

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 26 March 2008

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28 March, 2008



Rainfall and inflows

After four weeks of dry weather, particularly in the south of the Murray-Darling Basin, good falls of rain were recorded across much of New South Wales and north-eastern Victoria (see map). Unfortunately the dry conditions have continued along the lower Murray River in South Australia, where the highest falls were only 10 mm. The best rainfall occurred in northern NSW where Brewarrina received 100 mm, and in the Snowy Mountains where 78 mm was recorded at Thredbo. Although the Ovens, Kiewa and Mitta Mitta catchments in north-eastern Victoria all received 25-50 mm of rain, the preceding dry conditions meant there was very little response in streamflow. For instance, at Hinnomunjie on the Mitta Mitta River, the flow only increased from 160 to 350 ML/day. Murray system inflows for March (see graph) continue to trend towards the record low levels. During the past week, total storage decreased by 43 GL to 1 898 GL (or 20% of total capacity).

River Operations

In response to the recent rainfall and lower temperatures, water demand and evaporative losses along the Murray River decreased, and tributary inflows temporarily increased slightly. As a result, there was additional water in transit along the river and this allowed the release from Hume Reservoir to be reduced from 7 700 ML/day to 5 700 ML/day. Further downstream, the release at Yarrawonga Weir was reduced from 6 500 to 4 500 ML/day. During the hot weather in the first three weeks of March, Torrumbarry and Euston Weir pools were gradually lowered to boost downstream flows. However with the cooler weather and widespread rainfall during the last few days, it has been possible to start refilling these weir pools back towards Full Supply Level.

Storage in Menindee Lakes is currently 603 GL (or 38% of total capacity) and is not expected to increase unless there is further heavy rainfall upstream along the Barwon-Darling River or its tributaries. The release from Weir 32 on the lower Darling at Menindee is currently 1 200 ML/day and is expected to remain fairly steady for another couple of weeks.

During the past week, algal alerts were issued by New South Wales Algal Coordinating Committees for the lower Darling River and the Wakool River at Kyalite. All water users in these areas were advised to be vigilant and avoid contact with any water that appears discoloured or has a surface scum. The latest information can be obtained from the NSW Department of Primary Industries by ringing toll free 1800 999 457.

The Murray-Darling Basin Commission has purchased 11 GL of water to boost the natural watering occurring in the Narran Lakes system in north central New South Wales (see attached media release). It is hoped that this will ensure the success of a colonial bird breeding event that is happening there now.

