

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 12 March 2008



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Trim Ref : 08/2690*

14 March, 2008

Rainfall and Inflows

During the past week, the Murray-Darling Basin has experienced unseasonal hot and dry weather, particularly in western Victoria and South Australia (see attached rainfall map). In Mildura, for instance, there has been no rain since January, and the average temperature during the past week has been 38 °C. The latest forecast issued by the Bureau of Meteorology indicates that this weather is likely to continue for at least another week. As a result of the dry weather, inflows to the upper Murray are now approaching the record low levels observed this time last year.

River Operations

During the past week, total storage for the Murray System increased by 21 GL to 1 943 GL (21 % of total capacity) due to the continuing inflows to Menindee Lakes. Storage in Menindee Lakes is now 541 GL (or 31 % capacity) and is expected to rise to about 600 GL in the next few weeks. The flow in the Darling River flow at Bourke has now receded to 1 350 ML/day, after reaching a peak of 10 500 ML/day on the 3rd March. Unless there is further heavy rainfall in the north of the Basin, the flows along the Darling River are expected to continue receding.

Along the Murray River, flows have been steadily reduced over the past few weeks to minimise losses and conserve as much water as possible in Hume and Dartmouth Reservoirs. The unseasonal hot weather now requires the temporary lowering of some weir pools to continue meeting requirements along the mid reaches of the Murray (see attached media release for further details). In particular, flows between Euston Weir and Lock 7 are expected to fall to low levels during the coming week. A small increase in flow is expected from the lower Darling River later in March which will assist in meeting requirements in the Murray River downstream of Wentworth. Also, the release from Yarrowonga Weir has been increased from 5 000 ML/day to 6 000 ML/day to help meet water demand along the mid-Murray.

