

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 10 March 2004

Our Ref : RMW305/01/01/prs
Trim Ref : 04/2846DO

12 March, 2004



Rainfall

The northern half of the Murray-Darling Basin received further welcome rain with falls of up to 100 mm in southern Queensland. These falls will, however, have negligible impact on streamflows in the Darling River upstream of Menindee Lakes. Conditions along the River Murray remain dry with inflows to Dartmouth and Hume reservoirs receding to very low levels.

System Update

Release from Hume Reservoir averaged about 20 000 ML/day and is likely to be cut next week as transfers of water from Hume to Lake Victoria begin to be reduced. Flow downstream of Yarrawonga Weir will remain steady next week however the volume of water being passed to Lake Victoria via the Edward River system will begin to be gradually reduced. Further details will be provided next week.

Release from Torrumbarry Weir was decreased from 6100 to 4700 ML/day and forecast high diversion rates at National Channel will see release fall even further next week to about 4300 ML/day. The river height at Swan Hill has begun to fall and is expected to steady at about 0.85 m gauge height by 18 March.

Release from Euston Weir is currently averaging about 6500 ML/day and will be maintained at about this rate over the coming weekend. The weirpool will begin to be drawn down commencing Friday 12 March to assist in the dilution of saline inflows from the Darling River. The pool will fall to approximately 0.3 m below FSL by about 17 March. Further downstream, Mildura Weir pool will be drawn down to about 0.2 m below FSL by about 15 March, also to assist in diluting the Darling flows.

Salinity Spike

On Tuesday 9 March, River Murray Water issued a media release (*see attached*) warning of potentially high salinities within the Darling arm, and immediately downstream, of the Wentworth Weir pool. The first of the saline Darling River water passed Wentworth Weir on about Thursday 11 March. Comprehensive monitoring of the salinity front by the NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) has shown that the saline Darling water was passing Wentworth Weir almost unnoticed beneath a layer of fresh Murray water at the surface. Whilst surface salinity levels were below 250 EC, salinity levels at a depth of 5 m were about 2600 EC.

Downstream of Wentworth Weir, the Murray and Darling waters have been observed to rapidly mix and on 11 March the salinity of the River Murray 1 km downstream was about 1100 EC.

At Menindee Lakes, release has been reduced by DIPNR from about 5300 to 700 ML/day. Flow in the lower Darling River at Burtundy is currently peaking at about 4300 ML/day and salinity levels have fallen to about 300 EC.

DAVID DREVERMAN
General Manager

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 9 March 2004

Localised Very High Salinities for Wentworth



River pumpers are being advised to take into account possible rapid increases in river salinity when pumping from the River Murray over the next fortnight (from this evening, Tuesday, March 9).

River Murray Water (RMW) General Manager David Dreverman said the saline water flowing from the Darling was expected to arrive at Wentworth overnight.

“Salinities in excess of 3 000 EC have been observed in the Darling arm of the Wentworth Weir Pool. It is possible that similar salinities could be observed at, and downstream of, Wentworth Weir before the waters of the Darling and the Murray mix, though these would be localised and short lived,” Mr Dreverman said. To promote mixing of the flows release from Wentworth Weir will be biased towards the Victorian bank of the Murray.

“The saline front has moved quickly through the Darling with salinities rising by 1 500 EC in a matter of hours at some sites - this rapid increase in salinity is likely to occur on the Murray though the peaks will be lower as the saline water will be diluted by Murray flows”.

The “salt slug” had passed Burtundy and river salinity was 340 EC this morning, a fall from 1200 EC yesterday, following a peak of more than 3 000 EC last week (see attached plots). The saline water is forecast to pass downstream of Wentworth by late March.

“River Murray Water and the relevant water authorities in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia will continue to closely monitor the progress of the saline flow, and implement available operational responses aimed at minimising the salinity impacts of this event,” Mr Dreverman said. Additional releases from Euston and Mildura Weirs to aid dilution will commence once the salinity reaches Wentworth and further downstream the flow will be diverted into Lake Victoria for dilution, to minimise salinities in South Australia.

Releases from Menindee Lakes are being reduced by New South Wales’ Department of Infrastructure Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) towards the minimum release rate to conserve water for public use.

Lake Wetherell will be fully surcharged by the end of this Darling River flow event. Further media releases will be issued as the situation unfolds.

