

# SA River Murray Flow Report



Report #2/2024

Issued 12:00 pm 12 January 2024

This supersedes the previous Flow Report issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) on 5 January 2024. The next Flow Report will be provided on Friday 19 January 2024.

## Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border is approximately 8.5 GL/day and will remain around 8.5 GL/day over the coming week **depending on river operations**.

The current flow at the border comprises the full January Entitlement Flow (7 GL/day) plus water for the environment and interstate trade adjustments.

The flow over Lock 1 is approximately 9.5 GL/day and will decrease to around 8.5 GL/day over the coming week.

It is important to note that flow forecasts in this advice are based on the information available at the time of preparation. Advice may change as new gauging information becomes available or due to rainfall events or changed operations upstream.

## Water levels

Current water levels are updated daily and can be found at the following link: <https://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/River-Murray/SitePages/Daily.aspx>

## Upstream flows

Moderate to major flooding has occurred over recent days on the Campaspe and Goulburn Rivers due to a rainfall event where up to 150 mm fell over these river catchments. The flooding in those locations is lower than that experienced in October 2022.

The Department for Environment and Water is monitoring river levels in Victoria as a result of this recent rainfall, however, it is too early to predict how it will affect the River Murray in South Australia.

Given the higher flows are localised to parts of the upper Murray catchments, it is currently expected that flow from this event will reduce as water moves through the system upstream prior to reaching the South Australian border. The department will continue to monitor the situation and provide regular information on river flows to South Australian communities. The Bureau of Meteorology is responsible for flood prediction, warnings and advice for the River Murray which can be accessed at <http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/warnings/>

More information on upstream conditions and forecasts can be found in the Murray-Darling Basin Authority's *Weekly Flow Report* here: <https://www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/regular-reports-murray-data-storages/weekly-reports>

## Murray Mouth

Dredging operations at the Murray Mouth continue after resuming on 27 November 2023 after a break of just over a year due to high flows scouring sand out of the mouth. Dredging is undertaken to maintain connectivity (exchange of water) between the Coorong and the Southern Ocean.

Barrage releases, combined with dredging, help to maintain flow connectivity of the River Murray Channel to the Murray Mouth and assists in exporting salt from the river system.

Exclusion Zones established around the dredging operations are in place to ensure public safety. Refer to [Notice to Mariners No 61 of 2023](#).

## Barrage operations and water levels in the Lower Lakes

The water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.70 m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.69 m AHD.

The Lower Lakes are being managed to target a daily average lake level between 0.7 m AHD to 0.8 m AHD during January 2024.

During adverse weather conditions, SA Water will operate the barrages to minimise the risk of seawater entering Lake Alexandrina, therefore minimising any negative salinity impacts from reverse flow events.

Gate openings at the barrages can now be viewed on Water Data SA here:

<https://water.data.sa.gov.au/Data/Dashboard/75>

Total daily flow releases from the barrages can also be found on Water Data SA here:

<https://water.data.sa.gov.au/Data/Dashboard/1>

## River Murray River Vessel Waste Disposal Stations

The Lock 3 River Vessel Waste Disposal Station has been out of commission since January 2020 due to a significant infrastructure failure. The nearest alternative waste facility is located at Waikerie. Normal boat waste (domestic or galley waste) can still be deposited at the Lock 3 facility at the present time.

Murray Bridge RVWDS porta loo disposal unit is currently out of service. Repairs have been scheduled for 19th January 2024. Updates will be provided as further information becomes available. The rest of the site is functioning correctly.

You can report any River Vessel Waste Disposal Station issues on 1800 799 065.

If you have any questions, please contact the DEW Engagement Team on [DEW.WIOCommunications@sa.gov.au](mailto:DEW.WIOCommunications@sa.gov.au)

## Environmental news – Waterbirds making the most of the conditions at Goolwa

While roaming around the Coorong recently, our Water Delivery team spotted flocks of familiar faces making the most of the current conditions. Waterbirds such as Australian Pelicans and Great egrets were spotted along the Goolwa barrage and Barker Knoll. Let us know if you have spotted any feathered locals and send us your pictures.



Picture 1: Pelicans at Goolwa barrage.



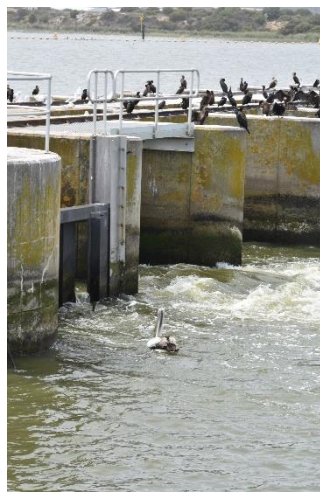
Picture 2: Waterbirds at Barker Knoll.



Picture 3: The stillness at Barker Knoll.



Picture 4: Great egret near Goolwa barrage.



Picture 5: Pelicans loitering at Goolwa fishway.

## Water quality

### Algal blooms

A number of current alerts for blue-green algae have been issued by upstream authorities. They include:

- Murray River at Buronga (**Amber alert**)
- Murray River at Curlwaa (**Amber alert**)
- Murray River at Fort Courage (**Amber alert**)
- Murray River at Lock 8 (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River at Pomona Boat Ramp (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River upstream Pomona (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River at Tapio (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River at Ellerslie (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River at Burtundy (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River at Tolarno (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River at Pooncarie (**Amber alert**)
- Darling River at Menindee Weir 32 (**Amber alert**)
- Great Darling Anabranh at Silver City Highway (**Red alert**)

While no algal blooms are currently present within South Australia, people are advised to avoid contact with any obviously green water or scums if they are encountered as they may cause skin irritations in some people.

