



River Murray Weekly Report

For the week ending Wednesday, 17 February 2021

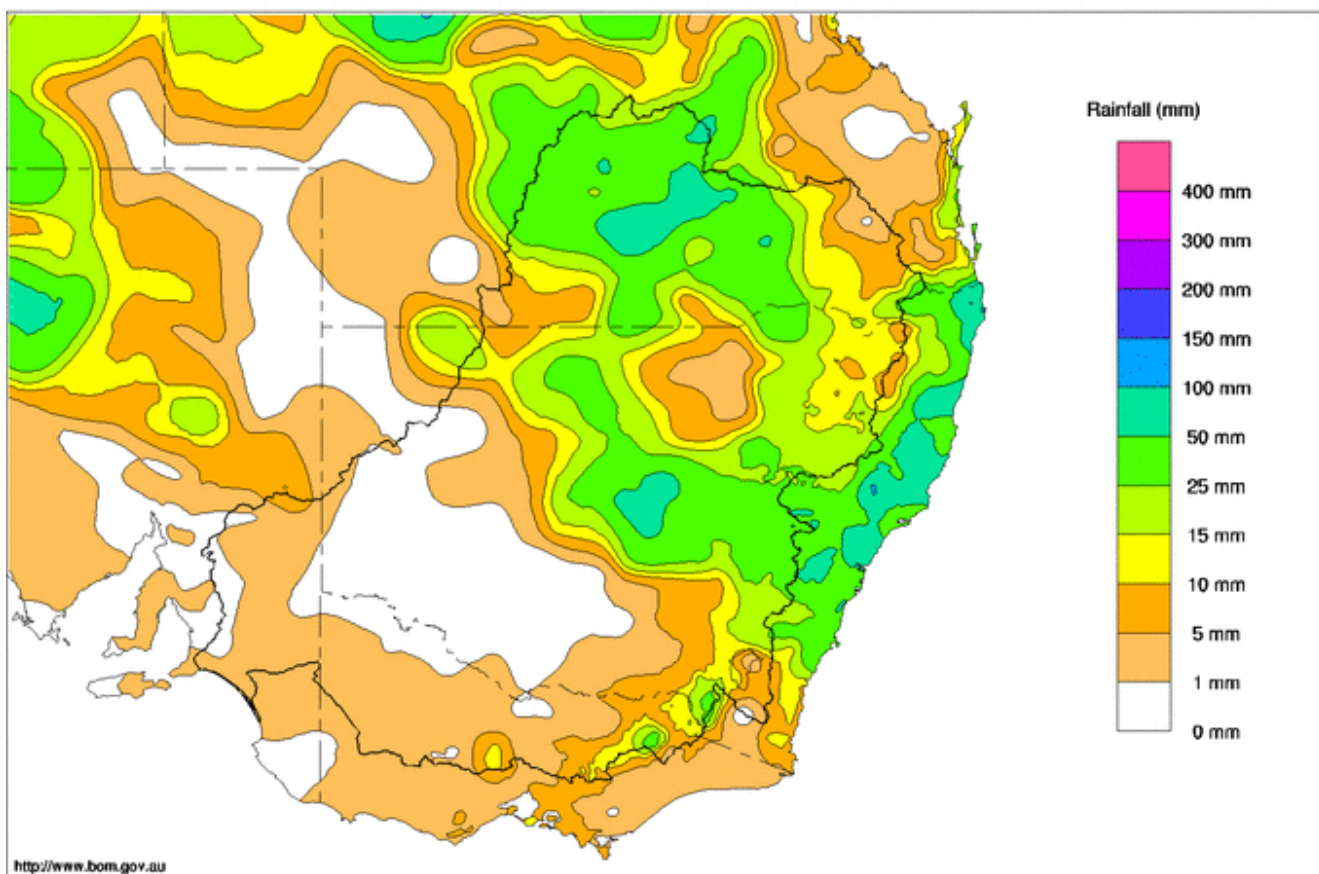
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Rainfall and inflows

The southern Basin recorded little rainfall this week, with the highest totals in the south-east. In Victoria, Falls Creek in the Victorian Alps recorded 33.8 mm, while Eurobin on the Ovens river recorded 14.4 mm. In New South Wales, Khancoban in the Snowy Mountains recorded 18 mm and Jingellic on the Murray River recorded 7.6 mm. Alternatively, rainfall was widespread across much of the northern Basin, with totals of 50-100 mm recorded in some parts.

