



South Australia

River Murray Water Resources Report



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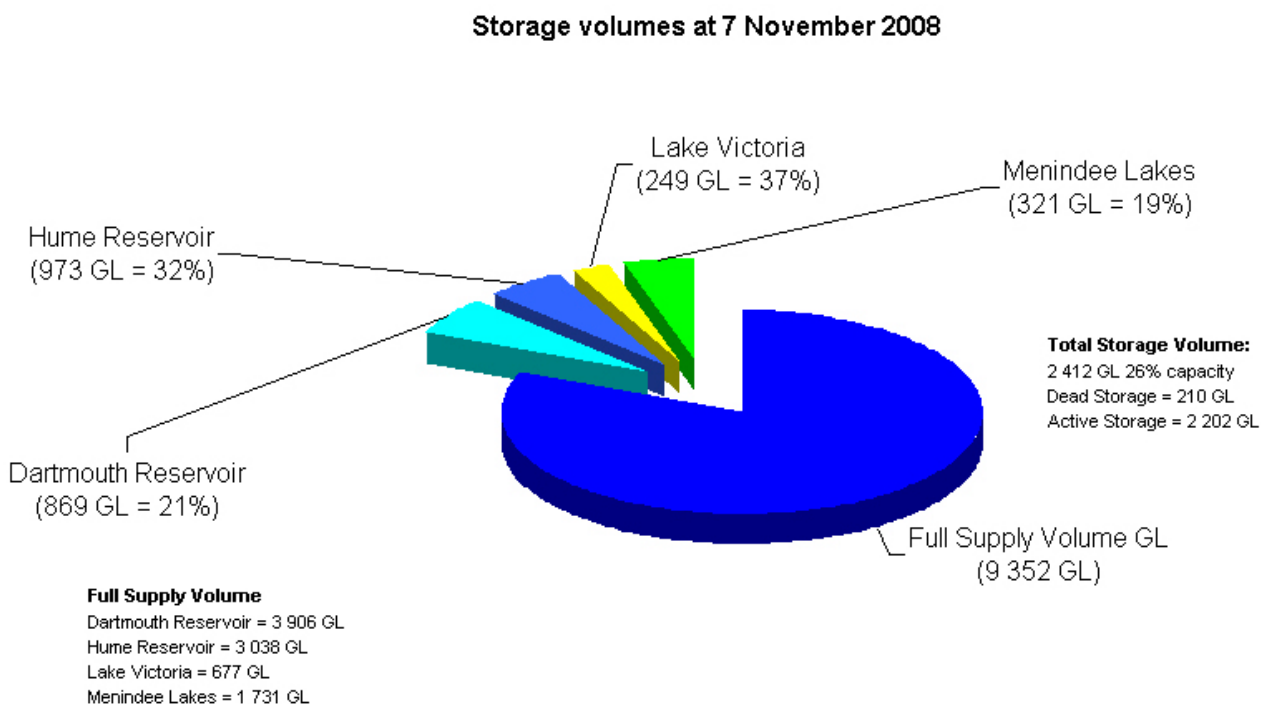
Observations at a glance

- River Murray irrigation allocations increased from 11% to 15% on 1 November 2008.
- Allocation announcements have also been made in New South Wales and Victoria.
- Irrigation allocation projections for 2008-09 have been updated and show there is a 75% chance of allocations increasing to 23% by the end of May 2009.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 2 412 GL (26% capacity), compared to about 1 994 GL (24% capacity) at the same time last year.
- Inflows for the 2008-09 water year remain extremely low and the water year is currently tracking as the 7th driest in 117 years of record.
- There is a low chance of any significant improvement in inflows after a dry winter and spring.
- 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 2 412 GL (26% capacity), compared to about 1 994 GL (24% capacity) at the same time last year. Current storage levels are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Storage levels at 7 November 2008



River Murray inflows

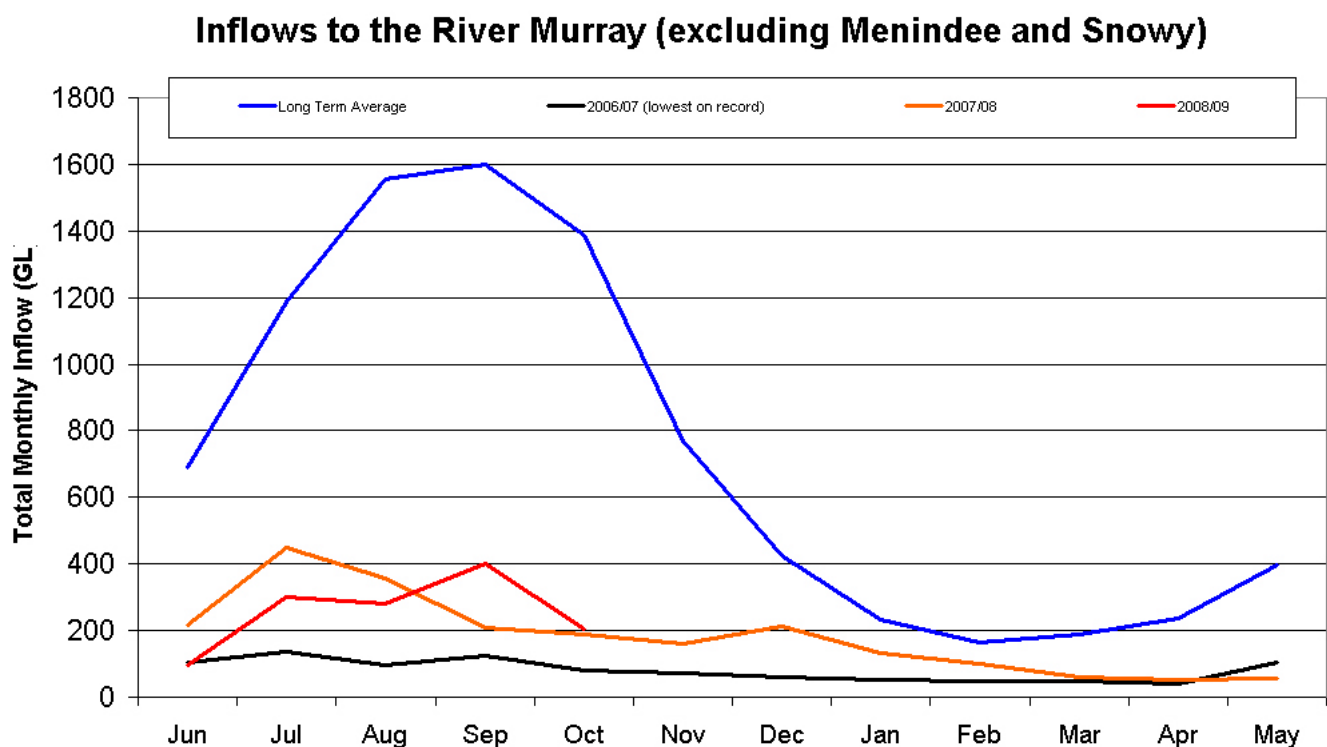
About 205 GL flowed into the River Murray system during October 2008 (excluding Snowy Hydro and Menindee Lakes), compared to 190 GL received in October 2007. But the figure was still well below the long-term October average of 1 390 GL.

