



# River Murray Weekly Report

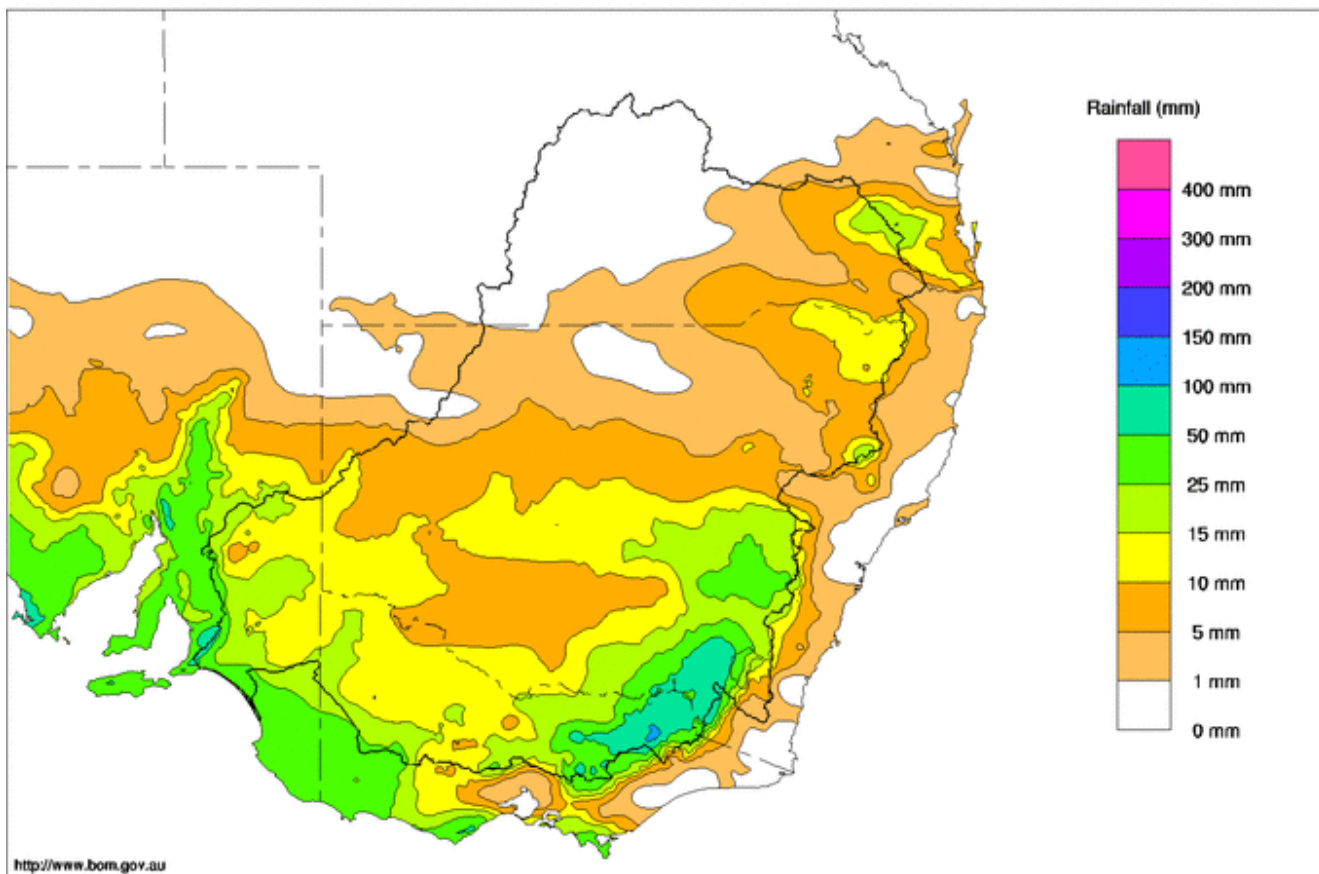
For the week ending Wednesday, 28 July 2021

Trim Ref: D21/

## Rainfall and inflows

Rainfall was widespread across much of the Murray Darling Basin this week with the highest totals recorded across the upper Murray and Murrumbidgee catchments (Map 1). In north east Victoria, 120 mm was recorded at Falls Creek (Rocky Valley), while Hunters Hill recorded 106 mm. Mt Buffalo in the Ovens catchment recorded 64 mm and Cheshunt on the King River recorded 59 mm. In New South Wales, the highest totals included 90 mm at Burrinjuck Dam on the upper Murrumbidgee River and 113 mm at Perisher Valley (just outside the Basin) in the Snowy Mountains.

