



River Murray Water Resources Report

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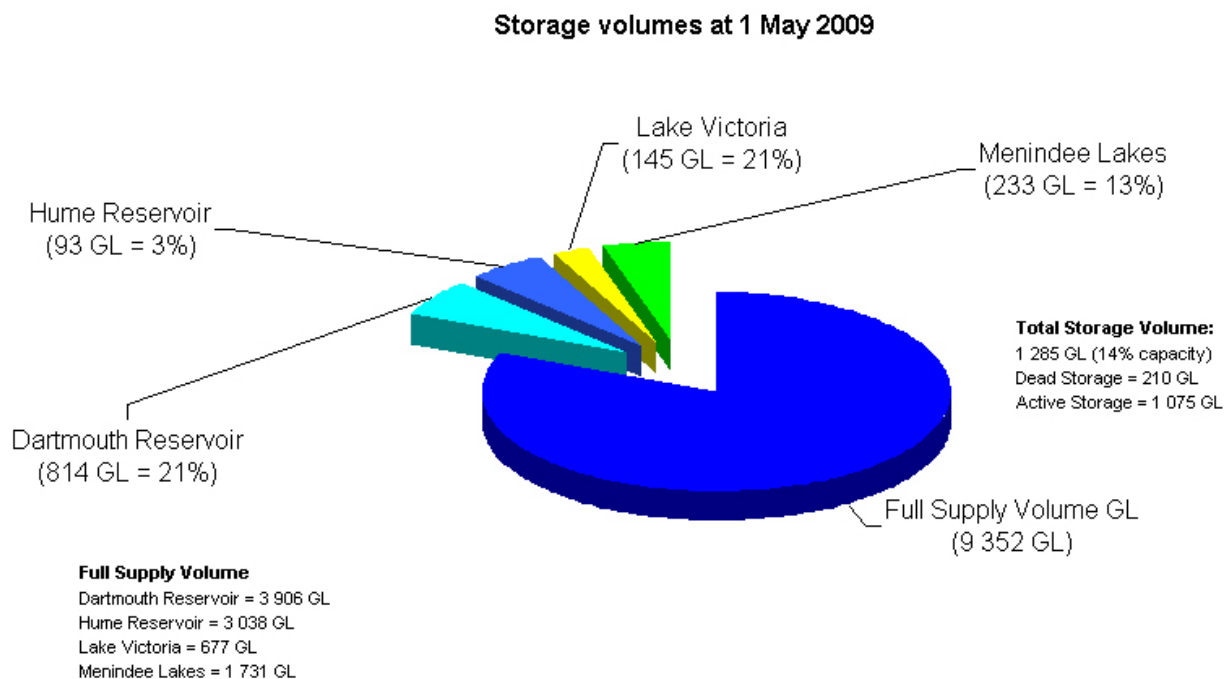
Observations at a glance

- River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia will remain at 18% for the remainder of 2008-09 as extreme drought conditions continue across the Murray-Darling Basin.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 1 285 (14% capacity), compared to the long-term May average of about 4 960 GL (53% capacity).
- 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 1 285 GL (14% capacity), compared to 1 767 GL (19% capacity) at the same time last year. The long-term average for May is 4 960 GL (53% capacity). Current storage levels are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Murray-Darling Basin storages



Rainfall and River Murray inflows

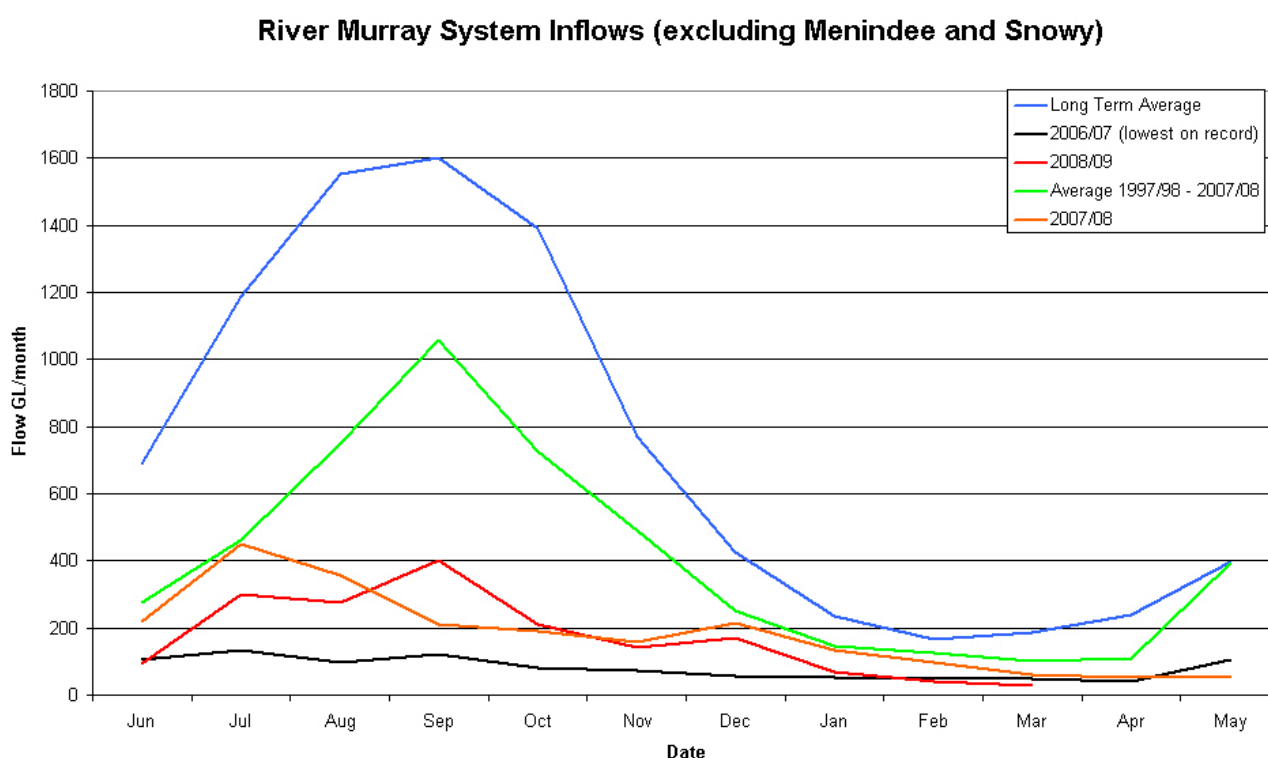
River Murray system inflows have continued at historically low levels despite some recent rainfall. From January to March 2009 about 140 GL was received, which is slightly lower than the previous historic minimum of 150 GL for the same period (recorded in 2007). Inflows for the year to date are the sixth driest in 117 years of record. **Table 1** outlines the year to date inflows compared to previous years and long-term averages.

