

RIVER MURRAY

FLOW ADVICE-UPDATE

Elevated water levels in the River Murray below Lock 1

Issued: 11am, 29 September 2010

This supersedes the previous flow advice issued by Department for Water (DFW) at 2pm, 21 September 2010.
This is NOT a Flood Warning.

BACKGROUND

High flows due to recent flooding in Victoria and New South Wales are moving down the River Murray into South Australia. Flows at the South Australia-Victoria Border ('SA-Vic Border') have been rising steadily since 31 August 2010.

Current projections from the Department for Water indicate that flows at the SA-Vic Border will peak at around 25,000 to 35,000 ML/day in mid October, and slowly recede during the rest of October. For comparison, the 1974 flood peak was 180,000 ML/day. This forecast may change as uncertainties about transmission losses from upstream states become clearer.

The predicted peak flow rate is within the normal historical flow range for the River Murray in South Australia. Risks associated with this event are low, and mainly relate to the effects of the channel becoming wet again after a significant dry period.

FLOOD RISK ABOVE LOCK 1

Pool levels between the SA-Vic Border and Lock 1 are not predicted to change significantly in response to these flows, except at the upstream end of each lock pool. There is low risk of inundation.

FLOOD RISK DOWNSTREAM OF LOCK 1

Below Lock 1, the Lower Lakes are expected to fill to their capacity.

River level in the River Murray between Lock 1 and the Lower Lakes is projected to rise to the following levels in mid October 2010. (Note AHD refers to the Australian Height Datum):

Reach	Maximum projected level above normal pool (0.75m AHD)	Maximum projected level AHD
Wellington to Murray Bridge	0.1m above pool	0.85m AHD
Murray Bridge to Mannum	0.1m – 0.2m above pool	0.85 - 0.95m AHD
Mannum to Purnong	0.2m – 0.25m above pool	0.95 – 1.0m AHD
Purnong to Swan Reach	0.25m – 0.7m above pool	1.0m – 1.45m AHD
Swan Reach to Lock 1	0.7m – 1.5m above pool	1.45m – 2.25m AHD



At these projected levels, River Murray towns are **NOT** predicted to be affected by River Murray inundation.

For comparison to previous holiday weekends, the projected October peak is compared with levels over the 2010 Easter weekend.

Reach	Projected Maximum level AHD	Projected difference in early October peak level to Easter 2010
Wellington to Murray Bridge	0.85m AHD	1.5m higher
Murray Bridge to Mannum	0.85 - 0.95m AHD	1.5m - 1.6m higher
Mannum to Purnong	0.95 – 1.0m AHD	1.6m - 1.7m higher
Purnong to Swan Reach	1.0m – 1.45m AHD	1.7m – 2.1m higher
Swan Reach to Lock 1	1.45m – 2.25m AHD	1.9m - 2.7m higher

There may be some water over low-lying access roads during October.

People planning to visit low-lying floodplain areas below Lock 1 during October are advised to monitor water levels and road access conditions, and take reasonable precautions to avoid rising waters.

People are advised to monitor the latest weather and flow forecasts and obey any signage along the River Murray or instructions from the emergency services.

For flood-related assistance, call the State Emergency Service on 132 500.
For life-threatening emergencies, call 000.

LEVEE BANKS

Areas along the River Murray between Lock 1 and Lower Lakes that are protected by levee banks are advised that due to prolonged drought conditions and low river levels:

- Levee banks may have deteriorated and could be at risk of failure.
- Floodplain areas including levee banks may have subsided due to soil drying and consolidation.

Projected increased flows may impact on levee banks downstream of Lock 1. People in the vicinity of levee banks are advised to monitor levee bank condition.

If significant structural cracking of levee banks is evident, people are advised to avoid the area, relocate to higher ground and call the Riverbank Collapse Hotline (**1800 751 970**) to report any observations.



RIVERBANK COLLAPSE

The predicted additional flows will raise water levels downstream of Lock 1, including areas known to be at risk of Riverbank Collapse. There is an increased risk of Riverbank Collapse occurring at some locations where soils show signs of cracking.

People living, working or playing along the River Murray below Lock 1 should continue to look out for the signs of potential Riverbank Collapse. These signs include cracking in the river bank, leaning trees or bubbles in the River. Further information is available at the Riverbank Collapse section of <http://www.sa.gov.au>.

To report the signs of Riverbank Collapse or to obtain further information call the free 24 hour Riverbank Collapse Hotline (**1800 751 970**). For life-threatening emergencies, call 000.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Up to date River Murray flow information can be accessed at the DFW and Murray Darling Basin Authority websites:

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

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

Details of river height and rainfall information in the Victorian River Murray are available at the Bureau of Meteorology website:

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

UPDATES

This Advice remains current until the Department for Water notifies otherwise.

