# RIVER MURRAY WEEKLY REPORT

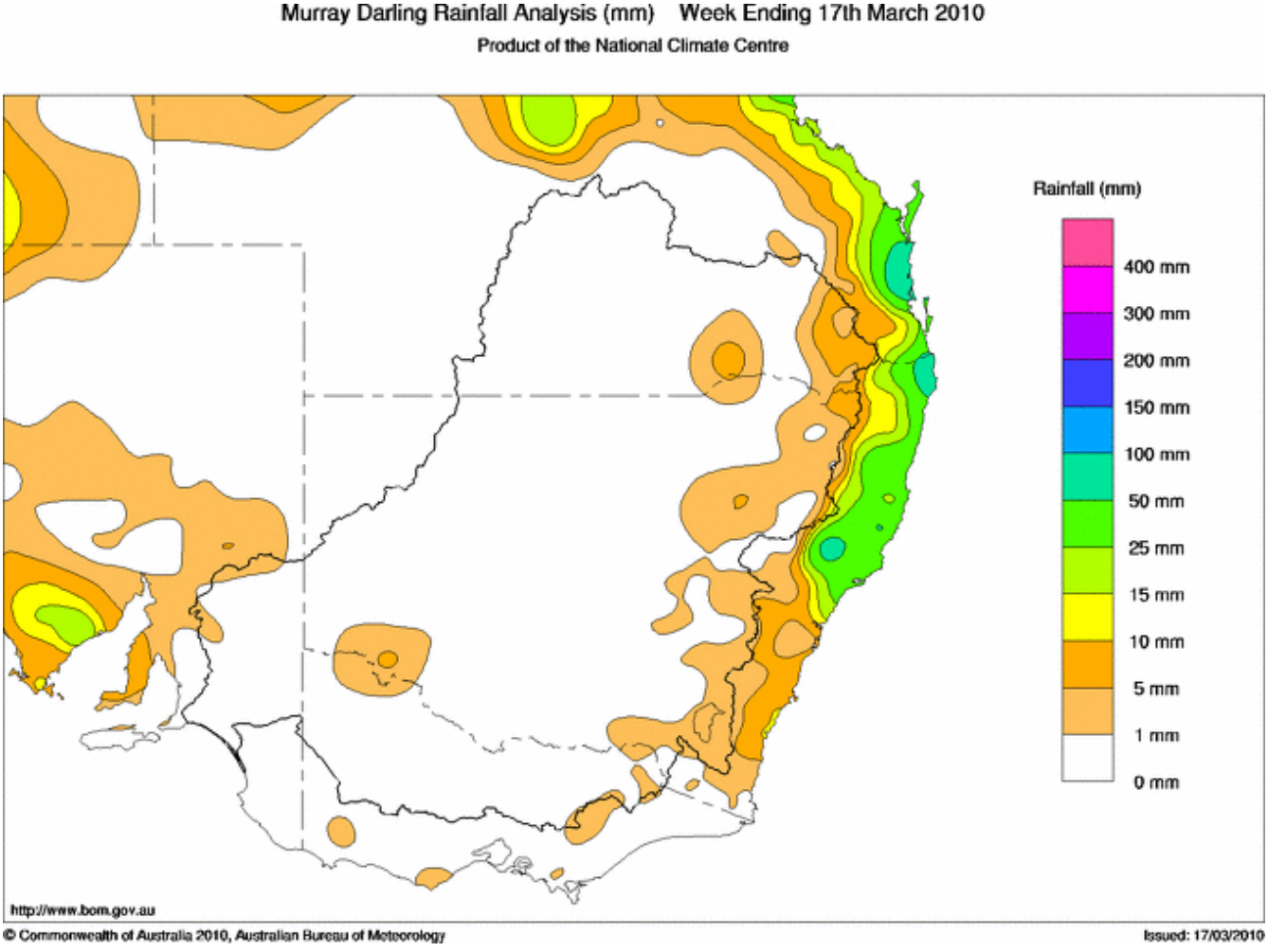
FOR THE WEEK ENDING WEDNESDAY, 17 MARCH 2010

***Trim Ref: D10/7096***

## Rainfall and Inflows

There was very little rainfall recorded in the Murray–Darling Basin for the week ending 17 March 2010 (see Map 1). As a result, streamflows in the upper Murray and its tributaries have been receding. For example, Hinnomunjie on the Mitta Mitta River has fallen from over 2,500 to 650 ML/day. Similarly, at Rocky Point on the Ovens River the flows are now around 890 ML/day, down from over 4,000 ML/day. There is little forecast rainfall in the southern Basin in the coming week.

In the northern Basin, large volumes of floodwater have been slowly moving down the Paroo, Warrego, Balonne, Moonie and Weir Rivers. The main flood peak in the Condamine-Balonne catchment has passed Whyenbah, on the Culgoa River (downstream of St George) and sharp rises are now being seen at Brenda just below the NSW border. With such large distances still to travel it is very difficult to accurately predict the volumes of floodwaters that will ultimately reach Menindee Lakes. Initial estimates are that the inflows to Menindee Lakes will exceed 1,000 GL. On the Barwon River (which becomes the Darling River), flows have now reached around 20,000 ML/day at Walgett.



