

# REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 13 March 2002

Our Ref: MDBC:269 :ng:bwh

15 March, 2002



Warm and dry conditions have continued across the Murray-Darling Basin. Light falls of rain of up to 20 mm were recorded in southern Queensland, however, the remainder of the Basin received little or no rain. Mild temperatures experienced over summer have delayed the finishing of some agricultural crops including rice and grapes. Combined with the commencement of autumn pasture watering and continued dry conditions, this is resulting in very high demands along the Murray.

Whilst flow downstream of Yarrawonga Weir has been maintained at channel capacity at the Barmah 'choke' in recent weeks, high demand and river losses have continued over a sustained period. Consequently, rationing of diversions is now being implemented along the River Murray from Yarrawonga to Wentworth to ensure that river flows are maintained within acceptable limits. The restrictions on diversions (excluding town water supplies) are being managed by New South Wales and Victorian water supply agencies in close consultation with River Murray Water (*see copies of attached Media Releases*), and represent an average level of restriction of about 10%.

Additional flow from tributaries in both New South Wales and Victoria in recent weeks, as well as management of timing of diversions at major offtakes in Victoria, has averted rationing of diversions until now. However, tributary flows are now at or being reduced to minimum riparian rates because of high irrigation demand in tributary systems.

Total diversion from major offtakes along the Murray and Edward/Wakool Rivers between Yarrawonga and Wentworth is currently about 6 500 ML/day, whilst private diversions and losses are about 7 000 ML/day in this reach. Release from Yarrawonga Weir is at maximum regulated flow of 10 400 ML/day, and tributary contributions are expected to total about 1 800 ML/day next week.

Flow downstream of Torrumbarry Weir was reduced during the week from 3 300 to 2 900 ML/day, however, it is expected to be increased slightly next week. River levels at Swan Hill have remained near the target minimum level, and are forecast to remain near this level next week.

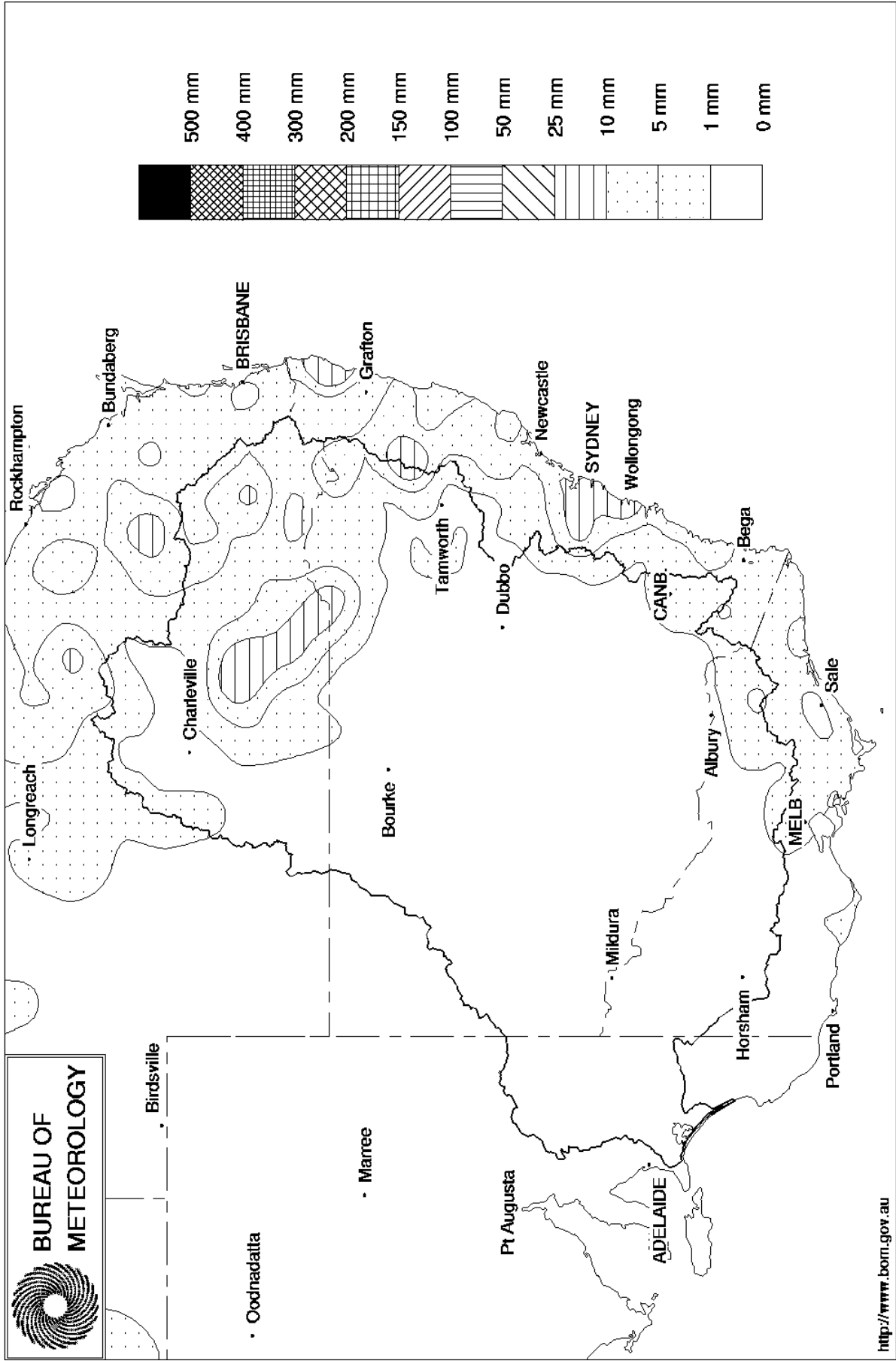
Additional flows from the Murrumbidgee River were arranged in early March to supplement River Murray flows. Flow at Balranald was 1 000 ML/day on 13 March, and will decline to minimum flow next week. As a result, the level of Euston Weir pool rise to near full supply level early next week before being drawn down by up to 40 cm to assist in meeting flow requirements. Mildura and Wentworth Weir pools will also be drawn down to a lesser extent to assist in maintaining flows (*see media release attached*). Release from Euston Weir has been temporarily reduced to minimise drawdown of the weir pool. Low regulated flow can be expected downstream of Mildura Weir and Wentworth Weir next week. Counts of blue-green algae in the Murray in the Sunraysia and lower Darling reaches generally remain in the low to moderate alert level.