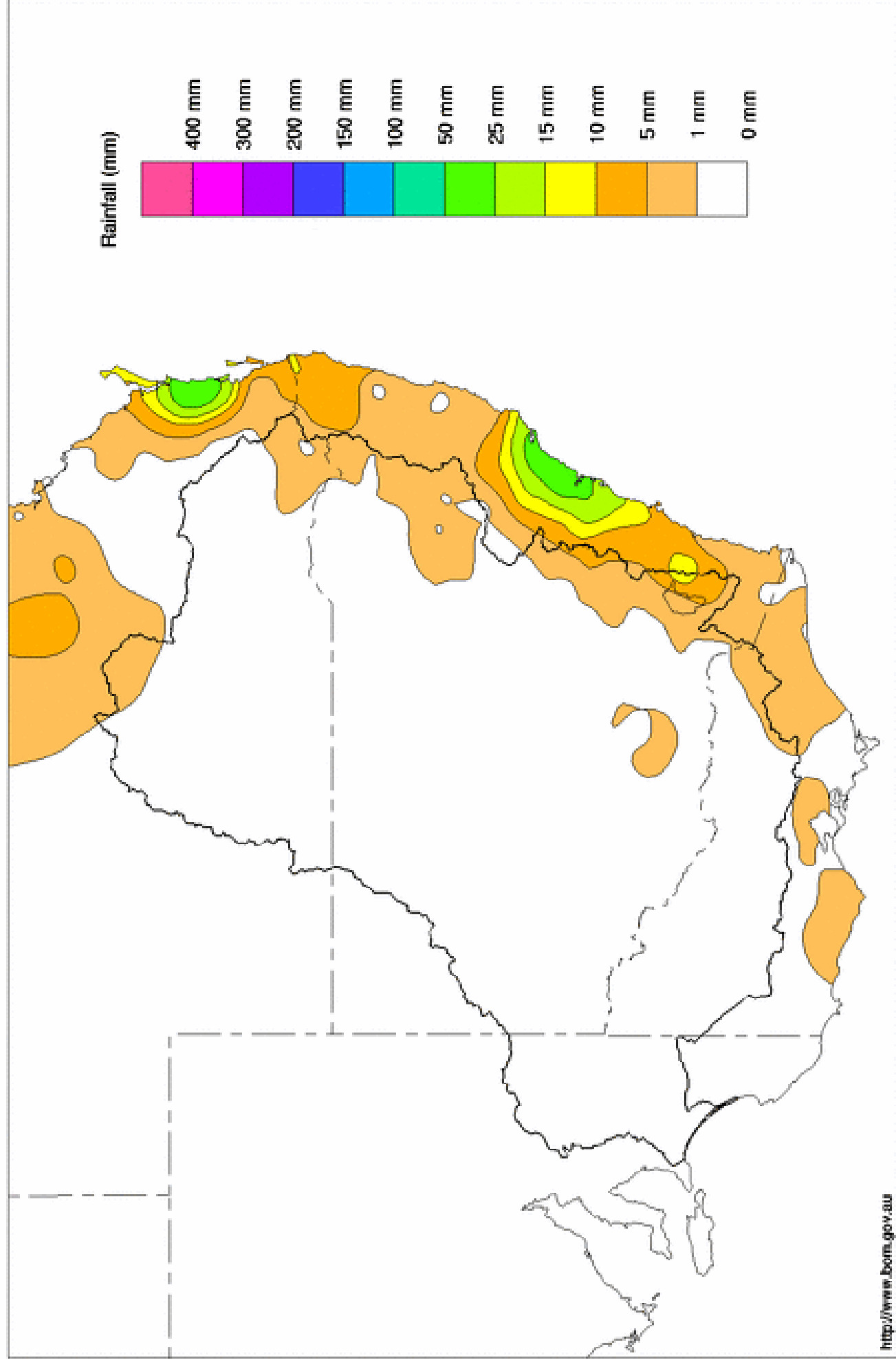
The salinity at Wakool Junction on the Murray River has remained between 200 and 240 EC during the past 2 weeks as a result of higher salinity water originating from the Wakool River. Further downstream, the salinity at Euston Weir has gradually increased from 120 to 165 EC during the past week. Salinities in the lower reaches of the Wakool River and also along the mid-Murray will continue to be carefully monitored and updated forecasts will be provided on the MDBC website at (http://www.mdbc.gov.au/rmw/river_information_centre).

Lake Victoria storage fell by 13 GL during the week, and is now at 349 GL (or 52% capacity). The flow to South Australia is currently 3 500 ML/day and continues to be adjusted to maintain weir pool levels close to full supply level. The water level in Lake Alexandrina is currently about -0.4 m AHD (or 40 cm below mean sea level) and continues to gradually fall. The Murray-Darling Basin Ministerial Council recently discussed the grave potential for acidification of the water and sediments of the Murray River downstream of Blanchetown and in particular in the Lower Lakes. In principle support was given for the Murray-Darling Basin Commission to provide \$6 million in emergency measures to reduce the risk of environmental damage to Lake Albert.

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Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 12th March 2008
Product of the National Climate Centre



Water in Storage

MDBC Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	MDBC Active Storage (GL)	Change in Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	410.96	681	17%	80	601	-0
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	171.55	371	12%	30	341	-35
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	24.05	349	52%	100	249	-13
Menindee Lakes		1 731 *		541	31%	(- -) #	0	+70
Total		9 352		1 943	21%	--	1 192	+21

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL % of Total Active MDBC Storage = **14%**

NSW takes control of Menindee Lakes when storage falls below 480 GL, and control reverts to MDBC when storage next reaches 640 GL

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026		429	42%	3	426	-1
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		441	27%	24	417	+8
Eildon Reservoir	3 390		578	17%	100	478	-32

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 11-Mar-2008

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2007
Lake Eucumbene - Total	543	-32	Snowy-Murray	+22	348
Snowy-Murray Component	419	-24	Tooma-Tumut	+1	150
Target Storage	1 410		Nett Diversion	21.3	199
			Murray 1 Release	+24	572

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2007
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	2.2	67.8
Wakool System loss	0.0	38.0
Western Murray Irrig.	0.9	18.5
Licensed Pumps	2.5	65.6
Lower Darling	0.3	8.9
TOTAL	5.8	198.8

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2007
Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	5.1	67
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	10.7	138
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	3.0	80 *
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.6	10
Licensed pumps - LMW	5.0	144
TOTAL	24.3	437 *

* please note that these values do not include Millewa pumping figures.

