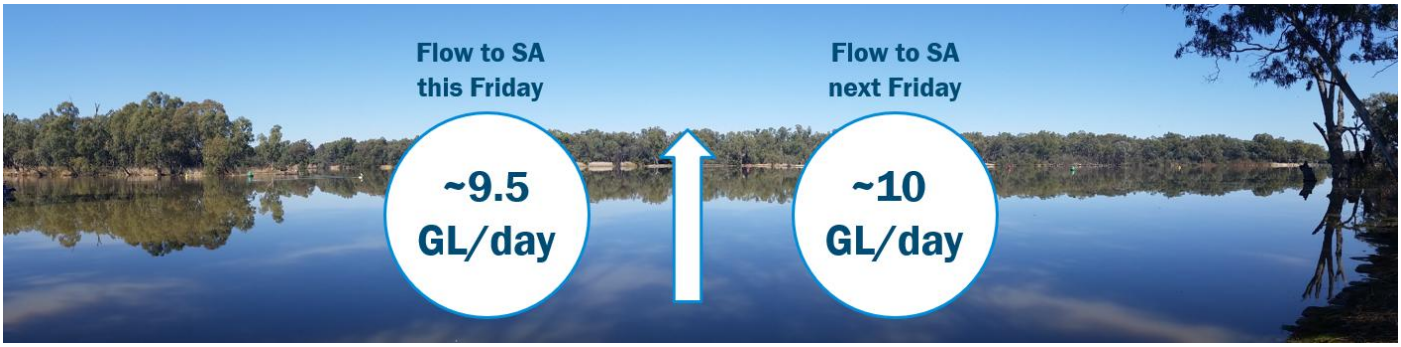
SA River Murray Flow Report

Government of South Australia
Department for Environment and Water

Report #48/2026
Issued 10am 27 November 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 9.5 GL/day and is forecast to increase to around 10 GL/day by next Friday.

The current flow at the South Australian border includes November Entitlement Flow (6.0 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. The flow at the SA border also includes environmental return flow from upstream watering events and direct trade to South Australia.

The flow over Lock 1 this Friday is approximately 6 GL/day and is forecast to increase to approximately 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.

Upstream flows, rainfall and storages

Rainfall across the Murray Darling Basin over the past week was widespread. Across the northern Basin, much of southern inland Queensland and northwestern New South Wales received 25 to 50mm, with a broad area along the border receiving 50 to 100mm. In the southern Basin totals were generally 25 to 50mm, increasing to 50 to 100mm across parts of northeast Victoria, with localised falls exceeding 100mm in the ranges. Lighter falls of 1 to 10mm were recorded along the River Murray in South Australia and across parts of south west New South Wales.

Further rainfall information for the Basin can be found at: http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/maps/rainfall/

As of 25 November 2026, Dartmouth Dam storage has increased slightly to 3,074 GL, which is approximately 80% of capacity, and Hume Dam storage has increased slightly to 2,452 GL, approximately 82% of capacity. Storage in the Menindee Lakes has gradually receded to 414 GL, approximately 23% of capacity.

Menindee Lakes storage goes into NSW control when the volume falls below 480 GL and does not return to a shared storage until the volume rises back above 640 GL.

Lake Victoria remains close to capacity, although storage has now begun to decline and is currently at 638 GL, which is 94% capacity. Releases from Lake Victoria are currently contributing to approximately 10% of the flow to South Australia.

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 upstream of SA

WaterNSW continues to monitor blue-green algae (BGA) conditions across the River Murray and Darling-Baaka systems. Recreational green alerts remain in place at various locations along the River Murray, as well as a red alert for the Wakool River. In the Menindee Lakes and Lower Darling-Baaka region, multiple alerts persist, including red alerts for Lake Menindee, Burtundy and Ellerslie and amber alerts for Lakes Cawndilla, Tandure, Wetherell and Copi Hollow, as well as much of the lower Darling-Baaka from Weir 32 to Tapio. These alerts indicate ongoing elevated algal activity and potential water quality risks.

Further information on current NSW algae is available via the WaterNSW Algae Alert Map. It should be noted that WaterNSW uses a different algae alert classification and reporting framework to that used in South Australia.

Separately, Goulburn-Murray Water advises a recreational BGA warnings for Lakes Eildon and Boga. 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

In the coming week, around 3 GL/day of water for the environment is expected to arrive at the South Australian border. The majority of this is a combination of return flows from watering actions in the Murrumbidgee and Goulburn Rivers and direct trade to SA. Delivery of water for the environment to South Australia remains constrained due to floodplain works upstream.

The water for the environment currently being delivered is supporting floodplain operations at Pike and Katarapko, is expected to support recent Murray cod breeding, and is providing flow to the Lower Lakes and Coorong. 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 is ongoing.

A mid to high level operation of the floodplain regulators at Katarapko and associated raising of Lock 4 has been undertaken and the drawdown is currently underway.

The low level operation of the Pike floodplain environmental regulators is ongoing. Water levels reached a peak of 0.75 m above the usual pool level and have now commenced slowly drawing down. Lock 5 has been raised by 50 cm to support the floodplain watering event and will be slowly lowered back to normal pool level over the coming weeks.