Storage in Menindee Lakes fell below 480 GL on 14 March. As a result, releases from the storage are now under the control of the NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation for management of regional NSW water supply requirements. The Commission will next have control over releases when the total Menindee Lakes storage next exceeds 640 GL.

DAVID DOLE  
General Manager

# Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 13th March 2002

Product of the National Climate Centre



<http://www.bom.gov.au>

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Issued: 13/03/2002

# MEDIA RELEASE

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**Friday, 15 March 2002**

## **Temporary Drawdown of the Euston, Mildura and Wentworth Weir Pool Levels**

River Murray Water announced today that the water levels of the Euston, Mildura and Wentworth Weir pools will be temporarily lowered to assist in meeting flow requirements along the River Murray. This is being undertaken specifically for the purpose of maintaining adequate flows in the River Murray, and to minimise the extent of restriction of diversions.

Irrigation demand and losses have increased significantly over the last two weeks along the middle reaches of the River Murray, and flow has been maintained at channel capacity in the Barmah 'choke' at the Barmah-Millewa Forest. This has focussed attention on the operating constraints imposed by channel capacity, in particular the decline in the effective carrying capacity of the mid Murray over the last twenty years. In addition, there have been changes in patterns of peak demand along the mid Murray in recent years.

In response to the recent sustained high demand along the mid Murray, the water level of Euston Weir and Mildura Weir pools will be temporarily lowered to assist in meeting flow requirements. In addition, both New South Wales and Victoria, in consultation with River Murray Water, have sought restraint from river diverters by introduction of minor restrictions to diversions to assist in maintaining river flows within acceptable limits.

Details of the forecast lowering of weir pool relative to full supply level (FSL) are as follows.

