



RIVER MURRAY WEEKLY REPORT

FOR THE WEEK ENDING WEDNESDAY, 25 JANUARY 2012

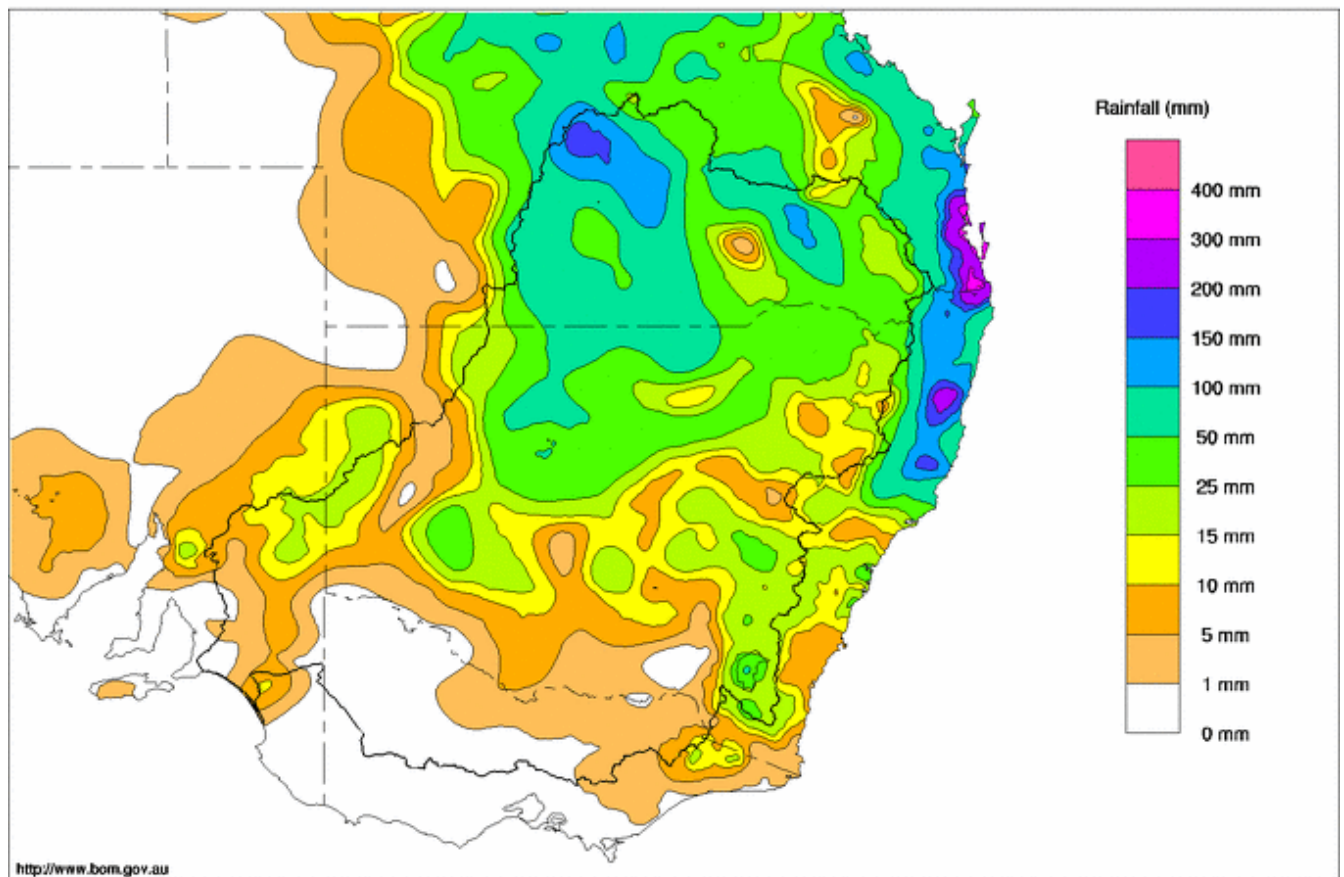
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Rainfall and Inflows

Persistent easterly winds affected the Murray-Darling Basin this week, bringing moisture that resulted in thunderstorms in some locations and considerable rainfall developing across northern and eastern areas later in the week (Map 1). This rain was associated with the same trough system currently delivering very heavy rainfall along parts of the eastern seaboard.

