



River Murray Water Resources Report

Issue 59: 24 June 2010

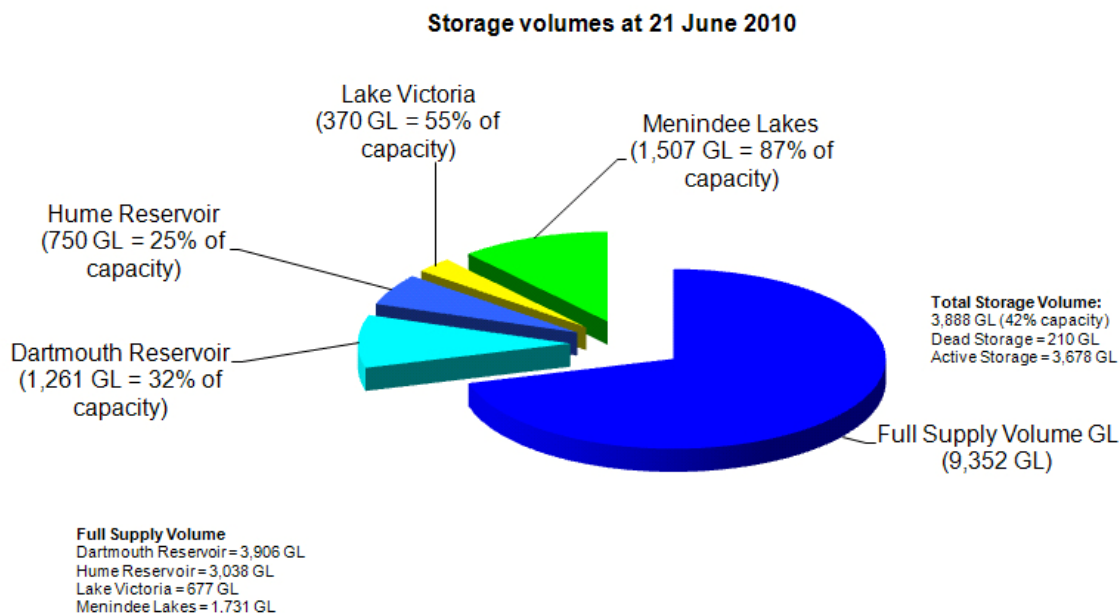
Observations at a glance

- Irrigators are currently able to access 62% of their water entitlement. The opening allocation for 2010-11 will be announced on 1 July 2010.
- The volume of water in upstream storages is currently 3,888 (42% capacity), compared to 1,529 GL (16% capacity) at the same time last year.
- River Murray system inflows during May 2010 were about 165 GL, which is below the long-term average of 385 GL. However this was the highest May inflow since 2001.

Murray-Darling Basin storages

The volume of water in storage in Hume and Dartmouth Reservoirs, Lake Victoria and Menindee Lakes is currently 3,888 (42% capacity), compared to 1,529 GL (16% 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 during May 2010 were about 165 GL, which is below the long-term average of 385 GL. However this was the highest May inflow since 2001.

The total River Murray system inflow from 1 June 2009 to the end of May 2010 was about 3,210 GL. This was well below the long-term average for this period of about 8,790 GL and was the 13th lowest in 119 years of records.

