

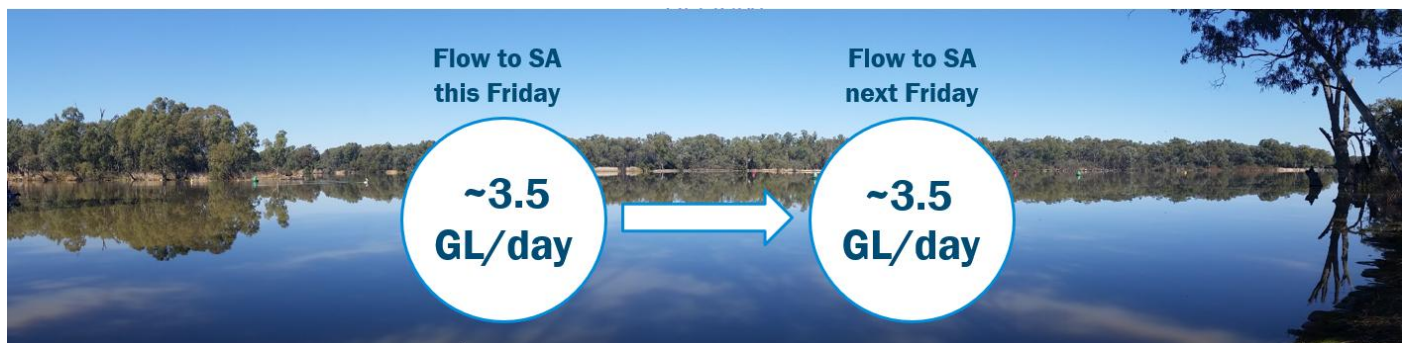
SA River Murray Flow Report



Report #21/2026
Issued 12:00pm 22 May 2026

This supersedes all previous Flow Reports issued by the Department for Environment and Water (DEW).

Flow outlook



The flow at the South Australian border this Friday is approximately 3.5 GL/day and is forecast to remain steady through to next Friday.

The flow at the South Australian border includes May Entitlement Flow (3 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. As this is the first sustained period, where River Murray flow has consisted primarily of Entitlement Flow since the 2022/23 River Murray Flood (i.e. limited environmental water delivery and no additional dilution flows), river users are advised that changes to river levels may be noticeable at some locations.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday is approximately 4 GL/day and is forecast to decrease to 3.5 GL/day through to 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.

2026-27 Updated projected opening allocations

There has been no change to the projected minimum allocation for South Australian River Murray irrigators (Class 3 High Security) for the 2026-27 water year, which remains at 62 per cent.

As the projected minimum allocation is greater than 50%, the carryover of unused allocations from the 2025-26 water year will not be available in the 2026-27 water year.

Allocation improvements are most likely to occur between July to November 2026, following the main rainfall and inflow season and when water resource availability generally improves. However, there are no guarantees of improved water availability – with the three-month Bureau of Meteorology outlook indicating that rainfall is likely to be below average for parts of the Murray-Darling Basin -

<https://reg.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/median/seasonal/0>

The actual opening allocation for the 2026-27 water year will be provided on **Friday, 15 June 2026**.

No further updates to water availability projections will be provided prior to this date. From 1 July 2026, updated water allocation information will be provided every two weeks if water allocations are **less than 100 per cent**.

For more information visit [Department for Environment and Water - Current allocations](#) or see the [latest allocation statement](#).

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 in the week up to 20 May 2026 was widespread and variable across the catchment. Central NSW received the most significant rainfall with totals up to 50 mm in the Murrumbidgee catchment. Rainfall along the Murray through Victoria and NSW was variable with totals ranging from 10-25mm. In South Australia, most of the Riverland received rainfall in the vicinity of 25-50mm, with totals of 5-10mm recorded in the Lower Murray, Lower Lakes and Coorong regions. Further rainfall information for the Basin can be found at <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/>

As of 20 May 2026, Dartmouth Dam storage has remained steady at 2,514 GL, which is approximately 65% of capacity, and Hume Dam storage has increased to 694 GL, approximately 23% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has remained relatively steady and is at 576 GL, approximately 33% of capacity. Lake Victoria is receiving operational transfers and has increased to 327 GL, which is 48% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 23% of the flow to South Australia.

Flows at the South Australian border averaged approximately 3.5 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

Flow from the Darling River to South Australia has been reduced as changes are implemented to prioritise conservation of resources within Menindee Lakes, resulting in a reduction in turbid water entering the River Murray. Most of South Australia's flow is likely to be delivered from Hume via Yarrawonga Weir in the coming month.

Algal blooms within SA

Coorong

Government agencies continue to work together to conduct fortnightly water testing in the Coorong to monitor for *Karenia*.

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](#).

Water testing results show the vast majority of South Australia's coastline continues to record zero or low levels of *Karenia* species since February 2026. *For current conditions and health advice* please visit the [SA Government algal bloom website](#) or the [SA Health water quality alerts 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 numerous red alerts for around Menindee Lakes and for the Darling River at multiple locations downstream to Ellerslie. Red alerts are present for Yanga Lake near Balranald and Lake Brewster in the Lachlan River catchment. Numerous BGA 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 recreational BGA warnings for Newlyn Reservoir, Lake Eildon, Lake Eppalock, Tullaroop Reservoir, and Hepburns Lagoon. Details of the current VIC alert locations can be found on the [Blue-Green Algae Warnings - Goulburn Murray Water](#) page.