There were high totals recorded in several parts of the Basin this week. For example in Queensland there was good rain across the upper Condamine catchment including 222 mm at Pine Hill Crossing, 138 mm at Hannaford, 117 mm at Traighli and 75 mm at Mt Kynoch. Further west, heavy rain also affected parts of the upper Maranoa and Warrego catchments including 131 mm at Augathella, 123 mm at Wansey Downs and 94 mm at Cunnamulla. In NSW, the heaviest rain resulted from severe thunderstorms across the north-west where Louth recorded 120 mm and 90 mm fell at Lightning Ridge. Thunderstorms also affected the south-east with 52 mm recorded at Cooma and 48 mm at Tidbinbilla. In the far south of the Basin little rain was recorded and temperatures were quite high.

Murray Darling Rainfall Totals (mm) Week Ending 25th January 2012
Product of the National Climate Centre



Map 1 - Murray-Darling Basin rainfall for the week ending 25 January 2012 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).



Along the Darling River, the flood peak from rain events late in 2011 is currently approaching Tilpa, while heavy local rain at Louth has caused the river to rise there again, adding additional volume to the flows. High inflows are continuing into the Menindee Lakes; while just upstream at Wilcannia the river continues to gradually rise and is now flowing at just under 29,000 ML/day. For more information regarding flood warnings, see the Bureau of Meteorology website at <http://www.bom.gov.au/>.

In the upper Murray catchments flows in the upper tributaries have continued their recession over the past week. For example at Hinnomunjie, the Mitta Mitta River decreased from 450 to 350 ML/day; while on the Ovens River, the flow at Rocky Point decreased from 600 to 500 ML/day and the flow at Wangaratta has dropped back from 950 to 800 ML/day.

River Operations

MDBA active storage decreased by 63 GL during the week to 6,548 GL (76% capacity). At Dartmouth Reservoir, the total storage decreased by 3 GL to 2,956 GL (77% capacity). The release to the Mitta Mitta River, measured at Colemans, was around 300 ML/day during the week, although as of 25 January, a higher pulse release had commenced that is expected to temporarily increase the flow to around 2,700 ML/day followed by a smaller peak of around 1,300 ML/day in two days time. This double pulse is to assist in maintaining water quality in the Mitta Mitta River and follows similar short flow pulses released earlier in January and in December 2011.

At Hume Reservoir the storage volume fell by 91 GL to 2,157 GL (72% capacity). The flow past Doctors Point averaged around 16,500 ML/day during the week.

At Yarrawonga weir, the pool level is currently at 124.79 m AHD, which is within the operating target of 124.7–124.8 m AHD. Demand at the irrigation offtakes eased slightly again this week, totalling around 60 GL compared with 65 GL last week. The release downstream of Yarrawonga was maintained at around 8,300 ML/day throughout the week, although the release is expected to decrease slightly over the coming week.

At the Barmah-Millewa forest, the environmental watering operation that started in the spring of 2011 has entered its final stages. Only small volumes of additional water are now entering the forest – targeting specific wetlands via an elevated flow through the Gulpa Offtake. This flow will be decreased further towards 450 ML/day in the coming weeks, enabling the critical drying phase to continue.

Over 400 GL of environmental water consisting of Living Murray and NSW and Victorian environmental water entitlements has been used for this watering event, which has produced benefits not only at Barmah-Millewa Forest, but also to many other areas including the Coorong in South Australia by providing a higher flow along the River Murray System.

Downstream on the Edward River at Stevens Weir, the pool is currently 5.19 m on the local gauge and the flow downstream is at 1,100 ML/day. The flow is expected to recede further in the coming week and may fall below 1,000 M/day.

On the Goulburn River, the flow at McCoys Bridge is currently 1,550 ML/day, but is expected to drop back towards 1,100 ML/day over the coming week. At Torrumbarry Weir, the pool level remains at 86.05 m. The flow downstream of the weir is currently 5,700 ML/day and is expected to decrease towards 5,000 ML/day during the next week; while diversions through the National Channel remain at around 2,000 ML/day.

