



# RIVER MURRAY WEEKLY REPORT

FOR THE WEEK ENDING WEDNESDAY, 23 MAY 2012

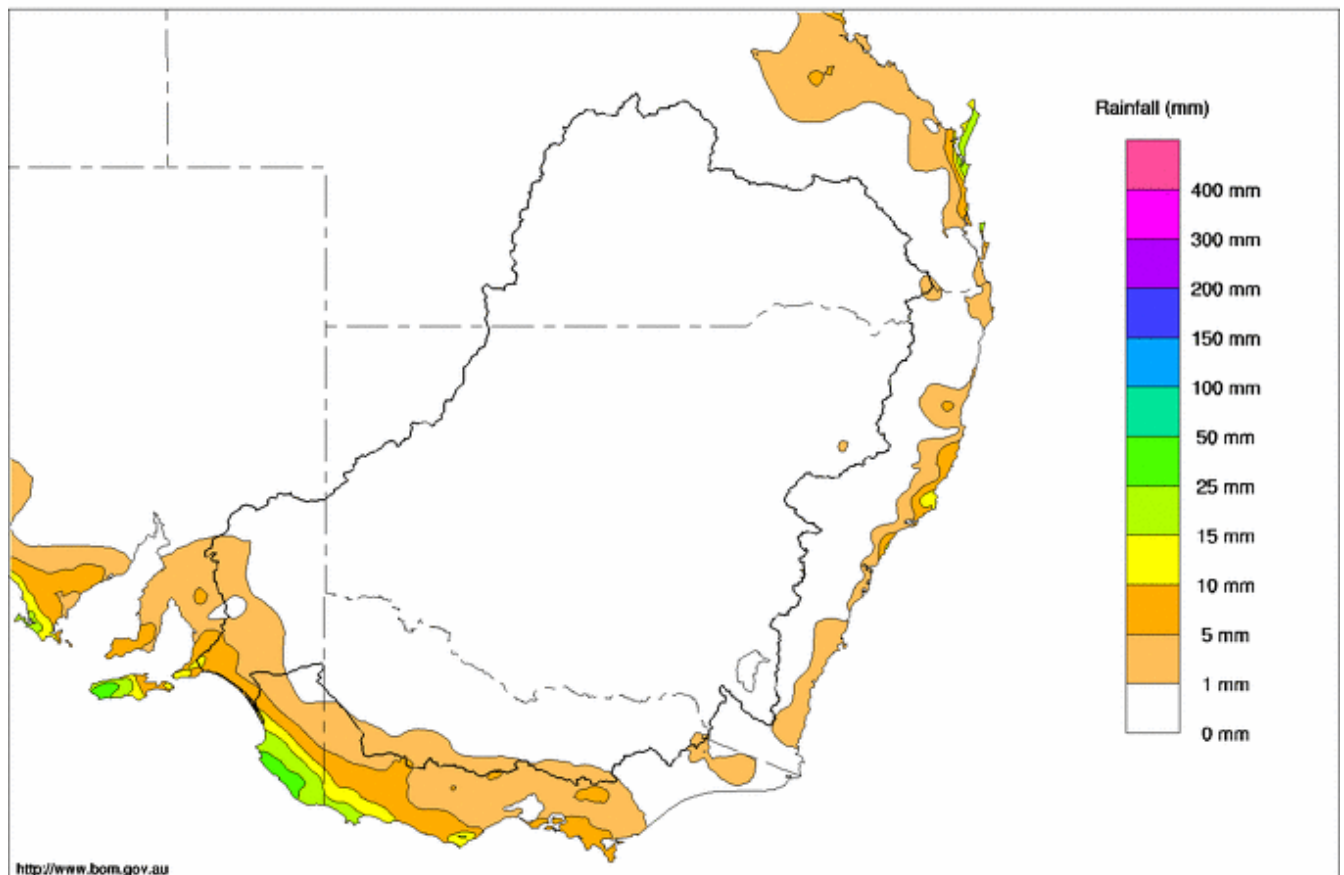
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## Rainfall and Inflows

It was another dry week across the Murray-Darling Basin with a slow moving high pressure ridge maintaining fine and stable conditions for most of eastern Australia. There was little or no precipitation over the Basin apart from the far south and south-west where most totals were less than 5 mm (Map 1). Some rainfall is forecast over the days ahead for parts of the Basin, which should bring an end to the spell of dry weather that has affected the region during the month of May thus far.

Stream flows in the upper Murray tributaries receded slowly over the week as dry conditions persisted across most catchments. On the Mitta Mitta River, the flow at Hinnomunjie decreased from 500 to 400 ML/day. On the upper River Murray, the flow at Biggara receded from 1,150 to 1,000 ML/day, while on the Kiewa River the flow at Bandiana also fell away, decreasing from 1,400 to around 800 ML/day.