Table 1: Comparison of inflows for the period June to March

	2008-09	2007-08	2006-07	Long-Term Average	Past 10 Years
Inflows June-March (GL)	1 740	2 090	870	8 220	4 385

Figure 2 shows the monthly River Murray inflows.

Figure 2: River Murray system inflows (excluding Menindee and Snowy)



River operations

Flow into South Australia is currently 3 000 ML/day, which provides for a flow past Lock 1 of 1 400 to 1 500 ML/day. During May, flow to South Australia will be reduced to about 2 000 ML/day, resulting in about 1 200 ML/day past Lock 1.

The average flow into South Australia during May 2008 was 1 600 ML/day, with just 1 015 ML/day flowing past Lock 1.

Salinity and water levels

Salinity levels above Lock 1 remain fairly low. However, downstream of Lock 1 salinity levels remain high due to low water levels. Salinity in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently 5 765 EC compared to about 4 167 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently 9 334 EC.

The water level in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently -1.05m AHD, compared to about -0.4m AHD at the same time last year. The water level in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently -0.38m AHD.

Table 2 shows the current water levels and salinity at selected locations.

Table 2: Water and salinity levels

	Actual Water Levels at 1/05/09		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	16.21	19.25	-0.04	218
Lock 5	16.27	13.24	16.30	-0.03	194
Lock 4	13.18	10.08	13.20	-0.02	275
Lock 3	9.84	6.25	9.80	0.04	366
Lock 2	6.15	3.34	6.10	0.05	447
Lock 1	3.25	-0.78	3.20	0.05	464
Lake Alexandrina (Milang)	-1.05				5 765
Lake Albert (Meningie)	-0.38				9 334
Goolwa	-0.98				27 821
<small>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</small>					

Water allocations in South Australia and interstate

The Minister for the River Murray has announced that River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia will remain at 18% for the remainder of 2008-09 as extreme drought conditions continue across the Murray-Darling Basin. View the Minister's latest allocation announcement at

www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/assets/files/MR_allocations15Apr09.pdf

The latest information about allocations in New South Wales is available at

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

The latest information about allocations in Victoria is available at

www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/

Temporary interstate River Murray water trade deadlines

Irrigators are reminded that applications for water trades to or from New South Wales must be lodged with NSW State Water by 31 May 2009, and trades to or from Victoria must be lodged with the relevant Victorian water authority by 16 June 2009.

Water trade within South Australia

Applications for permanent and temporary trades **within** South Australia to have effect in 2008-09 should also be lodged by **16 June 2009**. This will ensure sufficient time to process the trade by 30 June 2009. Although applications will be accepted after 16 June 2009 it may not be possible to process these applications by 30 June 2009 for use in 2008-09, or carry-over into 2009-10. Trades finalised after 30 June 2009 cannot be retrospective. Licence holders are therefore encouraged to submit trade applications for 2008-09 as early as possible.

Carry-over applications closed

Applications to carry-over irrigation allocations not used in 2008-09 into the 2009-10 water year have now closed. Late applications will not be accepted.

The carry-over policy and further information is available at www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html#Carryoverwater

Weather outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's outlook for May to July 2009 shows there is a 40-65% chance of exceeding median rainfall over the Murray-Darling Basin. It also shows there is a 50-55% 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/%7Eheinz/ex-flow-frame.htm

Bureau of Meteorology www.bom.gov.au

Queensland Department of Primary Industry www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au

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