



River Murray Water Resources Report

Issue 44: 21 August 2009

Observations at a glance

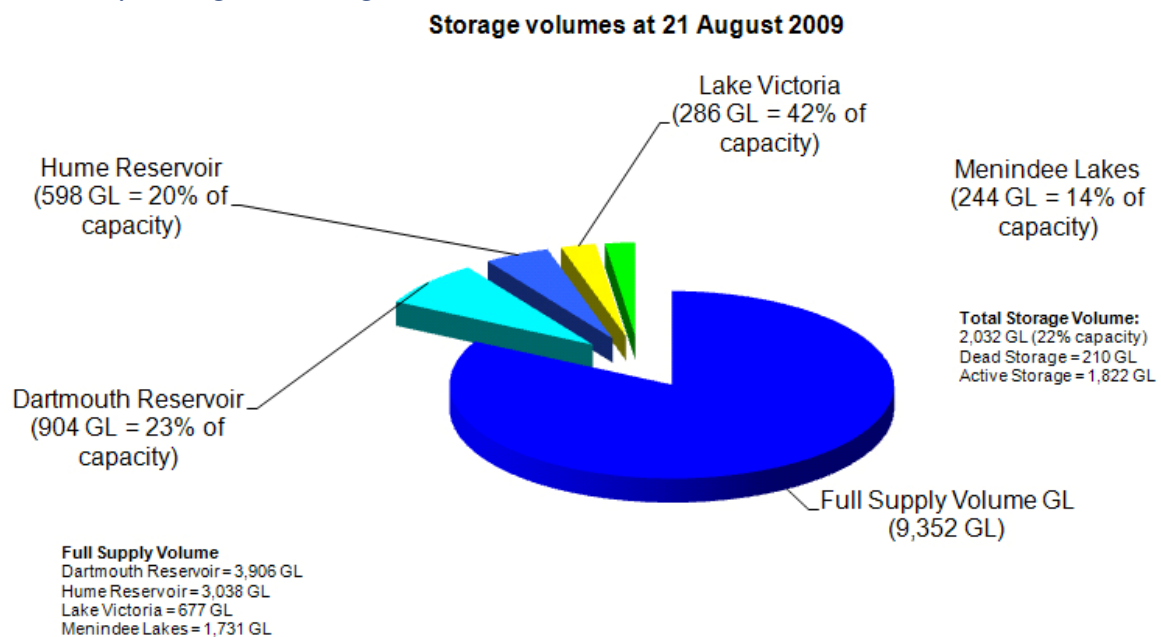
- Irrigators are currently able to access 5% of their allocation and 100% of their approved carry-over water volume.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 2,032 GL (22% capacity), compared to about 2,299 GL (25% capacity) at the same time last year.
- A minimum of 300 GL of inflow is expected to be received in August 2009.
- The NSW Office of Water has announced the relaxation of the temporary embargo on the annual trade of water from the Murrumbidgee Valley into the Murray Valley.
- 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 2,032 GL (22% capacity), compared to about 2,299 GL (25% capacity) at the same time last year.

Current storage levels are shown in **Figure 1**.