For further information contact:

Allison Hicks

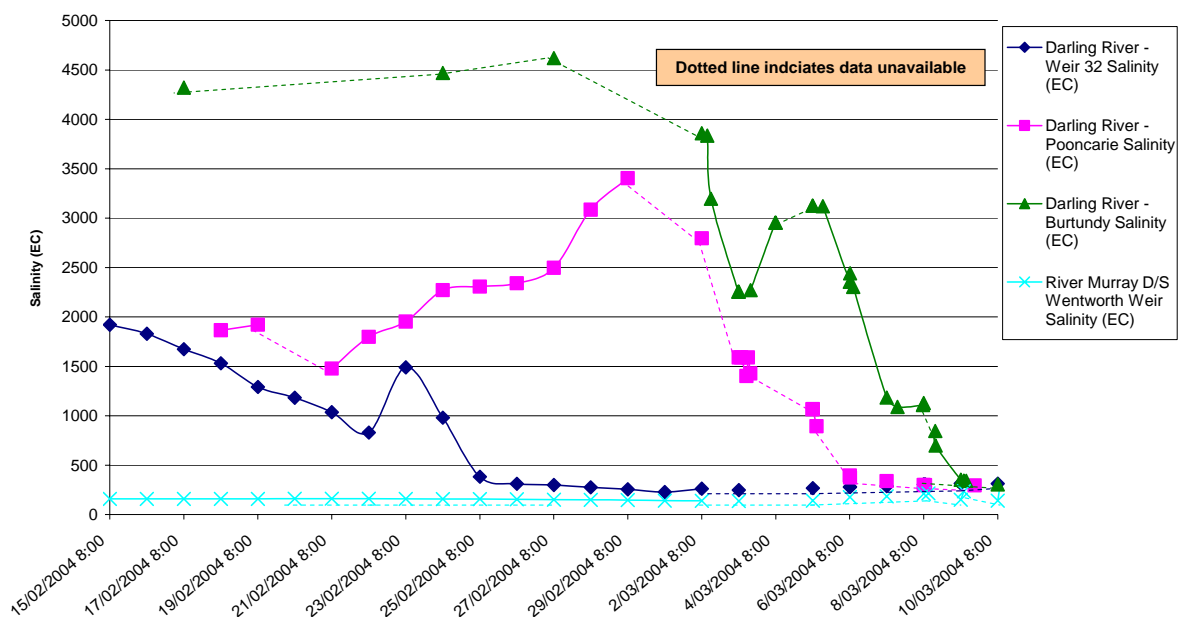
Media Liaison

Phone: 02 6279 0129

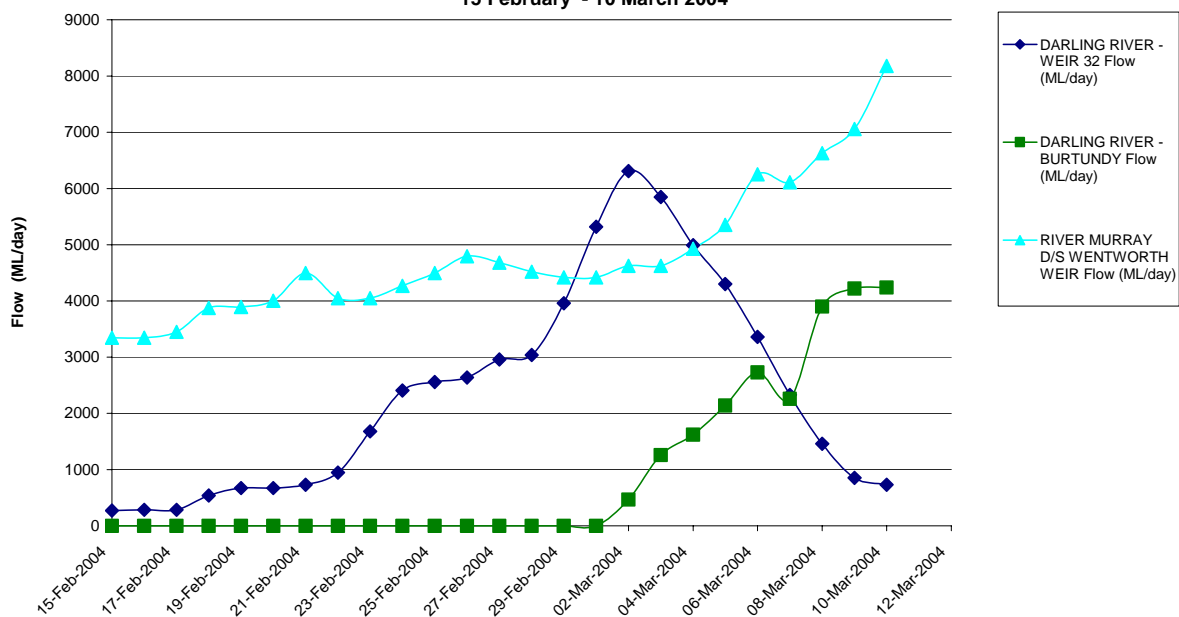
E-mail: allison.hicks@mdbc.gov.au

(Allison Hicks is not to be quoted as a spokesperson)

