

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 3 March 2004

Our Ref : RMW305/01/01/bwh
Trim Ref :04/2350DO

5 March, 2004



Rainfall

Hot and dry conditions returned to most of the Basin this week, apart from some falls of up to 50mm in eastern New South Wales. These falls, combined with last week's rain, are not expected to generate significant flows in the Darling River upstream of Menindee Lakes.

River Murray System

Increased irrigation demands and dwindling inflows from the Kiewa and Ovens Rivers have resulted in release from Hume Dam being increased to the highest level seen this season. Flow passing Albury/Wodonga reached 20 000 ML/day - well below the regulated capacity of 25 000 ML/day.

RMW has reduced its call on additional inflows from the Goulburn River (from the intervalley water trade account) in response to the expected inflows from the Lower Darling River. Inflow from the Goulburn will gradually fall next week and release from Torrumbarry Weir is expected to be reduced from 6100 ML/day to about 4500 ML/day by mid March. The river height at Swan Hill is expected to gradually fall over March falling below 1 m gauge height for the first time since November 2003.

Algal Update

A high algal alert remains current for Hume Reservoir, and medium alert levels are present throughout much of the remainder of River Murray system between Hume Dam and Wentworth.

Darling River System

Inflow to Menindee Lakes from recent rainfall events is now estimated to total about 300 GL which will fill Lake Wetherell to full surcharge level by the end of the event, allowing for the current releases to the lower Darling. This volume will still be below the storage at which control of release from the Lakes reverts from New South Wales to the MDBC (i.e. 640 GL).

The NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR) further increased release from Menindee Lakes this week from 2 500 ML/day to a peak of about 6 300 ML/day for water quality and environmental purposes in the lower Darling River. However, this increase will be short lived due to diminishing inflows to Menindee Lakes, and release is expected to be returned to minimum rates by mid March. DIPNR has issued advice to the local community regarding increased salinity levels in the lower Darling River (refer attached Media Release).

DIPNR and RMW are closely monitoring salinity and flow levels and will be providing regular advice to the community on this matter over the coming weeks. Further details are contained in the media releases issued by RMW on 5th March (refer attachments). RMW is continuing to liaise closely with water agencies in South Australia, Victoria and New South Wales with the aim of developing and implementing operational plans and advice aimed at minimising the impacts of higher salinity water on river users.

DAVID DREVERMAN
General Manager



Department of
Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources

Media Release - Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources
Murray Regional Office

Deniliquin: 4 March 2004

HIGH SALINITY IN WENTWORTH WEIRPOOL

Regional Director for the Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources, David Harriss, today advised water users to be aware of the highly saline water that is now entering the Wentworth weir pool.

Salinity levels of up to 4000ECs have been recorded and with the hot weather, all water users need to be aware before irrigating particularly those using overhead sprinklers.

DIPNR is continuing to review water resource availability and will determine in the coming days, if any further water will be available for general security users after access to the current high flow ceases.

Regular water quality reports are being prepared and interested users should contact the Buronga Office on ph 03 50219400 if they would like to be part of a fax stream to receive this information.

All information will be available at www.dipnr.nsw.gov.au at rural water management and from the Buronga Office

MEDIA CONTACTS

Murray Regional Office

[Bunty Driver](#) 0407 403 234

8-20 Edwardes St
PO Box 205
DENILQUIN NSW 2710

Telephone (03) 5881 9210
Facsimile (03) 5881 5102

MEDIA RELEASE



Friday, 5 March 2004

TEMPORARY RISES IN SALINITY LEVELS EXPECTED IN RIVER MURRAY FROM DARLING RIVER

River pumpers are advised of expected temporary increases in salinity levels in the River Murray near Wentworth and further downstream in coming weeks as flow from the lower Darling River resumes.

According to River Murray Water (RMW) General Manager David Dreverman, increased releases from Menindee Lakes are now arriving at the top end of the Darling arm of the Wentworth Weir pool, on the lower Darling River.