Figure 1: Murray-Darling Basin storages



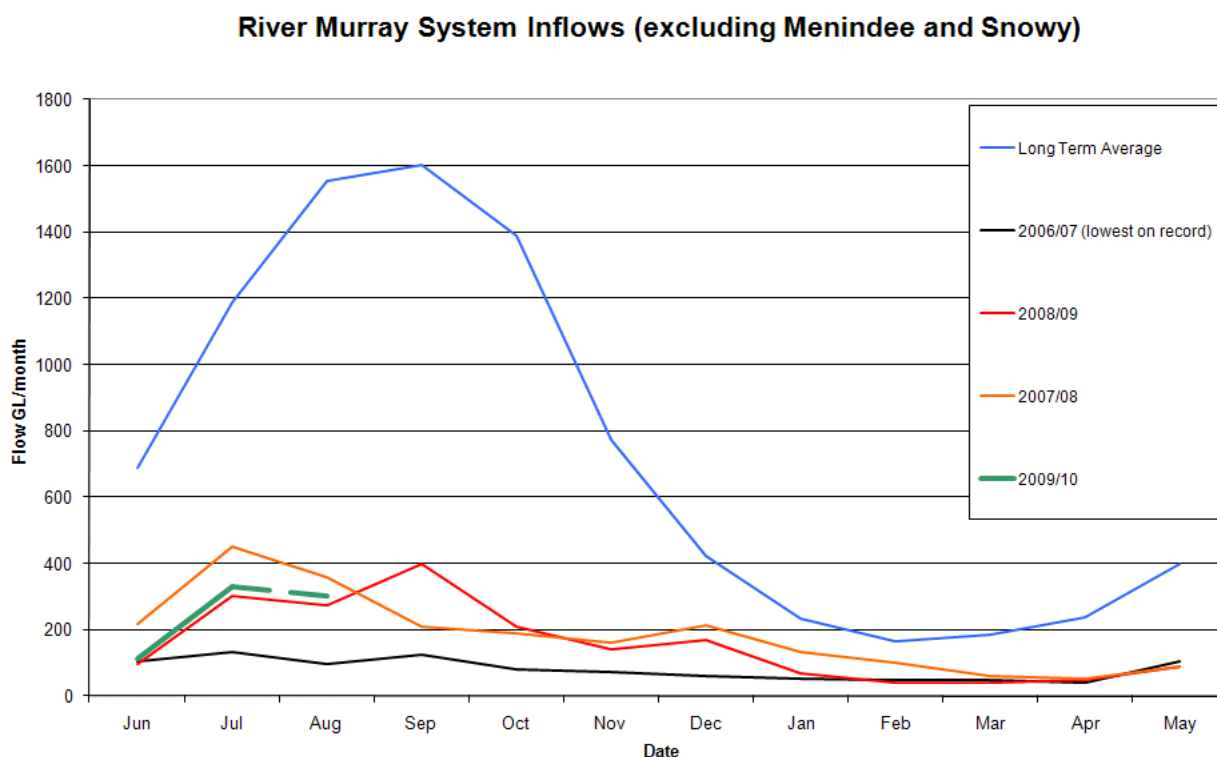
Rainfall and River Murray inflows

River Murray system inflows remain at extremely low levels. In July, about 330 GL flowed into the River Murray system, less than one third of the long-term July average of 1,170 GL.

A minimum of 300 GL of inflow is expected to be received in August 2009, however this may increase due to recent rainfall. In August 2008, 275 GL of inflow was recorded. The long-term August inflow average is 1,550 GL.

Figure 2 shows the monthly River Murray inflows.

Figure 2: River Murray inflows



River operations

Flows to South Australia are currently about 1,800 ML/day. This flow provides about 1,000 ML/day over Lock 1.

All weir pools are slightly above their normal full supply levels, except above Lock 6 and below Lock 1.

Information about river operations upstream of the South Australian border is available from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority website www.mdba.gov.au

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. Average salinity in Lake Alexandrina is currently 5,770 EC compared to about 3,900 EC last August. Average salinity in Lake Albert is currently 9,100 EC.

The average water level in Lake Alexandrina is currently about minus 0.79m AHD, and in Lake Albert the average water level is about minus 0.17m AHD.

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

Table 1: Water and salinity levels

	Actual Water Levels at 21/08/09		Full Supply Level Level	Variation from Pool Level	Current EC Level
	U/S mAHD	D/S m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	U/S of Weir m AHD	
Lock 6	19.16	16.29	19.25	-0.09	224
Lock 5	16.34	13.29	16.30	0.04	334
Lock 4	13.26	10.02	13.20	0.06	454
Lock 3	9.83	6.31	9.80	0.03	471
Lock 2	6.14	3.31	6.10	0.04	470
Lock 1	3.28	-0.79	3.20	0.08	429
Lake Alexandrina (average)	-0.79				5,770
Lake Albert (average)	-0.17				9,100
Goolwa	-0.62				19,619
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

River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia are currently at 5%. For further information 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/

Murrumbidgee Trade Announcement

The NSW Office of Water has announced the relaxation of the temporary embargo on the annual trade of water from the Murrumbidgee Valley into the Murray Valley.

NSW Commissioner for Water, David Harriss, said the interim embargo on annual trade announced on 1 July 2009 had been necessary, as more than 230 GL had been carried over and was required to be delivered into the Murray Valley during 2009-10.

Mr Harriss said there was now capacity to allow an additional 70 GL to be traded out of the Murrumbidgee Valley this season. As demand is likely to exceed the 70 GL limit, the NSW Office of Water, together with NSW State Water Corporation, will introduce a ballot system, whereby users may trade up to 15% of their entitlement and prospective purchasers will have an equal opportunity to participate.

Details of the ballot will be available from 24 August 2009 on the NSW Office of Water website at www.dwe.nsw.gov.au

Carry-over

Irrigators can now access 100% 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 national outlook for total rainfall over the late winter to mid-spring period (August to October) shows a 40-45% chance of exceeding the median rainfall across most of the Murray-Darling Basin. There is a 70-80% chance of exceeding the median maximum temperature during the same period.

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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