



Australian Government



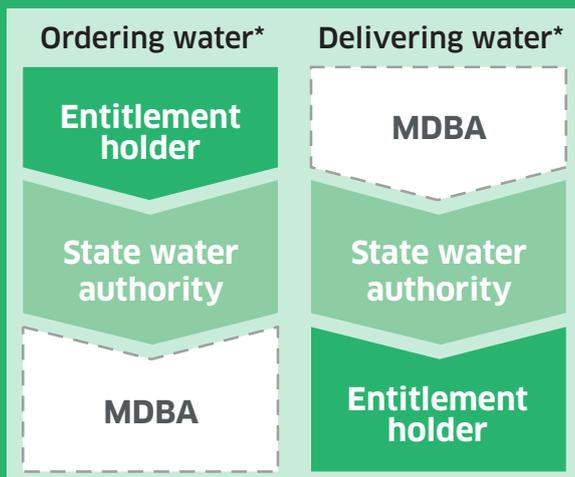
Sharing River Murray water

For more than 100 years, the states have been sharing the waters of the River Murray, and today, the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement sets out these water sharing rules and arrangements.

Under the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement (the Agreement), a key role of the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) is sharing the waters of the River Murray between Victoria, New South Wales and South Australia. In doing this, the MDBA strictly follows the rules of the Agreement.

Before water is made available for the states, there are system demands that must be met. These include conveyance water requirements and reserves for the following year.

Once these needs have been met, the MDBA informs each state about how much water they have available to allocate to their water entitlement holders. The MDBA does not allocate to individual entitlement holders.



According to the rules of the joint agreement (states)

Water sharing rules are complex and are set up to cover a range of wet and dry conditions. When it is extremely dry, water sharing prioritises critical human water needs.

Key facts

The joint management of the River Murray dates back more than 100 years. Most recently, the Basin states and the Australian Government agreed to the arrangements set out in the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement.



The **Agreement** sets out how water is shared in the River Murray System between the states.



The agreement requires states to set aside and **guarantee critical human water needs**.



These critical human water needs are a **practical measure to safeguard water for communities in drought**.



The Agreement prescribes the monthly **entitlement that NSW and Victoria jointly provide to South Australia**.



The MDBA determines **how much of the total water available in the River Murray system belongs to each state**, through monitoring water storage levels and inflows into the river.

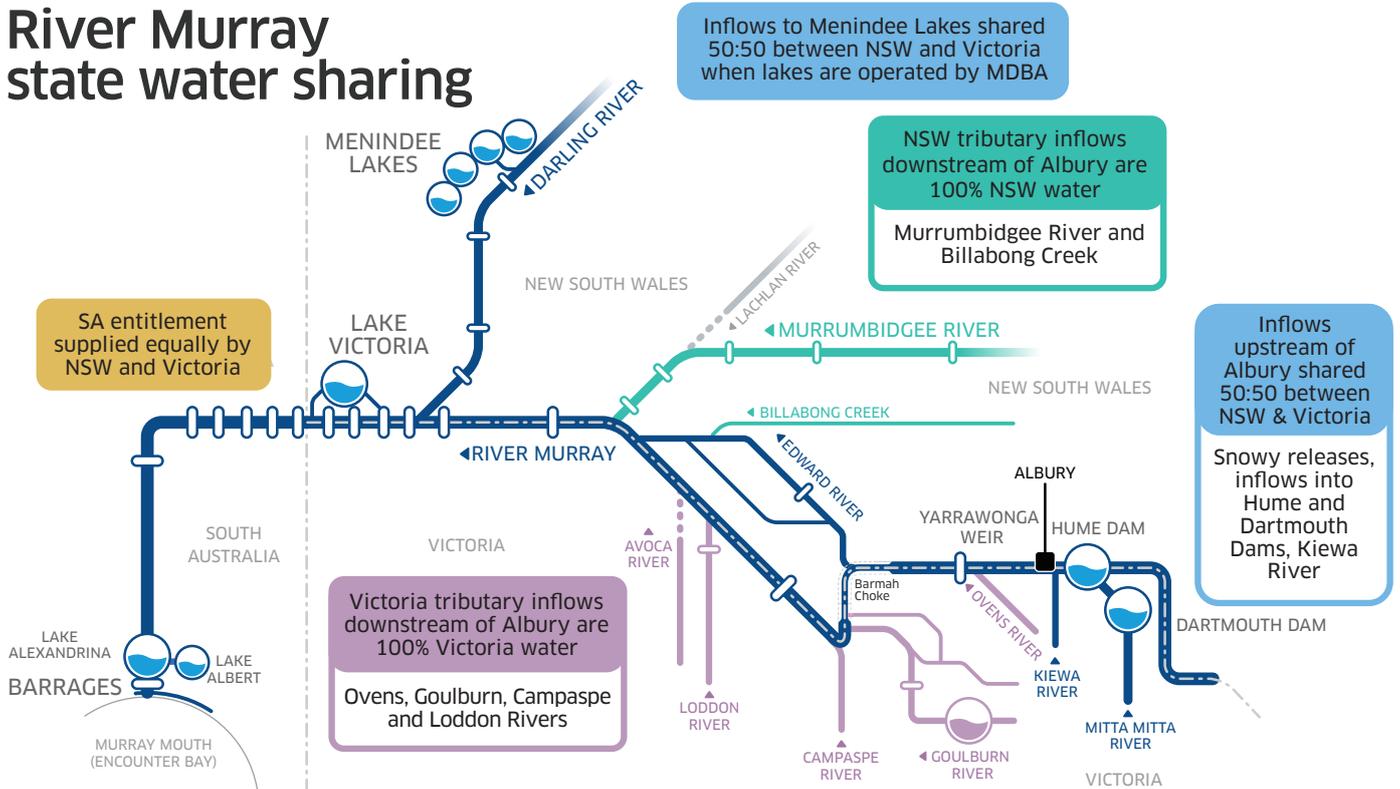


River flows and storage levels are monitored daily and can be viewed through the **MDBA's river data portal**.



The MDBA operates the river according to the above **rules and state orders**.

River Murray state water sharing



Water in reserve

Most dams are operated so that a certain amount of water is kept in reserve. In the River Murray system, water is set aside to assist with system needs for the following year. Some water is set aside up front, and some is set aside progressively throughout the year.

Conveyance water

Conveyance water is the water that is needed to keep the system running. It includes water that is lost to evaporation and to seepage. It can vary greatly through the year and between years depending on river flows and climate. Without it, water could not be delivered.

In the River Murray system, conveyance water is set aside before sharing water between the states.

Capacity limitations

Along the River Murray system, there are a number of locations (such as the Barmah Choke) where the river channel capacity is naturally restricted through a small narrow channel of the river. Flows through these parts of the river are carefully managed, and the small size of the channel can at times make it difficult for water orders to be filled. If these sections of the river experience high water levels, water will go over the bank and onto the land surrounding the river. At times, this cannot be avoided and occurs naturally in times of flood or high inflows. To ensure access to water downstream of these narrow channels, additional releases are sometimes necessary several months in advance to transfer water downstream in advance of future orders.



Connect with us.

The MDBA has offices in Adelaide, Albury-Wodonga, Canberra, Goondiwindi, Griffith, Mildura, Murray-Bridge, Toowoomba, and regional engagement officers around the Basin.

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