South Australian authorities closely monitor the situation upstream and SA Water increases sampling whenever a water quality event is detected to allow for timely action. SA Water, SA Health and DEW monitor the occurrence of blue-green algal blooms in South Australia. SA Water uses the water quality data to continually adjust operations to minimise impacts to water treatment plants and other users located along the River Murray.

Water quality alerts in South Australia can be found on the SA Health website:

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/public+health/water+quality/water+quality+alerts>

More information on current alerts upstream can be found on the WaterNSW website here:

<https://www.waternsw.com.au/water-services/water-quality/algae-alerts>

## Salinity

Salinity levels throughout the River Murray in South Australia are within their typical range. Nonetheless, it is possible that some irrigators may record higher salinity readings at isolated locations. These higher readings are more likely to be observed at the bottom of the water column.

Irrigators are encouraged to monitor the [daily salinity levels](#) provided by SA Water as part of their business operations.

PIRSA has provided salinity management advice for irrigators on its website:

[https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/emergencies\\_and\\_recovery/storms\\_and\\_floods/river\\_murray\\_flood\\_2022](https://www.pir.sa.gov.au/emergencies_and_recovery/storms_and_floods/river_murray_flood_2022)

## Further information

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>River Murray high flows</b>  | <a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray-flows">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray-flows</a>  |
| 2022-23 <b>River Murray Flood event</b>   | <a href="https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray-floods">https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray-floods</a>  |
| 2022-23 River Murray Flood <b>recovery</b>  | <a href="https://www.recovery.sa.gov.au/active-recoveries/river-murray-flood">https://www.recovery.sa.gov.au/active-recoveries/river-murray-flood</a><br><a href="https://pir.sa.gov.au/emergencies-and-recovery/storms-and-floods/river-murray-flood-2022">https://pir.sa.gov.au/emergencies-and-recovery/storms-and-floods/river-murray-flood-2022</a> |
| <b>Water quality alerts</b> in SA   | <a href="https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/public+health/water+quality/water+quality+alerts">https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/public+content/sa+health+internet/public+health/water+quality/water+quality+alerts</a>  |
| NSW <b>fish deaths</b>  | <a href="https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/habitat/threats/fish-kills">https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/habitat/threats/fish-kills</a>  |
| NSW <b>algal alerts</b>   | <a href="https://www.waternsw.com.au/water-services/water-quality/algae-alerts">https://www.waternsw.com.au/water-services/water-quality/algae-alerts</a>  |
| <b>Real-time water data</b> at sites in SA  | <a href="https://water.data.sa.gov.au/">https://water.data.sa.gov.au/</a>  |
| <b>Current daily water levels</b>   | <a href="https://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/River-Murray/SitePages/Daily.aspx">https://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/River-Murray/SitePages/Daily.aspx</a>  |
| <b>Daily flow and level information</b> at key SA Water sites on the River Murray | <a href="https://www.sawater.com.au/water-and-the-environment/south-australias-water-sources/river-sources/river-reports-daily-flow">https://www.sawater.com.au/water-and-the-environment/south-australias-water-sources/river-sources/river-reports-daily-flow</a>  |
| Daily <b>salinity</b> information in SA   | <a href="https://www.sawater.com.au/water-and-the-environment/south-australias-water-sources/river-sources/river-reports-daily-salinity">https://www.sawater.com.au/water-and-the-environment/south-australias-water-sources/river-sources/river-reports-daily-salinity</a>  |
| <b>Real time information</b> throughout the <b>River Murray system</b>            | <a href="https://riverdata.mdba.gov.au/system-view">https://riverdata.mdba.gov.au/system-view</a>  |
| <b>Whole River Murray System</b> updates  | <a href="https://www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/regular-reports-murray-data-storages/weekly-reports">https://www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/regular-reports-murray-data-storages/weekly-reports</a>  |
| <b>Flows in the River Murray System including water for the environment</b>       | <a href="https://www.mdba.gov.au/news-and-events/newsroom?news%5B0%5D=media-type%3ARiver%20Murray%20flows">https://www.mdba.gov.au/news-and-events/newsroom?news%5B0%5D=media-type%3ARiver%20Murray%20flows</a>  |
| <b>Marine safety</b> in SA  | <a href="https://marinesafety.sa.gov.au/">https://marinesafety.sa.gov.au/</a>  |
| <b>Victorian</b> rainfall and river conditions                                    | <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood/index.shtml">http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/flood/index.shtml</a>  |
| <b>NSW</b> rainfall and river conditions  | <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/flood/">http://www.bom.gov.au/nsw/flood/</a>  |
| <b>SA</b> rainfall and river conditions   | <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/flood/index.shtml?ref=hdr">http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/flood/index.shtml?ref=hdr</a>  |
| <b>Climate outlooks</b>   | <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/">http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/</a>  |
| <b>Climate drivers</b>  | <a href="http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/">http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/</a>  |

|                           |   |
|---------------------------|---|
| ID                        | RM-Flow-Report_2024 01 12                                     |
| Classification            | Public I2 A2  |
| Issued                    | 12 January 2024   |
| Authority                 | DEW   |
| Master Document Location  | R:\Water Group\RMO\WRO\04 Communications\Flow Advices\2023-24 |
| Managed and Maintained by | Water Infrastructure and Operations Branch                    |
| Author                    | Water Infrastructure and Operations Branch                    |
| Reviewer                  | A/Director, Water Infrastructure and Operations               |