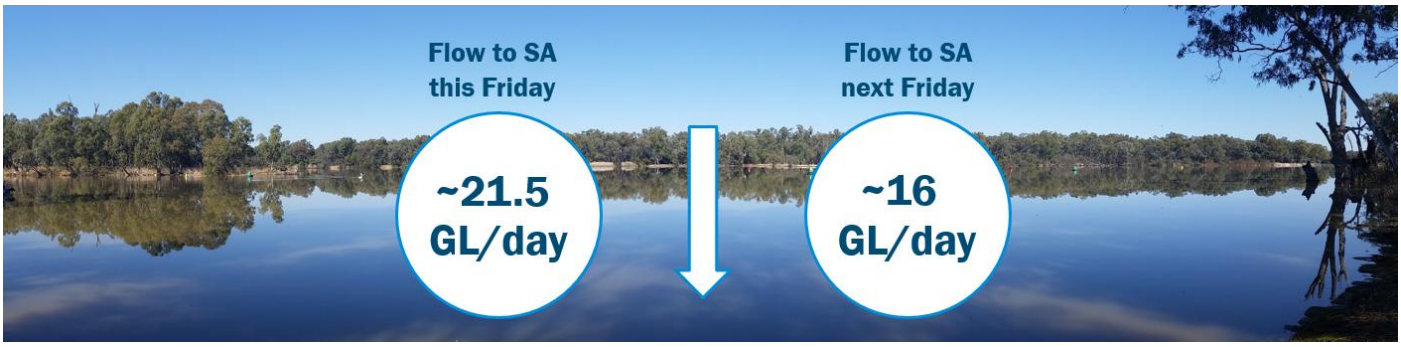
SA River Murray Flow Report

Government of South Australia
Department for Environment and Water

Report #32/2026
Issued 10:00am 7 August 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 21.5 GL/day and is forecast to reduce to approximately 16 GL/day next Friday.

The flow at the South Australian border includes August Entitlement Flow (4 GL/day) and environmental return flow from upstream watering events. An unregulated flow event resulting from significant tributary inflows below storages in Victoria and NSW is providing additional water. The unregulated flow event has peaked at the SA Border and is forecast to recede through next week.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday is approximately 21.5 GL/day and is forecast to decrease to approximately 19 GL/day 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 water monitoring information becomes available or due to rainfall events or changes to upstream operations and associated environmental watering actions.

Upstream flows, rainfall and storages

Rainfall across the Murray-Darling Basin in the week up to 5 August 2026 was mostly concentrated across the Southern Basin, with minimal rainfall recorded across large parts of QLD and NSW.

Southeastern NSW and large parts of Victoria received rainfall totals of 1 to 10mm, with higher totals in the range of 10 to 25 mm in the Upper Murray headwaters. Rainfall through late June and into early July has resulted in a number of tributaries in NSW and Victoria generating significant flow into the River Murray. An unregulated flow event commenced on 8 July from Wentworth to the South Australian border. Flows at the South Australian border have peaked as this water arrives and the flow is forecast to remain above entitlement flow throughout August. Under the Water Allocation Plan for the River Murray Prescribed Watercourse, unregulated flow is classified as ‘Planned Environmental Water’. This is water that is preserved for environmental outcomes and cannot be used for any other purpose.

In South Australia, rainfall in the range of 1 to 5mm was recorded through the Lower Murray and the Lower Lakes and Coorong region. Further rainfall information for the Basin can be found at:
http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/

As of 5 August 2026, Dartmouth Dam storage has increased to 2,745 GL, which is approximately 71% of capacity, and Hume Dam storage has increased to 1,744 GL, approximately 58% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has gradually receded to 535 GL, approximately 31% of capacity. Lake Victoria has increased to 650 GL, which is 96% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 3% of the flow to South Australia.

Flows at the South Australian border have been increasing and averaged 21.7 GL/day over the past week to 5 August.

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 blooms within SA

Coorong

Monitoring for *Karenia* continues across the South Australian coast and at the Coorong. For algal bloom water testing results and further information visit Algal Bloom Water Sampling Dashboard.

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 amber alerts for around Menindee Lakes and for the Darling River at multiple locations downstream to Tapio. A red alert is present for Ellerslie on the Darling River and Yanga Lake near Balranald. 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 recreational BGA warning for Lake Eildon, with alerts for other locations recently removed. 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

Delivery of water for the environment to the South Australian border is expected to reduce due to a reduction in watering actions upstream. Although the bulk of the flow entering South Australia in early August will be unregulated (or unmanaged) flow resulting from rainfall upstream, there will be up to 1-2 GL/day arriving, mainly from the end of a small event in the Murrumbidgee, with minor contributions from the Goulburn and the Darling rivers. The unregulated flow event will begin to reduce at the South Australian border over the coming week. Opportunities to add environmental water on the recession of the unregulated flow are being considered.

Water for the environment also continues to be delivered as part of SA's Entitlement flow.