<b>Weir</b>	<b>Current Level below FSL</b>	<b>Estimated Maximum Drawdown Below FSL</b>	<b>Expected Commencement Date of Drawdown</b>	<b>Approximate Date Weir Pool Level is Forecast to Reach Maximum Drawdown</b>
<b>Euston</b>	9 cm	40 cm	18 March	24 March
<b>Mildura</b>	2 cm	20 cm	16 March	24 March

It may also be necessary to lower Wentworth Weir pool by a smaller amount (up to about 10 cm) to assist with river operation. The extent of drawdown to be undertaken is generally based on levels which will no significant adverse impact on water supply, and which minimise as far as possible the impacts on other river users. At this stage, the duration of the drawdown of each weir pool is uncertain, but will depend on irrigation demand and weather conditions upstream.

River diverters, boat operators and river other users are advised to take this operation into account when planning their activities. A further media release will be issued once further information becomes available.

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(Daniel Connell is *not* to be quoted as a spokesperson)

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**NSW Department of Land & Water Conservation  
Murray Region**

**MEDIA RELEASE**

15 March 2002

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**WATER RESTRICTIONS ANNOUNCED FOR NSW IRRIGATORS**

Regional Director of the NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation, Mr David Harriss, announced today the introduction of restrictions on the pumping of water by licensed irrigators in the NSW Murray Valley.

The restrictions will commence immediately and remain for a minimum of 10 days.

All NSW licensed irrigators in the Murray Region between Yarrowonga and the Darling River junction are required not to pump from the River Murray or its tributaries between 8.00 am and 2.00 pm on any day until March 25<sup>th</sup>. More stringent restrictions may be required if these measures are found to be insufficient.

Separate arrangements have been introduced for Murray Irrigation Limited and Western Murray Irrigation. Irrigators within these areas will be advised by the corporations of the restrictions.

Urban utilities and industrial users are also requested to minimise their water use in the coming weeks to assist.

Mr Harriss said that the restrictions were necessary as current demand for water for irrigation exceeded the flows in the Murray River downstream of the Barmah Choke near Echuca to the junction of the Darling River at Wentworth. Without these actions, flows in the River Murray and levels in the Mildura and Euston weir pools would fall below acceptable limits in the coming weeks.

The restrictions imposed by NSW have been based on the proportion of existing water entitlements issued to NSW irrigators in the Murray River downstream of the Barmah Choke.

Ends

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**LAND & WATER  
CONSERVATION MURRAY REGION**



## *Media Release*

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### **RIVER MURRAY CAPACITY SHORTFALL AFFECTS IRRIGATORS**

Goulburn-Murray Water's Chief Executive, Mr. Denis Flett, announced today that Victoria is responding to requests from River Murray Water for short term reductions in diversions from the River Murray. Irrigation demand currently exceeds the channel capacity downstream of the Barmah choke by about 1,000 ML/d. Victoria and New South Wales have been requested to reduce river diversions as part of a package of measures to manage river operations.

All customer groups on the River Murray downstream of Yarrawonga are affected by the response to the current shortfall.

Diversions to the Torrumbarry Irrigation Area have been reduced at the National Channel and Pental Island pumps. Customers will be rationed by Goulburn-Murray Water and are requested to provide a minimum of four days notice for irrigation orders.

All licenced diverters from the River Murray downstream of Yarrawonga are required not to pump from the river between 8:00 am and 2:00 pm on any day until further notice. These restrictions to access are identical to measures already implemented for river diverters in New South Wales.

Mr. Flett said, "We are aware these measures will impact customers, but they are aimed at seeking an equitable and co-operative approach to addressing the management of the River Murray".

Pumped diversions to supply Sunraysia Rural Water Authority and FMIT are being reduced to reduce the total demand.

The capacity shortfall is expected to continue until the end of March or until a break in the weather reduces irrigation demand. River Murray Water are monitoring the situation daily and will advise both states of any adjustments in restrictions. More stringent measures may be required if measures to manage the river are not effective.