These environmental watering operations are aimed at supporting recovery of vegetation by improving soil moisture for native plants and floodplain trees at low elevation. They are also providing additional foraging habitat for waterbirds and frog breeding, and habitat for fish and other biota. Recent frog and tadpole surveys have shown strong frog breeding responses at many floodplain sites.

Locks 1, 2, 3 and 6 continue to be operated within normal operating range.

Canoe passage at Bookmark Creek regulator

Canoeists should be aware that the canoe passage located at the Bookmark Creek regulator remains **CLOSED** while water levels at Lock 5 are raised. The passage is expected to reopen in mid-December, once Lock 5 levels return to a range where the canoe passage can be operated and used safely.

Canoeists can still use the canoe portage at the regulator to access Bookmark Creek.

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 25 November 2026, the water level in Lake Alexandrina is approximately 0.79m AHD and Lake Albert is approximately 0.76m 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 0.725 m AHD and 0.825 m AHD throughout November.

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 closures are undertaken to mitigate the impact of saltwater ingress into Lake Alexandrina and the Goolwa Channel. A 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.

Barrage gate reductions have been occurring due to a recession of Lake inflow associated with the conclusion of unregulated flow. Operations will continue to be adjusted as required to maintain target lake levels and support flows to the Murray Estuary and the North Lagoon of the Coorong. The distribution of flow is being prioritised through Tauwitchere to support ecological processes in the Coorong. Gate openings at the barrages can 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)

RVWDS upgrade works

DEW will be undertaking construction works from late September to upgrade river vessel waste disposal infrastructure near Lock 3 and Lock 6.

Construction of a new river vessel waste disposal station (RVWDS) commenced at Kingston on Murray on Monday 21 September 2026, with completion estimated by March 2027, dependent on weather and site conditions.

This new RVWDS will replace the decommissioned Lock 3 RVWDS, ensuring continued safe and reliable wastewater disposal services for river users and the adjacent Kingston on Murray houseboat mooring marina. Further information about the construction of the RVWDS can be found in the fact sheet.

Works will commence in late September to upgrade RVWDS infrastructure at the existing Lock 6 site.

Key dates

These RVWDS will be **CLOSED** during the below dates, while works are undertaken*:

- Lock 6 RVWDS: September 2026 – March 2027
- Lock 3 RVWDS: 4 October 2026 (decommissioned)

** Dates are weather dependent and subject to change.*

Temporary pump-out stations

While works occur, alternative pump-out services will be available by contacting **Riverland Tank and Drain Cleaners on (08) 8102 0998**. Please provide as much advance notice of your pump-out needs as possible.

Station	Minimum notice time	Temporary pump-out site
Lock 3	4 hours	View on maps
Lock 6	4 hours	View on maps

For more information about Lock 3 and 6 works please email SAconstraints@sa.gov.au or see the RVWDS webpage linked below.

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

Upcoming works at Loveday Mussel Lagoons Wetland Complex

Construction is expected to commence in early December 2026 at the Loveday Mussel Lagoons Wetland Complex, near Cobdogla, as part of the South Australia Constraints Measures project and Sustaining Riverland Environments (SRE) program and are expected to be completed by April 2027.
The works will upgrade existing water management infrastructure, including the Loveday North inlet/outlet regulator, Loveday Causeway culverts and Red Gate regulator.
These improvements will help manage water levels across the wetland complex, reinstate natural wetting and drying cycles, reduce the impacts of invasive species such as common carp, and support healthier habitats for native fish, frogs and waterbirds.
Temporary access restrictions will apply throughout the wetland complex during construction.
For more information, visit www.environment.sa.gov.au/constraints or email SAconstraints@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 is returning the severely flood damaged sections of government and private levees to their pre-flood height.

Intermediate works to eight Government owned LMRIA Levees are complete, with safety inspections and necessary safety works on track to enable progressive reopening of all government owned levees by the end of the year. Burdett and Long Flat levees have now reopened to the public, **all other government-owned LMRIA levees remain temporarily closed to the public**.

Intermediate remediation works are currently underway at the Westbrook, Wellington, Swanport and Kilsby levees. All remaining private levees are scheduled for completion by June 2027.

Public safety risk assessments, including tree condition assessments, have now been completed across all government-owned levees. Fencing repairs are ongoing, with signage to be reinstated prior to reopening to the public. Arborist works are expected to commence on the remaining levees within the coming weeks, subject to suitable weather conditions. Where works are still required, levees will remain closed to the public until these are complete to ensure safe access.

For more information, including locations and access updates, please visit the LMRIA levees page.
If you have any questions, please contact the DEW Levee Recovery Team at DEW.lmrialevees@sa.gov.au

Overland Corner Reserve construction works

The Department for Environment and Water (DEW) is planning to conduct works at Overland Corner Reserve as part of the South Australia Constraints Measures project.

Construction is scheduled to commence in the first week of December 2026, with completion expected by April 2027, subject to weather conditions and approvals.

The works include upgrading the existing wetland regulator, improving the access track between the Overland Corner Hotel and the regulator, and installing three box culverts beneath the track to improve water movement and floodplain connectivity.

The reserve will be closed to the public for the duration of construction, with access restricted from the bottom of Heron Bend Road and the entrance near the Overland Corner Hotel.

Further information is available at environment.sa.gov.au/constraints or by emailing DEW.Constraints@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

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