

# REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 28 May 2008

Our Ref : M2008/00001/prs, AS  
Trim Ref : 08/4829

30 May, 2008



## *Rainfall and inflows*

The Murray-Darling Basin has experienced another week of dry weather, with most areas receiving less than 10 mm of rainfall (see Map). As a result of the continuing dry weather, Murray system inflows for May are likely to be less than last year (110 GL), and only slightly above the record low of May 1902 (75 GL). A significant rise in inflows is unlikely to occur until there is a series of large rainfall events in the upper catchments of the Murray and its tributaries.

Total system storage (including Menindee Lakes) has increased very slightly to 1 870 GL (20 % capacity) which is well below the long term average of 5 300 GL for this time of year. Active storage under MDBC control (which currently excludes the water stored in Menindee Lakes) is 1 110 GL (or 13 % capacity). Most other major storages across the Basin are also very low, as shown in the table below;

Water storage	Current storage (GL)	% capacity
Eildon (Vic)	452	13 %
Blowering (NSW)	504	31 %
Burrinjuck (NSW)	422	41 %
Wyangala (NSW)	128	11 %
Burrendong (NSW)	246	18 %
Copeton (NSW)	306	21 %
Eucumbene (Snowy)	670	14 %

## *River Operations*

The release from Dartmouth Dam remains at the minimum of 200 ML/day and the flow at Doctors Point (below Hume Dam and the junction of the Kiewa River) has a current minimum flow target of 800 ML/day.

During the past week, the water level in Lake Mulwala has been fairly steady at about 123.7 m AHD and the release from Yarrawonga Weir has been steady at 1 800 ML/day. This weekend, the release will be increased to about 4 500 ML/day to help maintain flows further downstream at Mildura Weir during the planned maintenance works in June (see attached media release). If conditions remain dry, the release at Yarrawonga Weir will be maintained at about 4 500 ML/day for about 2 weeks before being gradually reduced back to 1 800 ML/day. Under dry conditions, the level of Lake Mulwala is expected to fall at least another metre.

The increased flows along the river are expected to take about 6 days to reach Torrumbarry Weir and about 2½ weeks to arrive at Mildura Weir. If necessary, additional water might be released from both Torrumbarry and Euston Weirs to help supplement the flow pulse, which is needed to manage in-river salinity downstream of Mildura whilst critical maintenance is undertaken.

