

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 29 November 2000

Our Ref: MDBC:269 :am:bwh

1 December, 2000



More details on the extent of flooding northern New South Wales and parts of southern Queensland in the Darling River system became available during the week as flood waters moved downstream, and planning for the arrival of this water at Menindee Lakes has continued. Progressive increases in the release from Menindee Lakes at Weir 32 commenced last week and continued this week in order to draw the lakes down prior to the arrival of the inflow peak (*refer to attached media release*). While it remains too early to accurately forecast the volume of inflow to the lakes, preliminary indications continue to suggest that it will be significantly less than in the Darling River flood of late 1998. Flow in the Darling River at Bourke has recently risen to 25 000 ML/day, and is expected to peak in mid December.

After the recent period of spill from Hume Reservoir, regulated release specifically to supply downstream requirements resumed on 24 November. Discharge from Hume was subsequently increased on 25 November to achieve channel capacity at Albury in order to meet increasing irrigation demand, and to provide water from the Barmah-Millewa Forest allocation to maintain suitable water levels in the forest to sustain environmental processes initiated by recent flooding. As a result, storage in Hume (currently 98% of capacity) is being gradually drawn down.

Release from Yarrawonga Weir was gradually reduced to 20 000 ML/day in response to declining inflows to Lake Mulwala from the Ovens River, and will be maintained near this rate for a period of about 5 days to meet the environmental flow requirements of the Barmah-Millewa Forest. The forest requirements are being monitored, but it is expected that environmental requirements can be met whilst gradually reducing the flow at Yarrawonga over the next month.

The recent high flows into the Barmah-Millewa Forest have triggered the most significant bird breeding events in the forest since the mid 1970's, and the Barmah-Millewa Forum has advised that the prolonged inundation of the forest is crucial for the continuation of these bird breeding events. Consequently, on 30 November the Murray-Darling Basin Commission decided to increase flows in the River Murray between Hume Dam and Yarrawonga Weir above channel capacity for a short period in order to maintain suitable water levels for environmental requirements in the Barmah-Millewa Forest, and to continue to meet high irrigation demands (*refer to attached media release*).

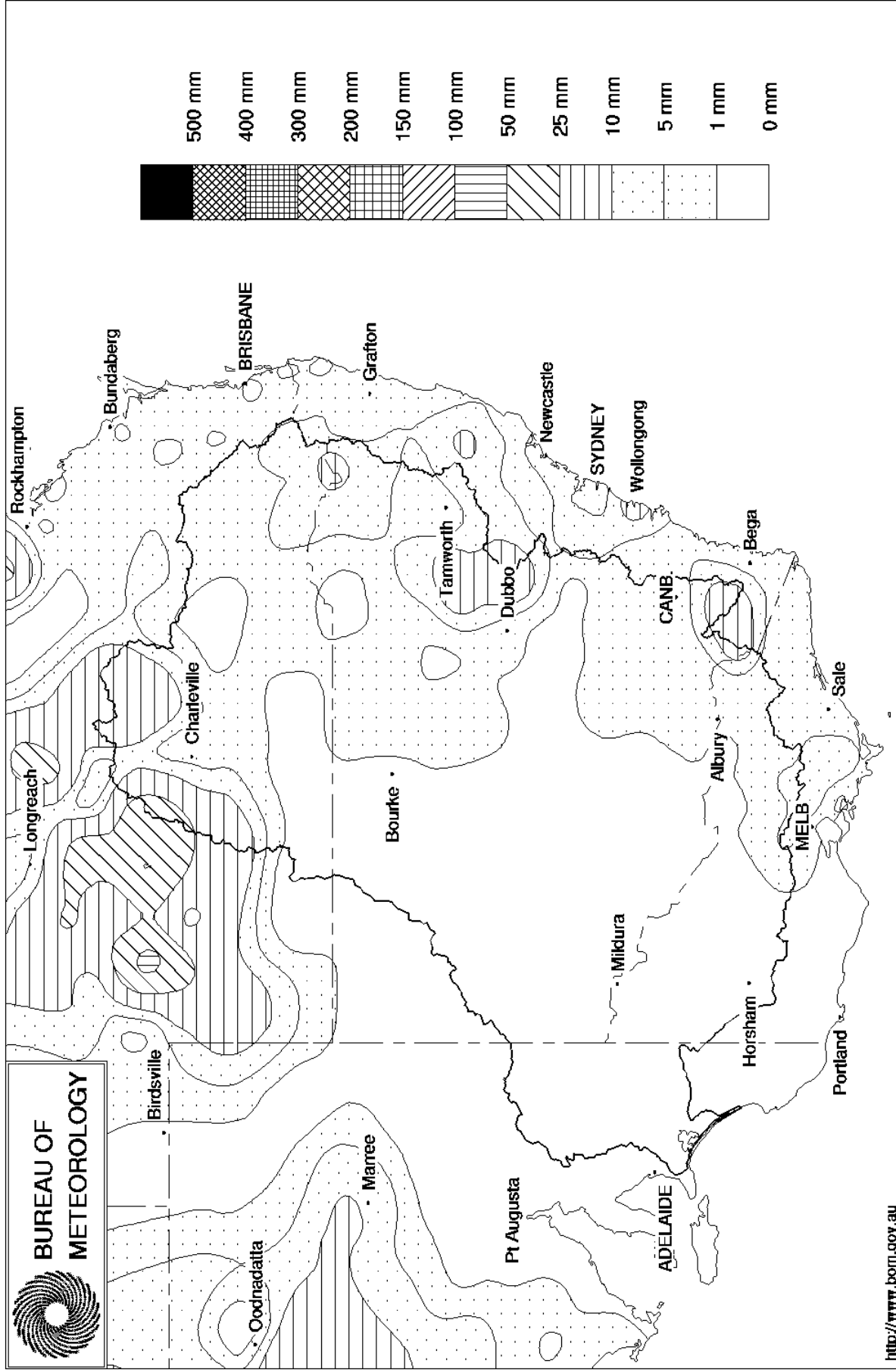
The Barmah-Millewa Forest water allocation was established in 1993 to provide environmental water for the forest. If conditions remain dry, the accumulated volume of allocation which is available this season (up to 300 GL), is expected to be fully used in late December. If necessary, additional environmental allocation from other sources may be called upon to assist in the completion of environmental events in the forest.

