

SA River Murray Flow Report



Report #12/2025

Issued 12:00pm 21 March 2025

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

Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border is approximately 7.5 GL/day and is expected to remain at that flow rate until next Friday, **depending on river operations**.

The current flow at the South Australian border includes the full March Entitlement Flow (6 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.

Around 60 GL of environmental water is being provided throughout March from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday will be approximately 5 GL/day, and flow is expected to remain at approximately 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](https://www.waterconnect.sa.gov.au/).

Upstream Flows, Rainfall and Storages

Over the past week, most of the Murray-Darling Basin had little rain, with only 0-5 mm in the west and central areas. However, small pockets in the north, southeast, the eastern ranges, and parts of Victoria near the border received 10-50 mm. Further rainfall information can be found at <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/>

As of 19 March 2025, Dartmouth Dam storage has fallen slightly to 3224 GL, or 83% of capacity, while Hume Dam storage reduced to 822 GL, or 27% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has decreased to 634 GL, or 36% of capacity. Releases from Menindee Lakes at Weir 32 via the Darling River are currently targeting 1.2 GL/day and releases from Lake Cawndilla to the River Murray via the Great Darling Anabranch are continuing at around 7 GL/day

Lake Victoria storage is currently at 240 GL, or 35% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 68% of the flow to South Australia.

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 quality

Algal activity within SA

Ongoing water quality sampling in the Lower Lakes has detected an increasing concentration of blue-green algae *Cylindrospermopsis raciborskii* in Lake Alexandrina. While the concentration is increasing, it does not currently pose a health hazard. Some level of blue-green algae on large open water sources like the River Murray or Lower Lakes is normal for this time of year when weather conditions are favourable for growth. Water quality sampling will continue to be undertaken on a regular basis and notifications will be made to the community, as needed. Should concentrations increase and become potentially harmful to humans and animals, SA Health will issue a Water Quality Alert.

Water quality alerts in South Australia can be found on the [SA Health website – Water Quality Alerts page](#).

As a precautionary measure, landholders that access water from the Lakes for stock watering purposes, are encouraged to manage farm water storages accordingly, noting the current high demand for water carting due to the very dry conditions throughout the Mount Lofty Ranges.

Water quality upstream of SA

After prolonged inflows from the Northern Basin into the Menindee Lakes, water quality has improved in some areas, with dissolved oxygen, turbidity, and salinity levels remaining generally stable.

Algal blooms upstream of SA

WaterNSW has issued red alerts for blue-green algae (BGA) at Lake Menindee and 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, Cairn Curran Reservoir, Tullaroop Reservoir, Laanecoorie Reservoir, 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.

Details of the current NSW alert locations can be found on the [WaterNSW website – Algae Alerts page](#).

Water for the environment delivery

Approximately 60 GL (or 2 GL/day) of water for the environment (from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder) is being delivered to the Lower Lakes during March. This water will help to ensure that all 11 fishways can continue to pass small volumes of freshwater to the Coorong. This allows movement and migration for our native fish. 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 also continues to be delivered as part of SA's Entitlement flow.

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

Murray Mouth

Dredging is continuing in the Murray Mouth.

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 19 March 2025, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.55m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.52m 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 0.6m AHD and 0.7m AHD throughout March.

As mentioned above, around 60 GL of environmental water from the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder is being delivered into the Lower Lakes in March. This water will help keep fishways open and slow the decline in lake levels during this 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](#).

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.
- On-ground works at Mobilong commenced on 20 January and at Burdett on 17 February. Works at Neeta and Cowirra are expected to commence in March.
- The scoping and procurement for works on private levees and the preparation of associated land access agreements with landholders are progressing.
- The results of on-ground geotechnical investigations are being analysed with 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.

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

Environmental news – Water scorpion

Though they resemble one, the water scorpion is not a true scorpion. They are found along the edges of slow flowing waterbodies including the SA River Murray, where they hide among waterlogged plant debris. They ambush prey small animals such as tadpoles and small fish by grabbing them with their front legs. Their long whip-like tail does not sting, it is in fact two attached respiratory tubes that are used like a snorkel to enable the animal to take in air when underwater.



Picture: Water scorpion found along slow flowing waterbodies on the SA River Murray. Photo credit: Casey O'Brien.

Further information

- [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_03_21
Classification	Public I2 A2
Issued	21 March 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