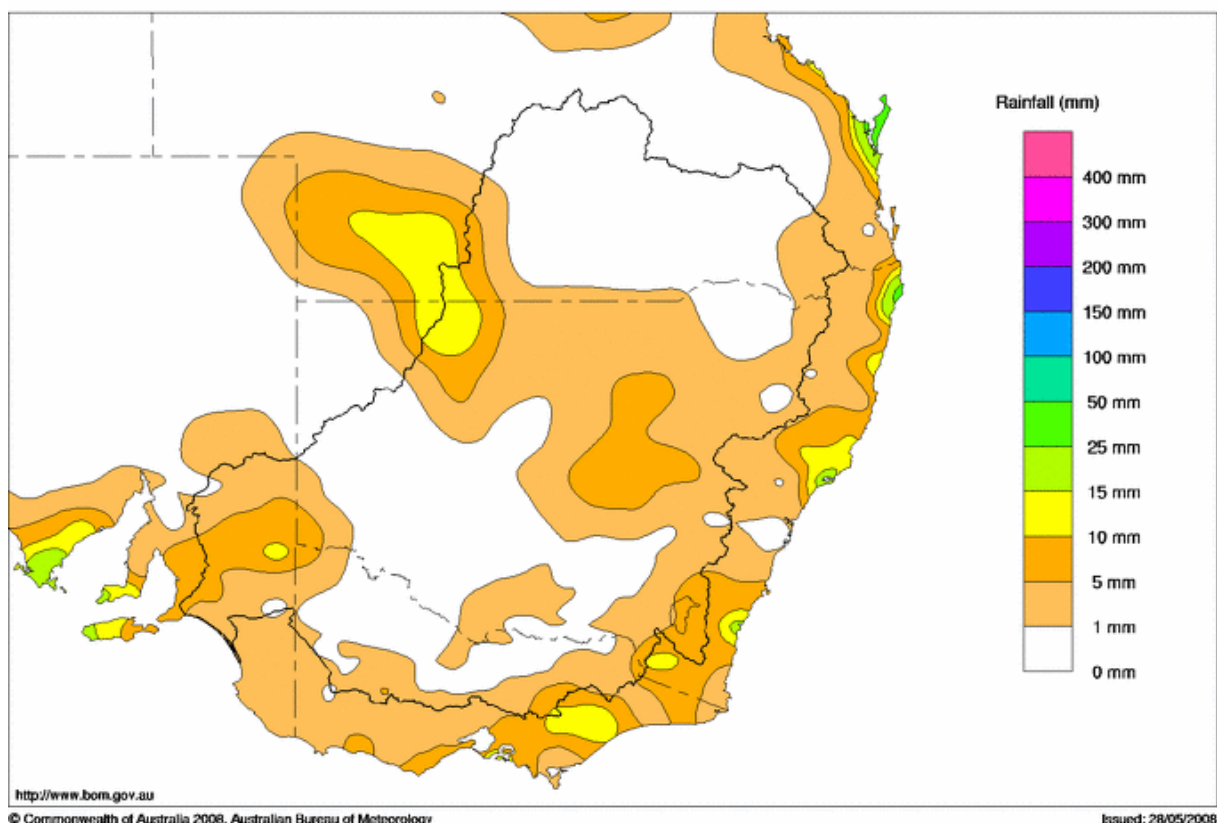
The proposed date for the commencement of the Mildura Weir drawdown is currently the 11<sup>th</sup> June. It is expected to be refilled in early July. The water released from the Mildura Weir pool and Lake Mulwala will be captured in Lake Victoria where it will be available for use next irrigation season. Initially during this operation, the level of Lock 8 Weir pool will be raised so that it can subsequently be drawn upon to sustain the flow down Mullaroo Creek.

Water quality measurements will be taken during the drawdown so that any increases in salinity at Mildura or downstream to Lake Victoria can be carefully assessed and managed.

The flow to South Australia is currently 1 600 ML/day and Locks 1 to 6 are close to, or above, full supply level. The water level in Lake Alexandrina remains steady at about -0.5 m AHD (or 50 cm below mean sea level). The pumping of water into Lake Albert, which commenced in early May, continues as planned.

DAVID DREVERMAN  
General Manager

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 28th May 2008  
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)	MDBC Active Storage (GL)	Change in Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	411.12	685	18%	80	605	+2
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	171.40	361	12%	30	331	+28
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	23.25	270	40%	100	170	+1
Menindee Lakes		1 731 *		557	32%	(- -) #	0	-5
<b>Total</b>		<b>9 352</b>		<b>1 874</b>	<b>20%</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>1 106</b>	<b>+25</b>

\* 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	422	41%	3	419	-0
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	504	31%	24	480	+26
Eildon Reservoir	3 390	452	13%	100	352	+2

**Snowy Mountains Scheme**

Snowy diversions for week ending 27-May-2008

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2008
Lake Eucumbene - Total	237	-37	Snowy-Murray	+19	85
Snowy-Murray Component	230	-18	Tooma-Tumut	+2	7
Target Storage	1 290		Nett Diversion	17.7	77
			Murray 1 Release	+25	93

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

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2007
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	- .7	90.6
Wakool System loss	0.0	22.5
Western Murray Irrig.	0.1	22.0
Licensed Pumps	0.8	85.4
Lower Darling	0.1	11.0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>231.5</b>

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2007
Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	.0	138
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	0.0	242
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	0.1	93 *
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.1	19
Licensed pumps - LMW	2.3	178
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>670 *</b>

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

**Flow to South Australia (GL)**

Entitlement this month	93 *	
Flow this week	11.7	(1 700 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	51	
Flow last month	74	