Flow in the River Murray at Euston is expected to peak slightly above 50 000 ML/day later this week. 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. A further opportunity for the enhancement of the peak flow to South Australia for environmental benefit by release from Lake Victoria is being considered by SA agencies and River Murray Water.

DAVID DOLE
General Manager

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 29th November 2000

Product of the National Climate Centre



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MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday, 30 November 2000



Increase in flows in the River Murray downstream of Hume Dam

River Murray Water General Manager, David Dole, announced today that the Murray-Darling Basin Commission has decided to increase flows in the River Murray between Hume Dam and Yarrowonga Weir above channel capacity for a short period commencing immediately.

This operation is necessary to maintain suitable water levels for environmental requirements in the Barmah-Millewa Forest, and to continue to meet high irrigation demands. This follows a recent period of warm and dry conditions, and receding flows in the Ovens River.

The period of time the River will be above channel capacity is not expected to exceed 7 days. The planned operation is expected to result in the following river levels:

	4 days at 28 000 ML/day	3 Days at 27 000 ML/day
Doctors Point	4.12 m (0.24 m above channel capacity)	4.04 m (0.16 m above channel capacity)
Albury	3.23 m (0.23 m above channel capacity)	3.15 m (0.15 m above channel capacity)
Corowa	4.54 m (0.32 m above channel capacity)	4.44 m (0.22 m above channel capacity)

As a consequence of this operation, it is expected that there will be some inundation of the lower lying areas adjacent to the river between Hume Dam and Yarrowonga Weir, particularly between Howlong and Corowa. In view of this, the Commission is prepared to meet, by *ex-gratia* payment, the costs of incremental damage arising from this specific operation. The Commission will begin negotiations with relevant landowners immediately in order to deal with this aspect of the operation of the River Murray.

The purpose of the higher flows is to ensure that River Murray Water is able to continue to supply critical volumes of water to the Barmah-Millewa Forest, as well as ensure that supplies to major irrigation developments in New South Wales and Victoria are maintained.

Recent flood flows into the Barmah-Millewa Forest have triggered the most significant bird breeding event in the forest since the mid-1970's. The water to be supplied to the forest through this operation is crucial for the continuation of this bird breeding event, and authorities regard the environmental values of this operation as extremely high.

The operation will be closely monitored over the coming week. In the event of significant rainfall in the Ovens River catchment or across irrigation areas, flow downstream of Hume will be reduced accordingly.

Information on river flows will be updated daily on the following recorded telephone messages:

- Hume Dam 02 6026 4312
- River Murray Water 1800 630 114

For further information contact: Daniel Connell Media Liaison Officer Phone: (02) 6279 0129 Mobile: 0418 276 498 Email: daniel.connell@mdbc.gov.au (Daniel Connell is <i>not</i> to be quoted as a spokesperson)	Recorded Information Service, Menindee Tel. (08) 8091 4586 DLWC Website: http://waterinfo.dlwc.nsw.gov.au/drr/flood/
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MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 29 November 2000



Further Increase in Release from Menindee Lakes

River Murray Water and the NSW Department of Land and Water Conservation today announced that further increases in releases from Menindee Lakes will be made in advance of the arrival of high flows from floods in rivers upstream of the Menindee Lakes.

Inflows to Menindee Lakes are currently about 6 500 ML/day and increasing slowly. Releases from the Lakes are currently about 9 000 ML/day at Weir 32 (3.3 m gauge height), and the storage is being slowly drawn down to provide airspace to manage the flood peak when it reaches Menindee in late December or early January.