“This water contains temporarily increased salinity levels caused by salt mobilised from the lower Darling River bed and residual pools,” Mr Dreverman said.

“Rapid increases in salinity can be expected in the Darling arm of Wentworth Weir pool. Whilst the initial flow will be of high salinity, it will be followed by low salinity water,” he said.

RMW has reported that salinity in the lower Darling River at Burtundy fell from about 4000 EC to 2300 EC by 3 March, but had since increased to about 3000 EC. This fluctuation is most likely due to water mixing effects as river flows increased.

Further upstream, salinity at Pooncarie has declined significantly from about 3400 to 1400 EC over the past three days, and is expected to continue to decline as fresher water arrives from upstream. At Weir 32 near Menindee Lakes, salinity remains low at about 300 EC (refer to attached diagram).

Salinity in the River Murray at Wentworth (currently about 140 EC) may approach or exceed 1000 EC for a short period of time in mid March, according to RMW preliminary estimates.

As much water as possible will be passed through Lake Victoria to mitigate rises in salinity in South Australia. Rises in river salinity in South Australia are not expected to rise to the levels predicted for Wentworth.

By 2 March, DIPNR had increased release from Menindee Lakes to a peak of about 6300 ML/day, and DIPNR is now gradually reducing the release to minimum rates to conserve water resources. Current planning is for the release to be reduced to minimum rates by about 8 March.

Mr Dreverman said: “RMW in conjunction with relevant water authorities in New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, is continuing to monitor progress on this ‘salt event’. In addition, RMW is implementing operational responses aimed at minimising impacts on all river users downstream.”

RMW will initiate a temporary release of additional water from Euston and Mildura Weir pool to provide increased Murray flow to further dilute the temporary rise in river salinity.

The additional release from Euston and Mildura Weirs is expected to start on or about 8 March depending on travel times of the 'salt slug' in the lower Darling River. A separate media release has been issued for this operation.

Further media releases will be issued when more information and revised forecasts are available.

For further information contact:

Lawrie Kirk

Manager Communication

Phone: 02 6279 0100

E-mail: lawrie.kirk@mdbc.gov.au

(Lawrie Kirk is not to be quoted as a spokesperson)

Ref: 04/2643DO

Regional Agency Contacts:

Mike Erny

Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (NSW)

Buronga Office

Phone: (03) 5021 9400

Ian Matheson

Sunraysia Rural Water Authority (VIC)

