

SA River Murray Flow Report

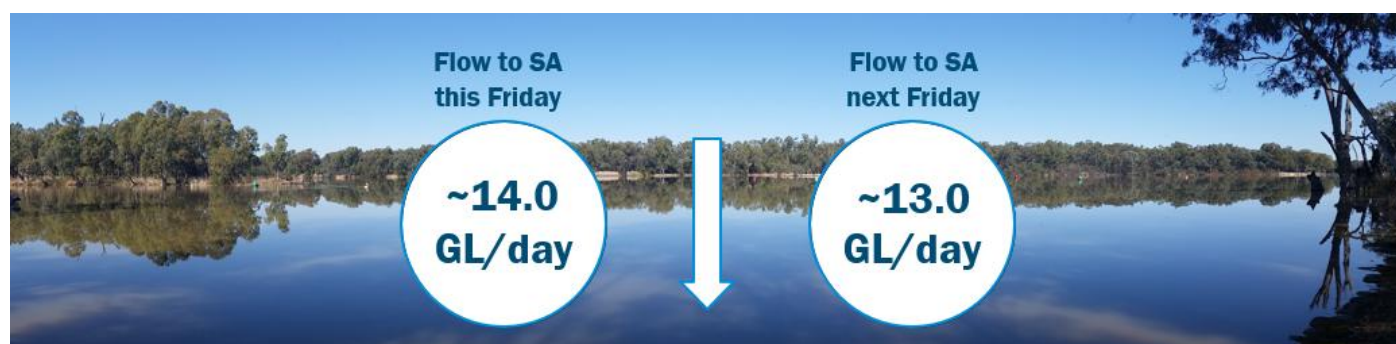


Report #37/2025

Issued 12:00pm 12 September 2025

This supersedes the previous Flow Report issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) on 5 September 2025. The next Flow Report will be provided on Friday 19 September 2025.

Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border this Friday is approximately 14.0 GL/day and is forecast to decrease to 13.0 GL/day by next Friday.

The current flow at the South Australian border includes September Entitlement Flow (4.5 GL/day), which is adjusted for deferred entitlement volume that is stored and accumulated for critical human water needs during dry periods. Flow at the SA Border also includes environmental water from upstream deliveries from Hume Dam, Goulburn River, and the Lower Baaka/Darling River.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday is approximately 8.0 GL/day and is expected to increase to 10.0 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, rainfall and storages

Over the past week, all areas other than the most northern reaches of the Murray-Darling Basin received rainfall. Southern Queensland received 1-25mm, with the highest rainfall to the west. New South Wales recorded rainfall of between 1 – 50mm with the higher rainfall totals recorded in central New South Wales. South Australia and Victoria also recorded rainfall totals of 1-15mm, with isolated pockets of up to 25mm. Further rainfall information can be found at <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/>

Rainfall in Queensland throughout March and early April has resulted in significant flow in the Upper Darling Catchments. More recent rainfall has resulted in a revised inflow forecast for another 460 - 560 GL expected to flow into the Menindee Lakes to the end of October. The current estimated volume is able to be regulated into Menindee Lakes and will not result in an increase in flow to South Australia. Further information will be provided as the flow progresses through the Darling River catchment.

As of 11 September 2025, Dartmouth Dam storage has increased to 2,694 GL or 70% of capacity, and Hume Dam storage has increased to 1,692 GL, or 56% of capacity. Transferring water from Dartmouth to Hume aims to manage the risk of spills if conditions become wet, while ensuring downstream of Hume demands can still be met if the season turns out dry. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has increased slightly to 1,371 GL, or 79% of capacity, with sufficient airspace to capture the estimated inflows from the Upper Darling catchment. With increased inflows in-transit to the Menindee Lakes and a relatively dry forecast for the Murray, the MDBA began calling for water from the Menindee Lakes on Thursday 7 August. This call on water is to manage storage levels at Lake Victoria and allow the MDBA to delay transfers from Hume to Lake Victoria.

Lake Victoria storage has increased to 554 GL, or 82% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 32% of the flow to South Australia.

Flows at the South Australia border averaged around 9.7 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

Water quality upstream of SA

Please be advised that with additional flows coming from the Darling River there will be an increase in turbidity of the water in the main channel of the River Murray. Horticulturalists may consider this as part of filtration and backflush programs for irrigation systems.

Algal blooms within SA

Coorong

Water testing in the Coorong continues to be undertaken but has now reduced to a fortnightly sampling program. The sampling is helping with understanding how the *Karenia* algal bloom situation is progressing and informs any potential future management options. Government agencies, including DEW, PIRSA, the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) and SA Health continue to monitor the situation.

For algal bloom water testing results and further information visit [Algal Bloom Water Sampling Dashboard](#).

For Coorong North Lagoon water quality and environmental conditions visit [Coorong North Lagoon Conditions Dashboard](#).

The Coorong region remains open. Visitors are advised to check signage and avoid contact with discoloured water, foamy water, or water where marine life is dead or in poor health. When the algae are broken up by wave action, algal particles can cause short-term skin or eye irritation and respiratory symptoms, including a cough or shortness of breath. If you notice symptoms, move away from the beach or water. Most symptoms will resolve within hours of leaving the area.

Health advice for people with asthma

Some algal species can release biotoxins into the air through wave action that may trigger symptoms in people with asthma.

People with asthma are advised to:

- carry their reliever medication with them while on beaches, especially when there is thick, visible foam or discoloured water
- take their preventive medication as prescribed
- check their asthma management plan is up-to-date.