\* Reduced to approx. 52 GL during May drought contingency operations

**Salinity (EC)**

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2007
Swan Hill	60	60	90
Euston	80	80	120
Red Cliffs	-	-	130
Merbein	150	150	150
Burtundy (Darling)	300	310	840
Lock 9	260	250	160
Lake Victoria	230	240	200
Berri	320	330	350
Waikerie	-	-	520
Morgan	380	390	560
Mannum	610	610	660
Murray Bridge	780	710	690
Milang (Lake Alex.)	3 470	3 790	2 970
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	2 940	3 100	2 570
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	-	-	3 150
Goolwa Barrages	21 200	22 330	20 800



**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)				
<b>River Murray</b>							
Khancoban	-	-	-	5 160	F	4 170	3 380
Jingellic	4.0	1.79	208.31	5 460	R	4 140	4 030
Tallandoon ( Mitta Mitta River )	4.2	1.27	218.16	390	F	410	430
Heywoods	5.5	1.09	154.72	400	S	430	560
Doctors Point	5.5	1.31	149.78	770	F	820	810
Albury	4.3	0.55	147.99	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	0.27	126.29	850	S	860	860
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	0.30	115.34	1 780	S	1 780	1 780
Tocumwal	6.4	0.73	104.57	1 710	F	1 750	1 760
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	0.91	79.46	2 090	R	2 140	2 100
Swan Hill	4.5	0.62	63.54	2 170	F	2 510	1 890
Wakool Junction	8.8	1.57	50.69	2 720	F	2 940	2 360
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	0.68	42.52	3 020	F	2 750	2 320
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 560	F	2 250	2 440
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.81	27.57	2 260	R	2 110	2 130
Rufus Junction	-	2.49	19.42	1 210	F	1 200	1 320
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-0.44	-	1 150	S	1 020	950
<b>Tributaries</b>							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.91	154.14	449	F	460	310
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.84	145.52	510	F	560	480
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.14	92.56	403	R	410	440
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	0.50	80.27	240	F	280	400
Edward at Liewah	-	0.95	56.33	457	S	480	740
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.90	54.39	0	S	0	0
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.43	56.39	198	S	200	200
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.03	-	-	F	-	-
Darling at Bourke	-	3.97	-	25	S	20	20
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.66	-	21	F	30	50

<b>Natural Inflow to Hume</b> (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	1 810	2 160
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**Weirs and Locks**

**Pool levels above or below design level**

<b>Murray</b>	FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s		FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s
Yarrowonga	124.90	-1.22	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	-0.02	+0.17
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	-0.02	+0.08
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.01	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.13	+0.13
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.05	+0.05	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.12	+0.21
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.04	+0.17	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.08	+0.17
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.02	+0.14	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.09	+0.12
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.16	+0.06	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.07	-1.19

<b>Murrumbidgee</b>	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-3.77	0.365	69.715	89.6
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-4.10	0.107	61.407	228