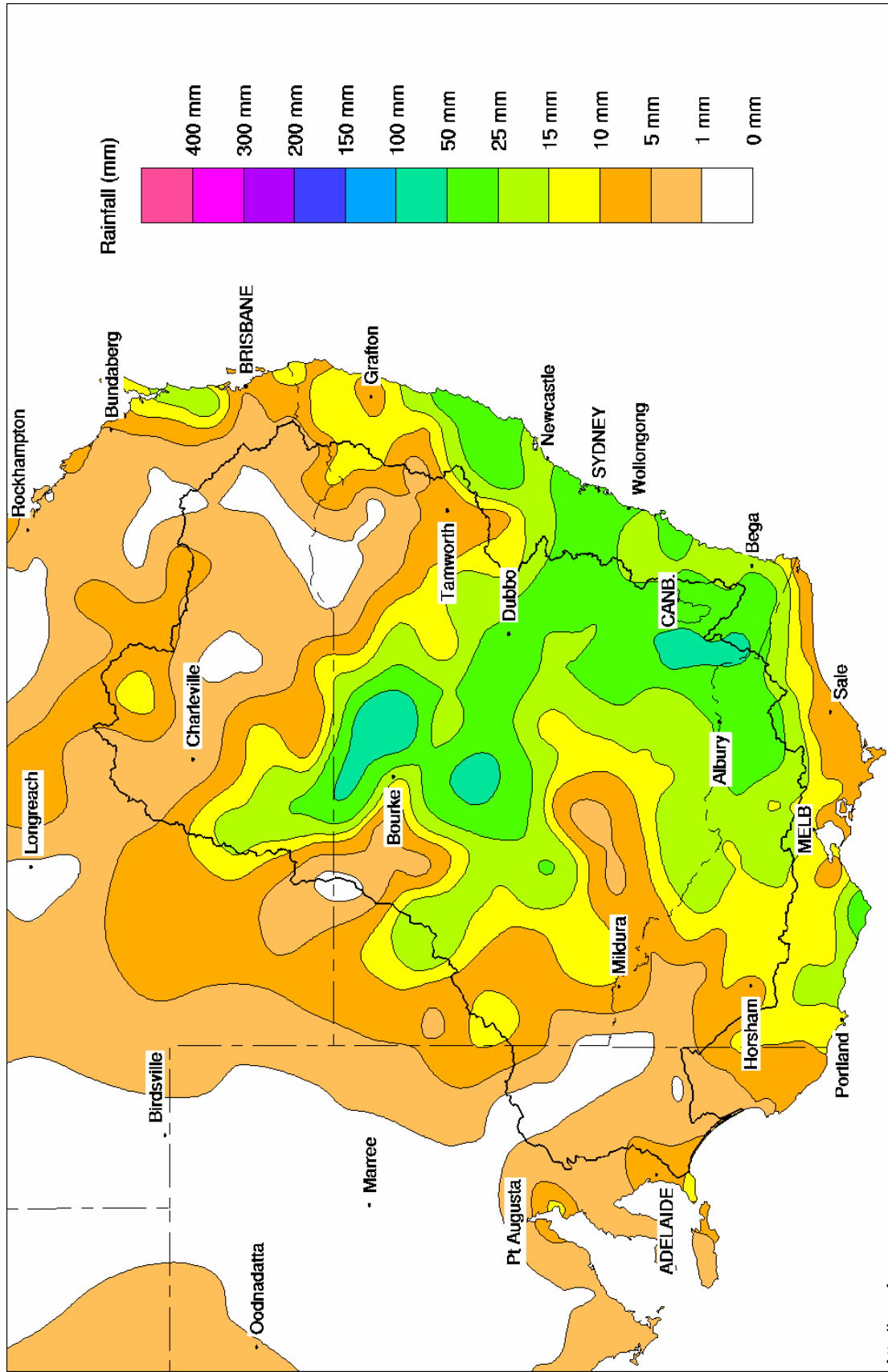
As a result of the cooler weather, the flow to South Australia has been reduced by 200 ML/day to a new target of 3 600 ML/day. The flow to South Australia is continually re-assessed to ensure it meets estimated irrigation demand, evaporative losses, the water requirements for Adelaide and country towns and also aims to provide a target flow of about 700 ML/day past Wellington. The water level of Lake Alexandrina is currently -0.50 m AHD (or 50 cm below mean sea level) which is 0.70 m lower than this time last year and 0.40 m lower than the previous historic low recorded in April 1968.

DAVID DREVERMAN
General Manager

Murray-Darling Basin Commission ♦ 51 Allara Street Canberra ACT ♦ GPO Box 409 Canberra ACT 2601
Switchboard 02-6279 0100; Weekly Report Enquiries 02-6279 0126, Facsimile 02-6230 6005
Internet : www.mdbc.gov.au

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 26th March 2008

Product of the National Climate Centre



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

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Issued: 26/03/2008

Week ending Wednesday 26 Mar 2008

Water in Storage

MDBC Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	MDBC Active Storage (GL)	Change in Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	410.81	678	17%	80	598	-1
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	170.69	315	10%	30	285	-33
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	23.58	302	45%	100	202	-22
Menindee Lakes		1 731 *		603	35%	(- -) #	0	+13
Total		9 352		1 898	20%	--	1 085	-43

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **13%**

NSW takes control of Menindee Lakes when storage falls below 480 GL, and control reverts to MDBC when storage next reaches 640 GL

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	426	42%	3	423	-1
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	456	28%	24	432	-22
Eildon Reservoir	3 390	510	15%	100	410	-32

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 25-Mar-2008

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2007
Lake Eucumbene - Total	491	-7	Snowy-Murray	+14	392
Snowy-Murray Component	384	-5	Tooma-Tumut	+2	153
Target Storage	1 410		Nett Diversion	12.2	240
			Murray 1 Release	+12	617

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2007
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	3.7	75.0
Wakool System loss	0.0	18.0
Western Murray Irrig.	0.4	19.8
Licensed Pumps	n/a	70.7
Lower Darling	0.3	9.5
TOTAL	4.4	192.9

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2007
Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	5.7	78
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	14.3	163
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	1.7	85 *
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.5	11
Licensed pumps - LMW	5.0	154
TOTAL	27.2	490 *

* please note that these values do not include Millewa pumping figures.