People with known asthma, emphysema, bronchitis, or other form of chronic lung disease may be more vulnerable to the respiratory effects of biotoxins and should avoid areas where there is discoloured or foamy water, particularly if there is an offshore breeze.

International evidence indicates there are no long-term health consequences of exposure at the beach to either algal particles or biotoxins.

If symptoms persist, see your doctor.

For further information visit the [SA Health – Water quality alerts](#) page.

For the latest information please visit the SA Government [algal bloom](#) page.

Algal blooms upstream of SA

WaterNSW issues blue-green algae (BGA) alerts as Red, Amber or Green. A red alert indicates a toxic algal bloom, making the water dangerous for humans and animals; an amber alert indicates BGA may be multiplying in numbers and water should be considered unsuitable for human or animal consumption but remains suitable for recreational use; and a green alert indicates the presence of BGA but not at levels to pose a threat to recreational, stock or domestic use.

WaterNSW has issued a green alert for BGA for the lower Darling-Baaka (Ellerslie) and a red alert for the Great Darling Anabranch (Silver City Highway). Numerous BGA amber and green alerts apply to the River Murray between Lake Hume and the SA border. Further details of the current NSW alert locations can be found on the [WaterNSW website – Algae Alerts page](#).

Victoria's Goulburn-Murray Water has issued BGA warnings for Hume Dam, Lake Eppalock, and at Lake Boga. Details of the current VIC alert locations can be found on the [Blue-Green Algae Warnings - Goulburn Murray Water](#) page.

Water for the environment delivery

Approximately 5 to 7 GL/day of water for the environment is expected to arrive at the South Australian border over the coming week. The majority of the environmental water arriving consists of return flows from a winter pulse in the Goulburn River and releases from Hume Dam. This water is supporting floodplain watering actions, improving river channel habitat for native fish, and increasing flow to the Lower Lakes and Coorong. Water for the environment also continues to be delivered as part of SA's Entitlement flow.

The floodplain operations are underway including:

- Katarapko floodplain operation is progressing smoothly as well as the gradual raising of Lock 4 by 30 cm (up to 13.5 m AHD).
- Pike floodplain operation and Lock 5 raising commenced this week.
- Chowilla - operation of the regulator commenced on 3 September. Associated raising of Lock 6 by up to 40 cm above normal pool level (up to 19.45 m AHD) will commence in the coming weeks.
- Raising of Lock 2 commenced on 3 September with levels being raised by on average 2.5 cm/day up to 50 cm above normal pool level (up to 6.6 m AHD).

For further information about the planned operations please visit:

[Chowilla Floodplain 2025-26 proposed environmental water operations](#)

[Pike Floodplain 2025-26 proposed environmental water operations](#)

[Katarapko Floodplain 2025-26 proposed environmental water operations](#)

[Lock 2 weir pool proposed environmental water operations](#)

Planning for further delivery of water for the environment throughout 2025-26 is continuing.

Murray Mouth

Dredging is continuing around the Murray Mouth and Goolwa 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 11 September 2025, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.82m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.80m 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 0.75m AHD and 0.85m AHD throughout September.

Successive storm surge events since the end of May have resulted in increased salinity in the upstream vicinity of the barrages, including through the Goolwa Channel. Water users in this area are advised that water quality may be highly variable. During adverse weather conditions and high tides, SA Water operates the barrages to minimise the risk of seawater entering Lake Alexandrina, therefore minimising any negative salinity impacts from reverse flow events. The four successive storm surge events from May through to July are the four highest on record (dating back to 1976) at the Goolwa barrage downstream monitoring station.

Barrage gate operations are adjusted to release water when tidal conditions permit and are 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 severely 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, Mypolonga, Burdett and Mobilong.
- Site preparation work including sheet piling has commenced at Westbrook, with construction works at Cowirra, Toora, and Placid continuing to progress. The substantive on-ground works have been completed at Neeta with final project close-out activities underway.
- 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 on the remaining private levees that were severely damaged during the 2022-23 River Murray flood. The request for tender issued by DIT in June closed on 17 July with submissions currently being assessed.
- The department is continuing to review the geotechnical assessment reports.

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-to-late 2025. Any government levee not requiring intermediate remediation work will remain temporarily closed pending the outcome of a full condition assessment and safety risk assessment to ensure safe access can be determined. These assessments are currently underway.

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 – Small-bodied fish monitoring 2025

In Autumn this year, our Chowilla ecologist along with a group of enthusiastic staff from Renmark Irrigation Trust and River Murray & Mallee Aboriginal Corporation put on waders and headed to Pipeclay Billabong on the Chowilla Floodplain to monitor small-bodied fish.

After setting their nets the night before, the group waded through a colourful carpet of floating fern (*azolla sp.*) that covered the water surface. They caught a range of small-bodied fish species. Native species included bony bream, carp gudgeon, flat-headed gudgeon and dwarf flat-headed gudgeon. Non-native species included gambusia, goldfish and carp. Other wildlife recorded during the monitoring included two Eastern long-necked turtles, a number of yabbies, and lots of invertebrates such as water beetles and glass shrimp. A small number of tadpoles were also observed in various stages of metamorphosis, indicating that frog breeding had occurred right through summer and early spring.

The delivery of water for the environment creates nutrient-rich habitats which are a great resource for small fish and other aquatic fauna to breed, grow, and become food that supports waterbirds and large-bodied fish.



Photos: Wildlife recorded recently during small-bodied fish monitoring at Chowilla Floodplain. Photo credit: X Ruiz, DEW.

Further information

- [Algal bloom 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](#)
- [Weir pool manipulation](#)

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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