

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 22 November 2000

Our Ref: MDBC:269 :ng:bwh

24 November, 2000



Rainfall across northern NSW and southern Queensland for the month of November to date has been well in excess of average. Widespread areas have already recorded rainfall totals of between 3 to 5 times the average November rainfall. This has followed wetter than average conditions in October.

Heavy falls of between 50 and 150 mm across northern New South Wales and southern Queensland this week has resulted in flooding in many of the tributaries of the Darling River. As a result, the Bureau of Meteorology has major flood warnings current for the Macintyre, Namoi and Macquarie Rivers; moderate warnings for the Warrego, Paroo, Castlereagh and Bogan Rivers; and a minor flood warning for the Balonne River. The Lachlan River, a tributary of the Murrumbidgee River, also has a minor flood warning in place. Record releases have recently been recorded at Chaffey Dam on the Peel River (a tributary of the Namoi).

Increased flows in the tributaries of the Darling River will lead to significant increases in inflows to Menindee Lakes over coming weeks. Whilst it is too early to accurately forecast the volume of inflow to the Lakes, preliminary indications are that it will be less than the Darling River flood of late 1998. In anticipation of these inflows, release from Menindee Lakes at Weir 32 is being progressively increased in order to draw the lakes down prior to the arrival of the Darling River peak (*refer to attached media release*).

Inflows to Dartmouth and Hume Reservoirs are steadily receding despite light rainfall this week, and storage in Hume remained at Full Supply Level during the week. However, with increasing demand for irrigation water and the re-commencement of supply of water from the Barmah-Millewa Forest allocation, storage in Hume is expected to fall next week. Discharge from Hume Dam is expected to be increased to channel capacity at Albury by 24 November to supply these requirements. Irrigation demand from Lake Mulwala is currently about 6 000 ML/day, and is expected to exceed 10 000 ML/day next week without further rain.

Release from Yarrawonga Weir was increased to a peak of 40 000 ML/day during the week prior to being reduced 33 000 ML/day by 23 November. Without further rain, release will remain at about 24 000 ML/day early next week to prolong watering of the Barmah-Millewa Forest. The recent flooding of the forest has initiated significant breeding events amongst many species of birds. Species reported to be nesting include Great Egrets, Cormorants, Spoonbills, Ibis, White Breasted Sea Eagles, Swamp Harrier, Whiskered Terns and many species of ducks. Continuing release of the Barmah-Millewa Forest allocation over the coming weeks will be targeted at providing water levels to assist completion of these breeding events, and also to allow many vegetation species including Moira Grass and water lilies to complete their life cycles.

Flow in the River Murray at Euston will continue to rise next week, and is expected to peak early in December slightly above 50 000 ML/day. Large numbers of mature native species of fish were passing upstream via the fish ladder at Euston Weir last week, however, unimpeded fish passage is possible now that the weir is effectively 'drowned' with high flow conditions. With planned increases in flows in the lower Darling River, flow in the River Murray at Wentworth is now expected to peak in the range 55 000 to 60 000 ML/day in mid December.

Weir 7 on the River Murray downstream of Rufus River will be removed next week in advance of the arrival of higher river flows. Advice on the remove any other weirs, if required, will be provided in later reports.

DAVID DOLE
General Manager



MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 23 November 2000



Further Increase in Release from Menindee Lakes

River Murray Water and the NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation today announced that increases in release from Menindee Lakes are being made in advance of the arrival of high flows from floods in rivers upstream of the Menindee Lakes.

This increase is being made to provide airspace to manage the flood peak when it reaches Menindee in late December or early January.

Floodwaters will reach Menindee Lakes over coming weeks following recent widespread heavy rainfall throughout the Darling River system. Preliminary indications are that the inflows will be less than those of the 1998 flood event, but this may change if further rain falls throughout the catchment.

Menindee Lakes are currently close to full, and since Monday 20 November, releases to the Darling River downstream of the Lakes have been progressively raised from 500 ML/day to 4 300 ML/day. Flow will be increased to 9 000 ML/day (gauge height of 3.3 m at Weir 32) by 29 November, and further increased in early December.

Details of the further rates of increase will be provided in a later media release.

The flow in the River Murray at Wentworth is currently about 36 500 ML/day. As a result of the current floods in the River Murray, and planned release from Menindee Lakes to the lower Darling River, preliminary indications are that the Murray flow at Wentworth will peak in the range 55 000 to 60 000 ML/day in mid December.

