

SA River Murray Flow Report



Report #50/2025

Issued 12:30pm 12 December 2025

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

Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border this Friday is approximately 10GL/day and is forecast to remain at 10 GL/day to next Friday.

The current flow at the South Australian border includes December Entitlement Flow (7.0 GL/day), which is adjusted for deferred entitlement volume that is stored and accumulated for critical human water needs and private carryover during dry periods. Flow at the SA Border this past week also included environmental water from upstream deliveries from the Murrumbidgee and Hume Dam.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday is approximately 7.5 GL/day and is expected to decrease to 7 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

Rainfall across the Murray-Darling Basin this week was patchy, with large areas of the Basin recording no rainfall. Southern Queensland and northern New South Wales recorded rainfall between 1 –5mm, with isolated patches of up to 25mm. Victoria recorded rainfall levels between 1-5mm, with isolated patches up to 15mm. South Australia received negligible rainfall totals. Rainfall distribution within the Basin can be found at <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/>.

South Australia receives an additional 3 GL/day of Additional Dilution Flow (ADF) when Menindee Lakes storage volume triggers are met. The delivery of ADF to South Australia has now ceased as Menindee Lakes storage volumes have decreased below the required trigger threshold.

As of 11 December 2025, Dartmouth Dam storage has decreased slightly to 2,839 GL, remaining around 74% of capacity, and Hume Dam storage has decreased to 1,231 GL, or 41% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes continues to decrease and is at 1,147 GL, or 66% of capacity. As of 8 December 2025, releases from Menindee Lakes will be targeting 4.35 GL/day at Weir 32.

Lake Victoria storage is at 600 GL, sitting around 89% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 18% of the flow to South Australia.

Flows at the South Australia border averaged around 10.2 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 onshore 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 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, and additional alerts are current across the Menindee Lakes and the lower Darling. 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 Murray Valley Irrigation Area No. 4 Channel Downstream of Naring Road including at the 6/4 Channel, Hepburns Lagoon, Torrumbarry Irrigation Area – No. 1 Lagoon, Torrumbarry Irrigation Area – No. 2 Lagoon, Torrumbarry Irrigation Area – No. 1 Channel – downstream of Greens Road, and Gum Lagoon in the Torrumbarry Irrigation Area. The warning for Lake Boga has recently 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

The delivery of water for the environment to the South Australian border is continuing at around 3 GL/day. This is made up of a combination of return flows from Hume Dam and direct trade to SA. The water being delivered is supporting the drawdown phases of floodplain and weir pool watering actions, and will provide continued 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 complete.
- Pike floodplain - operation at the Pike environmental regulator commenced in mid-September. The environmental watering event at Pike is almost complete and Lock 5, which was raised to support the Pike event, is back at normal pool level.
- Chowilla - operation of the Chowilla regulator commenced on 3 September and the drawdown is now in progress. Lock 6 has also been raised by up to 40 cm above normal pool level (up to 19.65 m AHD). The gradual drawdown of Lock 6 is now complete.
- Lock 2 - raising commenced on 3 September with the level being raised by on average 2.5 cm/day. The water level was held at a maximum of 50 cm above normal pool level (~ 6.6 m AHD) late November. The weir pool is currently being drawn down.

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 and further delivery is expected throughout December.

Murray Mouth

Dredging is continuing directly in the Murray Mouth at the junction of the Tauwitchere and Goolwa Channels.

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 December 2025, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.84m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.79m 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 December.

Following consultation with community and scientific stakeholders, the lake level envelope has been supported to remain at the upper bound of 0.85m AHD for an additional month through December. This change to planned operations reflects a later than anticipated spring pulse in the River Murray. This presented an opportunity to enable barrage releases to be maintained more efficiently as river flows reduce through Summer and as evaporation rates increase in the Lakes.

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.

Salinity throughout the Goolwa Channel from the Goolwa Barrage to Clayton Bay remains elevated as a result of salt water ingress from recent storm surge events.

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.
- Construction works at Cowirra, Toora, and Placid are 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 has closed and submissions have been assessed with approval processes currently underway.
- 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. All government levees remain temporarily closed pending the outcome of full condition assessments and safety risk assessments to ensure safe access can be determined before progressively reopening to the public. These assessments and associated works including but not limited to, sign installation, fence installation and tree assessments are underway and likely to be completed early to mid 2026.

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 – Painted burrowing frog at Chowilla

The Chowilla Floodplain team has been conducting frog call surveys recently, and were excited to hear the call of the painted burrowing frog (*Neobatrachus pictus*), at both Coombool Swamp and Lake Littra. This particular species hasn't been recorded at Chowilla since 2021.

Painted burrowing frogs can grow up to 58mm long, and have a body that is pale grey, brown or yellow with dark patches, and a pale stripe that runs along their back. Their prominent eyes with vertical pupils are a distinguishing characteristic. Their call is a long, rapidly pulsed, musical trill.

They use their spade-like feet to bury themselves underground for most of the year, emerging after rain or flood events to feed or breed in temporary wetlands. When above ground they shelter in leaf litter and fallen logs.

The delivery of water for the environment to the Chowilla Floodplain over the last 20 years has supported the improvement of habitat for all 8 species of frogs found in the upper SA River Murray. Now is a great time of year to listen out for frogs in a wetland or creek near you.



Photo background: Chowilla Floodplain, Sep 2025. Photo insert: Painted burrowing frog, 2019. C McDonald, 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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