In the Gunbower Forest, environmental water has been used to support the breeding cycle of about 50–60 pairs of great egrets (Figure 1). Great egrets are a threatened species listed in Australia's Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act. In November 2011, the egrets were observed to be preparing nests, with some sitting on eggs, while other bird species were well progressed into the breeding cycle with large chicks in nests. Delivery of environmental water commenced in late December and this additional water has ensured that the egret chicks will be able to fledge by mid-February.



Figure 1 - Great egret chicks in the Little Gunbower Wetland complex. Picture courtesy Anna Chatfield.

Downstream at Euston Weir, the flow is currently 5,800 ML/day, while at Mildura the flow is 5,200 ML/day and is expected to increase slightly in the coming days.

At Menindee Lakes, the storage volume increased by 36 GL during the week and is now at 1,561 GL (90% capacity). The release, as measured at Weir 32, decreased from 18,000 to 15,000 ML/day during the week, and the NSW Office of Water advises that a release of 15,000 ML/day will be maintained for at least the next week to manage the storage level during the period of high inflows and until the impact of further rainfall forecast for the northern Basin in the coming week is understood. The lakes are expected to move back into the surcharge level during the middle of February.

On the lower Darling, the flow at Burtundy increased steadily during the week to 14,000 ML/day, and is now expected to peak within the next week at between 14,000 and 15,000 ML/day. For further information on the flood operations at Menindee Lakes, please refer to the NSW Office of Water website (www.water.nsw.gov.au/).

At Lake Victoria, the storage level is currently 25.91 m AHD (548 GL, 81% capacity), and the flow into South Australia is currently 15,400 ML/day. At the Lower Lakes, the five day average level is currently 0.65 m AHD and the release through the barrages during the week has averaged approximately 7,000 ML/day. Slightly lower releases are expected during the coming week.

For media inquiries contact the Media Officer on 02 6279 0141

DAVID DREVERMAN
Executive Director, River Management



Water in Storage

Week ending Wednesday 25 Jan 2012

MDBA Storages	Full Supply Level	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	Active Storage (GL)	Change in Total Storage for the Week (GL)
	(m AHD)		(m AHD)	(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 856	471.15	2 956	77%	71	2 885	-3
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	187.37	2 157	72%	23	2 134	-91
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	25.91	548	81%	100	448	-4
Menindee Lakes		1 731*		1 561	90%	(480 #)	1 081	+36
Total		9 269		7 222	78%	--	6 548	-63
Total Active MDBA Storage							76% ^	

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	818	80%	3	815	-30
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	1 338	82%	24	1 314	-29
Eildon Reservoir	3 334	3 156	95%	100	3 056	-46

* Menindee surcharge capacity – 2050 GL

** All Data is rounded to nearest GL **

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

^ % of total active MDBA storage

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 24 Jan 2012

Storage	Active Storage (GL)	Weekly Change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This Week	From 1 May 2011
Lake Eucumbene - Total	2 125	n/a	Snowy-Murray	+8	294
Snowy-Murray Component	701	n/a	Tooma-Tumut	+2	248
Target Storage	1 520		Net Diversion	6	46
			Murray 1 Release	+13	614

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL) *

New South Wales	This Week	From 1 July 2011	Victoria	This Week	From 1 July 2011
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	47.6	803	Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	11.4	174
Wakool Sys Allowance	2.7	8	Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	13.9	342
Western Murray Irrigation	1.2	14	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	4.5	62
Licensed Pumps	7.4	121	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.8	29
Lower Darling	11.4	118	Licensed pumps - LMW	11.3	171
TOTAL	70.3	1064	TOTAL	41.9	778

* Figures derived from estimates and monthly data. Please note that not all data may have been available at the time of creating this report.

** All data above is rounded to nearest 100 ML for weekly data and nearest GL for cumulative data**

Flow to South Australia (GL)

* Flow to SA will be greater than entitlement for January due to Additional Dilution Flow and water trades to SA.