Various low to mid-level recreational BGA alerts remain current on the River Murray from Boundary Bend through to Lock 9. Details of LMW alert locations can be found on the [Blue-green algae monitoring - Lower Murray Water](#) page.

Water for the environment delivery

The delivery of water for the environment to the South Australian border is expected to be low as upstream watering actions have largely ceased. SA continues to receive a small volume of return flow from the [Great Darling Anabranch watering action](#) in addition to trades of Living Murray and Commonwealth Environmental Holder water. Approximately 500 ML/day is expected to arrive throughout the remainder of May, subject to deliverability. The water being delivered is helping to manage levels in the Lower Lakes and provide continuous flow to the Coorong. Water for the environment also continues to be delivered as part of SA's Entitlement flow. <https://www.dcceew.gov.au/cewh/water-region/lower-darling-baaka-region/priorities/latest-water-use> Small volumes of additional return flows may result from Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder releases from Hume over May and June, depending on upstream conditions.

Planning for delivery of water for the environment throughout 2026-27 is in progress.

Murray Mouth

Dredging is continuing to take place in the Tauwitchere Channel adjacent to Younghusband Peninsula.

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 20 May 2026, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.63 m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.65 m AHD, noting that lake levels can fluctuate considerably depending on wind conditions.

Lake Alexandrina is managed, as far as practicable, to target a daily average lake level between 0.6 m AHD and 0.7 m AHD throughout May.

Barrage gate operations are adjusted to release water when tidal conditions permit and are dependent on upstream flows, lake levels and variable weather conditions. Reverse head conditions have occurred daily since the weekend, resulting in temporary gate closures to reduce the impact of saltwater ingress to Lake Alexandrina and the Goolwa Channel. Gates have been operated around high tides when the conditions permit.

Total gate openings and barrage discharge have been reduced to correspond with the reduction in flow to Lake Alexandrina.

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 (RVWDS)

Contractors will perform system upgrades at the following RVWDS on the dates listed below. **Please note that the previously advised schedule has been substantially revised due to operational requirements.**

Updated dates are provided below:

- Goolwa RVWDS: 10-12 June.
- Murray Bridge RVWDS: 13-15 June

The stations will remain operational; however, minor delays may occur.

Note: The Lock 3 RVWDS does not accept toilet waste (blackwater) or wastewater (greywater), however, general boat hard waste (domestic and galley waste) can still be deposited at the Lock 3 facility. The nearest alternative waste facility is the Waikerie RVWDS.

For a full list and map of the stations visit: <http://environment.sa.gov.au/waste-disposal-stations>

You can report any RVWDS issues on 1800 799 065.

If you have any questions, please contact the DEW WIO Engagement Team at 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.

Higher salinity may be observed in the Goolwa Channel and the direct upstream vicinity of the Barrages as a result of reverse head conditions. Water users are recommended to monitor salinity at their extraction points in these locations.

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:

- Construction works at Cowirra and Toora are continuing to progress with anticipated completion in early June. Substantive on-ground works at Neeta is complete with final project close-out activities underway.
- Contracts for the remaining private levees have been awarded, with works scheduled to commence at Kilsby, Westbrook, Glen Lossie and Yiddinga in late-June to early-July.

Government levees in the LMRIA remain temporarily closed to the public. Where intermediate remediation works are required, they will remain closed until works are complete and public safety risk assessments, tree assessments (and any arborist works required), fencing repairs and reinstallation of signage is undertaken to ensure safe access before reopening to the public.

Reopening of the levees will be staged as the assessments and associated works are completed. It is expected levees will progressively start to reopen from mid-2026.

For more information, including locations and access updates, please visit the [LMRIA levees page](#).

If you have any questions, please contact the DEW Levee Team at DEW.lmrialevees@sa.gov.au

More information

- [Algal bloom information](#)

Other flow updates and information

- [Current SA daily water levels](#)
- [SA Water daily flow report](#)
- [SA Water daily salinity report](#)
- [SA Water daily river graphs](#)
- [Murray-Darling Basin Authority weekly report](#)

- [Real Time Water Data \(DEW\)](#)
- [Live river system data \(MDBA\)](#)
- [SA Health water quality alerts](#)

Mapping

- [River Murray inundation mapping](#)
- [2014 River Murray floodplain flood mapping](#)
- [Flood awareness mapping](#)
- [Algal bloom information](#)

Bureau of Meteorology forecasts

- [SA rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [Victorian rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [NSW rainfall and river conditions](#)
- [Climate outlooks](#)
- [Climate drivers](#)

Further information

- [Murray-Darling Basin Authority news](#)
- [Water for the environment actions by region](#)
- [NSW algal alerts](#)
- [Government of SA - State Disaster Recovery](#)
- [SA Marine safety](#)
- [Weir pool manipulation](#)
- [2022-23 River Murray Flood event](#)

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