# River Operations

MDBA active storage (which currently excludes Menindee Lakes) increased by 51 GL to 2,069 GL (24% capacity).

Total Storage in Dartmouth Reservoir increased by 9 GL to 1,212 GL (31% capacity) and the release has risen from 200 to 450 ML/day to target a flow at Tallandoon, downstream of Dartmouth Reservoir on the Mitta Mitta River, of 600 ML/day. Total storage in Hume Reservoir rose by 7 GL to 545 GL (18% capacity) and the release increased from 2,900 to around 6,500 ML/day as downstream demand increased and inflows from the Kiewa and Ovens River receded.

The pool level in Lake Mulwala fell during the week to 124.79 m AHD after a peak of 124.9 m AHD last week (due to increased tributary inflows, runoff from local rainfall and low irrigation diversions). After reducing the release at Yarrawonga Weir from 8,500 to 5,000 ML/day, irrigation demands have increased and the release is now at 5,700 ML/day and is likely to remain fairly steady over the coming week.

On the Edward River, the release from Stevens Weir, which last week was at 1,300 ML/day due to heavy local rainfall and a sharp reduction in irrigation demand, has been reduced to around 700 ML/day. During the coming week the flow should recede back to the current target of 500 ML/day.

Further downstream on the Murray, the release from Torrumbarry Weir increased from 5,900 to 7,300 ML/day as the higher flows from Yarrawonga Weir arrive. The release is expected to gradually fall during the week to around 3,000 ML/day.

Total storage in Menindee Lakes (which presently remain under NSW control) decreased by 6 GL to 584 GL (34% capacity). The release from Menindee Lakes has been reduced from 6,000 to 3,500 ML/day. The NSW government has started transferring water into the largest lake (Lake Menindee), in preparation for the arrival of the floodwaters in the coming weeks (see Figure 1). This is the first time Lake Menindee has received water since 2002. Upstream of Menindee Lakes, the flow in the Darling River at Wilcannia is currently around 6,000 ML/day.

Figure 1. Menindee Inlet 18/03/2010. First inflows to Lake Menindee since 2002 – Photo courtesy of Barry Philp, State Water NSW

On the Murray, the release from Wentworth Weir (immediately downstream of the confluence of the Murray and Darling Rivers) has fallen from about 14,500 to 10,400 ML/day and is expected to continue to gradually decrease over the coming weeks in response to the lower flows arriving from the Darling River.

Total storage at Lake Victoria increased by 41 GL to 522 GL (77% capacity) and is expected to continue increasing over the next 2 weeks, this is the highest volume in Lake Victoria since September 2007. During the past week, the flow to South Australia averaged around 7,000 ML/day and the flow past Lock 1 has decreased to 6,370 ML/day. The water levels in Weirs 1-3 are all slightly above Full Supply Level and Weirs 4-6 are all slightly below.

The water level in Lake Alexandrina is currently -0.78 m AHD and in Lake Albert is -0.70 m AHD. The water level in Goolwa Channel (which is separated from Lake Alexandrina by an earth embankment) has fallen to -0.01 m AHD. Pumping from Lake Alexandrina to Lake Albert continues.

**Algal Blooms**

Red alerts for blue-green algae are currently active along the Murray between Hume Dam and Moama some 500 river kilometres, and also along the Edward River. Further updates will be provided over the coming weeks. Further information can be obtained from the Regional Algal Coordinating Committee hotline on 1800 999 457 or visit the MDBA website at www.mdba.gov.au.

**For media inquiries contact: Sam Leone on 02 6279 0141**

DAVID DREVERMAN
Executive Director, River Murray

## Week ending Wednesday 17 Mar 2010

## Water in Storage

| MDBA Storages | Full Supply Level (m AHD) | Full Supply Volume (GL) | Current Storage Level (m AHD) | Current Storage (GL) | Current Storage % | Dead Storage (GL) | MDBA Active Storage (GL) | Change in Total Storage for the week (GL) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Dartmouth Reservoir | 486.00 | 3 906 | 430.50 | 1 212 | 31% | 80 | 1 132 | +9 |
| Hume Reservoir | 192.00 | 3 038 | 173.84 | 545 | 18% | 30 | 515 | +7 |
| Lake Victoria | 27.00 | 677 | 25.68 | 522 | 77% | 100 | 422 | +41 |
| Menindee Lakes | | 1 731 * | | 584 | 34% | (- -) # | 0 | -6 |
| **Total** | | **9 352** | | **2 863** | **31%** | **- -** | **2 069** | **+51** |

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL  % of Total Active MDBA Storage = **24%**