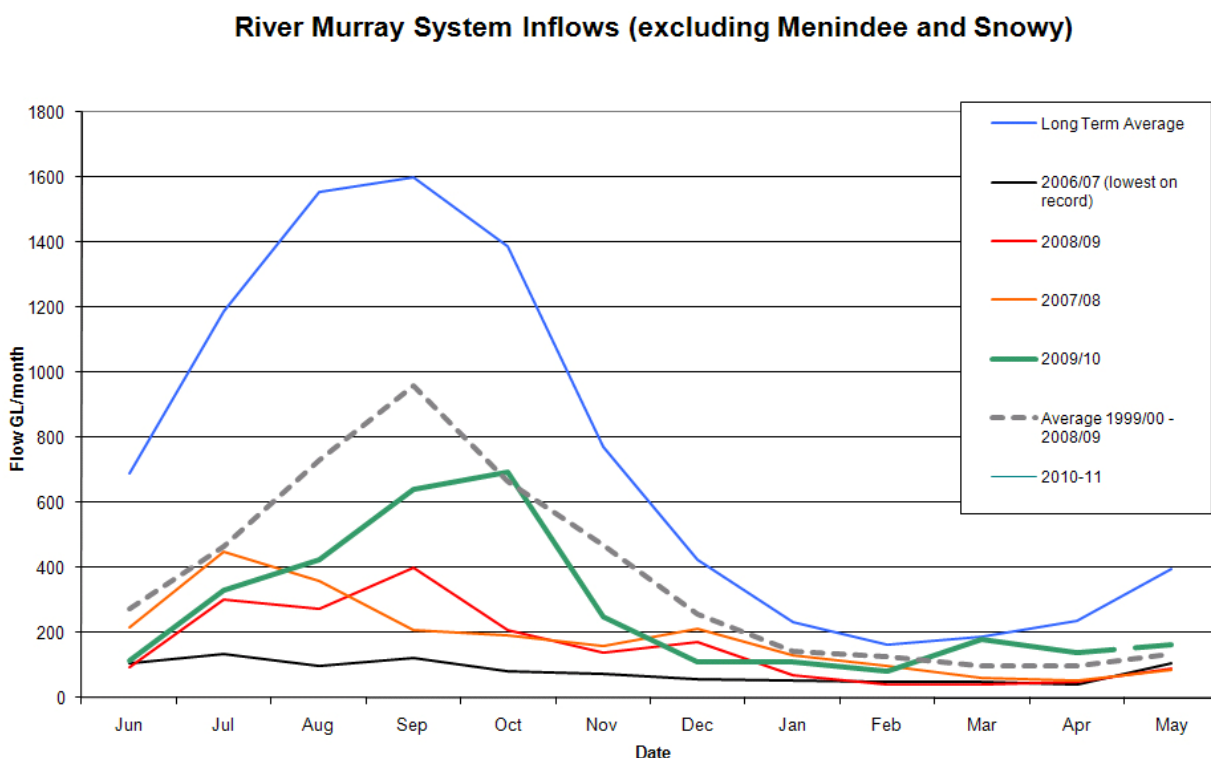
If the Menindee Lakes inflows are included, the total system inflows were 5,260 GL, which is 48% of the long-term average of 10,910 GL.

Table 1 and **Figure 2** show the River Murray System inflows (excluding Menindee).

Table 1: River Murray system inflows from 1 June to 31 May in various years

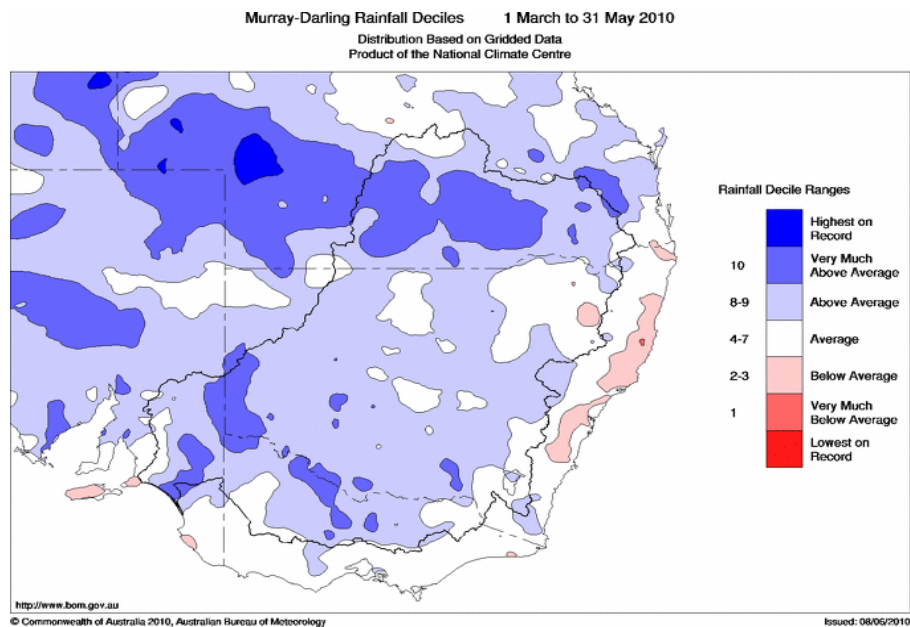
Period 1 June to 31 May	River Murray System Inflow (GL) (Rounded totals)
2006-07	970
2007-08	2,230
2008-09	1,880
2009-10	3,210
Long-term average	8,790
Last 10 years	4,425

Figure 2: River Murray system inflows



During autumn, above average rainfall was recorded across most of the Murray-Darling Basin. This rainfall provided improvements in water availability across the River Murray, northern NSW (including Menindee Lakes) and southern Queensland. **Figure 3** shows the Murray-Darling rainfall deciles for March to May 2010.