The July to October period is critical for River Murray system inflows, because about 65% of the total annual inflow is received during these months. From July to October this year about 1 185 GL of inflows have been recorded. The long-term average for the period July-October is 5 730 GL.

The period from November to March only yields approximately 20% of the annual inflow into the River Murray system based on previous historical records from 1891, therefore the chance of any significant improvement is very unlikely.

Figure 2 shows River Murray inflows in selected years against the long-term average.

Figure 2: River Murray inflows



River operations

Flows to South Australia remain constrained as a result of reduced water availability. South Australia has been receiving below entitlement flows since September 2006, or 37 consecutive months. South Australia's normal entitlement flow for this time of year is 6 000 ML/day.

Flow into South Australia has been increased to 4 200 ML/day (up from 3 800 ML/day in October) to cater for increased irrigation demands, increased evaporation, and pumping for metropolitan Adelaide and country towns.

Salinity and water levels

The water level in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently minus 0.31 m AHD compared to about 0.09 m AHD at the same time last year. The water level in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is minus 0.32 m AHD compared to about 0.05 m AHD at the same time last year.

Salinities in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) remain high at 4 551 EC compared to about 2 447 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is 5 411 EC compared to about 2 660 EC at the same time last year.

Water is still being pumped into Lake Albert from Lake Alexandrina.

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

Table 1: Water and salinity levels

	Actual Water Levels at 7/11/08		Full Supply Level Level	Variation from Pool Level	Current EC Level
	U/S m AHD	D/S m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	
Lock 6	19.21	16.30	19.25	-0.04	228
Lock 5	16.28	13.26	16.30	-0.02	249
Lock 4	13.19	10.20	13.20	-0.01	314
Lock 3	9.81	6.21	9.80	0.01	404
Lock 2	6.09	3.37	6.10	-0.01	478
Lock 1	3.24	-0.30	3.20	0.04	609
Lake Alexandrina (Milang)	-0.31				4 551
Lake Albert (Meningie)	-0.32				5 411
Goolwa	-0.17				18 354
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

South Australia

River Murray irrigation allocations increased from 11% to 15% from 1 November 2008 and some water has been reserved to meet critical human needs in 2009-10. The Minister's most recent announcement can be viewed at

www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/assets/files/MR_allocations15Oct2008.pdf

New South Wales

The NSW Department of Water and Energy has announced an increase for General Security users in the Lower Darling Valley to 30%, but there is insufficient water to increase allocations in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys.

Murray allocations remain at 95% High Security and 2% General Security, and Murrumbidgee allocations remain at 95% High Security and 9% General Security (with 7% available now and an additional 2% after February 2009).

The full announcement can be viewed at:

www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mm20081103_3948.html

Victoria

Goulburn-Murray Water has announced small increases in the Murray and Goulburn Valleys. Murray High Reliability Water Shares have increased from 17% to 19% and Goulburn High Reliability Water Shares from 12% to 14%. Allocations on the Broken, Campaspe, Loddon and Bullarook systems remain at 0% and it is becoming progressively unlikely that water will be allocated this season.

The full announcement can be viewed at: www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/allocations20081103.html

Irrigation allocation projections for 2008-09

Irrigation allocation projections for 2008-09 have been updated and are on DWLBC's website at www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html#Irrigationallocationprojectionsfor200809

The latest projections show there is a 75% chance of allocations increasing to 23% by end of May 2009, and a 50% chance of allocations increasing to 40% by the end of May 2009.

The projections are based on information provided by the Murray-Darling Basin Commission on the River Murray water resources available for sharing between South Australia, New South Wales and Victoria. The projections have been calculated taking into account the low inflow conditions in the River Murray system over the past few years.

The projections also take into account the need to share water between irrigation, critical needs reserve for 2009-10, environmental use and flows into the Lower Lakes. If inflows conditions remain low, it will be difficult to provide sufficient water for all competing demands.

Weather outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology has released its rainfall and temperature outlook for November 2008 to January 2009. It shows there is a 45-50% chance of exceeding median rainfall over the Murray-Darling Basin.

The latest temperature forecast for November 2008 to January 2009 shows there is a 60-65% 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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