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	186 *	
Flow this week	24.0	(3 400 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	40	
Flow last month	113	

* Reduced to approx. 106 GL during March drought contingency operations

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2007
Swan Hill	90	90	90
Euston	160	140	110
Red Cliffs	-	-	130
Merbein	130	120	140
Burtundy (Darling)	340	300	1 020
Lock 9	130	130	150
Lake Victoria	230	220	180
Berri	260	250	360
Waikerie	-	400	560
Morgan	460	440	610
Mannum	800	850	640
Murray Bridge	970	930	640
Milang (Lake Alex.)	3 890	3 560	2 760
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	3 440	3 470	2 400
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	-	-	3 150
Goolwa Barrages	25 350	24 220	18 200



River Levels and Flows

	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)				
River Murray							
Khancoban	-	-	-	3 940	R	2 300	1 610
Jingellic	4.0	1.38	207.90	2 360	R	1 470	2 230
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.42	218.31	630	R	620	640
Heywoods	5.5	2.16	155.79	5 990	S	6 110	6 900
Doctors Point	5.5	2.26	150.73	6 420	S	6 670	7 220
Albury	4.3	1.28	148.72	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	1.63	127.65	5 810	F	6 140	6 440
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	0.97	116.01	4 980	F	4 990	5 020
Tocumwal	6.4	1.41	105.25	4 830	S	4 860	4 990
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.10	79.65	2 550	F	2 710	3 230
Swan Hill	4.5	0.69	63.61	2 670	S	2 930	3 280
Wakool Junction	8.8	1.68	50.80	3 080	F	3 370	3 630
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	0.64	42.48	2 820	F	3 140	3 660
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 370	F	2 540	3 540
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.74	27.50	1 930	R	2 010	2 960
Rufus Junction	-	2.87	19.80	3 090	R	2 850	2 760
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-0.28	-	1 270	R	1 150	1 270
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.65	153.88	176	F	350	310
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.60	145.28	138	F	180	210
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.12	92.54	338	S	350	360
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	0.83	80.60	570	S	500	480
Edward at Liewah	-	1.02	56.40	495	F	520	570
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	1.22	54.71	110	F	130	140
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.44	56.40	198	F	240	370
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.37	-	375	R	490	900
Darling at Bourke	-	4.27	-	1 350	F	4 270	9 970
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.81	-	325	S	410	470

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	200	990
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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	-0.53	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.04	+0.56
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.01	-0.02
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.02	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.00	+0.08
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.00	+0.00	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	-0.01	+0.27
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.01	+0.10	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.01	+0.15
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	-0.05	-0.26	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.01	+0.10
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	-0.24	+0.21	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.02	-1.03

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-2.36	0.53	69.88	194
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.09	0.11	61.41	236



Lower Lakes

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	(m AHD)
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days	-0.43