Murray-Darling Rainfall Totals (mm) Week Ending 28th July 2021  
Australian Bureau of Meteorology



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Map 1 – Murray-Darling Basin rainfall for the week ending 28th July 2021. Source: Bureau of Meteorology.

Wet catchments of the upper Murray tributaries are responding well to rainfall. Upstream of Hume Dam on the Murray River at Jingellic, flow has averaged around 22,500 ML/day. Downstream of Hume Dam, inflows to the Murray from the Kiewa River, measured at Bandiana, averaged 6,500 ML/day. On the Ovens River, the flow at the Peechelba gauge averaged 20,700 ML/day. Specific information about flows at key locations can be found at the MDBA’s [River Murray data](#) webpage.

Over the next 8-days, the BoM is [forecasting](#) another 50-100 mm of rain over the upper Murray catchments. Please remain aware of changing river levels and any [warnings](#) issued by the BoM.



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## River operations

- Further rainfall forecast for the southern Basin over the coming week
- MDBA continuing to assess requirement for airspace releases at Hume Dam
- Higher tributary Inflows downstream of Hume Dam delivering water to the Barmah-Millewa forest
- Elevated inflows to the Murray from the Goulburn and Murrumbidgee Rivers

## Managing the filling of Hume Dam - maximising water availability and maintaining airspace to help mitigate any downstream flooding

Rainfall and wet catchments have delivered increased inflows to Hume Dam over recent weeks, increasing the storage volume to 77% capacity. This combined with Bureau of Meteorology [outlook](#) for further rain suggests a high likelihood of Hume filling and flooding downstream of Hume this winter-spring.

Daily, the MDBA is reviewing Bureau of Meteorology forecasts and outlooks, updating forecast inflows and predicting if and when the dam will fill. The filling of Hume Dam is close to being assured even under a transition to dry weather conditions. When filling of Hume Dam is assured, the MDBA will commence pre-releases to manage the filling process and to maintain some storage airspace to help mitigate any floods that occur in the coming months.

Further details about [flood management](#) at Hume Dam are available on the MDBA website.

## River Levels

River users can monitor River Murray levels and flow forecasts at key locations on the MDBA's [River Murray data](#) webpage to assist in planning any river activities. Up-to-date river data for sites can also be found on BoM's [website](#), at the WaterNSW real-time data [website](#), Victoria's DELWP water monitoring [website](#), South Australia's WaterConnect [website](#) and Queensland's [Water Monitoring Information Portal](#).

## River operations

Total **active storage** increased by 347 GL over the last week to 6,005 GL (70% capacity).

At **Dartmouth Reservoir**, the [storage](#) increased by 40 GL to 2,660 GL (69% capacity). The release, measured at Colemans gauge, increased earlier in the week to 2,100 ML/day for hydro-electric power generation and has since returned to target the minimum release rate of 200 ML/day.

Over the past week the **Hume Reservoir** [storage](#) increased by 249 GL to 2,348 GL (78% capacity). The release has remained at the minimum rate of 600 ML/day. Releases at low levels (well within the river channel) are likely to begin in the coming weeks to manage the filling of Hume and to maintain some storage airspace to help mitigate any floods that might occur in the coming months.