Murray Darling Rainfall Totals (mm) Week Ending 23rd May 2012  
Product of the National Climate Centre



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Map 1 - Murray-Darling Basin rainfall for the week ending 23 May 2012 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).



## River Operations

MDBA active storage increased by 4 GL this week and is now 7,528 GL (88%). At Dartmouth Reservoir storage increased by 5 GL to 3,219 GL (83% capacity) and release remains at 200 ML/day. At Hume Reservoir, the storage increased by 29 GL to 2,660 GL (89% capacity). The release continued to be cut back early in the week and is now at the minimum release of 600 ML/day. Hume Reservoir is now in the winter 'filling phase' of operation, which follows the completion of the irrigation season and aims to store water from the upper catchments to re-fill the storage (depending on rainfall) before downstream demands once again exceed inflows in the coming spring. A level of airspace can be expected to be maintained for flood mitigation in coming months with updates provided in future Weekly Reports.

At Yarrawonga, the pool level in Lake Mulwala is currently 124.78 m AHD and trending slowly down towards 124.7 m AHD. Release from Yarrawonga Weir - currently 3,400 ML/day - is expected to be further decreased later this week; however this will be dependent on inflows that could possibly be boosted by rainfall forecast for the region in a few days time.

On the Edward Wakool System, flow through the Edward and Gulpa offtakes continued to decrease slowly as the Murray receded. A requirement for lower flows at Stevens Weir in the coming weeks to enable maintenance works means that the flow through both offtakes will be lowered using the gates this week. A flow of 200 ML/day at the Edward offtake and 80 ML/day at the Gulpa offtake will be targeted by early next week. The flow at Stevens Weir during the last week has averaged around 2,000 ML/day as irrigation channels continued to drain. The flow is expected to decrease towards 600 ML/day in about a week's time. Downstream on the Wakool River, flows continue receding. At Kyalite, the current flow is about 3,200 ML/day.

On the Goulburn River, the flow at McCoys decreased from 3,600 to 2,000 ML/day. At Torrumbarry Weir, the flow is now at 6,700 ML/day after receding slowly during the week as expected. The flow should decrease to below 6,000 ML/day in the coming days.

On the Murrumbidgee River, the flow at Balranald continues to fall away following the recent flood peak. The current flow is around 12,200 ML/day – down from 14,700 ML/day at the same time last week. Water quality in the lower Murrumbidgee and the River Murray downstream has recently been affected by the flood flows with hypoxic blackwater generated by overbank inundation of the lower Murrumbidgee floodplains. This event was less extensive than last year, with few confirmed fish deaths. Water quality is now steadily improving following the successful addition of in-channel environmental dilution flows, the recession of flood waters and the arrival of cooler temperatures. The management of environmental flows for blackwater dilution was a collaborative undertaking between various State agencies, the Commonwealth Environmental Water holder and MDBA.

At Euston, the Murray continued receding during the week and is now flowing at 23,700 ML/day, with the recession also continuing through Colignan and Mildura. On the Darling River, inflow to the Menindee Lakes has averaged around 10,000 ML/day and the volume in storage decreased by 36 GL to 1,964 GL (113% capacity). Release from Menindee Lakes (measured at Weir 32) has been decreased throughout the week and is now at 11,200 ML/day. A continued reduction in release is planned for the week ahead.

Downstream of Menindee, the slow passage of flood waters continues. At Burtundy, the flow in the Darling has receded slightly to 19,200 ML/day. On the Great Darling Anabran, sustained high flows are also continuing. The Anabran has now received several periods of high flow during the last two years following 15 years during which the channel and its associated lake system was mostly completely dry. Recent observations via satellite and down at river level show a rejuvenating reconnection of water through the system from Menindee Lakes to the River Murray (Figures 1 and 2). For further information on the flood operations at Menindee Lakes, please refer to the NSW Office of Water website ([www.water.nsw.gov.au](http://www.water.nsw.gov.au)) with details available at <http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/Water-management/Water-availability/Flood-management/>.



**Figure 1 - The Great Darling Anabranh near Popiltah – mid way between Menindee and the Murray, May 2012.**  
(Photo: Mike Erny, NSW Office of Water)



**Figure 2 - Flood water mid way along the Great Darling Anabranh connecting to Mindona Lake beyond, May 2012.**  
(Photo: Mike Erny, NSW Office of Water)

At Wentworth, the flow fell below 50,000 ML/day for the first time since 27 March, and is currently 47,200 ML/day. At Lake Victoria, the storage volume increased by 10 GL to 359 GL (53%) and the lake level will be held relatively steady over the coming week. The flow to South Australia decreased to 43,700 ML/day, and will continue receding during the weeks ahead.

