



River Murray Water Resources Report

Issue 40: 22 June 2009

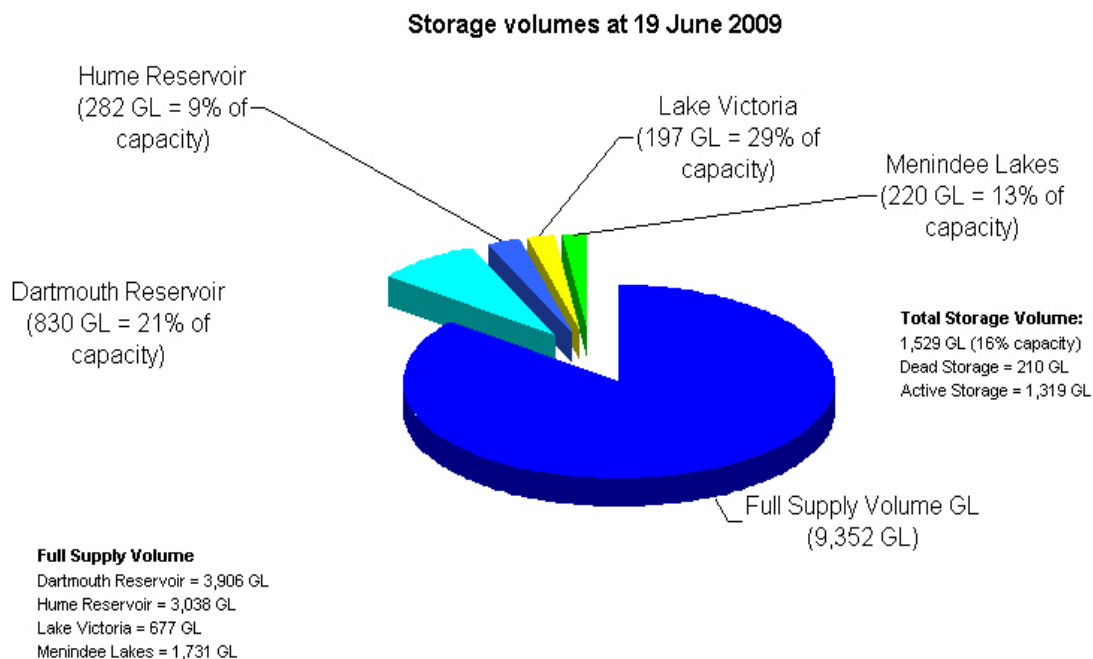
Observations at a glance

- Irrigators will begin the 2009-10 water year on 1 July with a 2% opening allocation and access to 60% of their approved carry-over water volume.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 1,529 GL (16% capacity), compared to about 1,986 GL (21% capacity) at the same time last year.
- From 1 June 2008 to 31 May 2009, inflows to the River Murray system were only 1,860 GL, compared with the long-term average for this period of 8,830 GL. The inflow for May 2009 was 90 GL, well below the long-term May average of 390 GL.
- 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 1,529 GL (16% capacity), compared to about 1,986 GL (21% capacity) at the same time last year. Current storage levels are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Murray-Darling Basin storages



Rainfall and River Murray inflows

Inflows continued at historically low levels between December 2008 and May 2009, but improved slightly in May 2009 due to widespread rainfall in late April 2009. This rainfall assisted in the initial wetting of catchments, however further follow up rainfall is required to significantly increase River Murray system inflows. It is anticipated that recent rainfall will improve inflows in June 2009.

The inflow for May 2009 was 90 GL, which is 60 GL higher than the minimum of 30 GL used for planning purposes but well below the long-term May average of 390 GL. The 2008-09 River Murray System inflows were the third driest in 118 years of record.

Above average rainfall will be required over a sustained period of time if River Murray system inflows are to return towards the long-term average. Given current rainfall forecasts this is unlikely to occur and therefore it is prudent to plan for another dry year in 2009-10.