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	186 *	(3 800 ML/day)
Flow this week	26.4	
Flow so far this month	93	
Flow last month	113	

* Reduced to approx. 110 GL during March drought contingency operations

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2007
Swan Hill	100	100	90
Euston	200	200	110
Red Cliffs	-	-	130
Merbein	150	140	140
Burtundy (Darling)	320	380	980
Lock 9	140	140	150
Lake Victoria	240	230	180
Berri	280	260	350
Waikerie	390	390	550
Morgan	450	440	600
Mannum	840	840	650
Murray Bridge	840	910	650
Milang (Lake Alex.)	3 430	3 490	2 800
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	3 390	3 320	2 440
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	-	-	3 150
Goolwa Barrages	28 130	27 530	18 700



Week ending Wednesday 26 Mar 2008

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	-	-	-	3 930	R	1 720	5 130
Jingellic	4.0	1.18	207.70	1 240	R	2 010	4 620
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.46	218.35	730	F	670	600
Heywoods	5.5	2.15	155.78	6 060	F	7 420	7 270
Doctors Point	5.5	2.25	150.72	6 320	F	8 120	8 220
Albury	4.3	1.28	148.72	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	1.91	127.93	7 480	F	7 660	6 790
Yarrawonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	0.96	116.00	4 980	F	6 080	5 950
Tocumwal	6.4	1.56	105.40	5 710	F	6 050	5 390
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.36	79.91	3 450	R	3 190	2 960
Swan Hill	4.5	0.74	63.66	2 930	F	3 020	2 720
Wakool Junction	8.8	1.69	50.81	3 080	F	3 100	2 880
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	0.59	42.43	2 570	F	2 540	2 600
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 480	F	2 130	1 880
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.79	27.55	1 900	R	1 410	1 370
Rufus Junction	-	2.87	19.80	3 090	F	3 310	3 340
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-0.25	-	1 270	F	1 380	1 270
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.71	153.94	259	F	490	720
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.75	145.43	359	R	220	190
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.16	92.58	400	F	370	380
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	0.62	80.39	350	F	430	450
Edward at Liewah	-	0.87	56.25	403	F	440	470
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	1.05	54.54	16	F	30	80
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.53	56.49	264	F	410	230
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.22	-	56	F	80	170
Darling at Bourke	-	4.29	-	1 431	R	1 040	1 340
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	1.04	-	1 210	R	530	140

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	610
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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
Yarrawonga	124.90	-0.55	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.00	+0.55
No. 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.09	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.00	+0.01
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.19	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.01	+0.08
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.03	+0.01	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.01	+0.32
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.02	+0.15	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.03	+0.14
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.00	-0.20	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.04	+0.10
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	-0.15	+0.11	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.04	-1.00

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-1.75	0.466	69.816	146
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-1.37	0.106	61.406	228