Barrages

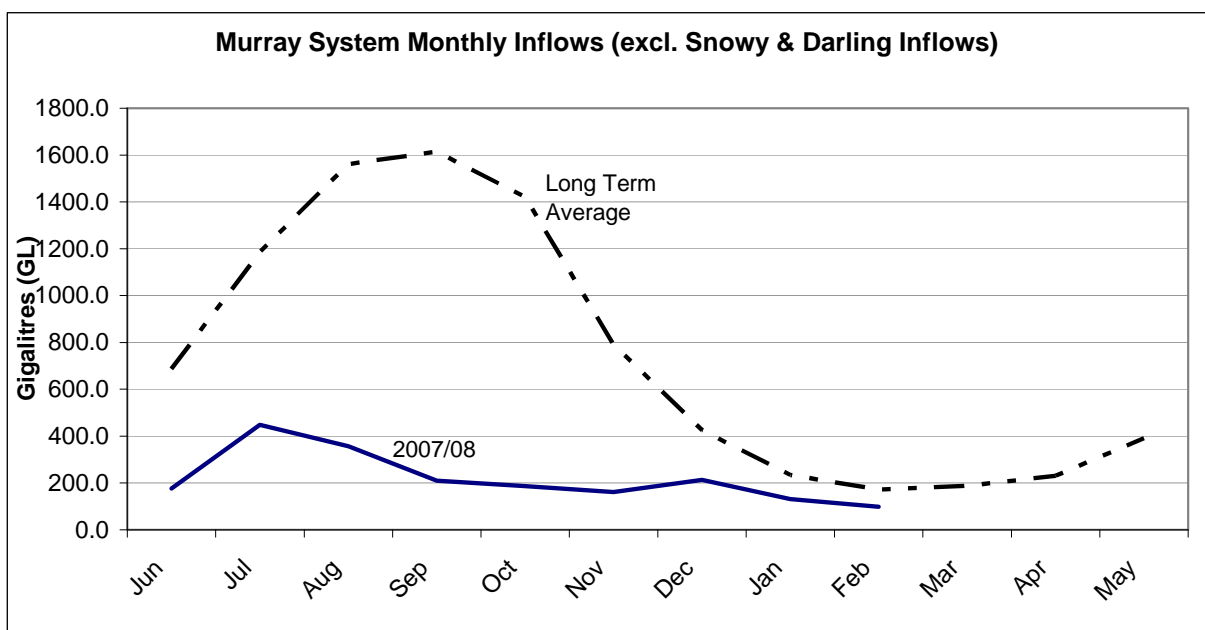
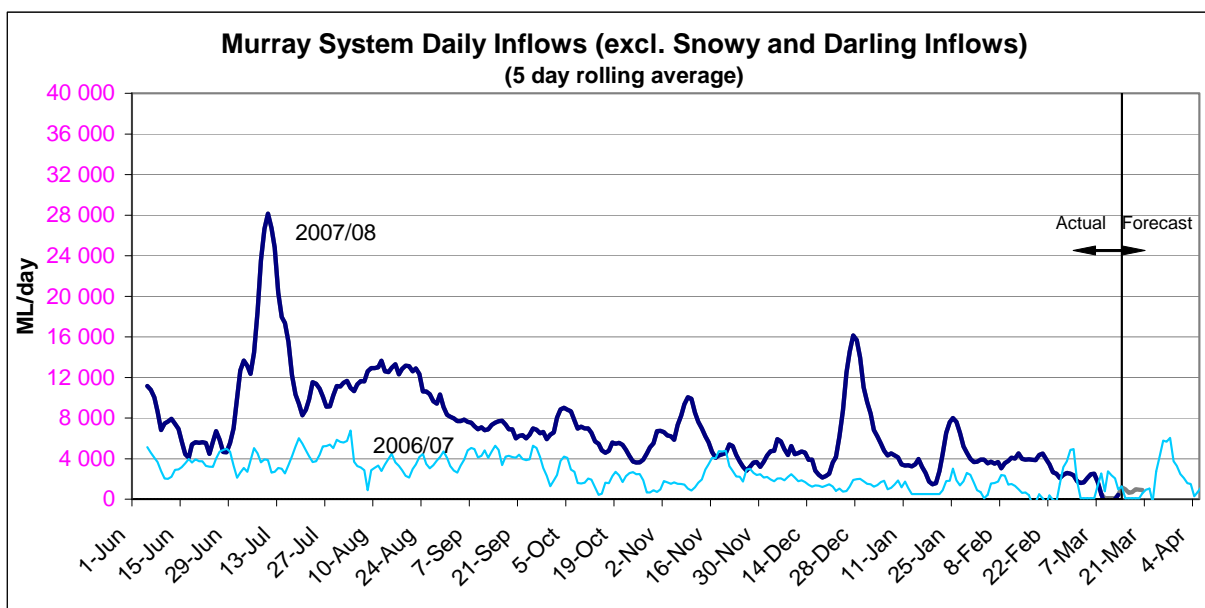
Fishways @ Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	Status	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	-0.42	All closed	-	Closed
Mundoo	26 openings	-0.40	All closed	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed	-	-
Tauwitchere	322 gates	-	All closed	Closed	Closed

