River Murray operations

The River Murray flows through New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia, sustaining rural towns and communities, supporting agricultural production and nourishing many unique Australian plants and animals.

MDBA River Operations is responsible for operating the River Murray on behalf of the joint governments of New South Wales (NSW), Victoria and South Australia.

Key water regulation assets under control of the MDBA include Dartmouth Dam, Hume Dam, Yarrawonga Weir, Torrumbarry Weir, Lake Victoria and the locks and weirs from Lock 15 at Euston to Lock 7 at Rufus River.

The MDBA determines the volume of water released to meet demands, but does not own any water and can only release water from storage when there are state orders or system demands to be met.

The physical operation of structures is managed by water authorities in each state. This includes Menindee Lakes on the Darling River, which contributes some water for use in the Murray system, but is managed by the NSW Government. Additionally, the MDBA does not operate the River Murray downstream of the South Australian border, where the South Australian Government take on this role.

Other key operational roles of the MDBA include: sharing water in the River Murray between the three states, management of salt interception schemes, overseeing maintenance of existing assets and construction of new assets.

The Murray-Darling Basin Agreement sets the MDBA’s responsibilities for operating the river. It also provides operating rules the MDBA must follow and be audited against each year.
Examples of river management structures

Water storages (also known as dams or reservoirs) capture large volumes of water to mitigate against prolonged drought.

Weirs are structures built in rivers and irrigation channels to store and regulate the flow of water, and also raise the river level to improve navigation.

Locks are chambers built adjacent to some weirs. They allow boats to pass through weirs by raising and lowering the river level.

Barrages are a series of weirs built at the end of the Murray to prevent sea water from entering the river system.

Connect with us.
The MDBA has offices in Adelaide, Albury–Wodonga, Canberra, Goondiwindi, Toowoomba, and regional engagement officers around the Basin.

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