The **Lake Mulwala** level is currently 124.76 m AHD, within the normal operating range (124.6 to 124.9 m AHD). The diversion at Mulwala Canal averaged around 1,800 ML/day as Murray Irrigation Limited (MIL) accessed supplementary licence water to refill their irrigation network. Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) continued to divert small volumes at Yarrawonga Main Channel (YMC) to assist with weed control within their supply channels. The release downstream of Yarrawonga has remained above 20,000 ML/day this week, peaking at 27,000 ML/day. This is the highest release rate since August 2017.

Whilst the flow on the Murray is unregulated and at these higher levels downstream of Yarrawonga Weir, forest regulators are open delivering water to the **Barmah and Millewa forests** and managing the river level below the capacity of the Barmah Choke.

At the **Kolety** (pronounced Kol-etch)/**Edward River** offtake the flow is being managed at around 1,800 ML/day. At **Gulpa Creek** offtake the gates are clear of the water and the flow (currently 930 ML/day) is not being regulated. Further downstream on the **Kolety/Edward River** the flow at Toonalook (currently 4,200 ML/day and rising) is being boosted by water returning from the River Murray via the Millewa forest. At **Stevens Weir**, the pool level has returned to the normal operating level to provide access to supplementary water in Wakool Canal and in the Wakool River, Yallakool Creek and Colligen Creek. Flow downstream of Stevens Weir reduced to around 1,600 ML/day whilst the weir pool was being refilled but is forecast to increase again in the coming week.



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On the **Goulburn River**, the flow measured at [McCoy's Bridge](#) is currently around 8,200 ML/day as GMW deliver a winter pulse on behalf of environmental water holders. Recent rainfall in the catchment has also delivered improved tributary inflows that will extend the duration of the current higher flow into next week. 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](#).

[Diversions](#) to **National Channel** have averaged 370 ML/day. Diversions are being used to maintain base flows in the Pyramid Creek system and at Kerang Weir on behalf of environmental water holders. The release from **Torrumbarry Weir** has increased to 15,600 ML/day and is forecast to reach around 17,000 ML/day in the coming week.

The Torrumbarry Weir pool is currently 24 cm below the full supply level (FSL) and will continue to be varied between 30 cm below FSL and FSL over the coming week as part of the weir pool variability program. In the weeks ahead, the pool level is expected to return to around FSL. Varying pool levels helps restore a more natural wetting and drying cycle to riverbanks and adjacent wetlands within the influence of the weir pool.

As conditions change with river levels or weir pools, river users and landholders should remain aware of the changing water level in case adjustments need to be made to pumps, moorings and recreational activities.

In the upper Murrumbidgee, WaterNSW has advised that both Blowering and Burrinjuck Dams are effectively full. Releases from both storages are being managed in response to higher inflows and to maintain airspace for flood mitigation purposes. More information is available at [WaterInsights](#). WaterNSW has announced access to [supplementary water](#) for the Murrumbidgee River.

Inflow from the **Murrumbidgee River** measured at [Balranald](#) continued around 6,700 ML/day this week. Over the coming week, flows are expected to remain steady. The [Murrumbidgee IVT](#) balance is open for trade from the Murray to the Murrumbidgee but remains closed to trade from the Murrumbidgee to the Murray.

At **Euston Weir**, the [weir pool level](#) has returned to FSL due to higher flows from upstream. The [downstream release](#) has averaged 16,200 ML/day and is forecast to increase above 20,000 ML/day over the coming week.

At **Mildura Weir**, maintenance works scheduled for July were cancelled after an employee was confirmed as a close contact of a confirmed coronavirus (COVID-19) case. The weir has been reinstated and the pool is being refilled (currently 19 cm below FSL) and will reach the FSL in the coming days. The works will be re-scheduled for winter 2022 or earlier if high river flows require the weir to be removed. More information is available from the [MDBA website](#).

At **Menindee Lakes**, total volume in [storage](#) increased this week to 1,149 GL (66% capacity).

Inflows to Menindee Lakes continue to increase with the flow upstream at Wilcannia currently around 8,200 ML/day. Recent rainfall across several NSW tributaries of the Darling River has resulted in additional flow into the system that will further boost inflows to the Menindee Lakes over the coming weeks.