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) is forecasting 1-5 mm of rainfall in the upper Murray catchment in the [coming days](#).

Murray-Darling Rainfall Totals (mm) Week Ending 17th February 2021
Australian Bureau of Meteorology



<http://www.bom.gov.au>
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Map 1: Murray-Darling Basin rainfall for the week ending 17 February 2021. Source: Bureau of Meteorology.

Inflows continued to ease across the Murray catchment this week with predominantly drier and warmer conditions across the southern Basin. Further specific information about flows at key locations can be found at the MDBA’s [River Murray data](#) webpage. Up-to-date river data for sites in the upper Murray can also be found on BoM’s [website](#) and in the Murray River Basin Daily River Report at the WaterNSW [website](#).



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River operations

- Upper Murray tributaries continue to recede
- Pulse of Murrumbidgee River Inter Valley Trade now receding
- Red alert level for blue-green algae continues for parts of Sunraysia
- Lake Victoria storage continues to fall as it supports delivery of system demands

Water demand

The MDBA is actively monitoring shortfall risks. A shortfall occurs when water cannot be delivered to users when and where it is needed. A delivery shortfall occurs when actual water use is higher than it was forecast to be when river water was released from storages, weeks earlier, to meet the forecast needs for irrigation and environmental water. A system shortfall occurs when the combined capacity of the system is unable to supply all downstream requirements over the full season. More information about shortfalls can be found at [Water demand \(shortfalls\) | Murray-Darling Basin Authority \(mdba.gov.au\)](https://www.mdba.gov.au/water-demand-shortfalls).

The risk of a **delivery shortfall** in the River Murray between Wakool Junction and the SA border over the coming week remains negligible. The MDBA is continuing to monitor weather conditions and forecast demands and will continue to actively manage the risk of delivery shortfall across the high demand summer-autumn period as conditions evolve.

The risk of a **system shortfall** is being closely monitored in consultation with states. Recent rainfall has assisted in reducing the risk of a system shortfall this season and any additional rainfall will continue to reduce the risk even further. The MDBA and states will continue to monitor this risk closely over the coming weeks and will take steps to minimise the risk of a shortfall as necessary.

The MDBA, Basin state governments and their agencies have different roles and responsibilities in managing delivery shortfalls. Read more information on [delivery shortfall risks for Victorian water licence holders](#).

Water quality impacts

The Murray and Lower Darling Regional Algal Coordinating Committee (RACC) has continued to declare a number of red and amber alerts for **blue-green algae** in the River Murray System. Currently, a **red alert** is still declared for a number of sites in the [lower Darling River](#) below Menindee Lakes and on the River Murray between Buronga and River Murray pump station. **Amber alerts** are in place at a number of sites on the River Murray and along the Edward-Wakool River system. The locations of these sites are available on the [WaterNSW](#) website. It is important that water users regularly keep up to date with algal alerts, notices, and health warnings. This information is available through [Goulburn-Murray Water](#) and [WaterNSW](#).

Monthly snapshot of water in the system

River Murray communities can access a monthly point-in-time snapshot that shows what proportion of water in the river has been provided for the environment compared with water for towns, industries, and irrigators. Find out more on [Flows in the River Murray system](#).

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River operations

Total **active storage** decreased over the last week by 10 GL to 4,208 GL (50% capacity).

At **Dartmouth Reservoir**, the [storage](#) increased by 10 GL to 2,442 GL (63% capacity). The release, measured at Colemans, remained around 200 ML/day to maintain a flow at Tallandoon above the current minimum target of 600 ML/day. The release is forecast to increase to around 300 ML/day in the coming week to continue supporting the Tallandoon target as inflows from Snowy Creek recede.