**Lower Darling Salinity
Between Menindee Lakes and River Murray
15 February - 10 March 2004**



**Lower Darling Flow
Between Menindee Lakes and River Murray
15 February - 10 March 2004**



For further information contact:

Allison Hicks

Media Liaison

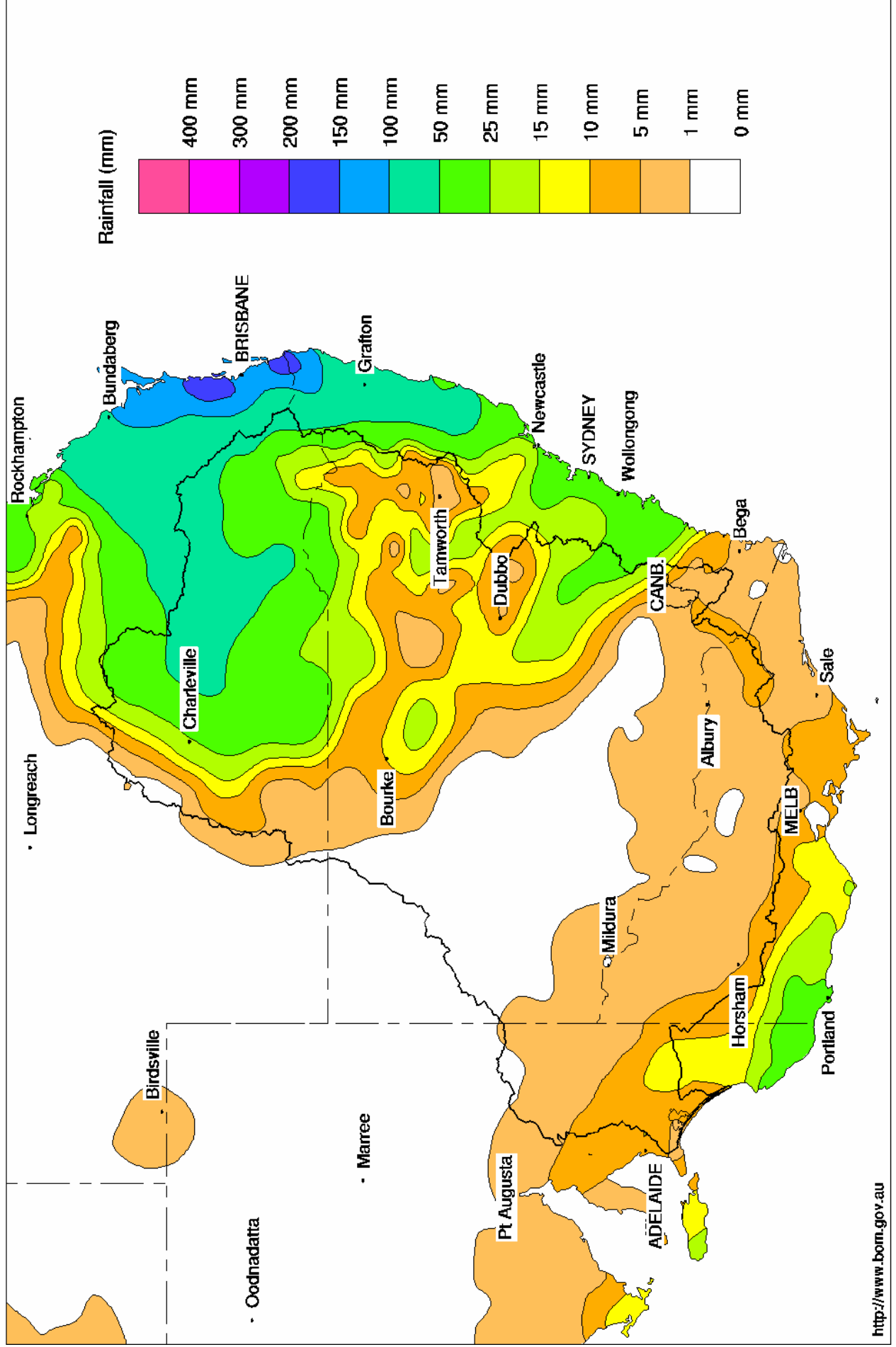
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Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 10th March 2004

