

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 23 May 2001

Our Ref : MDBC:269 :ng:bwh

25 May, 2001



Light falls of rain were recorded across much of the Basin this week, with heavier falls of between 10 and 25 mm recorded in the headwaters of the Mitta Mitta, Kiewa and Ovens Rivers in Victoria, and in the border rivers region of Queensland and New South Wales.

Tributary flows to the River Murray showed little or no response and most tributary inflows continued to recede. Minor increases in inflow to Hume Reservoir have occurred as a result of increased releases from the Snowy Mountains Scheme via Murray 1 Power Station near Khancoban. However, inflows from the unregulated areas of the Hume catchment remain low.

Flow in the River Murray at Albury-Wodonga has been maintained near the minimum requirement of 1 200 ML/day for most of the week, with some variation up to about 2 000 ML/day resulting from fluctuations in flow in the Kiewa River mainly as a result of hydro-electric power generation.

Release from Yarrawonga Weir remains at the minimum requirement of 1 800 ML/day, and is expected to remain near this rate unless there is significant rain upstream.

On the Edward River, drawdown of Stevens Weir pool for the winter period is continuing, and the upstream water level is now 3 m below full supply level, and will continue to be drawn down over the next week. As anticipated, flow downstream of Stevens Weir has increased in response to draining of the irrigation system and flow peaked earlier in the week at about 1 600 ML/day.

Drainage returns from the Torrumbarry Irrigation System has led to an increase in flow in the Murray at Swan Hill to 4 000 ML/day. River salinity levels at Swan Hill have continued to rise as a result of increased saline input to the River Murray from drainage from irrigation systems. Flow in the River Murray at Euston Weir (currently 4 800 ML/day) expected to reach about 5 600 ML/day next week.

At Mildura Weir, replacement of weir trestles with refurbished units has been successfully completed during the week, and the water level of the weir pool is now being gradually raised. The upstream pool level on 23 May was 2.2 m below full supply level, and is expected to be restored to near full supply level by early June. Temporary increases in river salinity have occurred as a result of increased saline groundwater input while the pool level is low – salinity at Red Cliffs recently peaked at 470 EC, and downstream at Merbein it is expected to peak at about 500 EC next week.

Flow in the Darling River upstream of Menindee Lakes is gradually receding, and storage in the Lakes is now gradually declining mainly as a result of evaporation. Without significant rain in the upper Darling catchment, release from Menindee Lakes is expected to remain at the minimum requirement until at least spring 2001.

Following a request by the South Australian Department for Water Resources, flow to South Australia is being gradually reduced to the entitlement flow of 3 000 ML/day with the aim of providing river conditions suitable for a detailed river salinity survey which is planned to be undertaken in coming weeks (*see Media Release attached*).

DAVID DOLE
General Manager

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 25 May 2001 RIVER MURRAY SALINITY SURVEY

The Department for Water Resources announced today that it is planning to undertake a survey of the South Australian section of the River Murray in June to provide additional information on the amount and location of salt entering the river. Planning for the survey has been a joint undertaking with SA Water and River Murray Water.

Department for Water Resources spokesman, Brenton Erdmann said today that the survey results would provide valuable information to increase our understanding of the impacts of development along the river, for planning future salinity reduction works and for assessing how existing salt interception schemes are performing.

“The State Government is committed to addressing the problem of River Murray salinity and has pledged a contribution to the Murray-Darling Basin Commission’s \$60m program over the next 7 years for salinity reduction works” Mr Erdmann said. “The salinity survey will provide very detailed information for the planning of future actions”.

“We are arranging to have two boats in the water to cover the 600 km section of the river from the border to Wellington. Flows and salinities will be measured at every kilometre along the way. The results of the survey will tell us how much salt per day per kilometre is currently entering the River Murray at any location” he added.

As an example of the how the information is used, Mr Erdmann cited the case of the Woolpunda Salt Interception Scheme. The Woolpunda Scheme consists of a series of bores each side of the river between Overland Corner and Waikerie. These bores intercept salt water flowing underground into the river and pumps it away to a disposal basin. Before the construction of the scheme, a salinity survey indicated that there was up to 18 tonnes of salt per day per kilometre entering the river in this area. Since the scheme has been operating, survey results have shown that this has dropped to 2 tonnes or less per day per kilometre. It has also shown that the salt load has quadrupled along a section of the river not protected by the scheme. Planning is now underway to address this.

