

RIVER MURRAY FLOW ADVICE AND WATER RESOURCE UPDATE

Flow to South Australia

Issued 10:00 19 August 2011

This supersedes the previous flow advice update issued by the Department for Water on 12 August 2011. A further flow advice will be provided on Friday 26 August 2011.

Water Resource Update

The River Murray system inflow to the end of July 2011 was around 1,485 gegalitres, compared to the long-term average of 1,170 gegalitres for the same period. River Murray system inflow during August is expected to remain high. The long-term average inflow for August is approximately 1,540 gegalitres. Around 850 gegalitres has already been received in August and, with further follow up rainfall, it is possible the long-term average inflow could again be exceeded.

The above average inflow to the River Murray system has resulted in a total flow to South Australia of around 1,370 gegalitres from 1 July 2011 to 18 August 2011, which is more than the total flow across the border during 2007-08 of 960 gegalitres.

Murray-Darling Basin Authority storage levels as at 18 August 2011 and at the same time last year

Storage	Full Supply Volume GL	18/8/2011 GL	18/8/2010 GL	Long-term Average (end August) GL
Dartmouth	3,856	2,662 (69%)	1,419 (36%)	
Hume	3,003	2,886 (96%)	1,314 (43%)	
Lake Victoria	677	515 (76%)	380 (56%)	
Menindee Lakes (FSL)	1,731	1,964 (113%)	1,577 (91%)	
TOTAL	9,267 (100%)	8,027 (86%)	4,690 (50%)	7,130 (77%)

FLOW OUTLOOK

All catchments remain wet and volumes in storage are higher compared to the same time last year. As a result, even with average rainfall, good stream flow responses are expected to occur from key locations including the upper Murray and north-east Victoria. Rainfall, inflow and storage conditions across the Murray-Darling Basin will be closely monitored over the next six months and, if necessary, operations such as pre-releases from upstream storages will be undertaken to minimise potential risks associated with high flow events.



The flow to South Australia is around 39,000 megalitres per day (ML/day). High flow across the South Australian border of between 20,000-40,000 ML/day is expected for the next three to four weeks depending upon flow conditions and operations upstream. The flow at Lock 1 is still around 31,000 ML/day. It is anticipated that flow will remain at around 30,000-37,000 ML/day for the next few weeks, depending on the flow to South Australia. Unregulated flow is expected to last into October 2011, with the possibility of further unregulated flow from future rainfall and potential environmental watering events upstream.

The navigable pass at Lock 7, upstream of South Australia, has been removed due to the higher flow within the River Murray.

BARRAGE OPERATIONS AND WATER LEVELS IN THE LOWER LAKES

The water level in Lake Alexandrina is currently around 0.69m AHD. The water level in Lake Albert is slightly higher. Water is slowly draining out of Lake Albert in preparation for an inflow of fresher water. This is part of ongoing barrage operations that will continue to lower and raise water levels to further freshen Lake Albert and remove accumulated salt from the Lower Lakes. Water levels are expected to remain within a range of 0.55m to 0.8m AHD.

In order to lower and raise water levels in both lakes, some of the barrage gates/bays will be opened and closed to maintain the desired water level target. Water levels and barrage operations are 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 vary considerably with wind speed and direction. This, when combined with the high water level or high tides, could result in seawater backflow events and/or some inundation of low-lying areas around the edges of Lake Alexandrina, Lake Albert or the Goolwa Channel.

A number of seawater backflow events have occurred between May and July 2011, which has caused elevated salinity levels upstream of each of the barrages. This situation has generally only lasted for a few days, dissipating as water is again released into the Coorong. Elevated salinity levels have lasted slightly longer in some locations. The potential for these events has reduced with the lower number of barrage gates now open.

The Department for Water is also responsible for monitoring salinity in the Lower Lakes and maintains a network of salinity recording devices at a number of locations. Data collected from this monitoring network informs the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and Government of South Australia for barrage operations, conducting scientific analysis and formulating policy positions.



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



River Murray Water Levels as at 18 August 2011

Location	River Km	Normal Pool Level	Current Level (m AHD)
Lock 10	825.0	30.80	30.83
Lock 9 Kulnine	764.8	27.40	27.51
Lock 8 Wangumma	725.7	24.60	24.86
Lock 7 Rufus River	696.6	22.10	23.51
Lock 6 Murtho	619.8	19.25	19.30
Renmark	567.4	-	16.36
Lock 5	562.4	16.30	16.29
Lyrup	537.8	-	13.69
Berri	525.9	-	13.48
Lock 4	516.2	13.20	13.24
Loxton	489.9	-	-
Cobdogla	446.9	-	-
Lock 3	431.4	9.80	9.73
Overland Corner	425.9	-	7.56
Waikerie	383.6	-	6.60
Lock 2	362.1	6.10	5.96
Cadell	332.6	-	-
Morgan	321.7	-	43.93
Lock 1 Blanchetown	274.2	3.20	3.13
Swan Reach	245.0	0.75	1.27
Mannum PS	149.8	0.75	0.86
Murray Bridge	115.3	0.75	0.76

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.