Figure 3: Murray-Darling rainfall deciles for March to May 2010



River operations

Flows to South Australia will be at the normal monthly entitlement flow during June and July, which are 3,000 ML/day and 3,500 ML/day respectively. In addition, another 72 GL will be delivered during June and July to correct for an error in measuring the flow to South Australia.

The flow to South Australia is currently averaging 4,230 ML/day and the average flow over Lock 1 is 3,595 ML/day.

A total of 810 GL has been delivered to Lake Alexandrina at the end of May 2010. This includes a mix of water allocated in 2009-10, South Australian Government water purchases and water originating from the floods earlier this year in New South Wales and Queensland. This is the highest inflow since 2005-06 and has increased the water level in the Lake Alexandrina.

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 between Lock 6 and Murray Bridge remain low. However below Wellington salinity levels in both Lakes Alexandrina and Albert remain high. The average salinity in Lake Alexandrina is currently 3,400 EC and in Lake Albert is currently 14,700 EC.

The average water level in Lake Alexandrina is currently about minus 0.29m AHD, and in Lake Albert the average water level is about minus 0.41m AHD. Pumping from Lake Alexandrina to Lake Albert has temporarily ceased.

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

Table 2: Water and salinity levels at 15 June 2010

	Actual Water Levels at 21/06/10		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	19.26	16.30	19.25	-0.09	165
Lock 5	16.31	13.32	16.30	0.01	226
Lock 4	13.21	10.28	13.20	0.01	277
Lock 3	9.81	6.28	9.80	0.03	286
Lock 2	6.10	3.32	6.10	0.00	292
Lock 1	3.19	-0.15	3.20	-0.01	291
Lake Alexandrina (average)	-0.29				3,400
Lake Albert (average)	-0.41				14,700
Goolwa	-0.05				19,400
Water levels below Lock 1 are affected by wind and will vary throughout the day					
EC Readings below Lock 1 are averages and will vary throughout the day					

Cautious optimism for 2010-11 water year

On 17 June 2010, Minister for the River Murray Paul Caica said South Australia will begin the 2010-11 water year in a much better position than in the past three years.

Mr Caica said the latest Murray-Darling Basin Authority resource assessment included 80 billion litres of additional water for South Australia, reflecting the improved storage within the Menindee Lakes.

"This means there will be more water available for the environment and puts us in a good position to accumulate a substantial amount of our critical human water needs for 2011-12 early in the water year," Mr Caica said.

"It also means South Australian irrigators can expect the opening allocation to be announced on 1 July to be better than they have received in recent years."

Mr Caica said that opening allocations will be greater than in the past three years when opening allocations were 4%, 2% and 2% respectively. By the end of August, there is a 95% chance that allocations will reach at least 25%. This compares with an actual allocation of only 10% at the end of August 2009.

Irrigators will also be able to access 100% of their carryover entitlements.

Irrigators are reminded that allocations in South Australia will remain at 62% until the end of this month.

For further information read the Minister's full announcement at www.ministers.sa.gov.au/images/stories/mediareleasesJUN10/allocation%20outlook%20.pdf

Water allocations in South Australia and interstate

River Murray irrigation allocations in South Australia are currently at 62% of water entitlement and will remain at this level until 30 June 2010.

Opening allocations for 2010-11 will be announced by the Minister for the River Murray on 1 July 2010.

The latest information about allocations in New South Wales is available at <http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/>

The latest information about allocations in Victoria is available at http://www.g-mwater.com.au/news/media-releases/2009_media_releases

Weather outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology is forecasting dry and warm conditions for the period June to August 2010. The outlook is showing a 30-55% chance of exceeding median rainfall and a 70-75% chance of exceeding median maximum temperatures across the Murray-Darling Basin.

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