Over the past week the **Hume Reservoir** [storage](#) decreased by 8 GL to 1,683 GL (56% capacity). The current Hume release is near 11,500 ML/day and expected to remain around this rate over the coming week.

At **Lake Mulwala**, the pool [level](#) returned to normal operating level (below 124.9 m AHD) on Thursday, 11 February. Surcharging the pool at Lake Mulwala conserved water after a “rain rejection” of irrigation orders and prevented unseasonal flooding of the downstream Barmah-Millewa forest. Over the past week the pool has hovered around 124.81 m AHD and is forecast to fall over coming days.

Diversion to Mulwala Canal is currently around 2,700 ML/day, up from a low of 2,400 ML/day earlier in the week. Around 250 ML/day of this diversion is returning to the river system to meet demands downstream of the Barmah Choke. Diversions to Yarrowonga Main Channel increased this week to around 1100 ML/day. The release from **Yarrowonga Weir** has remained steady around 8000 ML/day.

Every year the MDBA investigates whether lowering Lake Mulwala is required to assist any works on Yarrowonga Weir or bridge, or for the management of the invasive weed *Egeria densa*. Lowering Lake Mulwala can help manage *Egeria* and is typically undertaken every 3 to 5 years. Lowering Lake Mulwala is done in late autumn and early winter to avoid peak irrigation (having Lake Mulwala at full supply level is required for gravity diversions into Yarrowonga Main Channel and Mulwala Canal) and peak recreation periods. Following assessment of the extent of weed in the lake, the MDBA has determined that Lake Mulwala will not be drawn down in 2021. However, this year’s assessment has identified that a lowering in winter 2022 is likely to be required to manage *Egeria* and assist with works.

Flow through the **Edward River Offtake** has averaged near 1,600 ML/day, while flow through **Gulpa Creek Offtake** has remained steady around 250 ML/day this week.

Downstream on the **Edward River**, the release from Edward Escape has averaged around 1000 ML/day and the diversion to Wakool Main Canal has remained steady around 750 ML/day. The flow downstream of Stevens Weir was around 1,800 ML/day at the beginning of the week before reducing to the current flow of 1,300 ML/day. The release will continue to target around 1,500 ML/day over the coming week. Flow through the Wakool River, Yallakool Creek and Colligen Creek offtakes is currently around 70, 160 and 190 ML/day, respectively.

On the **Goulburn River**, the flow measured at [McCoys Bridge](#) reached a peak of around 1,800 ML/day before reducing to its current flow of around 950 ML/day. The flow is expected to stay around this rate before increasing towards the end of next week.

In addition to the Goulburn River, the delivery of water from the Goulburn IVT account to the Murray is continuing via the Campaspe River and Broken Creek. Combined, IVT deliveries are expected to total 40 GL in February. For more information see the [Goulburn-Murray Water website](#). Information regarding opportunities for allocation trade between the Goulburn and Murray Valleys is available at the Victorian water register [website](#).

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Photo 1: Houseboat on the River Murray (Photo Courtesy: Tyson Milne, MDBA)

[Diversions](#) to **National Channel** have averaged around 1,400 ML/day and are forecast to increase to around 1,650 ML/day in the coming week. The release from **Torrumbarry Weir** has reduced and is currently around 5,600 ML/day.

Inflow from the **Murrumbidgee River** has continued to fall as the flows from a “rain rejection” of irrigation orders upstream have reached the Murray. The flow, measured at [Balranald](#), is currently around 2,200 ML/day down from a high of around 3,500 ML/day a week ago. This additional flow will help meet the 45 GL of Murrumbidgee IVT that was ordered from upstream Murrumbidgee storages for February. The [Murrumbidgee IVT balance](#) is open for trade from the Murray to the Murrumbidgee (99.9 GL) but remains closed for trade from the Murrumbidgee to the Murray.

At **Euston Weir**, the [weir pool level](#) remains near FSL. The [downstream release](#) is currently around 11,000 ML/day and forecast to continue reducing to around 7,500 ML/day in a weeks’ time, as the pulse from the Murrumbidgee passes.

