



# River Murray Water Resources Report

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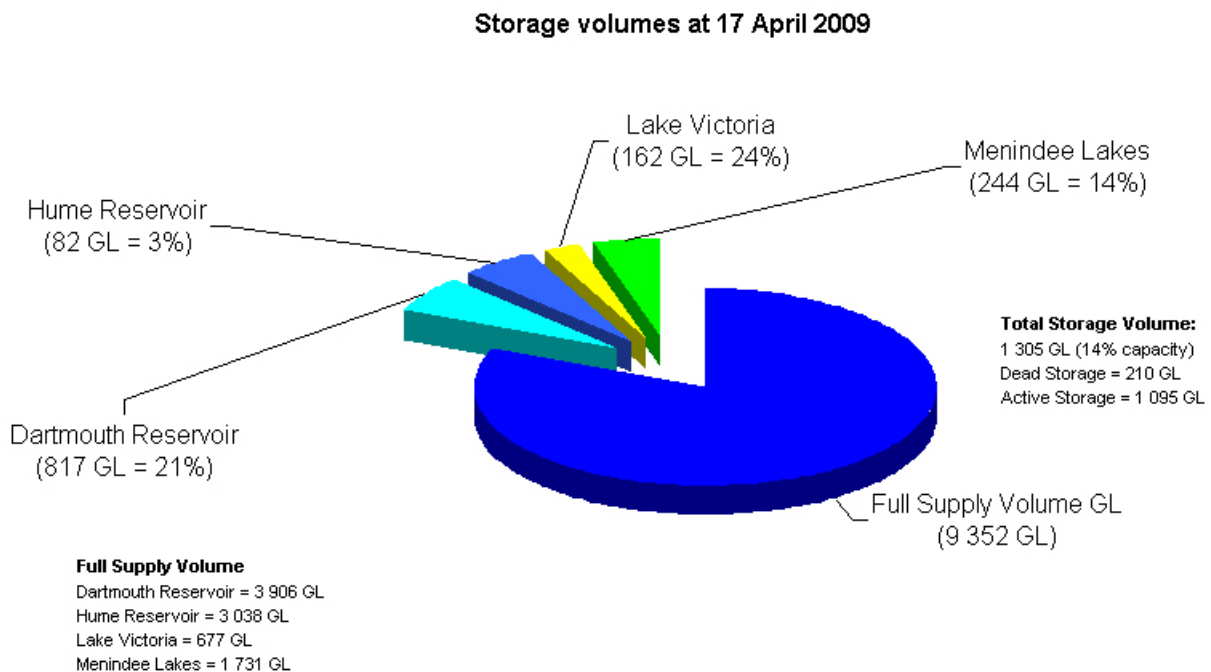
## Observations at a glance

- River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia will remain at 18% for the remainder of 2008-09 as extreme drought conditions continue across the Murray-Darling Basin.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 1 305 GL (14% capacity), compared to the long-term average for mid-April of about 5 020 (54% capacity).
- Just 40 GL of inflows were recorded in March 2009, which was just slightly above the worst case scenario predictions.
- Below Lock 1 water levels remain low and salinity levels remain high due to reduced flows into South Australia.

## Murray-Darling Basin storages

The volume of water in storage in Hume and Dartmouth Reservoirs, Lake Victoria and Menindee Lakes is currently 1 305 GL (14% capacity), compared to about 1 771 GL (19% capacity) at the same time last year. The long-term average for mid-April is 5 020 (54% capacity). Current storage levels are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Murray-Darling Basin storages