Environmental water holders are using entitlements to maintain higher releases from Menindee Lakes with a target flow at Weir 32 of 500 ML/day. This compares with the normal winter minimum release of 200 ML/day. This higher flow rate is being maintained to benefit native fish in the Barka/lower Darling River during July and into August.

Over the coming months, the MDBA will continue to revise forecasts and operational plans to determine the volume and timing of water released from Menindee Lakes to support the Murray system. This process will be ongoing and will take account of the operating rules of the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement, the '[Objectives and Outcomes for River Operations in the River Murray System](#)' as well as the more specific opportunities and risks driven by system conditions, water security, delivery efficiency, and environmental and community considerations. Further updates will be provided in the Annual Operating Outlook (published by the MDBA in August) and future weekly reports as updated plans and release decisions are made. More information on the management of Menindee lakes is also available in a [webinar](#) hosted by the MDBA.

At **Wentworth Weir**, the weir pool level continues to be managed around FSL. The downstream flow averaged near 14,700 ML/day. Just upstream of Wentworth Weir at Curlwaa, the Abbotsford Bridge was closed in mid-July for 6 weeks. This is to allow essential maintenance work to replace the existing timber deck of the lift span. More information can be found [here](#).





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At **Lock 9** the weir pool has been raised to a level around 20 cm above FSL to help maximise diversions into Lake Victoria as higher flows arrive from upstream. The **Lock 8** weir pool is currently near FSL and will be raised to around 80 cm above FSL during August to November to inundate the Mulcra floodplain and other wetlands adjacent to the weirpool. **Lock 7** is targeting around 55 cm above FSL to increase flow into the Lindsay River to facilitate pumping for water for the environment into Lake Wallawalla.



Photo 1 – Lake Wallawalla (Lindsay Island), currently being pumped full. (Source: Mallee CMA- D Wood)

The [storage](#) at **Tar-ru/ Lake Victoria** increased by 50 GL to 522 GL (77% capacity) and will continue to rise during the next week. Inflows to Tar-ru/Lake Victoria remain at the maximum capacity of the inlet regulator.

The [flow](#) to **South Australia** is currently around 6,600 ML/day and forecast to increase over the coming week to around 10,000 ML/day. The required flow to South Australia continues to be exceeded, with [unregulated flow](#) available on the River Murray downstream of Hume Reservoir and on the Edward System. Any extensions to the announcement of unregulated flow will be subject to on-going rain and elevated inflows. General information on River Murray unregulated flows can be accessed on the MDBA [webpage](#). Information on access to Murray supplementary water licences in NSW is available from [WaterNSW Water insights](#).

The **Lower Lakes** 5-day average water level is 0.8 m AHD. Barrage releases will continue to be made, when conditions allow, to push fresh water into the Coorong to support a productive environment for fish and birds. 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



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Australian Government



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## Water in Storage

Week ending Wednesday 28 Jul 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	465.68	2 660	69%	71	2 589	+40
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	188.49	2 348	78%	23	2 325	+249
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	25.68	522	77%	100	422	+50
Menindee Lakes		1 731*		1 149	66%	(480 #)	669	+8
<b>Total</b>		<b>9 269</b>		<b>6 679</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>6 005</b>	<b>+347</b>
Total Active MDBA Storage							70% ^	

### Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	1 050	102%	3	1 047	+35
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	1 629	100%	24	1 605	+46
Eildon Reservoir	3 334	2 179	65%	100	2 079	+107

\* 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 27 Jul 2021

Storage	Active Storage (GL)	Weekly Change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This Week	From 1 May 2021
Lake Eucumbene - Total	718	+46	Snowy-Murray	+17	325
Snowy-Murray Component	382	+4	Tooma-Tumut	+9	70
Target Storage	1 170		Net Diversion	8	255
			Murray 1 Release	+25	405

### Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL) \*

New South Wales	This Week	From 1 July 2021	Victoria	This Week	From 1 July 2021
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	15.9	17	Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	0.4	1
Wakool Sys Allowance	0.1	1	Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	0	0
Western Murray Irrigation	0.0	0	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	0	1
Licensed Pumps	0.8	4	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0	0
Lower Darling	0.0	0	Licensed pumps - LMW	0.3	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16.8</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>4</b>

\* 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	108.5 *	
Flow this week	46.6	(6 700 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	159.3	
Flow last month	116.3	

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

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2020
Swan Hill	80	80	90
Euston	-	-	-
Red Cliffs	140	130	120
Merbein	120	120	130
Burtundy (Darling)	300	290	390
Lock 9	130	140	130
Lake Victoria	140	140	120
Berri	200	200	170
Waikerie	270	270	220
Morgan	290	290	230
Mannum	320	300	240
Murray Bridge	320	330	270
Milang (Lake Alex.)	730	760	750
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	390	580	920
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	1 460	1 470	1 630
Goolwa Barrages	7 620	4 870	1 950



## River Levels and Flows

Week ending Wednesday 28 Jul 2021

	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)				
<b>River Murray</b>							
Khancoban	-	-	-	4 820	R	4 990	5 390
Jingellic	4.0	3.59	210.11	24 690	F	22 680	16 910
Tallandoon ( Mitta Mitta River )	4.2	2.23	219.12	3 280	F	3 490	2 460
Heywoods	5.5	1.46	155.09	600	S	600	600
Doctors Point	5.5	2.28	150.75	6 630	F	5 920	5 030
Albury	4.3	1.34	148.78	-	-	-	-
Corowa	4.6	2.01	128.03	8 360	R	6 860	5 290
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	3.20	118.24	24 130	R	24 830	12 770
Tocumwal	6.4	3.71	107.55	22 790	F	22 670	10 450
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	4.48	83.02	15 570	R	13 120	6 930
Swan Hill	4.5	2.21	65.13	12 660	R	9 350	7 070
Wakool Junction	8.8	4.09	53.21	13 370	R	11 440	10 070
Euston Weir (d/s)	9.1	2.76	44.60	16 800	R	16 210	15 130
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	13 880	F	13 060	16 150
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.46	28.22	14 730	R	14 590	15 690
Rufus Junction	-	3.40	20.33	6 130	S	6 200	7 010
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	0.77	-	5 980	F	6 290	6 040
<b>Tributaries</b>							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.8	2.95	156.18	6 410	F	6 420	5 460
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	12.04	149.72	21 880	R	18 170	15 910
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	4.76	96.18	8 150	F	8 580	2 600
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	5.5	1.88	81.65	1 810	F	1 930	2 550
Edward at Liewah	-	3.02	58.40	2 560	F	2 540	2 090
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	1.29	54.78	230	R	150	130
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	4.99	60.95	6 700	S	6 690	7 070
Barwon at Mungindi	6.1	6.54	-	10 080	F	9 480	6 700
Darling at Bourke	9.0	5.75	-	12 420	R	11 000	8 030
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.86	-	450	F	460	470

Natural Inflow to Hume	41 090	31 180
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(i.e. Pre Dartmouth &amp; 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	-0.14	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.60	+1.11
No. 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.24	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.04	+0.15
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.02	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.08	+0.26
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	-0.19	+0.60	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.11	+0.76
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.03	+0.82	No. 3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.07	+0.48
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.14	+0.06	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.26	+0.24
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	-0.02	+0.71	No. 1 Blanchetown	3.20	+0.04	+0.02