The flow in the Darling River and tributary catchments upstream of Menindee is being monitored closely by the Department of Land and Water Conservation, in consultation with River Murray Water. Regular updates will be provided during the flood event, and public meetings will be organised for communities affected by the floods in the coming weeks.

For further information contact:

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(Daniel Connell is *not* to be quoted as a spokesperson)

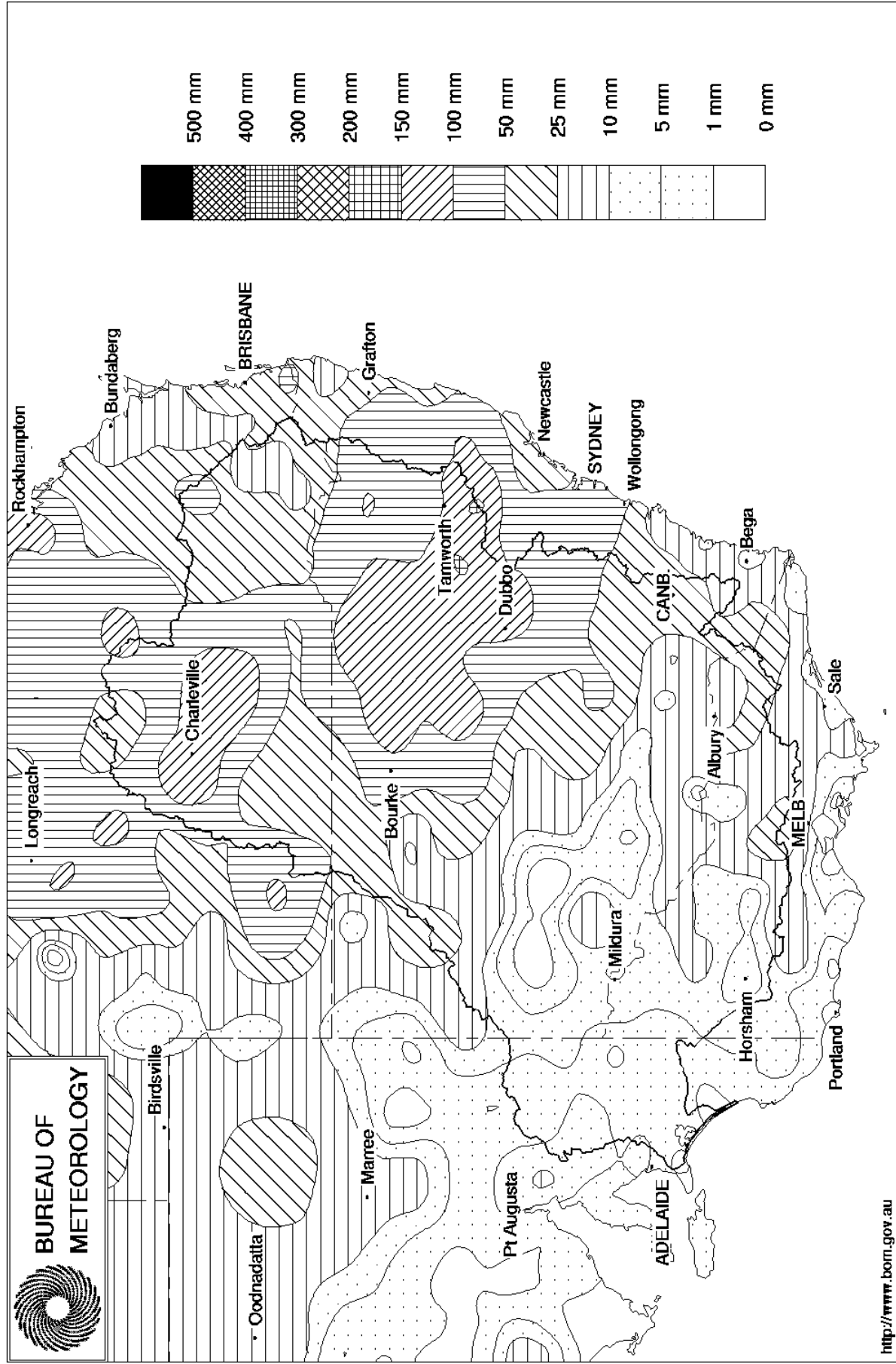
Recorded Information Service, Menindee Tel. (08) 8091 4586