Downstream at Lock 1, the flow remains above 50,000 ML/day but this should begin to fall away in the coming week as the recession from upstream arrives. At the Lower Lakes, additional barrage gates were opened following the weekend, with a return to lighter wind conditions reducing the likelihood of reverse flows. The 5 day average level for Lake Alexandrina decreased by around 7 cm and is currently 0.74 m AHD.

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**Water in Storage**

**Week ending Wednesday 23 May 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	475.75	3 219	83%	71	3 148	+5
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	190.22	2 660	89%	23	2 637	+29
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	24.14	359	53%	100	259	+10
Menindee Lakes		1 731*		1 964	113%	(480 #)	1 484	-39
<b>Total</b>		<b>9 269</b>		<b>8 202</b>	<b>88%</b>	- -	<b>7 528</b>	<b>+4</b>
Total Active MDBA Storage							88% ^	

**Major State Storages**

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	942	92%	3	939	-3
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	1 523	93%	24	1 499	-3
Eildon Reservoir	3 334	2 801	84%	100	2 701	+4

\* 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 22 May 2012

Storage	Active Storage (GL)	Weekly Change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This Week	From 1 May 2012
Lake Eucumbene - Total	2 476	n/a	Snowy-Murray	+6	49
Snowy-Murray Component	883	n/a	Tooma-Tumut	+3	11
Target Storage	1 290		Net Diversion	3	39
			Murray 1 Release	+9	58

**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)	-6.6	1059	Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	-0.3	208
Wakool Sys Allowance	1.6	28	Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	0	548
Western Murray Irrigation	0.3	22	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	0.1	90
Licensed Pumps	2.0	188	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.8	56
Lower Darling	7.0	295	Licensed pumps - LMW	1.2	264
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>1592</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>1166</b>

\* 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 this month due to Unregulated Flows and Additional Dilution Flow.

Entitlement this month	93.0 *	
Flow this week	316.5	(45 200 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	1,188.2	
Flow last month	1,752.1	

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

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2011
Swan Hill	120	110	130
Euston	150	160	140
Red Cliffs	170	170	160
Merbein	130	140	140
Burtundy (Darling)	330	320	350
Lock 9	220	230	190
Lake Victoria	260	270	220
Berri	290	280	250
Waikerie	-	-	-
Morgan	270	270	280
Mannum	250	250	290
Murray Bridge	320	320	360
Milang (Lake Alex.)	510	510	560
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	300	290	350
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	4 720	4 680	4 920
Goolwa Barrages	410	410	1 420



**River Levels and Flows**

**Week ending Wednesday 23 May 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	-	-	-	1 850	F	1 730	2 190
Jingellic	4.0	1.54	208.06	3 390	F	3 510	4 050
Tallandoon ( Mitta Mitta River )	4.2	1.46	218.35	600	S	610	660
Heywoods	5.5	1.30	154.93	600	S	680	4 160
Doctors Point	5.5	1.50	149.97	1 330	F	1 560	5 330
Albury	4.3	0.65	148.09	-	-	-	-
Corowa	3.8	0.65	126.67	1 900	F	2 790	6 790
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	0.70	115.74	3 450	S	3 740	4 690
Tocumwal	6.4	1.36	105.20	-	F	-	4 920
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.17	80.72	6 660	F	7 740	8 730
Swan Hill	4.5	1.57	64.49	7 260	F	7 680	8 200
Wakool Junction	8.8	4.34	53.46	13 750	F	14 230	16 340
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	3.60	45.44	23 740	S	25 520	30 250
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	32.17	25 620	F	-	-
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	5.52	30.28	47 200	S	48 760	54 770
Rufus Junction	-	6.70	23.63	43 760	R	45 220	53 570
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	3.30	-	53 100	F	53 610	53 800
<b>Tributaries</b>							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.22	154.45	880	R	950	1 110
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	8.20	145.88	1 180	R	1 270	1 640
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	2.13	93.55	2 040	F	2 730	4 620
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	1.85	81.62	1 770	F	2 020	1 470
Edward at Liewah	-	2.76	58.14	2 240	S	2 440	3 180
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	1.64	55.13	850	F	930	1 220
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	5.91	61.87	12 180	F	13 460	16 250
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.26	-	160	F	150	90
Darling at Bourke	-	4.44	-	2 670	F	2 700	3 200
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	7.27	-	19 170	S	19 320	19 650

Natural Inflow to Hume (i.e. Pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	4 850	5 050
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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	-0.12	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+1.63	+4.41
No. 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.01	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.03	+2.60
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.01	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.01	+2.39
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.06	+1.37	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.39	+3.70
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.04	+2.88	No. 3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.14	+3.38
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.29	+2.13	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.84	+3.55
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.70	+2.90	No. 1 Blanchetown	3.20	+0.29	+2.55

