

# SA River Murray Flow Report

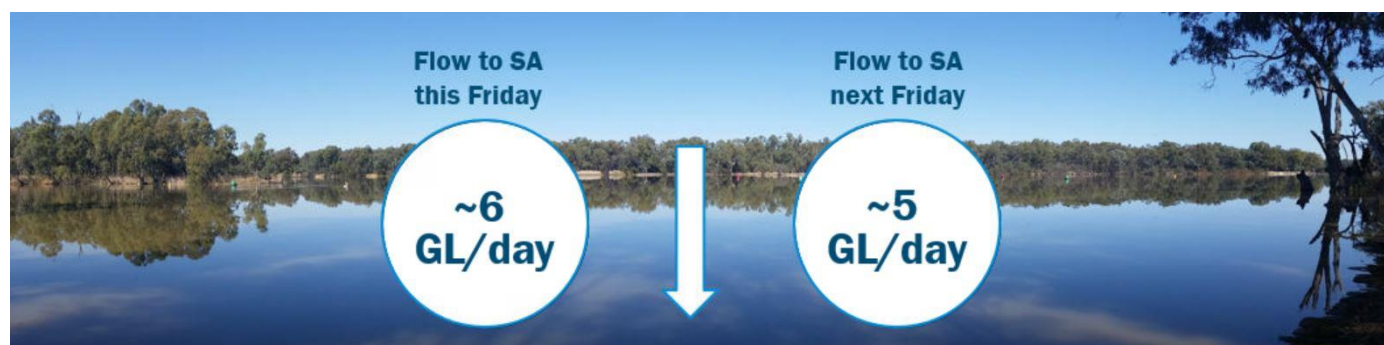


Report #37/2024

Issued 12:00 pm 13 September 2024

This supersedes the previous Flow Report issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) on 6 September 2024. The next Flow Report will be provided on Friday 20 September 2024.

## Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border is approximately 6 GL/day and will decrease to around 4-5 GL/day over the coming week **depending on river operations**.

The current flow at the border comprises the full September Entitlement Flow (4.5 GL/day), water for the environment and interstate trade adjustments.

The flow over Lock 1 is approximately 4.5 GL/day and will decrease to around 4 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 on [WaterConnect](#).

## Upstream flows

Flow at the SA border is expected to decrease and remain stable at approximately 4-5 GL/day for the remainder of September. It is anticipated that flow across the border will increase at the start of October due to planned upstream environmental watering events from multiple catchments. However, flows may change subject to rainfall events.

More information on upstream conditions and forecasts can be found in the [Murray-Darling Basin Authority's Weekly Flow Report](#).

## Water for the environment delivery

A low-level operation of the environmental regulator is underway at the Pike Floodplain initially targeting a raise in water levels up to 15.1 m AHD (55 cm above the normal level at the Pike regulator). This will then potentially be increased up to 15.3 m AHD (75 cm above normal level at the Pike regulator) along with minor raising at Lock 5 by up to 10 to 20cm. Planning is underway to pump water to 2 sites at Pike to water regenerating lignum and black box.

At Katarapko floodplain, a low-level operation has commenced with water levels being gradually raised behind The Splash regulator to up to 2.0 metres (to 12.0 m AHD). A concurrent 10 cm raising of Lock 4 may also be undertaken.

Weir pool manipulation within normal operating ranges at the other SA locks and weirs is under consideration.

The floodplain environmental watering actions are aimed at supporting the significant improvements in condition and regeneration of trees, lignum and understorey vegetation and providing important habitat for frogs, waterbirds and other fauna. The

management of these operations may be adapted depending on River Murray flows, conditions in the River and on the floodplain, and will be informed by the outcomes of environmental monitoring.

Water for the environment continues to be delivered as part of SA's entitlement flow in addition to a small volume from the Goulburn River. Flows at the SA border are expected to remain in the range of 4-5 GL/day throughout the remainder of September.

## Murray Mouth

Dredging operations at the Murray Mouth continue. Dredging is undertaken to maintain connectivity (exchange of water) between the Coorong and the Southern Ocean. Dredging is currently being undertaken on the Younghusband Peninsula and in the Tauwichee channel. Dredging operations may be impacted by severe weather, significant swell and dredge maintenance activities.

Barrage releases, combined with dredging, help to maintain flow connectivity of the River Murray Channel to the Murray Mouth and assist 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 0.76 m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.76 m AHD.

The Lower Lakes are being managed to target a daily average lake level between 0.75 m AHD and 0.85 throughout September.

During adverse weather conditions and high tides, 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. Barrage operations will continue to be undertaken dependent on upstream flows, lake levels and variable weather conditions.

Gate openings at the barrages can now be viewed on [Water Data SA – Barrage dashboard](#).

Total daily flow releases from the barrages can also be found on [Water Data SA – Flows dashboard](#).