Menindee Lakes total combined [storage](#) decreased by 1 GL to 316 GL (18% capacity) over the last week. Upstream of the Lakes, flow in the Darling River at Wilcannia is currently around 600 ML/day. WaterNSW currently forecast around 12-16 GL of inflow will reach Lake Wetherell from this event, more information is provided in the WaterNSW [regional water availability report](#). Some [water restrictions](#) remain current in NSW. Links to drought services and assistance can be accessed via the MDBA [drought webpage](#). At Weir 32, the release is around the normal summer minimum rate of 350 ML/day.

At **Wentworth Weir**, the weir pool level continues to be managed around FSL. The downstream flow increased to the current rate near 8,900 ML/day and is forecast to peak this week at around 9500 ML/day.

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Photo 2: Lock 8 on the River Murray (Photo Courtesy: Tyson Milne, MDBA)

Downstream at **Lock 9** the weir pool continues to vary near FSL. The **Lock 8** and **Lock 7** weir pools were gradually raised 10 cm this week to 40 cm below FSL and will vary around these levels over the coming month. This raising will assist fishway operation and is part of the weir pool variability program.

This week the [storage](#) level at **Lake Victoria** reduced by 10 GL to 277 GL (41% capacity) as releases continue to supplement Murray flows to meet system demands.

The [flow](#) to **South Australia** increased this week to target around 8,600 ML/day for the rest of February. The flow includes South Australia's normal monthly Entitlement flow, small volumes of consumptive trade and water for the environment. In February, environmental water holders have ordered 30 GL of water for the environment to South Australia, delivered at an additional rate of around 1,070 ML/day.

The **Lower Lakes** 5-day average water level is 0.75 m AHD. Barrage releases will continue to be made, when conditions allow, to push fresh water into the Coorong and to support Black Bream spawning over the coming months. For information on barrage releases and South Australia's Entitlement flow, see the South Australian Department for Environment and Water Weekly [River Murray Flow Report](#).

For media inquiries contact the Media Officer on 02 6279 0141

ANDREW REYNOLDS
Executive Director, River Management



Australian Government



**Water in Storage****Week ending Wednesday 17 Feb 2021**

MDBA 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 Total Storage for the Week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 856	461.39	2 442	63%	71	2 371	+10
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	184.29	1 683	56%	23	1 660	-8
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	23.32	277	41%	100	177	-10
Menindee Lakes		1 731*		316	18%	(- -) #	0	-1
Total		9 269		4 718	51%	- -	4 208	-10
Total Active MDBA Storage							50% ^	

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	727	71%	3	724	-12
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	1 255	77%	24	1 231	+12
Eildon Reservoir	3 334	2 129	64%	100	2 029	-16

* Menindee surcharge capacity – 2050 GL

** All Data is rounded to nearest GL **

NSW has sole access to water when the storage falls below 480 GL. MDBA regains access to water when the storage next reaches 640 GL.

^ % of total active MDBA storage

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 16 Feb 2021

Storage	Active Storage (GL)	Weekly Change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This Week	From 1 May 2020
Lake Eucumbene - Total	1 181	-22	Snowy-Murray	+25	644
Snowy-Murray Component	579	-17	Tooma-Tumut	+4	224
Target Storage	1 460		Net Diversion	21	420
			Murray 1 Release	+29	916

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL) *

New South Wales	This Week	From 1 July 2020	Victoria	This Week	From 1 July 2020
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	15.9	426	Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	6.7	127
Wakool Sys Allowance	2.7	74	Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	7.7	193
Western Murray Irrigation	0.9	18	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	4	82
Licensed Pumps	5.4	173	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.2	17
Lower Darling	0.1	2	Licensed pumps - LMW	16.1	314
TOTAL	25.0	693	TOTAL	34.7	733

* Figures are derived from actual and estimates where data is unavailable. Please note that not all data may have been available at the time of creating this report. ** All data above is rounded to nearest 100 ML for weekly data and nearest GL for cumulative data

Flow to South Australia (GL)

* Flow to SA will be greater than normal entitlement for this month due to environmental flows.