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

RMW Weekly Report

Week ending Wednesday 12th March 2008



State Allocations (as at 12th Mar 2008)

NSW - Murray Valley

Suspended water re-credit	100%
High security	0%
General security	0%

NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley

High security	90%
General security	13%

NSW - Lower Darling

High security	100%
General security	50%

Victoria - Murray Valley

high reliability	43%
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Victoria - Goulburn Valley

high reliability	54%
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South Australia - Murray Valley

irrigation allocation	32%
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NSW : http://www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au/water/state_mm_murr_water_quality.shtml#alloc

VIC : <http://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/allocations/current.asp>

SA : <http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/media.html>



MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 13 March 2008

MID-MURRAY FLOWS AND LEVELS TO BE LOWERED

Murray-Darling Basin Chief Executive Dr Wendy Craik advised today that as a result of persistent hot conditions along the mid and lower reaches of the Murray, some weirpools will be temporarily lowered.

River flows through Sunraysia can be expected to fall to low levels over the next couple of weeks, or possibly longer if hot conditions persist.

“Temperatures in Sunraysia and South Australia have been more than 6° C above average in the last week and hot conditions are forecast to continue over the coming week”, Dr Craik said.

“We’re seeing a large increase in demands and river losses in the hot conditions and harvests are running later than normal because of the relatively mild February”

Commencing Thursday 13 March, the weirpool levels of Euston, Torrumbarry and Yarrawonga (Lake Mulwala) will be temporarily lowered to help meet increased demands and river losses. It may also be necessary to draw upon Lock 8 as well as small amounts from the Mildura, Wentworth and Lock 9 pools.

“There is no intention to lower weirpools in South Australia and release from Lake Victoria is being adjusted to maintain these pools at or close to normal operating levels to control river salinity”, Dr Craik said.

“We’ve been running the river to minimise loss and conserve as much water as possible in Hume and Dartmouth Reservoirs for this season and next. This has resulted in lower than normal river flows in the mid Murray. The hot conditions now require the temporary lowering of weirpools to meet requirements”

The extent and duration of the lowering of weirpools will be minimised as much as is practicable but will depend on weather and demand conditions over the coming weeks.

Initial expectations are that the level of Euston Weir pool will be drawn to between 0.4 and 0.6 m below full supply level over the coming week. The level of Torrumbarry Weir pool is expected to be drawn to between 0.2 and 0.4 m below full supply level over the same period. Lake Mulwala is also expected to be further lowered and may fall below the current lower target of 124.4 m AHD for a short period.

At Swan Hill, the water level is currently about 0.7 m (local gauge height) and is expected to fall to as low as 0.5 m over the coming weeks. Flow rates between Euston Weir and Lock 7 are expected to fall to low levels. A small increase in flow is expected from the Darling River later in March and will assist in meeting lower Murray requirements.

Further details will be provided over coming weeks and flow forecasts can be obtained at http://www.mdbc.gov.au/rmw/river_information_centre.

Boat operators, stock owners, river pumpers and other river users are advised to take the lower water levels and flows into account and make any necessary adjustments to their activities. The Murray-Darling Basin Commission will continually review its river operational plans, taking into account emerging conditions. We will provide details of any significant changes via media releases, operational updates and weekly reports (available on the MDBC website).

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