## Water quality

### Algal blooms upstream of SA

Numerous amber alerts for Blue Green Algae remain upstream of the Border. An amber alert indicates that the water should be considered unsuitable for potable use and that the water may be unsuitable for stock watering. Water users should use caution and avoid water where signs of Blue Green Algae are present. Details of the current alert locations can be found on the [WaterNSW website – Algae Alerts page](#).

## River Murray 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 hard waste (domestic or galley waste) can still be deposited at the Lock 3 facility at the present time.

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

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

## Intermediate remediation of the LMRIA levees project

The Intermediate Remediation of the LMRIA Levees project is jointly funded by the Australian and South Australian governments, through the Disaster Recovery Funding Arrangements. This project will return sections of government and privately owned levees that were significantly damaged in the 2022-23 River Murray flood to their pre-flood height.

Intermediate remediation works update

- Statutory approvals for the intermediate remediation works and cultural heritage surveys of government and private levees have been completed.
- Sheet piles have been purchased and preparation works undertaken where required, including the testing of materials from quarry pits to determine suitability.
- Works have commenced at Pompoota, Mypolonga and Long Flat.
- The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) is working with the Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT), as the state infrastructure agency, on the procurement of contractors to undertake works.
- A request for tender was issued by DIT in July, with an anticipated award date in October.
- Early stages of procurement and preparation of land access agreements for works on private levees have commenced.
- The Levee Recovery team continues to engage regularly with landholders and irrigation trusts.

Where intermediate remediation works are required for government levees, they will remain closed until the works are progressively completed and subsequent safe access is determined over the next 12-18 months. Any government levee not requiring intermediate remediation work will remain closed pending the outcome of the condition assessment and a safety risk assessment to ensure they are safe for public access. The government levee banks are Cowirra, Neeta, Wall Flat, Pompoota, Mypolonga, Mobilong, Burdett, Long Flat, Monteith and Jervois. Access to private levees is at the landholder's discretion, however, access is not permitted where remediation works are being undertaken.

The safety of the public is of paramount importance and the Department for Environment and Water will keep the community informed of the progress of the project, including when levees may be accessible to the public, through its website and newsletter.

For more information, please visit [Department for Environment and Water – Levees](#)

If you have any questions, please contact Lisa van der Linde, Communications and Engagement Officer on 0437 313 087 or [Lisa.vanderlinde@sa.gov.au](mailto:Lisa.vanderlinde@sa.gov.au)

## Environmental news – Crops of seed pods in the floodplain

Wattle Day is marked on the 1st of September each year, a time when many species of Acacia, commonly known as wattles, are in flower.

River Cooba, one of our three main River Murray floodplain trees, is a wattle whose flowers appear at more variable times of the year. You may have noticed large crops of seed pods following the high flows of 2022 and 2023.

When they mature, the pods break up leaving each individual seed encapsulated in a small woody vessel that can float on water for up to two weeks. The ability of the seed to disperse on floodwaters helps this truly river-adapted wattle to colonise floodplains along the river.



*(left to right, clockwise) Picture 1: River Cooba. Picture 2 and 3: River Cooba seed pods.*

*Photo credit: Michelle Denny, DEW.*

## 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.

## Water data webpage shut down for maintenance

The Water Data SA webpage will be shut down for maintenance on Monday 23 September 2024, between 10:00 am and 4:00 pm.

The telemetry data feeds for surface water, meteorology and groundwater locations and their associated datasets will be down during this time. After 4:00 pm, the Water Data SA webpage and telemetry data feeds should be operating again.

For any queries, please contact [Support.WaterDataSA@sa.gov.au](mailto:Support.WaterDataSA@sa.gov.au).

## Further information

- [SA River Murray Flows page - Department for Environment and Water](#)
- [2022-23 River Murray Flood event](#)
- [Government of South Australia - State Disaster Recovery](#)
- [SA Water quality alerts - SA Health](#)
- [Real-time SA water data](#)
- [Current SA daily water levels](#)
- [Daily flow and water level information at key SA Water sites on the River Murray](#)
- [SA daily salinity information](#)
- [SA Marine safety](#)
- [Real time information - whole of River Murray system](#)
- [Whole River Murray System weekly reports](#)
- [Flows in the River Murray System including water for the environment](#)
- [Water for the environment actions in the Murray-Darling basin catchments](#)
- [NSW fish kills](#)
- [NSW algal alerts](#)

## Bureau of Meteorology

- [SA rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [Victorian rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [NSW rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [Climate outlooks](#)
- [Climate drivers](#)

ID	RM-Flow-Report_2024_09_13
Classification	Public I2 A2
Issued	13 September 2024
Authority	DEW
Master Document Location	R:\Water Group\RMO\WRO\04 Communications\Flow Advices\2024-25
Managed and Maintained by	Water Infrastructure and Operations Branch
Author	Water Infrastructure and Operations Branch
Reviewer	A/Director, Water Infrastructure and Operations