Entitlement this month	217.0 *
Flow this week	109.8
Flow so far this month	452.5
Flow last month	520.4

(15 700 ML/day)

Salinity (EC) (microSiemens/cm at 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2011
Swan Hill	100	90	130
Euston	130	130	130
Red Cliffs	170	180	120
Merbein	200	200	130
Burtundy (Darling)	330	330	380
Lock 9	250	240	170
Lake Victoria	210	210	200
Berri	300	530	250
Waikerie	-	-	-
Morgan	420	410	280
Mannum	340	310	290
Murray Bridge	330	330	340
Milang (Lake Alex.)	520	520	510
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	490	480	330
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	5 000	5 080	5 420
Goolwa Barrages	600	620	1 330



River Levels and Flows

Week ending Wednesday 25 Jan 2012

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	-	-	-	3 370	F	2 180	1 150
Jingellic	4.0	1.66	208.18	4 190	F	2 990	2 300
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.47	218.36	660	R	680	940
Heywoods	5.5	3.05	156.68	15 320	S	15 840	15 320
Doctors Point	5.5	3.08	151.55	15 770	F	16 410	16 210
Albury	4.3	2.06	149.50	-	-	-	-
Corowa	3.8	3.27	129.29	15 160	F	16 240	15 510
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.43	116.47	8 320	F	8 380	9 680
Tocumwal	6.4	2.07	105.91	8 000	S	8 020	9 640
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.88	80.43	5 680	F	6 470	7 030
Swan Hill	4.5	1.29	64.21	5 620	F	5 980	5 280
Wakool Junction	8.8	2.96	52.08	8 320	F	7 990	6 940
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	1.32	43.16	5 840	F	5 660	5 370
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	5 040	F	4 520	5 300
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.65	28.41	15 920	R	15 530	15 680
Rufus Junction	-	4.67	21.60	14 620	R	14 940	15 680
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	1.14	-	13 260	F	13 550	15 700
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.05	154.28	610	S	730	840
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	8.01	145.69	780	F	870	1 210
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.85	93.27	1 550	S	1 550	1 940
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	1.34	81.11	1 120	F	1 290	1 500
Edward at Liewah	-	2.08	57.46	1 420	R	1 290	1 000
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	1.34	54.83	270	F	270	270
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.61	56.57	330	F	340	610
Barwon at Mungindi	-	4.15	-	3 280	R	1 880	460
Darling at Bourke	-	10.48	-	41 020	F	53 400	68 890
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	6.18	-	14 050	R	13 810	13 020

Natural Inflow to Hume (i.e. Pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	6 080	7 030
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Weirs and Locks Pool levels above or below Full Supply Level (FSL)

Murray	FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s		FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s
Yarrowonga	124.90	-0.11	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.09	+2.28
No. 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.04	+0.64
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.00	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.00	+0.55
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.05	+0.12	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.04	+1.45
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.07	+1.01	No. 3 Overland Corner	9.80	-0.10	+0.75
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.03	+0.47	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.01	+0.78
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.14	+0.76	No. 1 Blanchetown	3.20	+0.00	+0.39

Lower Lakes FSL = 0.75 m AHD

Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days (m AHD)	0.65
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Barrages