Planning for delivery of water for the environment throughout 2026-27 remains in progress. A mid to high level operation of the floodplain regulators at Katarapko along with a 30 cm raising of Lock 4 has recently commenced and will continue throughout spring. Water levels will be gradually increased over the coming weeks.

The operation of the Pike floodplain regulators is being planned to commence in late September with Lock 5 proposed to be raised once the current works are completed in October. Weir pool raising is also proposed at Lock 2 and Lock 1 and these are expected to commence during the unregulated flow event. Levels at Lock 2 are planned to be raised up to 50 cm higher commencing in early August, while the level at Lock 1 is only planned to increase 10cm.

These environmental watering operations are aimed at supporting further recovery of floodplain vegetation health and providing important habitat for frogs, fish, waterbirds and a range of other biota. Proposed operations remain subject to water availability and relevant approvals.

Murray Mouth

Dredging is continuing to take place in the Tauwitchere Channel and Goolwa 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.

Barrage operations and water levels in the Lower Lakes

As of 5 August 2026, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.77 m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.82 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 0.675 m AHD and 0.775 m AHD throughout August, with current operations targeting the top of the planned envelope.

Barrage gate operations are adjusted to release water when tidal conditions permit and are dependent on upstream flows, lake levels and variable weather conditions. It is likely that the forecast low pressure system arriving over the weekend will result in reverse head conditions at the barrages into next week.

Gate closures are undertaken to mitigate the impact of saltwater ingress into Lake Alexandrina and the Goolwa Channel. The reverse head means that water cannot be physically discharged as the water level on the downstream side of the barrages is higher than that on the upstream side of the barrages. Gates are operated around high tides and prevailing conditions to discharge water when the conditions permit.

Additional gates are currently open due to unregulated flow arriving at Lake Alexandrina. Gate operations will be adapted to maintain the target lake level and deliver water to the Murray Estuary and Coorong as the unregulated flow arrives. 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)

Following damage sustained during the 2022-23 River Murray flood, pontoon repair works are scheduled to occur at the following RVWDS sites over the dates listed below.

Please note that impacted stations will be CLOSED during the repair periods.
These dates are subject to change dependant on weather conditions.

- Renmark RVWDS: 10 Aug – 22 Aug
- Loxton RVWDS: 24 Aug – 5 Sept
- Morgan RVWDS: 7 Sept – 12 Sept

Temporary pump out stations:

During site closures, temporary pump out services will be opened upstream of each of the regular RVWDS sites.

To request a temporary pump out service, please contact Riverland Tank and Drain Cleaners on **(08) 8102 0998** to arrange attendance to the temporary pump out site.

Please provide as much advance notice of your pump out needs as possible.
The minimum notice requirement for each site is listed below.

Station	Minimum notice time	Temporary pump out site
Renmark	4+ hours	View on maps
Loxton	4+ hours	View on maps
Morgan	24+ hours	View on maps

A skip bin will be available at pump out sites for disposal of household waste.
Access and use of the skip bins will be provided to users during attendance by Riverland Tank and Drain Cleaners.

Upgrade works are scheduled to occur at Lock 3 and 6 RVWDS sites from late-August. More information about these upgrades and temporary pump out services for these sites will be provided in the coming weeks.

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 until works commence in late-August. 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 Toora, Neeta and Cowirra are complete
- Construction works are underway at the Westbrook and Wellington levees.
- Contracts for the remaining private levees have been awarded.

Government levees in the LMRIA remain temporarily closed to the public.

Where intermediate remediation works are required, levees will remain closed until works are complete to ensure safe access.

Public safety risk assessments, including tree condition assessments, have now been completed across all levees. Fencing repairs are ongoing, with signage to be reinstated prior to reopening.

Arborist works are now complete at Burdett and Long Flat with works to be scheduled for remaining levees - subject to suitable weather conditions. Levees will reopen in stages as associated works are completed, with progressive reopening anticipated in the coming months.

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.

Further information

• Algal bloom information	**Bureau of Meteorology forecasts**
Other flow updates and information	• SA rainfall and river conditions
• Current SA daily water levels	• Victorian rainfall and river conditions
• SA Water daily flow report	• NSW rainfall and river conditions
• SA Water daily salinity report	• Climate outlooks
• SA Water daily river graphs	• Climate drivers
• Murray-Darling Basin Authority weekly report	• Long-range forecast
• Real Time Water Data (DEW)	**Further information**
• Live river system data (MDBA)	• Murray-Darling Basin Authority news
• SA Health water quality alerts	• Water for the environment actions by region
Mapping	• NSW algal alerts
• River Murray inundation mapping	• Government of SA - State Disaster Recovery
• 2014 River Murray floodplain flood mapping	• SA Marine safety
• Flood awareness mapping	• Weir pool manipulation
• Algal bloom information	• 2022-23 River Murray Flood event

ID	RM-Flow-Report_2026_08_07
Classification	Public I2 A2
Issued	07 August 2026
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