DLWC Website:

<http://waterinfo.dlwc.nsw.gov.au/drr/flood/>

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 22nd November 2000

Product of the National Climate Centre



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

Week ending 22-Nov-2000

Water in Storage

MDBC Storages	Full Supply Level m AHD	Full Supply Capacity GL	Storage Level m AHD	Current Storage		Dead storage GL	Active storage GL	Change for the week GL
				GL	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3906	471.97	3048	78%	80	2968	+40
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3038	191.99	3036	100%	30	3006	-7
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	26.54	629	92%	100	529	+40
Menindee		1682 *		1910	114%	480 #	1430	-2
Total		9306		8622	93%	690	7932	+70

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1999 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **92%**

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1026	913	89%	3	910	+90
Blowering Reservoir	1631	1442	88%	24	1418	-9
Eildon Reservoir	3390	1771	52%	100	1671	+58

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 21-Nov-2000

Storage (GL)	Current storage	Weekly change	Diversion	This week	From 1st May
Lake Eucumbene - Total	2999	+62	Snowy-Murray	+0	506
Snowy-Murray Component	1495	+54	Tooma-Tumut	+4	270
Target Storage	1450		Nett Diversion	-4.2	236
			Murray 1 Release	+11	819

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales			Victoria		
	This week	From 1 July		This week	From 1 July
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	16.3	399.8	Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	12.2	80.3
Wakool System loss	0.0	4.4	Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	0.4	215.8
Western Murray Irrig.	0.7	5.4	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	4.6	29.8
Licensed Pumps	4.1	83.0	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.3	9.4
Lower Darling	0.2	124.9	Licensed pumps - SRW	3.7	55.7
TOTAL	21.4	617.4	TOTAL	21.1	391.0

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	180
Flow this week	186.8
Flow so far this month	551
Flow last month	997

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25 C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August
Swan Hill	280	320	220
Euston	220	216	195
Red Cliffs	220	230	229
Merbein	200	220	187
Burtundy	430	438	423
Lock 9	220	230	219
L. Victoria	270	253	306
Berri	250	249	296
Waikerie	-	250	348
Morgan	250	244	349
Mannum	270	274	350
Murray Bridge	290	296	347
Meningie	1270	1290	1278
Goolwa Barrages	690	708	1634



River Levels and Flows

	Minor Flood stage	Gauge height	Flow	Trend	Average flow this week	Average flow last week
River Murray	m	m	ML/day		ML/day	ML/day
Khancoban	-	-	3700	R	3330	3500
Jingellic	4.0	2.37	10880	F	12570	11340
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	2.00	2740	F	3390	3470
Heywoods	5.5	3.08	16300	S	18440	16360
Doctors Point	5.5	3.55	20900	R	23300	22490
Albury	4.3	2.59	-	F	-	-
Corowa	7.0	3.95	22800	F	25960	22000
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	4.26	35000	F	38230	32000
Tocumwal	6.4	5.13	39668	F	38210	36950
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	7.42	42231	F	41300	35560
Stevens Weir (d/s)		4.84	9940	S	12977	23071
Swan Hill	4.5	3.98	24850	S	24930	23880
Wakool Junction	8.8	8.61	44912	R	39820	31970
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	5.42	42620	R	39200	34250
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	4.93	35800	R	34710	29460
Rufus Junction	-	5.90	28000	R	25380	22190
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	25900	R	23660	23490
Tributaries						
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	2.39	3670	R	3990	3720
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	10.53	9777	F	13890	13580
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	7.89	18836	F	19850	11630
Edward at Liewah	-	5.43	8420	R	7770	5640
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	5.18	21100	R	16560	8000
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	1.31	990	F	1410	2340
Darling at Bourke	-	5.04	8760	R	5740	2530
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.88	611	S	640	580
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.70	1530	R	890	580

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	24640	22320
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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	+0.06	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.77	+3.60
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.02	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	-0.05	+1.64
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.02	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	-0.04	+1.45
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.01	+2.16	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.00	+2.35
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.00	+2.29	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	-0.02	+1.62
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.16	+1.36	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	-0.04	+1.66
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.25	+1.98	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	-0.04	+1.09

Murrumbidgee	FSL (M AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht. metres	Flow ML/day
No. 7 Maude	75.40	+0.00	2.12	2970
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	+0.07	0.45	580

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.80	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.72	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.70	30

