

# SA River Murray Flow Report

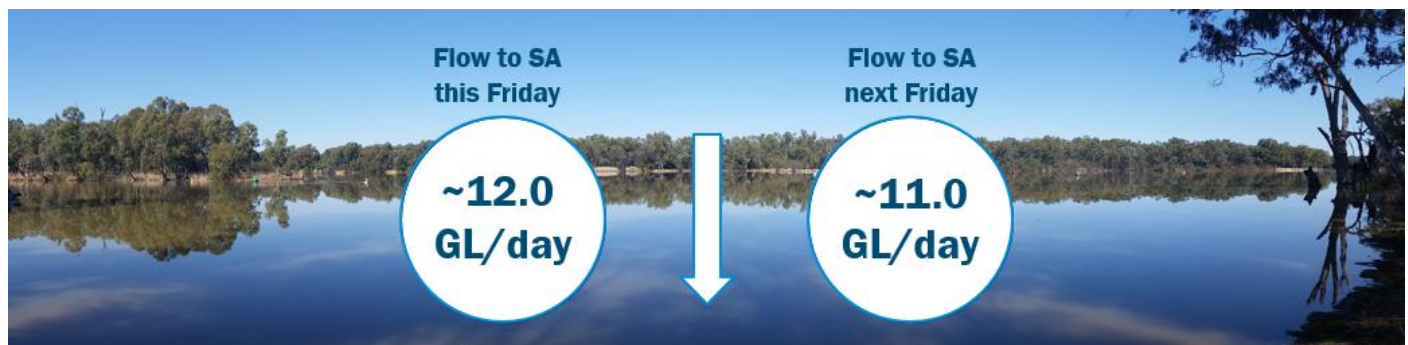


**Report #38/2025**

**Issued 12:00pm 19 September 2025**

**This supersedes the previous Flow Report issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) on 12 September 2025. The next Flow Report will be provided on Friday 26 September 2025.**

## Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border this Friday is approximately 12.0 GL/day and is forecast to decrease to 11.0 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 12.5 GL/day and is expected to decrease to 11.5 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](http://www.waterconnect.gov.au).

## Upstream flows, rainfall and storages

Rainfall was widespread across the southern and eastern Murray-Darling Basin this week, with the highest totals recorded along the eastern border of the Basin. Queensland received 1 to 10mm, with most of the rainfall recorded in the south-east. New South Wales recorded higher rainfall of up to 50mm, with the highest totals recorded in the south-east. Victoria received rainfall across the entire state ranging from 1 to 50mm. South Australia received widespread rainfall, but lower totals of 1-5mm with isolated pockets of up to 10mm. 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, as at 4 September 2025, 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 18 September 2025, Dartmouth Dam storage has increased to 2,720 GL or 71% of capacity, and Hume Dam storage has increased to 1,704 GL, or 57% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has increased to 1,411 GL, or 81.5% 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. From Wednesday 24 September, flow at Weir 32 will commence increasing to a new flow target of 9.0 GL/day. 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 decreased slightly to 547 GL, or 81% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 17% of the flow to South Australia.

Flows at the South Australia border averaged around 13.4 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 on a fortnightly basis. The sampling is helping with understanding how the *Karenia* algal bloom situation is progressing and informs any potential future management options. Government agencies are working together to 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 a BGA warning at Lake Boga. Previous warnings for Hume Dam and Lake Eppalock have been removed. 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 underway include:

- Katarapko floodplain - operation is progressing smoothly as has the gradual raising of Lock 4 by 30 cm (up to 13.5 m AHD).
- Pike floodplain - operation and Lock 5 raising commenced last week and is progressing as planned.
- 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 near the end of September.
- Lock 2 - raising 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 18 September 2025, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.83m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.87m 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](mailto: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 at Westbrook has been completed, with construction works at Cowirra, Toora, and Placid continuing to progress. The substantive on-ground works at Neeta have been completed 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 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](mailto:Lisa.vanderlinde@sa.gov.au)

## Environmental News – A splash of colour for the “Threatened Species Bake Off”

Murray hardyhead is a highly threatened small-bodied (less than 90 mm) freshwater fish endemic to the lowland floodplains of the Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers. It is “critically endangered” according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature - IUCN, and “endangered” according to the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act - EPBC).

The species was once widespread in the southern Murray-Darling Basin but has experienced rapid ongoing decline due to river regulation, reduced flows and predation by carp. The few isolated populations that remain are heavily reliant on management interventions and the use of water for the environment.

Due to their short lifespans (12 to 18 months) successful yearly recruitment is required to sustain populations. Their colour can become noticeably gold during spawning season (spring through to summer).

The plight of this tiny fish inspired Casey O’Brien from the DEW Environmental Water unit to bake a Murray hardyhead cake as her 2025 entry in the “Threatened Species Bake Off” that the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) Threatened Species Commissioner runs every year. It looks too real to eat but it was delicious.



*Left photo: Murray hardyhead, Michael Hammer, Museum and Art Gallery of Northern Territory. Right photo: Casey O’Brien, DEW baked artpiece.*



## 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](#)

ID	RM-Flow-Report_2025_09_19
Classification	Public I2 A2
Issued	19 September 2025
Authority	DEW
Master Document Location	R:\Water Group\RMO\WRO\04 Communications\Flow Advices\2025-26
Managed and Maintained by	Water Infrastructure and Operations Branch
Author	Water Infrastructure and Operations Branch
Reviewer	Director, Water Infrastructure and Operations