One of the requirements for a successful survey is low steady flow in the River, and the dry conditions that have been experienced in autumn are providing a good opportunity for this. Agreement has been reached with the Murray-Darling Basin Commission to regulate the flow to South Australia from the current 6,000 megalitres per day to the May entitlement flow of 3,000 ML/day, commencing on the 28 May, by varying the delivery of additional dilution flows. This flow will be maintained until the end of June if weather conditions permit after which the flow will be increased back to the July entitlement plus additional dilution flow.

It is expected that there will be a temporary increase in river salinity during this period, depending on the location along the river. The salinity will still be well below the 800 electroconductivity units (EC) target at Morgan however. Salinities will drop again when the flows increase in July.

Mr Erdmann said that river users should be aware that water levels in the river might fall in some locations, particularly downstream of the Lock and Weirs, as the result of planned reduction in flows. Boat operators should be aware of any change in water levels and exercise care when navigating in the shallower sections of the river during this period. Irrigators should also make sure that their pump intakes are set at a low enough level.

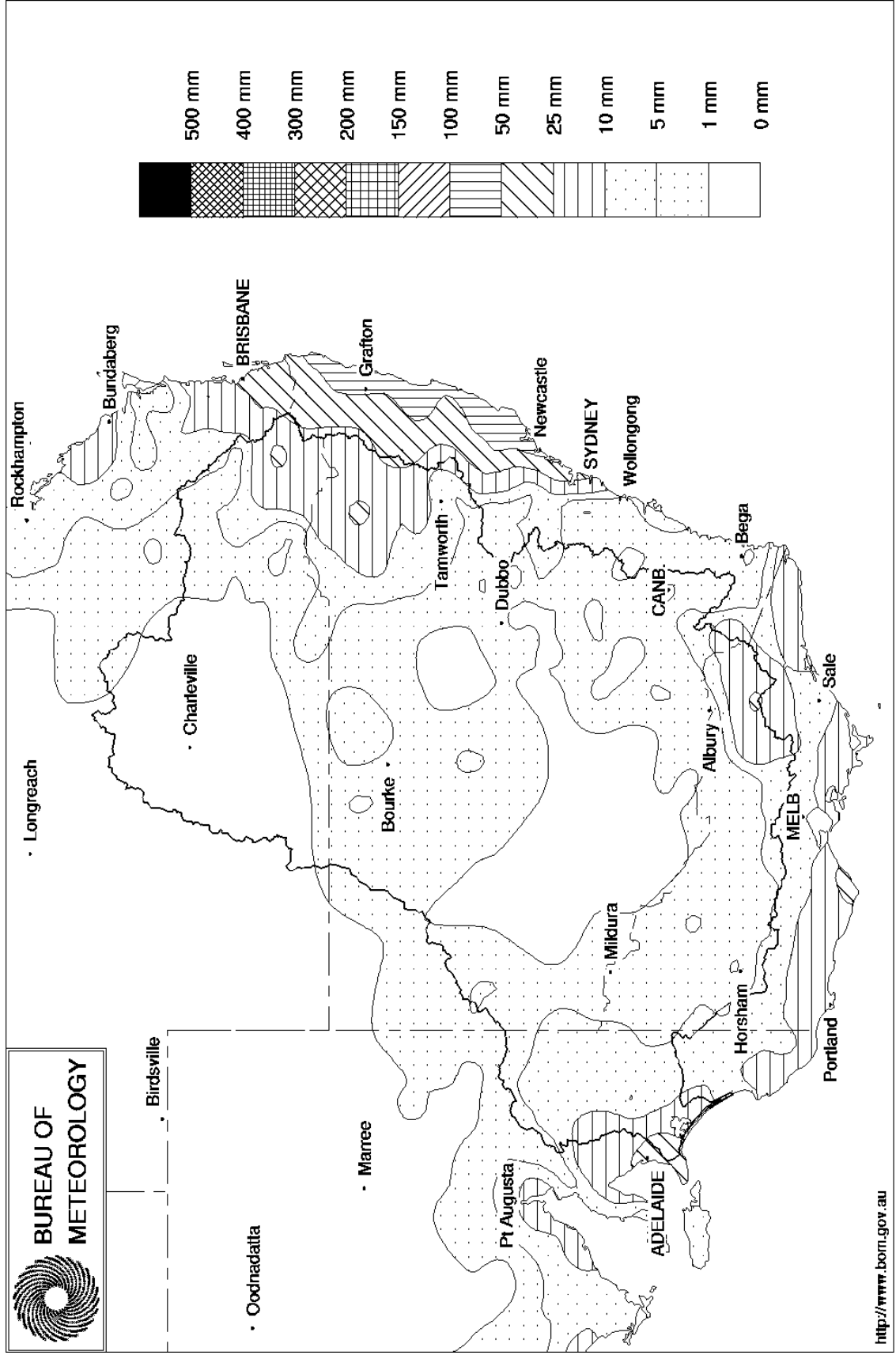
“The information that can be obtained from such a salinity survey is vital for long term management of river salinity. It is planned to undertake similar surveys in the future years, when suitable flow conditions exist, so we continue to increase our understanding and knowledge of the many processes affecting River Murray salinity” Mr Erdmann said.