**Lower Lakes**

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

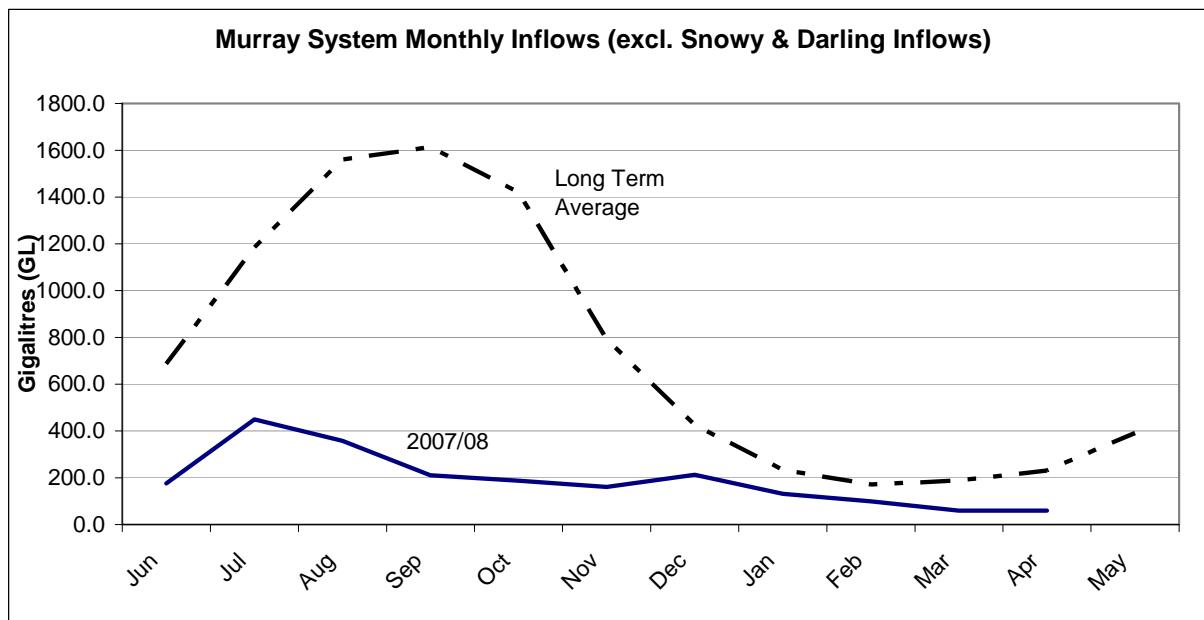
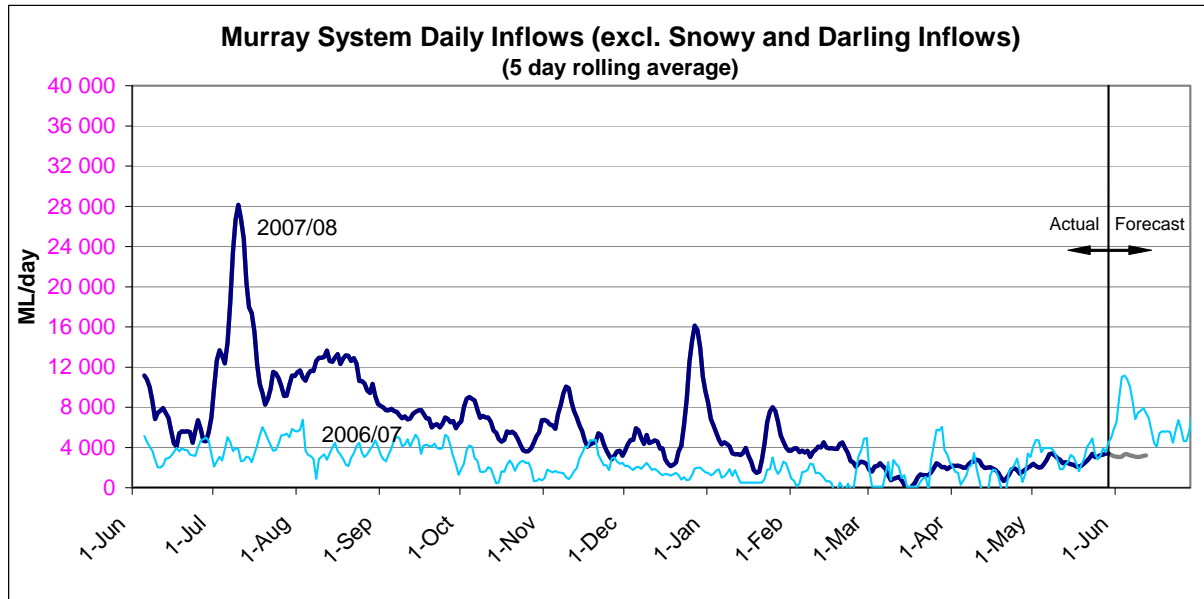
	(m AHD)
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days	-0.47

**Barrages**

**Fishways @ Barrages**

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	Status	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	-0.37	All closed	-	Closed
Mundoo	26 openings	-0.46	All closed	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed	-	-
Tauwitchere	322 gates	-	All closed	Closed	Closed

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



**State Allocations (as at 28th May 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	57%
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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](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 27 May, 2008

## **Major new maintenance works at Mildura weir will need more flows from Lake Mulwala**

The Murray-Darling Basin Commission (MDBC) announced today that major maintenance and replacement works at Mildura Weir will start in mid-June.