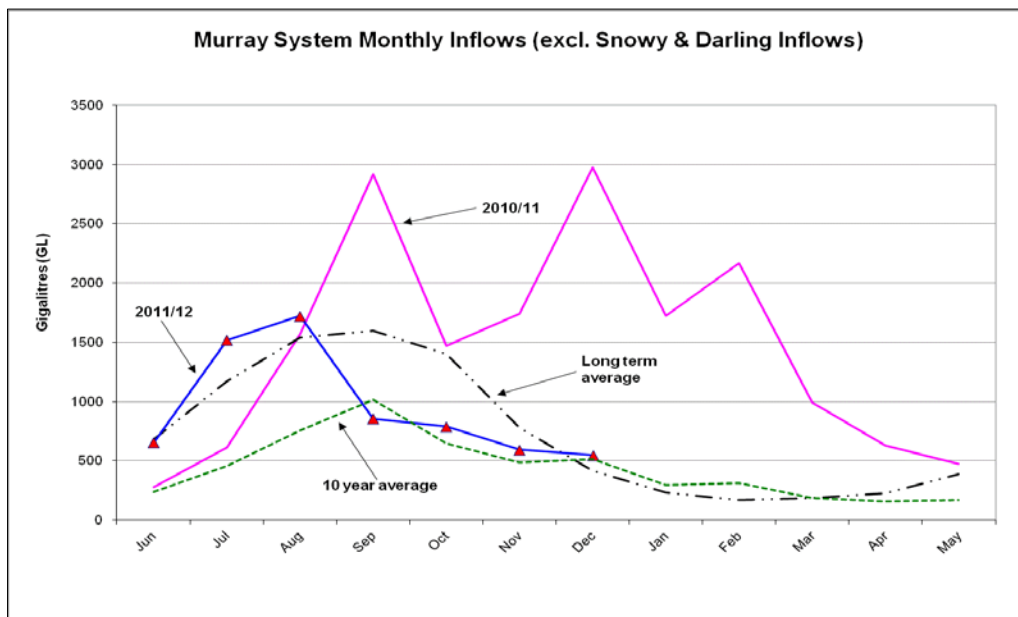
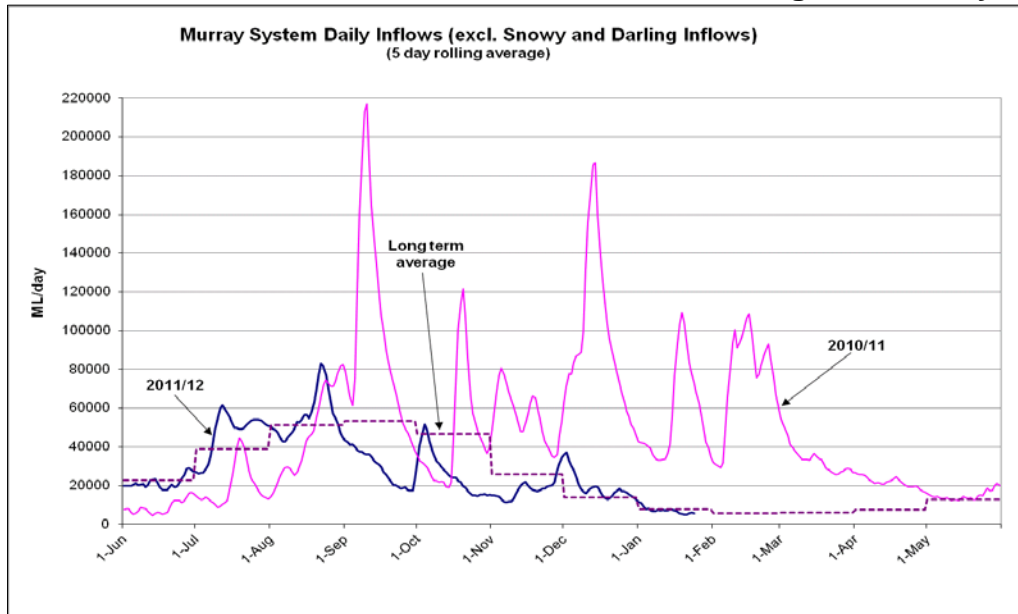
Fishways at Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	No. Open	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	0.60	10	-	Open
Mundoo	26 openings	0.56	4	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	1	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	3	-	-
Tauwitchere	322 gates	0.57	13	Open	Open

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



Week ending Wednesday 25 Jan 2012



State Allocations (as at 25 Jan 2012)

NSW - Murray Valley

High security	100%
General security	100%

Victorian - Murray Valley

High reliability	100%
Low reliability	0%

NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley

High security	100%
General security	100%

Victorian - Goulburn Valley

High reliability	100%
Low reliability	0%

NSW - Lower Darling

High security	100%
General security	100%

South Australia - Murray Valley

High security	100%
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NSW : <http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/About-us/Media-releases/media/default.aspx>
 VIC : <http://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/allocations/current.asp>
 SA : <http://www.waterforgood.sa.gov.au/category/news/>