## Lower Lakes FSL = 0.75 m AHD

Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days (m AHD)	0.80
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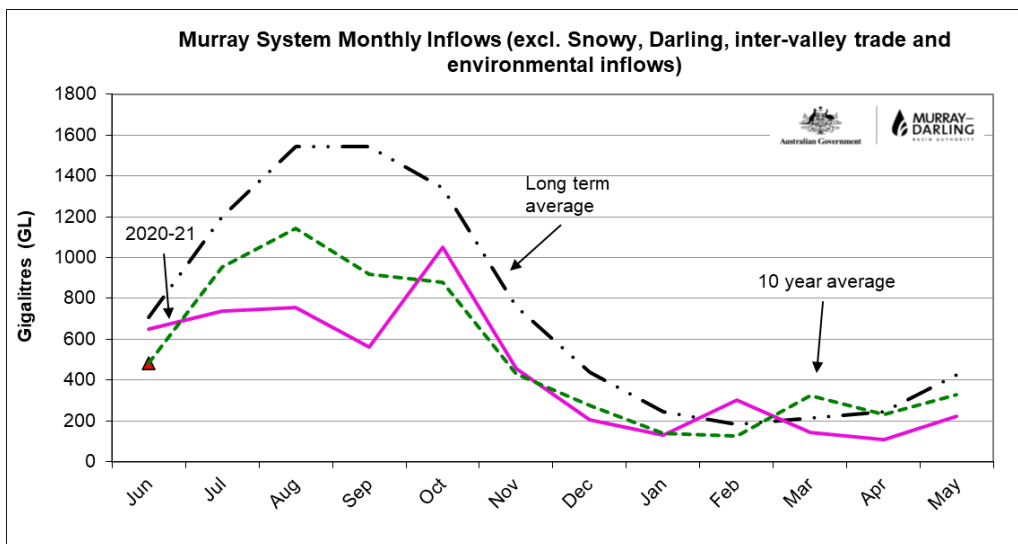
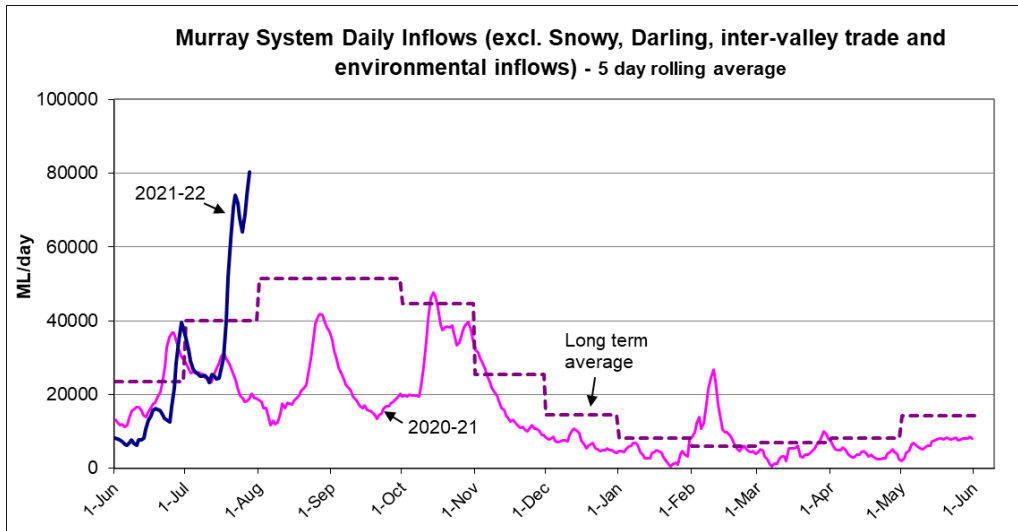
## Barrages

## Fishways at Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	No. Open	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot 1	Vertical Slot 2	Dual Vertical Slots
Goolwa	128 openings	-0.11	1	-	Open	Open	-
Mundoo	26 openings	0.70	All closed	-	-	-	Open
Hunters Creek	-	-	-	-	Open	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	1	-	Open	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed	-	-	-	Open
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.74	21	Open	Open	Open	-

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





**State Allocations (as at 28 Jul 2021)**

**NSW - Murray Valley**

High security	97%
General security	10%

**Victorian - Murray Valley**

High reliability	31%
Low reliability	0%

**NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley**

High security	95%
General security	50%

**Victorian - Goulburn Valley**

High reliability	37%
Low reliability	0%

**NSW - Lower Darling**

High security	100%
General security	100%

**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>