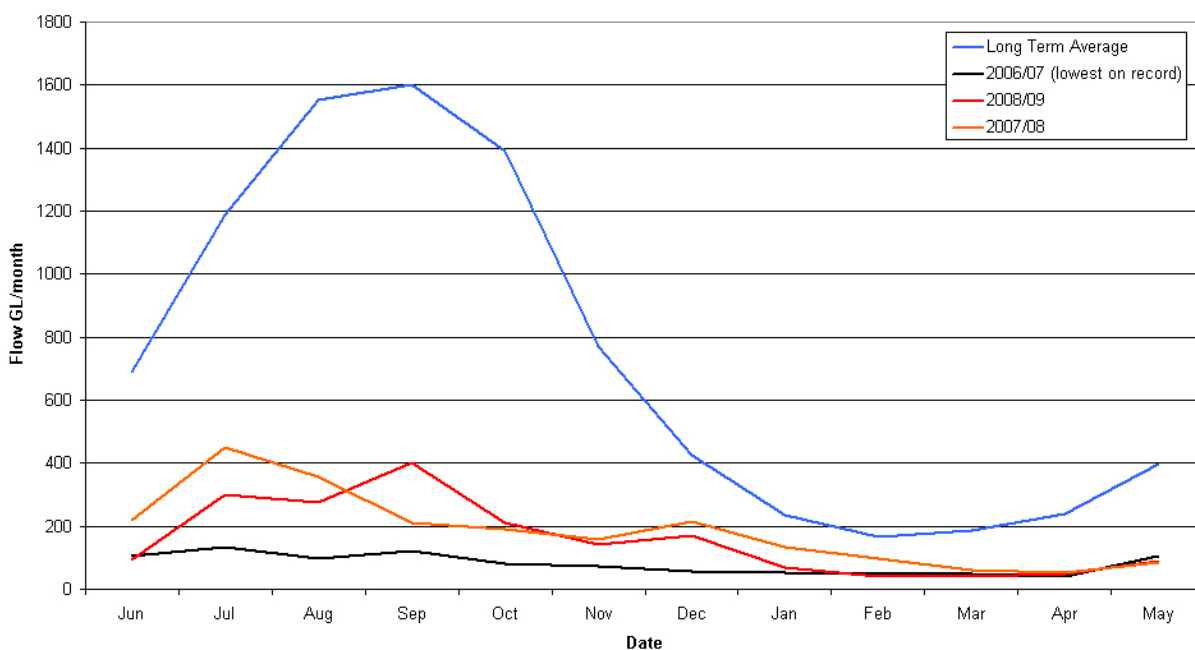
Table 1 shows River Murray inflows in 2008-09 compared to previous years, and long-term averages. **Figure 2** shows the monthly River Murray inflows.

Table 1: River Murray system inflows in 2008-09 compared to previous years

Period (June to May)	River Murray System Inflow (GL)
2008-09	1,860
2007-08	2,200
2006-07	970
Last 10 years	4,890
Long-term average	8,830

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

River Murray System Inflows (excluding Menindee and Snowy)



River operations

Flows to South Australia have been reduced to 1,700 ML/day due to lower demand, reduced losses and the need to conserve water. This flow still provides around 1,200 ML/day over Lock 1.

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 5,761 EC compared to about 4,171 EC at the same time last year. Salinity in Lake Albert (at Meningie) is currently 9,889 EC.

In Lake Alexandrina the average water level is about minus 0.90m AHD, and in Lake Albert it is about minus 0.30m AHD.

Table 2 shows the current water levels and salinity at selected locations.

Table 2: Water and salinity levels

	Actual Water Levels at 19/06/09		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	
Lock 6	19.18	16.20	19.25	-0.07	260
Lock 5	16.26	13.18	16.30	-0.04	258
Lock 4	13.17	9.96	13.20	-0.03	361
Lock 3	9.78	6.23	9.80	0.03	383
Lock 2	6.16	3.32	6.10	0.06	384
Lock 1	3.29	-0.77	3.20	0.09	450
Lake Alexandrina (Milang)	-0.94				5,761
Lake Albert (Meningie)	-0.27				9,889
Goolwa	-0.8				25,252
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

Irrigators will begin the 2009-10 water year on 1 July with a 2% opening allocation and access to 60% of their approved carry-over water volume. Minister for the River Murray, Karlene Maywald, said while drought conditions across the Murray-Darling Basin remain extremely serious, South Australia has been able to secure enough water to make a small opening allocation. View the Minister's latest River Murray announcement at www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/media.html

The latest information about allocations in New South Wales is available at www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/mediarelnr/mr_toc_currn.html or http://www.dwe.nsw.gov.au/water/avail_alloc.shtml

The latest information about allocations in Victoria is available at www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/media-releases-2008/

Temporary interstate River Murray water trade closed

Applications for water trades to or from New South Wales and Victoria have closed.

Water trade within South Australia

It was recommended that all applications for permanent and temporary trades **within** South Australia to have effect in 2008-09 be lodged by 16 June 2009. This would have ensured sufficient time to process the trade by 30 June 2009.

Applications will still be accepted, but 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.

For further information contact DWLBC on (08) 8595 2053.

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.

From 1 July 2009, irrigators can access 60% of their approved carry-over volume.

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

Weather outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's outlook for June to August 2009 shows there is a 40-50% chance of exceeding median rainfall over the Murray-Darling Basin. It also shows there is a 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

SA Murray-Darling Basin NRM Board www.samdbnrm.sa.gov.au

Murray-Darling Basin Commission www.mdbc.gov.au

SA Water Daily Reports www.riverland.net.au/%7Eheinz/ex-flow-frame.htm

Bureau of Meteorology www.bom.gov.au

Queensland Department of Primary Industry www.longpaddock.qld.gov.au

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