

RIVER MURRAY FLOW ADVICE AND WATER RESOURCE UPDATE

Flow to South Australia

Issued 10:00 15 April 2011

This supersedes the previous flow advice issued by the Department for Water (DFW) on 8 April 2011. A further update will be provided on Thursday 21 April 2011.

WATER RESOURCES UPDATE

Rainfall over December 2010 to February 2011 was the highest on record for large areas of the southern Murray-Darling Basin and good falls of rain within the Basin continued in March 2011.

As a result of this rainfall, River Murray system inflow for each of the last nine months has exceeded long-term averages. Inflow to the end of March 2011 was 16,260 gigalitres (GL), which is almost twice the long-term average of 8,210 GL for this period.

Around 1,000 GL of inflow was received during March 2011, which is significantly above the long-term average of 187 GL. This is the fourth month in a row that River Murray system inflows (excluding Darling and Snowy inflows) have reached a new record. The record March inflow was heavily influenced by receding flows from February rainfall.

The high inflow to Menindee Lakes and downstream of the major River Murray storages means very little water has been released for consumptive use and a large volume will be held in storage for 2011-12. The total volume of water held in the storages controlled by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority is around 7,670 GL or 83 per cent capacity.

Murray-Darling Basin Authority storage levels as at 15 April 2011 and around the same time last year

Storage	Full Supply Volume	15/4/2011	14/4/2010	Long-term Average (April)
Dartmouth	3,856 GL	2,420 (63%)	1,215 (31%)	
Hume	3,003 GL	2,800 (93%)	478 (16%)	
Lake Victoria	677 GL	445 (66%)	536 (79%)	
Menindee Lakes (FSL)	1,731 GL	2,005 (116%)	693 (40%)	
TOTAL	9,267 GL (100%)	7,670 GL (83%)	2,922 GL (31%)	4,950 GL (53%)

FLOW OUTLOOK - APRIL 2011



Government of South Australia
Department for Water

WATER IS GOOD

River Murray flood waters are receding slowly with flow at Wentworth now at approximately 60,000 megalitres per day (ML/day). Flow at the South Australian border has reduced to around 64,000 ML/day and is expected to steadily fall to around 30,000 ML/day by the end of April 2011. This is subject to further rainfall and changed river operations upstream of South Australia. There are no further flow peaks in transit upstream of South Australia.

With Additional Dilution Flow and Unregulated Flow, the total flow across the border to South Australia is expected to be the highest since 1993-94. The total flow to South Australia between 1 June 2010 and the end March 2011 was 11,865 GL. It is projected that Unregulated Flow will continue to be received until the end of May 2011 and Additional Dilution Flow until at least mid September 2011.

The drop in flow and lower river levels has allowed the navigation pass at Lock and Weir No 5 (near Renmark) to be reinstated. The boating traffic can now pass this weir via the lock chamber.

It is anticipated that in the next two weeks, as river flow and levels recede, most of the navigation passes at Locks 1 through to Lock 9 will also be reinstated.

Lock and Weir No 2 (near Waikerie) has been closed to river traffic for several months due to construction work on the navigation pass and the Lock Chamber being inundated with flood water. The water level will need to drop a further 400mm before the Lock Chamber can be operated. It is anticipated the Lock Chamber will be reopened in late April.

The flow at Lock 1 (Blanchetown) is currently 75,000 ML/day.

BARRAGE OPERATIONS AND WATER LEVELS IN THE LOWER LAKES

The water level in Lake Alexandrina is currently around 0.70m AHD. Water levels in Lakes Alexandrina and Albert and the Goolwa Channel have been high over the last few weeks due to additional water from the recent high flow event and constraints on releasing more water through the barrages and Murray Mouth. Some areas have experienced elevated salinity over the past week due to high tides and storm events. It is expected that salinity will decrease as releases through the barrages increase over the coming weeks.

Over the coming months the use of barrage operations to lower and raise water levels to further freshen Lake Albert and remove salt from the Lower Lakes will continue. It is anticipated that water levels will remain within a range of 0.6m AHD to 0.8m AHD.

In order to decrease and increase water levels in both lakes, it is necessary for some of the gates/bays to be opened and closed at the barrages to maintain the desired water level target. Both water levels and barrage operations are being 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 also vary considerably with wind speed and direction and this, when combined with the high water level, could result in some inundation of low-lying areas around the edge of Lake Alexandrina, Lake Albert or the Goolwa Channel.

People with land close to the shore of the lakes or channel that can be inundated at water levels higher than 0.75m AHD should monitor levels and if necessary move stock to higher ground, and secure and protect any infrastructure that could be inundated.



RIVER SAFETY

Recreational boat users are warned that some artificial structures on the floodplain, wetlands and creeks – including fences, bridges and other structures – could still be under water due to the relatively high flow conditions and could present a risk to their safety.

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 (SES) on **132 500**.

For life-threatening emergencies, call **000**.

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

The Murray-Darling Basin Authority publishes blackwater information on its website, including regularly updated bulletins and maps, at <http://mdba.gov.au/water/blackwater>



River Murray Water Levels as at 15 April 2011

Location	River Km	Normal Pool Level	Current Level (m AHD)	1974 Flood Level	1993 Flood Level
Lock 10	825.0	30.80	31.20	33.81	33.32
Lock 9 Kulnine	764.8	27.40	27.99	30.03	29.44
Lock 8 Wangumma	725.7	24.60	26.14	27.60	27.19
Lock 7 Rufus River	696.6	22.10	24.42	25.70	25.24
Lock 6 Murtho	619.8	19.25	19.78	21.03	20.50
Renmark	567.4	-	16.99	18.54	18.04
Lock 5	562.4	16.30	16.77	18.07	17.50
Lyrup	537.8	-	15.32	16.85	16.26
Berri	525.9	-	14.84	15.81	15.74
Lock 4	516.2	13.20	14.46	15.65	15.08
Loxton	489.9	-	13.15	15.05	14.12
Cobdogla	446.9	-	11.27	13.44	12.38
Lock 3	431.4	9.80	10.68	13.16	12.02
Overland Corner	425.9	-	10.02	12.73	11.58
Waikerie	383.6	-	8.82	11.26	10.24
Lock 2	362.1	6.10	8.03	10.28	9.30
Cadell	332.6	-	6.62	9.17	8.08
Morgan	321.7	-	6.02	8.85	7.65
Lock 1 Blanchetown	274.2	3.20	4.26	6.81	5.38
Swan Reach	245.0	0.75	2.91	6.06	4.51
Mannum PS	149.8	0.75	1.25	3.15	1.90
Murray Bridge	115.3	0.75	0.96	2.06	1.26

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.

