

SA River Murray Flow Report



Report #3/2025

Issued 12:00 pm 17 January 2025

This supersedes the previous Flow Report issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) on 10 January 2025. The next Flow Report will be provided on Friday 24 January 2025.

Flow outlook



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

The current flow at the South Australian border includes the full January Entitlement Flow (7 GL/day), along with water for the environment, interstate trade adjustments and adjustment for deferred entitlement flows, which are stored and accumulated for critical human water needs during dry periods.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday will be approximately 4.5 GL/day, but flow is expected to remain at approximately 4.5 GL/day by next Friday.

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

Since early this January, Dartmouth Dam storage has decreased by 20 GL, bringing storage level to 3,398 GL, or 88% of capacity, while Hume Dam storage has fallen by 144 GL to 1,486 GL, or 49% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has increased to 859 GL, or 49% of capacity, with inflows continuing into Lake Wetherell. Since January 7, approximately 190 GL of inflows have been recorded, and WaterNSW forecasts an additional 110 to 210 GL by mid-February 2025. Releases from Menindee Lakes at Weir 32 are currently flowing at approximately 1.5 GL/day. Meanwhile, flow at the South Australian border has averaged 8.5 GL/day in recent weeks, a rate expected to continue over the next week.

This forecast remains subject to change, depending on river operations and catchment rainfall. 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

Water for the environment is currently being delivered via pumping to a site on the Chowilla Floodplain.

Water for the environment continues to be delivered as part of SA's Entitlement flow. Over the remainder of January, approximately 1GL/day of water for the environment will be delivered to SA. This water will support the maintenance of levels in the Lower Lakes and/or barrage and fishways releases to the Coorong over summer. In the absence of water for the environment, SA would currently be receiving Entitlement flow only (7 GL/day in January).

Water for the environment is also being delivered to a number of pumped and gravity fed sites managed by the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board.

Murray Mouth

Dredging operations have resumed from the Christmas shut down. Dredging will continue in the Tauwitschere channel over the coming week. Barrage releases, combined with dredging throughout most of the year, 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

As of the 15th of January 2025, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.68m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.66m AHD.

The Lower Lakes are managed to target a daily average lake level between 0.70m AHD and 0.80m AHD throughout January. High demand, hot temperatures and high winds over the Christmas Break have resulted in lake levels receding towards the bottom of the planned envelope for this time of year. Flow to the Coorong has been reduced to fishways only to support Lake levels to return to the target range for this time of year.

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

WaterNSW has issued red alerts for blue-green algae (BGA) along the Darling River at Wilcannia and Caulpaulin, extending downstream to the Menindee Lakes. These lakes are under a mix of amber and green alerts, with a red alert at the Lake Menindee outlet and at Lake Wetherell. The Lower Darling (Baaka) is also under various amber and green alerts, with red alerts at Tolarno, Pooncarie, and Ellerslie.

In the Murray River, amber and green BGA alerts are in effect from Lake Hume to the South Australian border, and the Edward-Wakool system and the Lachlan River are also under similar alerts.

Victoria's Goulburn-Murray Water has issued BGA warnings for Lake Eildon, Torgannah Lagoon, and the Murray Valley Irrigation Area 3-5 Channel/spurs.

A red alert from WaterNSW indicates a toxic algal bloom, making the water dangerous for humans and animals. An amber alert signifies that the water is unsuitable for drinking and may be unsafe for stock watering. Water users should exercise caution and avoid areas where signs of blue-green algae are visible.

At the time of publishing, there are **no BGA alerts for the River Murray in South Australia**.

Details of the current NSW 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

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.

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 the flood damaged sections of government and private levees to their pre-flood height.

Intermediate remediation works update:

- On-ground remediation works have been completed at Pompoota and Long Flat.
- The substantive on-ground works have been completed at Mypolonga and Wall Flat with any final project close-out activities due to be completed in January 2025.
- Site preparations including sheet piling have been completed at Burdett, Mobilong, and Cowirra.
- The Department for Infrastructure and Transport (DIT), is in the final stages of awarding the tender for the remaining 4 government levees (Burdett, Mobilong, Cowirra, Neeta) and on-ground works are scheduled to commence in January 2025.
- The procurement for works on private levees and the preparation of associated land access agreements with landholders are progressing.
- The results of the on-ground geotechnical investigations are being analysed with draft reports expected to be provided to the department shortly.

Government levees in the LMRIA are temporarily closed to the public.

Where intermediate remediation works are required for government levees, they will remain temporarily closed until the works are progressively completed and safe access is determined, which is likely to be mid-2025. Any government levee not requiring intermediate remediation work will remain temporarily closed pending the outcome of a full 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.

Recreational activities

Recreational activities are not permitted on the levees while they are closed, including:

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 DEW will keep the community informed of the project's progress, 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

Environmental news – Eckerts creek

Little water level changes are still important. A low-level operation was conducted at the end of last year in Katarapko Floodplain, delivering a small amount of water that was beneficial for the environment.

The photos of Eckerts creek show how a small rise in water level still inundates fringing vegetation – great for the vegetation and great for the small aquatic animals that need to shelter and breed amongst the protection that the inundated vegetation provides. These frogs' eggs were spotted hiding amongst the sedges.



Picture 1: Eckerts creek at the start of the operation. Picture 2: Frog's eggs spotted at Eckerts creek during the operation.

Picture 3. Eckerts creek in the middle of the operation. Photos credit: Richard Walsh and Brett Ibbotson, DEW.

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 algal alerts](#)

Bureau of Meteorology

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

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