

# RIVER MURRAY FLOW ADVICE

## Flow to South Australia

Report #5/2012

Issued 10:00 am 3 February 2012

**This supersedes the previous flow advice issued by the Department for Water on 27 January 2012. Further flow advice will be provided on Friday 10 February 2012.**

### FLOW OUTLOOK

A low pressure system across the Gwydir and Namoi catchments in New South Wales has produced significant rainfall and inflows in the last three days. This event is in addition to the flow event generated from rainfall in November and December 2011 which is still in transit to South Australia. The peak flow from last year's event has just arrived at Wilcannia (upstream of Menindee Lakes) and inflows from the event over the last three days will arrive at Wilcannia in around six weeks time. The highly dynamic nature of the Barwon-Darling River system and associated rivers makes flow forecasting challenging, particularly as the Gwydir and Namoi Rivers were still rising as this flow advice was being prepared.

Due to expected additional flows into Menindee Lakes, the NSW Office of Water increased releases on 2 February 2012 from 15,000 ML/day to 20,000 ML/day. This will provide Menindee Lakes with additional airspace to minimise the impact of future inflows on downstream water users. Additional airspace is now also being made in Lake Victoria to accommodate future inflows. The flow to South Australia increased to 16,500 ML/day on 3 February and is likely to remain around this rate over the coming week. This is a forecast only and remains subject to weather conditions and flows upstream. Further information will be provided in future weekly River Murray Flow Advisories on the duration of releases and higher flows.

South Australia's Entitlement Flow during February is 6,929 ML/day and Additional Dilution Flow (ADF) of 3,000 ML/day is still being received. Any additional flow is deemed to be unregulated flow. The increased flow will help to extend the duration of releases from the Lower Lakes into the Coorong. This has been supported during the last month by the delivery of environmental water provided by initiatives of the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder and *The Living Murray*.

The flow over Lock 1 is currently 14,000 ML/day and will reduce to around 11,000 ML/day over the coming week before increasing again to around 13,000 ML/day.

The unregulated flow and environmental water (previously released and future releases) will flow through South Australia to the Lower Lakes and Coorong. This will assist in the maintenance of barrage releases over the remainder of summer and into autumn, improve and maintain salinity levels in Lakes Alexandrina and Albert and maintain connectivity to the Coorong. In addition, environmental water from *The Living Murray* is being delivered to wetlands on the Chowilla Floodplain to enhance floodplain vegetation and wildlife habitat; building on the benefits from the 2011 high flow events.

### SALINITY OUTLOOK

The continuation of Additional Dilution Flow will help mitigate some of the impact of localised salinity increases. The Department for Water continues to undertake detailed modelling of the salt loads.



Government of South Australia  
Department for Water

WATER IS GOOD

Irrigators are reminded to check the salinity levels regularly at their pump sites and also to access the Department for Water's River Murray Water Data website to obtain real-time salinity data from locations where monitoring sites are established. The data may be accessed via the following link:

<http://data.rivermurray.sa.gov.au/Telemetry/Default.aspx?App=RMW>

## **BARRAGE OPERATIONS AND WATER LEVELS IN THE LOWER LAKES**

The water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.64m AHD and the water level in Lake Albert is approximately 0.51m AHD (wind affected). Barrage gates are currently being operated to provide a release in the order of 5,500 ML/day. This rate is expected to be maintained over the coming week. 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. Barrage operations are being monitored by SA Water to minimise the impacts of any forecast backflow events.

The Department for Water is 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 assists the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and the Government of South Australia in determining 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](http://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.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 provided by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder can be accessed online at:

<http://www.environment.gov.au/ewater/southern/murray/lower-murray.html>

Information on the discharge of acid drainage water into the Lower River Murray can be accessed online at

[www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au](http://www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au)



## River Murray Water Levels as at 1 February 2012

Location	River Km	Normal Pool Level	Current Level (m AHD)
Lock 10	825.0	30.80	30.82
Lock 9 Kulnine	764.8	27.40	27.41
Lock 8 Wangumma	725.7	24.60	24.72
Lock 7 Rufus River	696.6	22.10	22.15
Lock 6 Murtho	619.8	19.25	19.28
Renmark	567.4	-	16.31
Lock 5	562.4	16.30	16.30
Lyrup	537.8	-	13.34
Berri	525.9	-	13.28
Lock 4	516.2	13.20	13.24
Loxton	489.9	-	10.37
Cobdogla	446.9	-	9.72
Lock 3	431.4	9.80	9.70
Overland Corner	425.9	-	6.64
Waikerie	383.6	-	6.32
Lock 2	362.1	6.10	6.11
Cadell	332.6	-	-
Morgan	321.7	-	3.40
Lock 1 Blanchetown	274.2	3.20	3.21
Swan Reach	245.0	0.75	0.85
Mannum PS	149.8	0.75	0.69
Murray Bridge	115.3	0.75	0.63

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](http://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.



Government of South Australia

Department for Water

**WATER IS GOOD**