Releases from Menindee Lakes will now be progressively increased to 20 000 ML/day at Weir 32 (6.25 m gauge height) by 10 December. Further increases to rates of up to 25 000 to 30 000 ML/day may be required in mid to late December. Details of further increases will be provided in future advice.

The volume of floodwater upstream of Menindee Lakes is expected to be much less than the 1998 flood event, and the river levels downstream are also expected to be lower. However, this may change if further rain falls throughout the catchment.

The flow in the Darling River at Burtundy is now about 1 300 ML/day (1.06 m gauge height), and is expected to reach about 5.8 m in mid December.

The flow in the River Murray at Wentworth is currently about 42 000 ML/day. As a result of combined inflows from the current small floods in the River Murray, and releases from Menindee Lakes to the lower Darling River, the flow in the River Murray at Wentworth is now expected to peak in the range 50 000 to 55 000 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:

Daniel Connell

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

DLWC Website:

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

Week ending 29-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	472.37	3071	79%	80	2991	+23
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3038	191.65	2969	98%	30	2939	-67
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	26.71	648	95%	100	548	+19
Menindee		1682 *		1883	112%	480 #	1403	-27
Total		9306		8570	92%	690	7880	-52

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1999 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = 91%

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1026	925	90%	3	922	+13
Blowering Reservoir	1631	1394	85%	24	1370	-48
Eildon Reservoir	3390	1792	53%	100	1692	+21

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 28-Nov-2000

Storage (GL)	Current storage	Weekly change	Diversion	This week	From 1st May
Lake Eucumbene - Total	3033	+33	Snowy-Murray	+10	517
Snowy-Murray Component	1509	+14	Tooma-Tumut	+7	277
Target Storage	1450		Nett Diversion	3.1	239
			Murray 1 Release	+14	833

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	47.2	447.1
Wakool System loss	0.0	4.4
Western Murray Irrig.	1.3	6.6
Licensed Pumps	5.7	88.6
Lower Darling	0.9	125.6
TOTAL	55.2	672.4

Victoria	This week	From 1 July
Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	19.5	99.8
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	13.5	229.3
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	8.0	37.4
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.5	9.9
Licensed pumps - SRW	3.7	59.4
TOTAL	45.1	435.7

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	180
Flow this week	218.3
Flow so far this month	769
Flow last month	997

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25 C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August
Swan Hill	230	270	223
Euston	230	221	196
Red Cliffs	260	260	231
Merbein	250	230	190
Burtundy	440	433	424
Lock 9	230	222	219
L. Victoria	270	257	303
Berri	240	254	293
Waikerie	280	280	347
Morgan	280	265	344
Mannum	250	251	344
Murray Bridge	250	272	342
Meningie	1300	1300	1279
Goolwa Barrages	1010	729	1581



River Levels and Flows

	Minor Flood stage	Gauge height	Flow	Trend	Average flow this week	Average flow last week
	m	m	ML/day		ML/day	ML/day
River Murray						
Khancoban	-	-	4750	R	2490	3330
Jingellic	4.0	2.19	9190	R	8430	12570
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.87	2220	F	2440	3390
Heywoods	5.5	3.56	22640	S	20230	18440
Doctors Point	5.5	3.97	26100	R	23860	23300
Albury	4.3	3.07	-	F	-	-
Corowa	7.0	4.22	25000	R	23030	25960
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	3.07	21900	F	25690	38230
Tocumwal	6.4	3.96	25075	F	30050	38210
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	6.12	25374	F	35310	41300
Stevens Weir (d/s)		4.95	10500	S	10241	12977
Swan Hill	4.5	3.85	23910	S	24300	24930
Wakool Junction	8.8	8.94	48695	F	48080	39820
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	5.93	49730	R	47050	39200
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	5.24	42000	R	38940	34710
Rufus Junction	-	6.45	37958	R	31180	25380
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	28300	R	27130	23660
Tributaries						
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	2.16	2920	R	2640	3990
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	9.47	5006	F	6490	13890
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	2.07	1915	F	7710	19850
Edward at Liewah	-	5.23	7790	F	8270	7770
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	5.35	22700	F	22970	16560
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	1.53	1240	F	1180	1410
Darling at Bourke	-	7.66	24500	R	17330	5740
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	1.06	1320	R	690	640
Barwon at Mungindi	-	4.24	3760	F	3530	890

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	16000	24640
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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	-0.05	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+1.32	-28.25
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.15	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.00	+1.95
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.28	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	-0.03	+1.66
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.03	+2.49	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.01	+2.58
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.15	+2.60	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	-0.01	+1.81
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.00	+1.82	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	-0.03	+1.82
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.23	+2.61	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	-0.06	+1.20

Murrumbidgee	FSL (M AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht. metres	Flow ML/day
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-0.53	0.65	330
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.09	0.35	469

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.74	15
Mundoo	26 openings	0.74	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.72	30