Product of the National Climate Centre



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 in Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	447.54	1 842	47%	80	1 762	-5
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	177.25	857	28%	30	827	-131
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	23.52	313	46%	100	213	-14
Menindee Lakes		1 603 *		248	16%	640 #	0	+11
Total		9 227		3 261	35%	850	2 802	-139

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1916 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **33%**

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026		436	42%	3	433	-4
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		369	23%	24	345	-35
Eildon Reservoir	3 390		939	28%	100	839	-42

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 09-Mar-2004

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2003
Lake Eucumbene - Total	1 848	-1	Snowy-Murray	+6	613
Snowy-Murray Component	1 050	-	Tooma-Tumut	+1	262
Target Storage	1 410		Nett Diversion	4.6	351
			Murray 1 Release	+11	940

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2003
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	34.6	623.9
Wakool System loss	1.7	28.5
Western Murray Irrig.	0.9	24.0
Licensed Pumps	11.1	185.1
Lower Darling	3.8	13.1
TOTAL	52.0	874.5

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2003
Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	15.2	273
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	0.0	440
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	3.9	128
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	2.1	29
Licensed pumps - SRW	4.8	163
TOTAL	26.0	1 034

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	186	(6 300 ML/day)
Flow this week	43.9	
Flow so far this month	62	
Flow last month	201	

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2003
Swan Hill	80	80	100
Euston	100	100	120
Red Cliffs	110	100	130
Merbein	120	120	140
Burtundy (Darling)	300	1 630	2 460
Lock 9	140	150	170
Lake Victoria	240	240	230
Berri	260	250	270
Waikerie	330	330	390
Morgan	370	370	410
Mannum	450	450	440
Murray Bridge	480	490	480
Milang (Lake Alex.)	1 170	1 200	1 120
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	900	880	1 090
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	2 200	2 140	1 620
Goolwa Barrages	1 940	1 950	2 160



River Levels and Flows

	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)				
River Murray							
Khancoban	-	-	-	1 350	F	1 330	1 440
Jingellic	4.0	1.26	207.78	1 670	S	1 720	2 100
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.36	218.25	660	R	620	630
Heywoods	5.5	3.40	157.03	20 230	R	19 560	18 430
Doctors Point	5.5	3.52	151.99	20 500	S	20 130	18 710
Albury	4.3	2.58	150.02	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	-	-	20 000	F	20 100	18 470
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.77	116.81	10 100	S	10 170	10 300
Tocumwal	6.4	2.28	106.12	10 620	F	10 770	10 840
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.70	80.25	4 690	F	5 230	6 140
Swan Hill	4.5	1.03	63.95	4 500	F	5 020	5 240
Wakool Junction	8.8	2.72	51.84	6 870	F	7 150	7 320
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	1.40	43.24	6 480	F	6 520	6 720
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	30.95	5 780	F	5 380	5 510
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.09	27.85	8 180	R	6 360	4 580
Rufus Junction	-	3.39	20.32	6 100	R	5 870	6 200
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	-	3 780	S	3 900	3 850
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.67	153.90	200	F	380	290
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.88	145.56	537	F	420	340
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.18	92.60	416	F	550	1 130
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 250	F	2 290	2 340
Edward at Liewah	-	2.57	57.95	2 040	F	2 100	2 170
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.39	54.88	287	F	310	320
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.50	56.46	231	R	240	250
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.35	-	340	S	410	660
Darling at Bourke	-	4.25	-	1 283	S	1 340	1 720
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	2.52	-	4 240	S	3 170	250

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	480	1 480
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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	-0.20	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.08	+1.08
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.02	+0.09
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.00	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.02	+0.14
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.04	+0.15	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.01	+0.60
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.06	+0.45	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.03	+0.17
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.09	+0.06	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.03	+0.12
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.07	+0.10	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.06	-0.16

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-1.17	0.79	70.14	507
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.34	0.19	61.49	305

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.62	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.60	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwicheere	322 gates	0.59	All closed



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