Lower Lakes

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

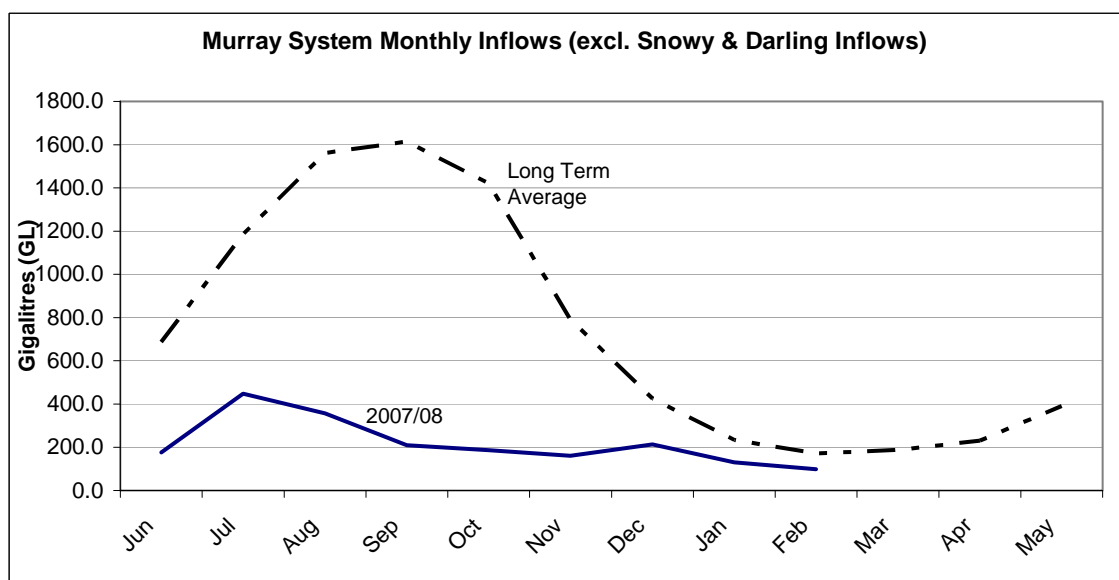
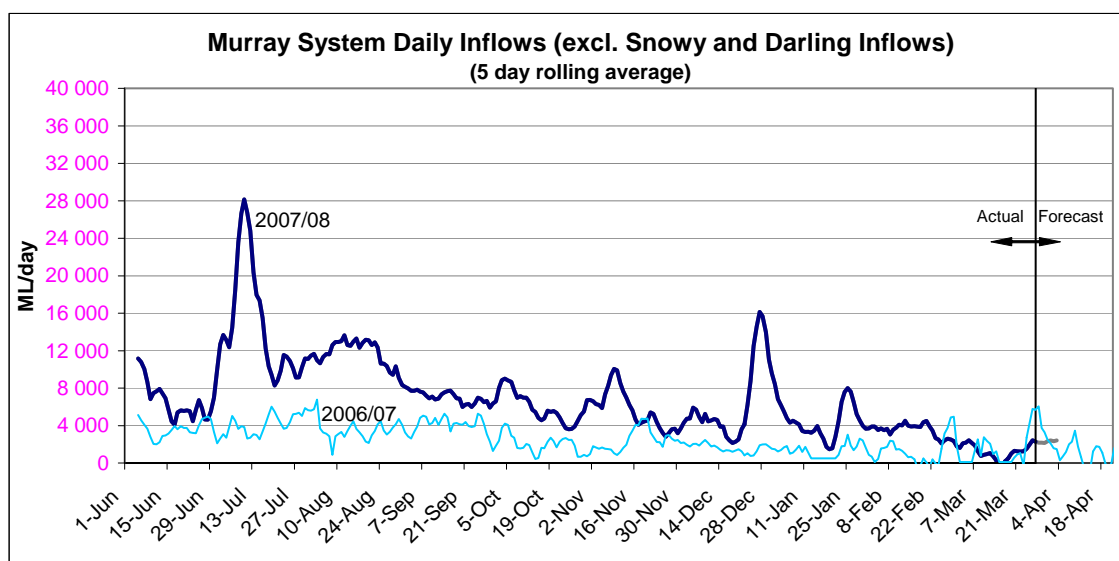
	(m AHD)
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days	-0.48

Barrages

Fishways @ Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	Status	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	-0.69	All closed	-	Closed
Mundoo	26 openings	-0.44	All closed	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed	-	-
Tauwichee	322 gates	-	All closed	Closed	Closed

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



State Allocations (as at 26th Mar 2008)

NSW - Murray Valley

High security	25%
General security	0%

NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley

High security	90%
General security	13%

NSW - Lower Darling

High security	100%
General security	50%

Victoria - Murray Valley

high reliability	43%
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Victoria - Goulburn Valley

high reliability	55%
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South Australia - Murray Valley

irrigation allocation	32%
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NSW : http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/water/state_mm_murr_water_quality.shtml#alloc
 VIC : <http://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/allocations/current.asp>
 SA : <http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/media.html>



MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday 25 March, 2008

Easter water 'gift' will boost Narran Lakes environment

The Murray-Darling Basin Commission bought 11,000 megalitres of water over the Easter weekend to boost the natural watering occurring at the Narran Lakes system in north central New South Wales.

Chief Executive Dr Wendy Craik AM said the one-off purchase would boost environmental benefits for the flora and fauna in the internationally important Ramsar wetland site.

“We moved quickly to take advantage of nature’s window of opportunity to supplement recent natural flows into the area,” Dr Craik said.

“We are pleased to have reached a commercial arrangement with a seller to secure the water which began to flow on Easter Saturday and will continue to be delivered over the next six weeks.”

“The water will bring strong environmental benefits and we hope it will ensure the success of a colonial water bird breeding event that is happening there now - the first major breeding event in Narran Lakes in nine years,” Dr Craik said.

Dr Craik said the water was being drawn from off-river storages on the Narran system and was water which was being returned to the river. It is passing through an automated gauging station which could accurately and continuously monitor the transfer.

Media contact: Sam Leone, Phone: 0407 006 332

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