For further information contact:

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Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 23rd May 2001

Product of the National Climate Centre



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

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Week ending 23-May-2001

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	472.78	3094	79%	80	3014	+1
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3038	177.91	926	30%	30	896	+50
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	23.56	317	47%	100	217	-7
Menindee		1682 *		1965	117%	480 #	1485	-6
Total		9306		6301	68%	690	5611	+38

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1999 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = 65%

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1026	404	39%	3	401	+0
Blowering Reservoir	1631	721	44%	24	697	+12
Eildon Reservoir	3390	1054	31%	100	954	+12

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 22-May-2001

Storage (GL)	Current storage	Weekly change	Diversion	This week	From 1st May
Lake Eucumbene - Total	2778	-54	Snowy-Murray	+39	110
Snowy-Murray Component	1288	-	Tooma-Tumut	+1	4
Target Storage	1290		Nett Diversion	38.3	106
			Murray 1 Release	+41	122

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)	-5.9	1578.6	Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	0.0	480.0
Wakool System loss	0.3	38.5	Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	0.0	774.6
Western Murray Irrig.	0.2	30.7	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	0.0	154.9
Licensed Pumps	2.8	379.5	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	1.2	56.9
Lower Darling	0.1	290.0	Licensed pumps - SRW	1.8	162.1
TOTAL	-2.5	2317.4	TOTAL	3.0	1628.4

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	93
Flow this week	44.2
Flow so far this month	189
Flow last month	479

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25 C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August
Swan Hill	200	238	214
Euston	200	201	200
Red Cliffs	430	380	247
Merbein	420	360	229
Burtundy	440	439	413
Lock 9	290	298	274
L. Victoria	340	341	309
Berri	390	383	332
Waikerie	460	470	391
Morgan	470	458	394
Mannum	440	420	400
Murray Bridge	390	381	396
Meningie	1000	1070	1246
Goolwa Barrages	1620	1939	1135



Week ending 23-May-2001

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	-	-	6050	S	6410	5340
Jingellic	4.0	1.90	6530	F	6890	5590
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.38	770	S	800	750
Heywoods	5.5	1.32	650	R	650	720
Doctors Point	5.5	1.72	2120	R	1530	1250
Albury	4.3	0.80	-	F	-	-
Corowa	7.0	0.68	1570	F	1720	2080
Yarrawonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	0.48	1850	S	1830	2090
Tocumwal	6.4	1.03	2434	S	2430	3070
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.31	3130	R	3220	3230
Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	1.06	858	F	1173	562
Swan Hill	4.5	1.00	3940	F	3810	3210
Wakool Junction	8.8	2.46	4862	R	4480	4500
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	1.16	4790	R	4710	5890
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.74	2850	F	5680	8130
Rufus Junction	-	3.22	4916	F	5860	9060
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	5050	R	5070	9980
Tributaries						
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.39	1320	R	750	340
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.81	390	S	410	350
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.34	670	F	710	440
Edward at Liewah	-	1.72	1110	R	970	910
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.50	500	S	520	610
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.56	280	R	220	760
Darling at Bourke	-	4.27	1440	R	1350	1200
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.89	654	F	740	830
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.46	650	F	730	790

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	2140	1550
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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
Yarrawonga	124.90	-0.26	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.06	+0.92
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.04	+0.09
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.00	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.04	+0.18
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	-2.20	+0.06	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.05	+0.66
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.01	+0.10	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	-0.01	+0.32
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	-0.05	-0.03	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.12	+0.22
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	-0.01	+0.08	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.08	+0.03

Murrumbidgee	FSL (M AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht. metres	Flow ML/day
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-0.05	0.56	240
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.44	0.25	363

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.78	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.79	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.78	25