Entitlement this month	194.0 *	
Flow this week	59.4	(8 500 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	143.2	
Flow last month	275.4	

Salinity (EC) (microSiemens/cm at 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2020
Swan Hill	80	90	100
Euston	-	-	-
Red Cliffs	120	120	130
Merbein	110	110	140
Burtundy (Darling)	500	490	380
Lock 9	120	120	130
Lake Victoria	100	110	120
Berri	160	160	160
Waikerie	220	220	200
Morgan	220	230	210
Mannum	260	250	230
Murray Bridge	260	250	240
Milang (Lake Alex.)	710	710	760
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	740	640	1 180
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	1 370	1 370	1 630
Goolwa Barrages	1 160	1 220	1 230

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River Levels and Flows

Week ending Wednesday 17 Feb 2021

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	-	-	-	5 330	F	4 500	3 480
Jingellic	4.0	2.03	208.55	7 430	R	7 330	9 760
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.44	218.33	660	F	720	1 080
Heywoods	5.5	2.90	156.53	9 650	R	8 070	5 800
Doctors Point	5.5	2.77	151.24	12 030	R	10 910	9 310
Albury	4.3	1.79	149.23	-	-	-	-
Corowa	4.6	2.12	128.14	9 060	F	9 020	8 820
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.35	116.39	8 070	R	8 010	8 270
Tocumwal	6.4	1.88	105.72	7 810	S	7 870	8 440
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.03	80.58	5 670	F	6 260	7 450
Swan Hill	4.5	1.28	64.20	6 520	F	7 160	7 610
Wakool Junction	8.8	3.22	52.34	9 090	F	9 720	9 570
Euston Weir (d/s)	9.1	1.92	43.76	10 960	F	11 450	10 020
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	9 920	F	9 490	7 390
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.99	27.75	8 920	R	8 370	6 680
Rufus Junction	-	3.82	20.75	8 760	R	8 200	8 040
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	0.73	-	5 490	F	5 620	5 910
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.8	1.35	154.58	950	R	1 240	1 810
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	8.28	145.96	1 300	F	1 630	3 530
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.48	92.90	970	F	1 430	1 710
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	5.5	1.52	81.29	1 310	F	1 430	2 090
Edward at Liewah	-	2.77	58.15	2 200	F	2 330	2 350
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	1.43	54.92	500	F	530	620
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	2.46	58.42	2 180	F	2 840	3 150
Barwon at Mungindi	6.1	3.11	-	0	S	0	90
Darling at Bourke	9.0	4.16	-	760	F	1 030	910
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.73	-	160	F	180	210

Natural Inflow to Hume	6 250	16 110
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(i.e. Pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)

Weirs and Locks Pool levels above or below Full Supply Level (FSL)

Murray	FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s		FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s
Yarrowonga	124.90	-0.10	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	-0.35	+1.50
No. 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	-0.01	+0.22
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.01	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.04	+0.25
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.01	+0.30	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.04	+0.81
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.06	+0.35	No. 3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.04	+0.24
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	-0.03	-0.37	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.01	+0.19
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	-0.38	-0.26	No. 1 Blanchetown	3.20	+0.02	-0.02