**Lower Lakes FSL = 0.75 m AHD**

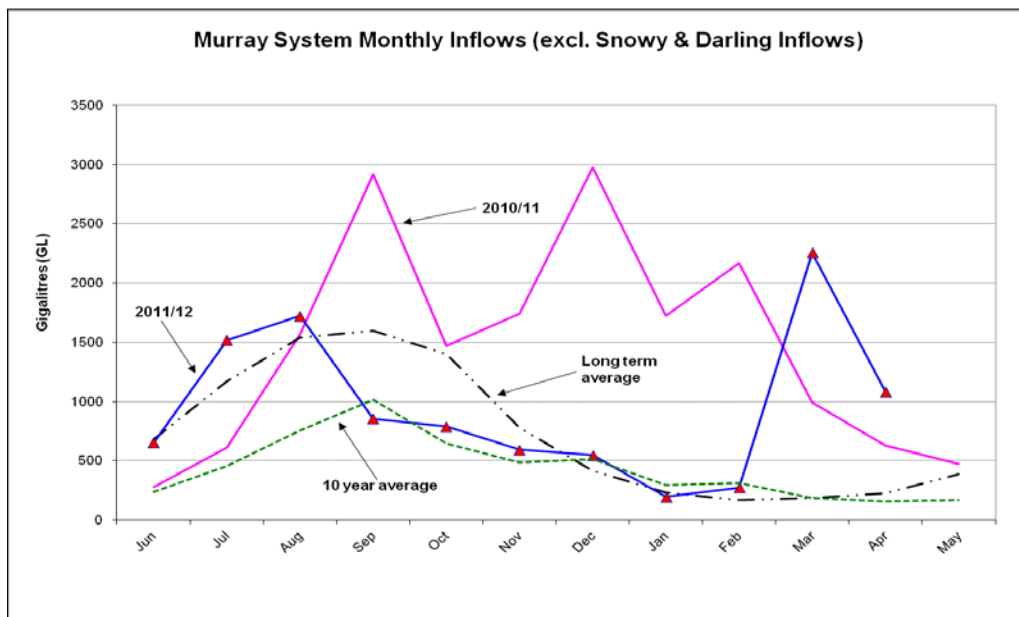
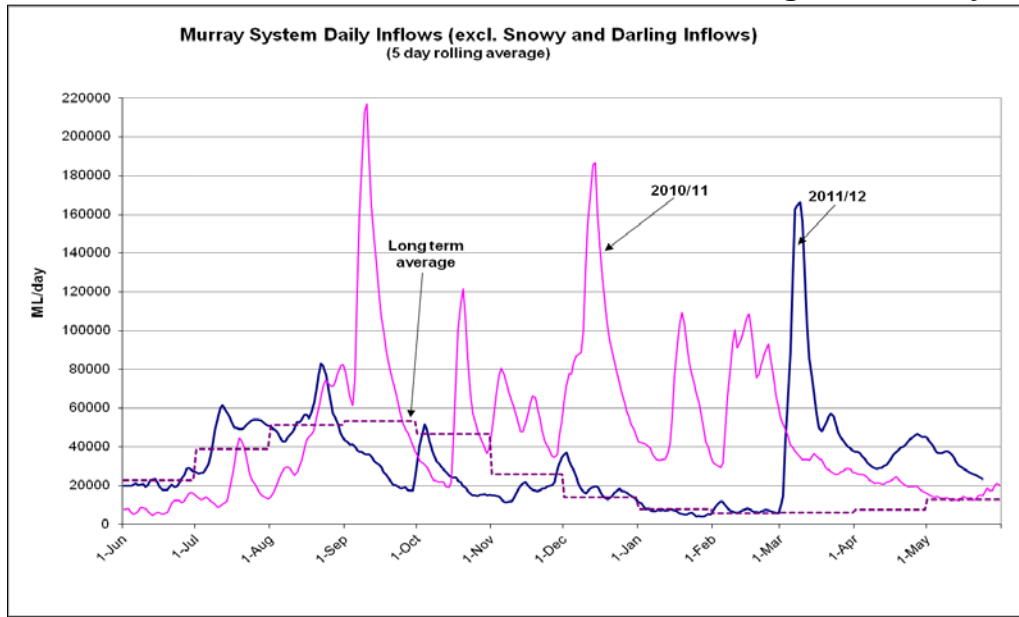
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days (m AHD)	0.74
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**Barrages**

**Fishways at Barrages**

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	No. Open	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	0.75	50	-	Open
Mundoo	26 openings	0.77	6	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	1	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	90	-	-
Tauwitchere	322 gates	0.80	125	Open	Open

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



**State Allocations (as at 23 May 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/>