- E N D S -

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Position: Production Manager

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Date released: 15 March 2002

## Week ending Wednesday 13 Mar 2002

### Water in Storage

MDBC Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead storage (GL)	Active storage (GL)	Change for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	476.84	3 333	85%	80	3 253	-6
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	177.39	872	29%	30	842	-145
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	24.34	395	58%	100	295	-37
Menindee Lakes		1 682 *		481	29%	480 #	1	-18
<b>Total</b>		<b>9 306</b>		<b>5 080</b>	<b>55%</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>4 390</b>	<b>-206</b>

\* Menindee surcharge capacity 1999 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **51%**

# NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

### Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026		267	26%	3	264	-4
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		293	18%	24	269	-35
Eildon Reservoir	3 390		874	26%	100	774	-53

### Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 12-Mar-2002

Storage (GL)	Current storage	Weekly change	Diversion	This week	From 1 May 2001
Lake Eucumbene - Total	2 995	-23	Snowy-Murray	+15	722
Snowy-Murray Component	1 323	-	Tooma-Tumut	+0	221
Target Storage	1 410		Nett Diversion	14.7	502
			Murray 1 Release	+17	1 031

### Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2001
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	70.0	1 283.4
Wakool System loss	3.1	29.9
Western Murray Irrig.	0.8	24.8
Licensed Pumps	17.6	309.3
Lower Darling	5.9	109.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97.4</b>	<b>1 756.8</b>

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2001
Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	22.0	430
Torrumbary System + Nyah (net)	29.3	660
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	3.7	135
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	2.0	61
Licensed pumps - SRW	4.3	153
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>61.3</b>	<b>1 439</b>

### Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	186	(5 900 ML/day)
Flow this week	41.4	
Flow so far this month	78	
Flow last month	198	

### Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2001
Swan Hill	170	116	196
Euston	190	157	223
Red Cliffs	210	210	294
Merbein	210	210	288
Burtundy	510	490	469
Lock 9	370	370	407
Lake Victoria	470	463	399
Berri	520	520	465
Waikerie	610	610	554
Morgan	610	611	547
Mannum	610	615	538
Murray Bridge	730	719	577
Meningie	N/A	N/A	1 223
Goolwa Barrages	1 470	1 497	1 432



Week ending Wednesday 13 Mar 2002

### River Levels and Flows

River Murray	Minor Flood stage (m)	Gauge height		Flow (ML/day)	Trend	Average flow this week (ML/day)	Average flow last week (ML/day)
		local (m)	(m AHD)				
Khancoban	-	-	-	1 850	F	1 880	3 460
Jingellic	4.0	1.46	207.98	3 070	R	3 710	4 660
Tallandoon ( Mitta Mitta River )	4.2	1.45	218.34	860	R	840	840
Heywoods	5.5	3.63	157.26	23 060	R	24 250	24 200
Doctors Point	5.5	3.75	152.22	23 400	R	24 290	24 390
Albury	4.3	2.84	150.28	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	4.15	130.17	24 400	F	24 760	22 760
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.79	116.83	10 400	S	10 390	10 370
Tocumwal	6.4	2.29	106.13	9 770	F	9 740	9 730
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.20	79.75	2 880	F	3 090	2 700
Swan Hill	4.5	0.56	63.48	1 530	F	1 650	1 790
Wakool Junction	8.8	1.65	50.77	2 880	R	2 720	3 530
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	0.73	42.57	2 650	R	2 390	3 460
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	30.82	1 410	F	1 840	3 860
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.76	27.52	1 810	S	2 260	4 450
Rufus Junction	-	3.31	17.68	5 450	S	5 410	5 740
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	-	3 200	S	3 300	3 820
<b>Tributaries</b>							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.75	153.98	290	F	340	320
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.71	145.39	241	F	550	290
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.17	92.59	399	F	370	420
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	1 110	F	1 200	1 560
Edward at Liewah	-	1.86	57.24	1 250	F	1 290	1 210
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.32	54.81	201	F	310	770
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	1.35	57.31	1 030	F	700	390
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.24	-	120	F	240	350
Darling at Bourke	-	4.22	-	1 090	R	700	490
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.86	-	540	F	770	1 300

<b>Natural Inflow to Hume</b> (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	2 020	2 140
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### Weirs and Locks

Pool levels above or below design level

Murray	FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s		FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s
Yarrowonga	124.90	-0.03	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.08	+1.00
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.00	+0.06
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.09	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.00	+0.12
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.01	+0.02	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.00	+0.55
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.02	+0.12	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.01	+0.19
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.00	-0.04	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.06	+0.14
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	-0.01	+0.08	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.04	-0.13

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-2.72	0.5	69.85	211
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-1.00	0.2	61.5	314

### Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.62	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.62	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.60	All closed

AHD = Level relative to Australian Height Datum, i.e. height above sea level

