

SA River Murray Flow Report



Report #8/2025

Issued 12:00pm 21 February 2025

This supersedes the previous Flow Report issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) on 14 February 2025. The next Flow Report will be provided on Friday 28 February 2025.

Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border is approximately 8 GL/day and is expected to remain at approximately 8 GL/day over the coming week, **depending on river operations**.

The current flow at the South Australian border includes the full February Entitlement Flow (6.9 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, and flow is expected to remain at that flow rate until 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 and Storages

There was widespread rainfall across the Basin over the past fortnight, with significant falls in the upper catchments of both the northern and southern Basin. Despite this recent rain, inflows across the Basin remain below the median, and overall system operations have seen little change. Further rainfall information can be found at <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/>

As of 20 February 2025, Dartmouth Dam storage has fallen slightly to 3321 GL, or 86% of capacity, while Hume Dam storage has increased marginally to 1,161 GL, or 39% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has decreased to 730 GL, or 37% of capacity. Latest inflow estimates suggest an additional 25–35 GL is forecast to enter Menindee Lakes by late March. Inflows from the Northern Basin are delivering water of varying quality into the Menindee Lakes. Releases from Menindee Lakes at Weir 32 are currently targeting 1.5 GL/day.

Lake Victoria storage is currently at 369 GL, or 54% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 66% of the flow to South Australia.

Meanwhile, flows at the South Australian border averaged around 7.9 GL/day over the past 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

Throughout February, approximately 1GL/day of water for the environment will be delivered to SA in addition to SA's entitlement flow. This environmental water will help to ensure that all 11 fishways can continue to pass small volumes of freshwater to the Coorong over summer. This allows movement and migration for our native fish. Water for the environment also continues to be delivered as part of SA's Entitlement flow.

Approximately 50 GL of environmental water is expected to be delivered to the Lower Lakes over February and March. In addition to allowing fishways to remain open, the environmental water will also contribute to slowing the decline in lake levels over this period.

Water for the environment is currently being pumped to Coombool Swamp on the Chowilla Floodplain and a number of pumped and gravity fed sites managed by the Murraylands and Riverland Landscape Board.

Murray Mouth

Dredging operations are currently underway between the Murray Mouth and the Tauwichee channel. 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 20 February 2025, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.58m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.47m AHD, noting that lake levels can fluctuate considerably depending on wind conditions.

The Lower Lakes are managed, as far as practicable, to target a daily average lake level between 0.65m AHD and 0.75m AHD throughout February. High demand, hot temperatures and high winds over the summer have resulted in lake levels receding below the bottom of the planned operating range for this time of year, however, remain above the Basin Plan target of 0.4m AHD for 95% of the time.

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, 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 alerts. The Great Darling Anabranch has a red alert at the Silver City Highway testing location.

In the Murray River, amber and green BGA alerts are in effect from Lake Hume to the South Australian border.

Victoria's Goulburn-Murray Water has issued BGA warnings for Newlyn Reservoir, Torgannah Lagoon, Murray Valley Irrigation Area 3-5 Channel/spurs, Hepburns Lagoon and Torrumbarry Irrigation Area Gum/No.2 Lagoons.

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**.

SA Water routinely monitors the quality of several public water resources for microbiological (eg blue green algae, E. coli, protozoa) and chemical levels and provides results to SA Health. In the event that a health risk to the public is identified, a health advice will be issued on the [SA Health website - Water quality alerts page](#).

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, Long Flat, Wall Flat and Mypolonga.
- The Department for Infrastructure and Transport has awarded the tender for the remaining 4 government levees in 2 packages of works to occur concurrently (Mobilong and Burdett in package 1, Cowirra and Neeta in package 2). Site preparations including sheet piling have been undertaken at Mobilong, Burdett and Cowirra.
- On-ground works at Mobilong commenced on 20 January 2024 as part of package 1. The works at Neeta, as part of package 2, are expected to commence in mid-late February 2025.
- The scoping and 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:

- walking and running
- cycling
- fishing
- driving vehicles
- mooring houseboats and other vessels.

Information about designated council houseboat mooring sites can be obtained from the relevant local council website.

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

Fishways in action – supporting native fish

Native fish species congolli (*Pseudaphritis urvillii*) and common galaxias (*Galaxias maculatus*) were detected moving through the barrage's fishways last December. These fish are diadromous, which means that they require both fresh and salt water to complete their life cycle. Maintaining adequate flow to the Coorong is critical to support their migration and breeding.

Australian smelt (*Retropinna semoni*), bony bream (*Nematalosa erebi*) and various gudgeon and goby species were also recorded using the fishways last month. At that time, the only water flowing through the barrages was water for the environment which is critical for these species to complete their life cycles.

Barrage fish monitoring is conducted by SARDI Aquatic Sciences and funded by The Living Murray, a joint initiative of the New South Wales, Victorian, South Australian and Commonwealth Governments, coordinated by the Murray–Darling Basin Authority.



Left to right, top: 1. Goolwa barrage fishway cage trap. 2 and 3: Native fish. Left to right, bottom: 4. Congolli and galaxias at Hunters Creek fishway. 5. Congolli at Goolwa fishway. 6. Bony bream. Photo credits: Olly Cirocco and Maiko Lutz, 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](#)

ID	RM-Flow-Report_2025_02_21
Classification	Public I2 A2
Issued	21 February 2025
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