Irymple

Phone: (03) 5021 9777

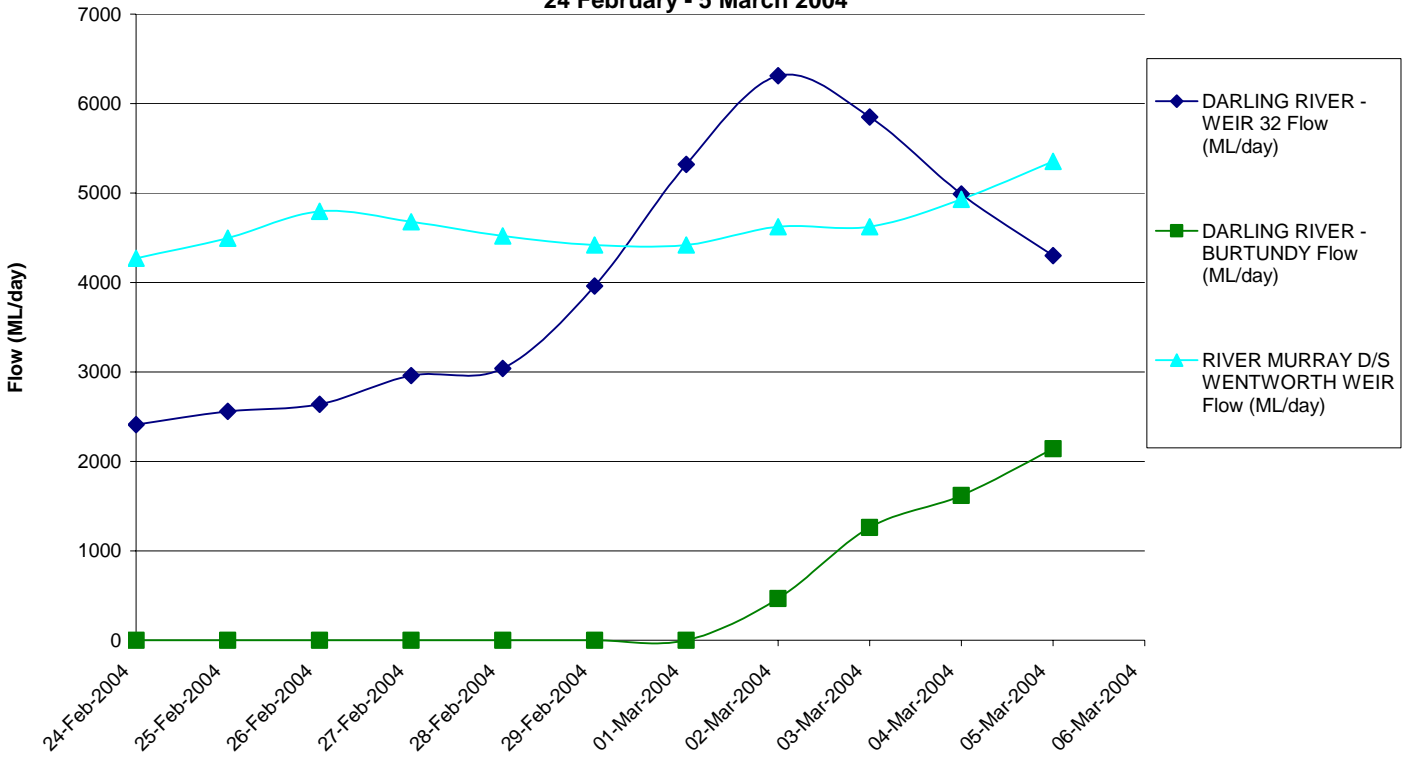
Paul Harvey

Department of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation

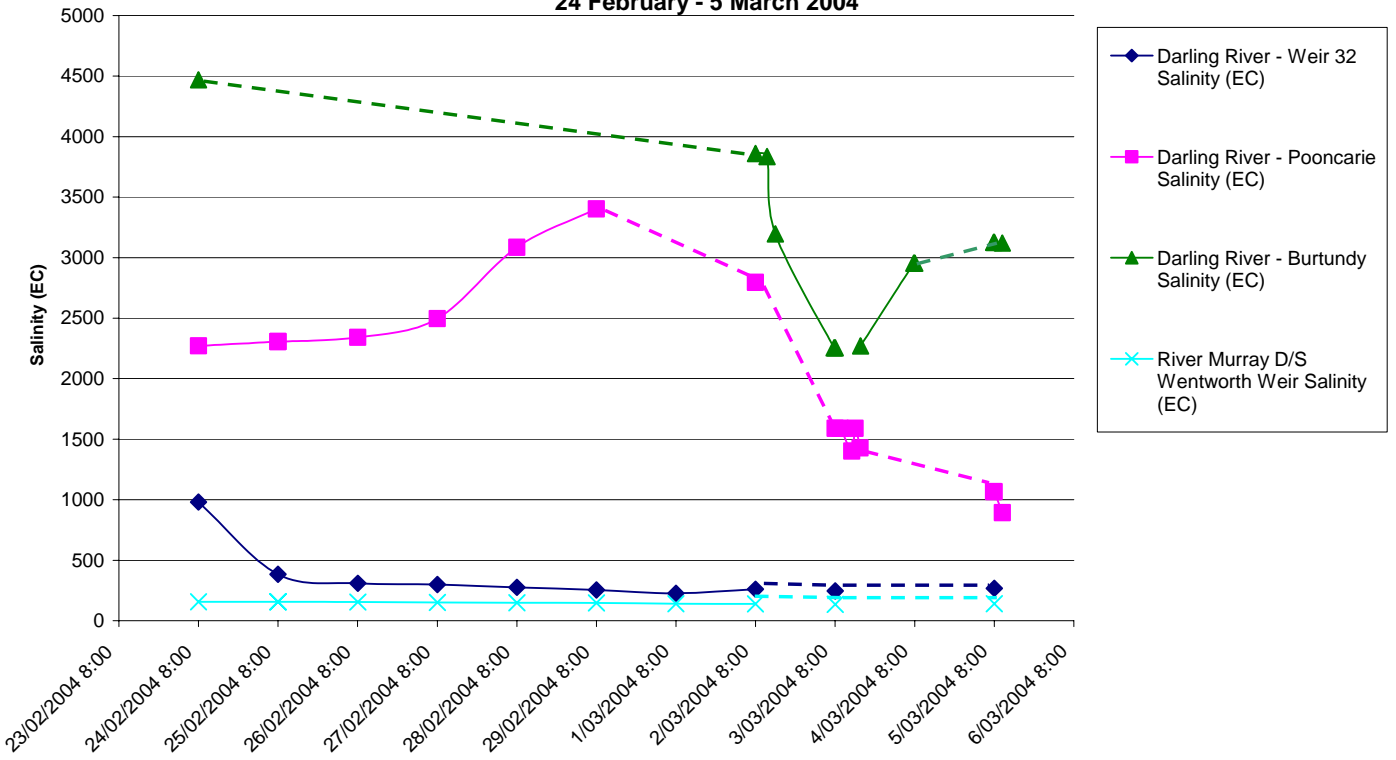
Adelaide

Phone: (08) 8463 6903

**Lower Darling Flow
Between Menindee Lakes and River Murray
24 February - 5 March 2004**



**Lower Darling Salinity
Between Menindee Lakes and River Murray
24 February - 5 March 2004**



MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 5 March 2004

Temporary Drawdown of Euston and Mildura Weir Pools to Assist with Dilution of River Salinity Levels



Both the Euston and Mildura weir pools will be temporarily drawn down on or about 8 March to help dilute saline flows from the Darling River into the River Murray.

The lengthy period of drought on the Darling River and then the resumption of flow after a recent period of no flow to conserve water resources for Menindee and Broken Hill water supplies, has caused the saline flows, according to River Murray Water (RMW) General Manager David Dreverman.

He said “the passage of increased saline flows from the Darling River is being closely monitored by RMW and the NSW Department of Infrastructure, Planning and Natural Resources (DIPNR). Relevant water authorities in Victoria and South Australia are also closely involved in assessment and planning of operational responses.”

“River salinity in the Murray just downstream of Wentworth Weir may temporarily approach or exceed 1000 EC as the flow front caused by releases from Menindee Lakes reaches the Darling arm of the Wentworth Weir pool,” Mr Dreverman said.

“Soon after the Robinvale 80 Ski Race at Euston Weir, release from Euston Weir will be increased on or after 8 March to temporarily dilute salinity levels downstream. Euston Weir pool level will be drawn down by up to 30 cm below full supply level of 47.60 m Australian Height Datum (AHD), but will gradually be returned to full supply level by late March or early April”, he said.

RMW has also advised that increased release will also be made from Mildura Weir commencing on or about 8 March to supplement dilution. The timing of the drawdown of Mildura Weir pool will depend on the travel time of the ‘salt slug’ in the lower Darling River. The pool level will be drawn down by up to 20 cm below full supply level, but will be gradually raised in time for the Mildura 100 Ski Race in April.