Lower Lakes FSL = 0.75 m AHD

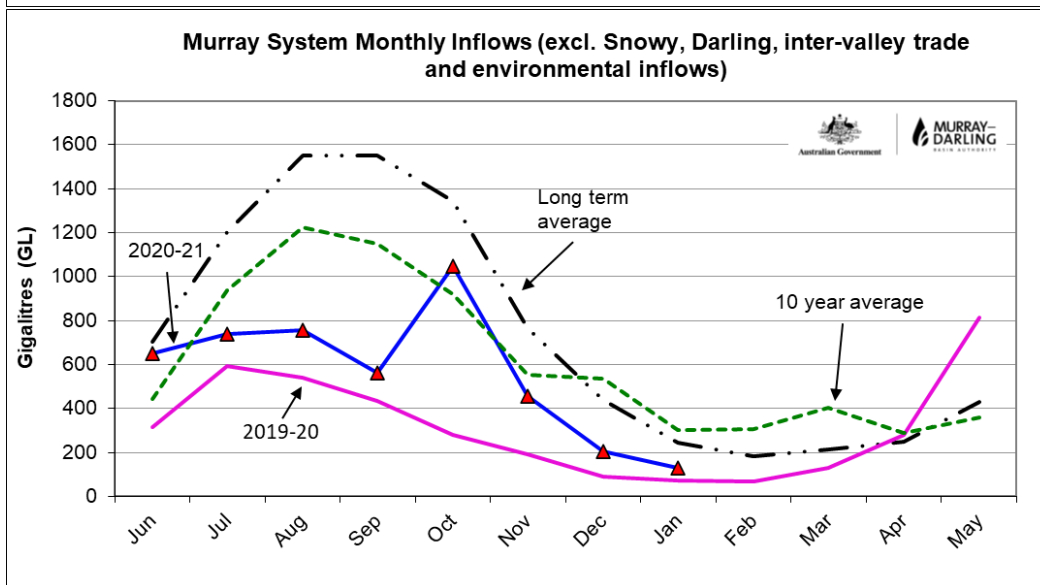
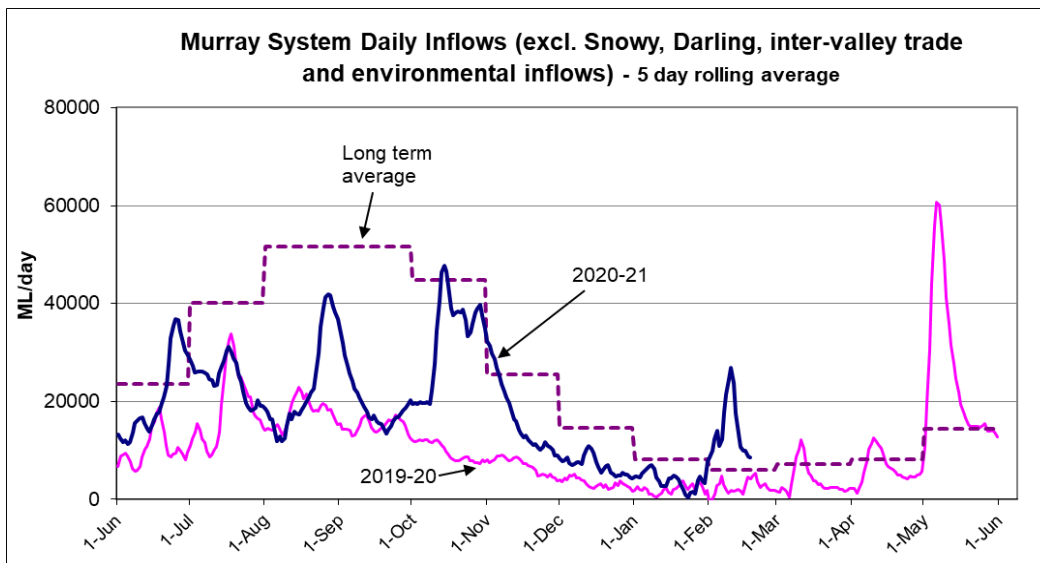
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days (m AHD)	0.75
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Barrages

Fishways at Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	No. Open	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot 1	Vertical Slot 2	Dual Vertical Slots
Goolwa	128 openings	0.77	All closed	-	Open	Open	-
Mundoo	26 openings	0.75	All closed	-	-	-	Open
Hunters Creek	-	-	-	-	Open	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	1	-	Open	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed	-	-	-	Open
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.77	2	Open	Open	Open	-

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



State Allocations (as at 17 Feb 2021)

NSW - Murray Valley

High security	97%
General security	50%

Victorian - Murray Valley

High reliability	100%
Low reliability	0%

NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley

High security	100%
General security	100%

Victorian - Goulburn Valley

High reliability	100%
Low reliability	0%

NSW - Lower Darling

High security	100%
General security	30%

South Australia - Murray Valley

High security	100%
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NSW : <https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/summary>

VIC : <http://nvrn.net.au/seasonal-determinations/current>

SA : <https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray/water-allocations-and-announcements>

