.78	2.06	1.26

Note that the above water levels may be affected by local wind conditions.



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

Information provided by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder can be accessed at

<http://www.environment.gov.au/ewater/southern/murray/lower-murray.html>

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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