For further information contact:

Lawrie Kirk

Manager Communication

Phone: 02 6279 0100

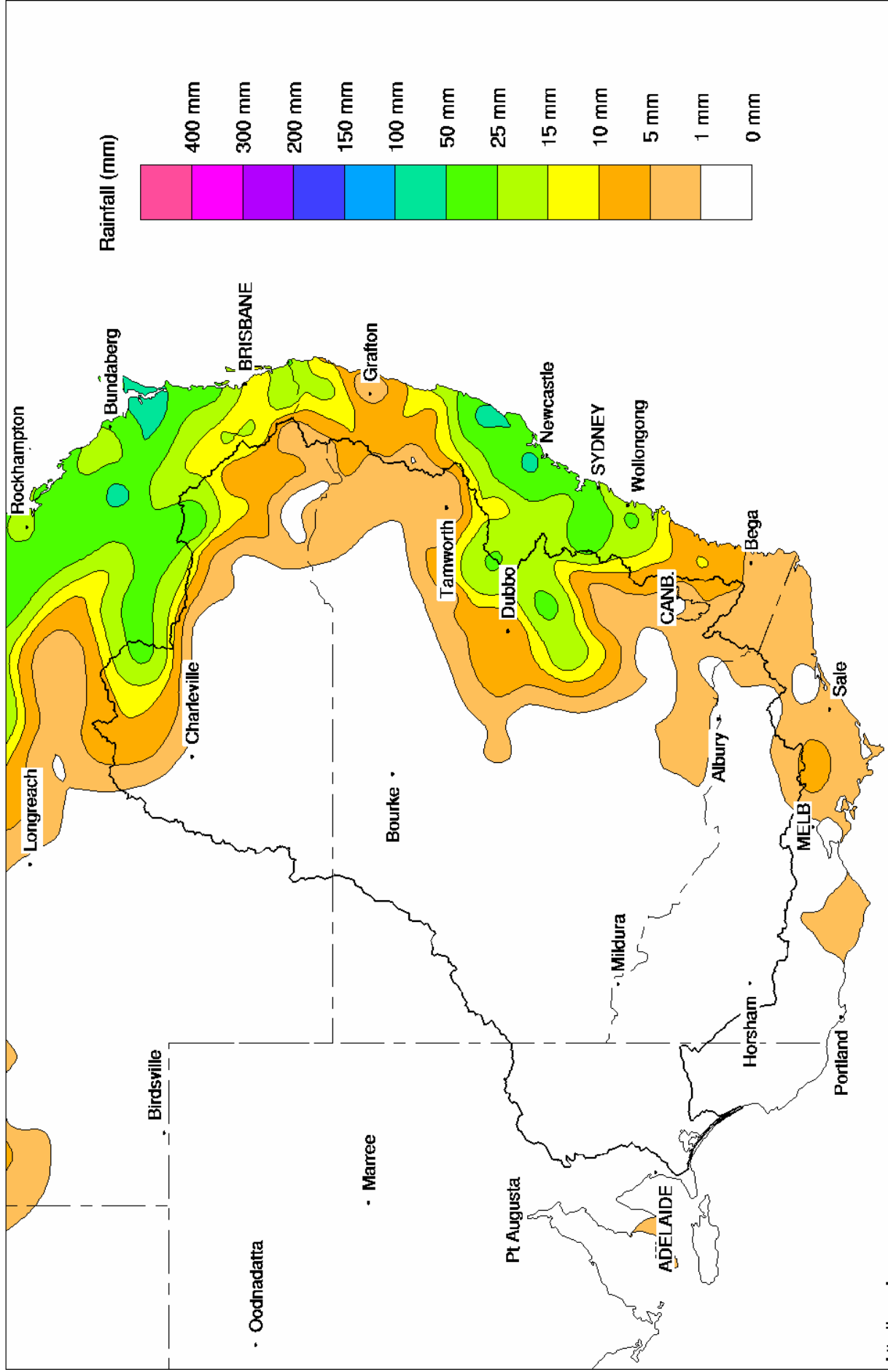
E-mail: lawrie.kirk@mdbc.gov.au

(Lawrie Kirk is not to be quoted as a spokesperson)