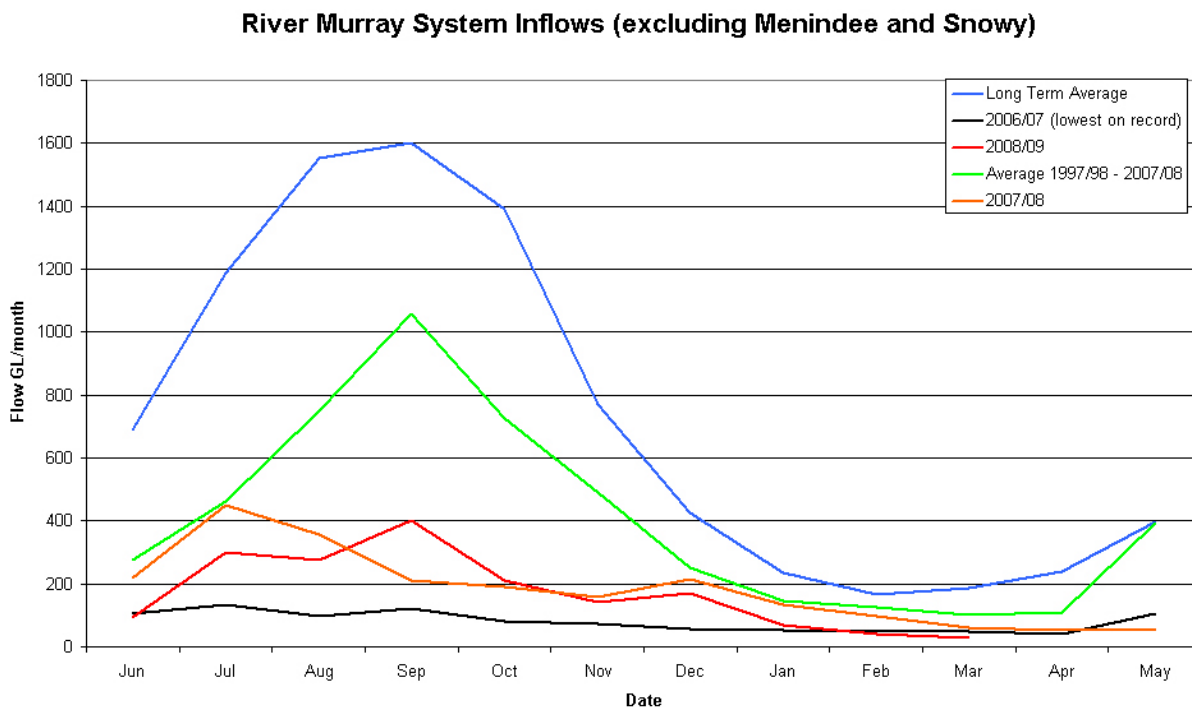
## River Murray inflows

Inflow conditions have significantly deteriorated since the end of December 2008 due to low rainfall combined with above average temperatures. Only 40 GL of inflows were recorded during March 2009, which meant there was no increase in the amount of water available to South Australia.

The 40 GL of inflows last month was just slightly above the 30 GL assumed in the "worst case" scenario.

Figure 2 shows monthly River Murray inflows.

Figure 2: River Murray system inflows (excluding Menindee and Snowy)



## River operations

Flow into South Australia is currently 3 100 ML/day to meet irrigation diversions and wetland rewetting. Originally this figure was to be 2 900 ML/day but it was increased to prevent weir pools dropping significantly amid higher temperatures. This compares to an average flow of 2 400 ML/day during April last year, and the normal minimum entitlement flow for April of 4 500 ML/day.

The flow past Lock 1 is currently about 1 500 ML/day.

The daily flows have been adjusted to take into account the re-wetting of some wetlands in accordance with the SA Murray-Darling Basin Natural Resources Management Board's re-wetting program. This program began in March and has continued this month.

## Salinity and water levels

Salinity levels above Lock 1 remain fairly low. However, downstream of Lock 1 salinity levels remain high due to low water levels. Salinity in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently 5 995 EC compared to about 4 154 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently 11 640 EC.

The water level in Lake Alexandrina (at Milang) is currently -1.1m AHD, compared to about -0.4m AHD at the same time last year. The water level in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently -0.49m AHD.

**Table 1** shows the current water levels and salinity at selected locations.

**Table 1: Water and salinity levels**

	Actual Water Levels at 17/04/09		Full Supply Level Level	Variation from Pool Level	Current EC Level
	U/S m AHD	D/S m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	
<b>Lock 6</b>	19.20	16.17	19.25	-0.05	165
<b>Lock 5</b>	16.22	13.15	16.30	-0.08	191
<b>Lock 4</b>	13.10	10.07	13.20	-0.10	284
<b>Lock 3</b>	9.78	6.18	9.80	-0.02	380
<b>Lock 2</b>	6.08	3.24	6.10	-0.02	442
<b>Lock 1</b>	3.18	-0.75	3.20	-0.02	464
<b>Lake Alexandrina (Milang)</b>	-1.10				5 995
<b>Lake Albert (Meningie)</b>	-0.49				11 640
<b>Goolwa</b>	-1.05				30 797
Water levels below Lock 1 are affected by wind and will vary throughout the day					
EC Readings below Lock 1 are daily averages and will vary throughout the day					

## Water allocations in South Australia and interstate

The Minister for the River Murray has announced that River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia will remain at 18% for the remainder of 2008-09 as extreme drought conditions continue across the Murray-Darling Basin. View the Minister's latest allocation announcement at [www.ministers.sa.gov.au/news.php?minister=13](http://www.ministers.sa.gov.au/news.php?minister=13)

The latest information about allocations in New South Wales is available at [www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mr\\_toc\\_currnr.html](http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mr_toc_currnr.html)

The latest information about allocations in Victoria is available at [www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/](http://www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/)

## Temporary interstate River Murray water trade deadlines

Irrigators are reminded that applications for water trades to or from New South Wales must be lodged with NSW State Water by 31 May 2009, and trades to or from Victoria must be lodged with the relevant Victorian water authority by 16 June 2009.

## Water trade within South Australia

Applications for permanent and temporary trades **within** South Australia to have effect in 2008-09 should also be lodged by **16 June 2009**. This will ensure sufficient time to process the trade by 30 June 2009. Although applications will be accepted after 16 June 2009 it may not be possible to process these applications by 30 June 2009 for use in 2008-09, or carry-over into 2009-10. Trades finalised after 30 June 2009 cannot be retrospective. Licence holders are therefore encouraged to submit trade applications for 2008-09 as early as possible.

## Carry-over applications closed

Applications to carry-over irrigation allocations not used in 2008-09 into the 2009-10 water year have now closed. Late applications will not be accepted.

The carry-over policy and further information is available at [www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html#Carryoverwater](http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/index.html#Carryoverwater)

## Weather outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's outlook for April to June 2009 shows there is a 30-60% chance of exceeding median rainfall over the Murray-Darling Basin. It also shows there is a 35-60% chance of exceeding median maximum temperatures.

### Further information on River Murray conditions and rainfall forecasts can be obtained from the following websites:

Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation [www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au](http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au)  
SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board [www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au](http://www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au)  
Murray-Darling Basin Commission [www.mdbc.gov.au](http://www.mdbc.gov.au)  
SA Water Daily Reports [www.riverland.net.au/%7Eheinz/ex-flow-frame.htm](http://www.riverland.net.au/%7Eheinz/ex-flow-frame.htm)  
Bureau of Meteorology [www.bom.gov.au](http://www.bom.gov.au)  
Queensland Department of Primary Industry [www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au](http://www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au)

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