Chief Executive Dr Wendy Craik AM said the weir would be temporarily removed and the lock closed to allow some of the trestles to be replaced or refurbished as required.

“At the same time, releases from Lake Mulwala will be increased this weekend to maintain flows at Mildura,” Dr Craik said. “The flows are necessary to minimise any temporary increases in river salinity downstream of Mildura due to saline inflow from the adjacent water table.

“Flows from Lake Mulwala will arrive at Mildura Weir during the drawdown and will help refill Mildura weir pool as quick as possible.

“The lower level of Lake Mulwala may also provide an additional benefit by allowing frost to kill an introduced aquatic weed that has spread throughout the Lake,” Dr Craik said.

Dr Craik said it was necessary to complete the trestle maintenance at Mildura Weir before the beginning of the next irrigation season.

“The water released from Mildura Weir Pool and Lake Mulwala will be recaptured in Lake Victoria where it will be available for use next irrigation season.

“This co-ordinated and very important operation has the support of each of the three states responsible for managing water allocations and river salinities in this time of extreme drought”, Dr Craik said.

At Mildura, the proposed schedule for works is as follows:

<b>Proposed Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
11th June	Commence removal of Mildura weir bars and trestles, and commence gradual lowering of weir pool
approx 25th June	Expected date of commencement of refilling of Mildura weir pool
early July	Expected date of completion of refilling of weir pool to near full supply level. This date will be dependent on available river flows.

Dr Craik said the above schedule will be adhered to as far as possible, however, some minor variations in timing may be required in response to river conditions and other circumstances that may arise at the time.

Withdrawal of the weir will lead to a lowering of the weir pool level by about 3.6 m below the normal full supply level.

Water quality measurements will be taken during the drawdown, so that any salinity impacts at Mildura or downstream to Lake Victoria can be carefully assessed.

It is intended to divert any higher salinity water into Lake Victoria to minimise impacts on South Australia.

At Lake Mulwala, the proposed schedule is as follows:

<b>Proposed Date</b>	<b>Action</b>
31 <sup>st</sup> May	Increase release from 1 800 ML/day to about 4 500 ML/day.
Mid June	Reduce release from about 4 500 ML/day to about 1 800 ML/day. Lake Mulwala level to fall to at least 122.7m AHD under dry conditions.
Late July or earlier	Expected date of refilling Lake Mulwala to normal operating range

At Lake Mulwala, the current release downstream is 1 800 ML/day (0.3 m gauge height), and if conditions remain dry it is expected to be increased to about 4 500 ML/day on 31 May 2008 and remain at about this rate for about 2 weeks before being gradually reduced back to 1 800 ML/day.

The water level in Lake Mulwala is already partially lowered and is currently 123.7 m AHD (or 1.2 m below Full Supply Level).

If conditions remain dry over the coming weeks, the level in Lake Mulwala is expected to fall at least another metre.

The actual duration and extent that Lake Mulwala will be lowered will depend on inflows from the Ovens and Kiewa Rivers.

“To enable irrigation diversion at the commencement of the next irrigation season, it is expected that the water level of Lake Mulwala would be returned to the lower bounds of its operating range before late July using inflow from the Kiewa and Ovens Rivers where possible,” Dr Craik said.

During the drawdown of Lake Mulwala and Mildura Weirs, interference with habitat, including removal of trees, stumps and fallen logs and aquatic plants is prohibited.

In addition no works may be undertaken on the foreshore or the bed of Lake Mulwala without the express written permission of Goulburn-Murray Water in Victoria or a Planning Permit from the Shire of Corowa in NSW.

“MDBC will continue to review Murray operations over the coming weeks and will provide additional information if there are significant changes to this plan,” Dr Craik said.

Boat operators, stock owners, river pumpers and other lake users are advised to take these changed water levels into account and make any necessary adjustments to their activities.

**For media inquiries contact: Sam Leone, phone 0407 006 332**

*TRIM Ref: 08/4795*