Ref:04/2649DO

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 3rd March 2004

Product of the National Climate Centre



Week ending Wednesday 03 Mar 2004

Water in Storage

MDBC Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	Active Storage (GL)	Change in Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	447.65	1 847	47%	80	1 767	+1
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	178.50	988	33%	30	958	-118
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	23.66	327	48%	100	227	-18
Menindee Lakes		1 603 *		238	15%	640 #	0	+61
Total		9 227		3 399	37%	850	2 952	-74

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1916 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **35%**

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	440	43%	3	437	-4
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	403	25%	24	379	-49
Eildon Reservoir	3 390	981	29%	100	881	-42

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 02-Mar-2004

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2003
Lake Eucumbene - Total	1 848	+2	Snowy-Murray	+11	607
Snowy-Murray Component	1 055	-	Tooma-Tumut	+1	261
Target Storage	1 410		Nett Diversion	9.5	346
			Murray 1 Release	+9	929

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2003
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	27.2	589.3
Wakool System loss	1.6	31.8
Western Murray Irrig.	0.9	23.0
Licensed Pumps	9.5	174.0
Lower Darling	1.1	9.3
TOTAL	40.3	827.4

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2003
Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	13.5	260
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	0.0	428
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	5.1	124
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	1.9	27
Licensed pumps - SRW	4.8	158
TOTAL	25.3	998

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	186	(6 600 ML/day)
Flow this week	46.0	
Flow so far this month	18	
Flow last month	201	

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2003
Swan Hill	70	80	100
Euston	100	100	120
Red Cliffs	100	100	130
Merbein	120	120	140
Burtundy (Darling)	2 260	4 120	2 490
Lock 9	160	160	170
Lake Victoria	250	240	230
Berri	260	260	270
Waikerie	-	340	390
Morgan	370	370	410
Mannum	440	440	440
Murray Bridge	480	480	480
Milang (Lake Alex.)	1 210	1 190	1 120
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	810	850	1 100
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	2 100	2 050	1 590
Goolwa Barrages	1 980	1 910	2 160



River Levels and Flows

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	-	-	-	1 310	F	1 470	2 140
Jingellic	4.0	1.27	207.79	1 740	S	2 100	2 680
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.34	218.23	620	S	630	1 330
Heywoods	5.5	3.37	157.00	19 510	R	18 430	17 160
Doctors Point	5.5	3.49	151.96	20 200	R	18 710	17 790
Albury	4.3	2.54	149.98	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	3.51	129.53	19 300	R	18 470	18 730
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.77	116.81	10 100	F	10 300	10 300
Tocumwal	6.4	2.31	106.15	10 840	R	10 840	10 660
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.10	80.65	6 140	R	6 140	5 990
Swan Hill	4.5	1.16	64.08	5 390	R	5 240	5 330
Wakool Junction	8.8	2.82	51.94	7 300	R	7 320	7 330
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	1.43	43.27	6 650	F	6 720	6 530
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	30.94	5 620	F	5 510	5 180
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.89	27.65	4 620	S	4 580	4 180
Rufus Junction	-	3.38	20.31	6 040	R	6 200	6 540
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	-	4 060	R	3 850	3 430
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.64	153.87	160	F	290	740
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.71	145.39	280	F	340	350
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.52	92.94	936	F	1 130	1 130
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 260	F	2 340	2 340
Edward at Liewah	-	2.67	58.05	2 190	R	2 170	2 160
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.41	54.90	322	F	320	320
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.51	56.47	238	S	250	210
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.43	-	550	F	660	770
Darling at Bourke	-	4.30	-	1 562	R	1 720	14 510
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	1.07	-	1 260	R	250	0

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	1 550	1 660
---	-------	-------

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	-0.21	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.04	+2.93
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.02	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.01	+0.08
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.01	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.01	+0.14
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.03	+0.14	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.00	+0.61
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.05	+0.25	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.02	+0.22
No. 9 Kulinine	27.40	+0.05	+0.02	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.09	+0.17
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.03	+0.11	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.09	-0.18

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-1.31	0.86	70.21	601
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.64	0.19	61.49	305

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.62	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.60	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.63	All closed

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



A Business Unit of MDBC