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

** All Data is rounded to nearest GL **

## Major State Storages

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Burrinjuck Reservoir | 1 026 | | 467 | 46% | 3 | 464 | +2 |
| Blowering Reservoir | 1 631 | | 550 | 34% | 24 | 526 | +7 |
| Eildon Reservoir | 3 334 | | 899 | 27% | 100 | 799 | -1 |

## Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 16-Mar-2010

| Storage | Active storage (GL) | Weekly change (GL) | Diversion (GL) | This week | From 1 May 2009 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Lake Eucumbene - Total | 831 | -3 | Snowy-Murray | +13 | 635 |
| Snowy-Murray Component | 602 | -7 | Tooma-Tumut | +0 | 242 |
| Target Storage | 1 410 | | Nett Diversion | 12.6 | 393 |
| | | | Murray 1 Release | +21 | 874 |

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

| New South Wales | This week | From 1 July 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net) | 3.2 | 166 |
| Wakool Sys Allowance | 1.4 | 55 |
| Western Murray Irrig. | 0.5 | 21 |
| Licensed Pumps | 2.5 | 82 |
| Lower Darling | 0.1 | 7 |
| **TOTAL** | **7.7** | **331** |

| Victoria | This week | From 1 July 2009 |
|---|---|---|
| Yarrawonga Main Channel (net) | 2.2 | 114 |
| Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net) | 7.9 | 207 |
| Sunraysia Pumped Districts | 2.7 | 107 |
| Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s) | 0.4 | 16 |
| Licensed pumps - LMW | 5.0 | 219 |
| **TOTAL** | **18.2** | **663** |

* Figures derived from Estimates and Monthly Data. Please note that not all data may have been available at the time of creating this report.

** All Data is rounded to nearest 100 ML for the above**

## Flow to South Australia (GL)

| | |
|---|---|
| Entitlement this month | 186 |
| Flow this week | 49.7 |
| Flow so far this month | 136 |
| Flow last month | 235 |

(7 100 ML/day)

## Salinity (EC)

**(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)**

| | Current | Average over the last week | Average since 1 August 2009 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Swan Hill | 60 | 50 | 60 |
| Euston | 100 | 100 | 90 |
| Red Cliffs | 100 | 90 | 100 |
| Merbein | 90 | 90 | 100 |
| Burtundy (Darling) | 220 | 230 | 470 |
| Lock 9 | 160 | 180 | 140 |
| Lake Victoria | 200 | 200 | 200 |
| Berri | 210 | 210 | 320 |
| Waikerie | - | 210 | 400 |
| Morgan | 260 | 240 | 490 |
| Mannum | 310 | 290 | 580 |
| Murray Bridge | 310 | 330 | 650 |
| Milang (Lake Alex. | 6 110 | 5 960 | 5 640 |
| Poltalloch (Lake Alex. | 3 600 | 4 450 | 5 050 |
| Meningie (Lake Alb. | 13 710 | 15 150 | 11 730 |
| Goolwa Barrages | 16 830 | 17 210 | 13 750 |

## Week ending Wednesday 17 Mar 2010

## River Levels and Flows

| River Murray | Minor Flood stage (m) | Gauge height local (m) | Gauge height (m AHD) | Flow (ML/day) | Trend | Average flow this week (ML/day) | Average flow last week (ML/day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Khancoban | - | - | - | 7 110 | F | 2 910 | 4 270 |
| Jingellic | 4.0 | 2.00 | 208.52 | 7 190 | R | 3 240 | 5 730 |
| Tallandoon ( Mitta Mitta River ) | 4.2 | 1.47 | 218.36 | 610 | S | 560 | 740 |
| Heywoods | 5.5 | 2.38 | 156.01 | 6 480 | R | 3 070 | 5 120 |
| Doctors Point | 5.5 | 2.40 | 150.87 | 8 010 | R | 4 920 | 6 220 |
| Albury | 4.3 | 1.39 | 148.83 | - | - | - | - |
| Corowa | 7.0 | 1.29 | 127.31 | 4 480 | R | 4 030 | 6 930 |
| Yarrawonga Weir (d/s) | 6.4 | 0.99 | 116.03 | 5 180 | F | 6 670 | 6 180 |
| Tocumwal | 6.4 | 1.51 | 105.35 | 5 740 | F | 7 320 | 6 190 |
| Torrumbarry Weir (d/s) | 7.3 | 2.40 | 80.95 | 7 270 | S | 6 750 | 4 670 |
| Swan Hill | 4.5 | 1.23 | 64.15 | 6 090 | R | 5 290 | 4 040 |
| Wakool Junction | 8.8 | 2.72 | 51.84 | 7 040 | R | 6 030 | 5 120 |
| Euston Weir (d/s) | 8.8 | 1.42 | 43.26 | 6 140 | R | 5 540 | 5 320 |
| Mildura Weir (d/s) | | - | - | 4 630 | F | 4 920 | 4 860 |
| Wentworth Weir (d/s) | 7.3 | 3.44 | 28.20 | 10 380 | F | 11 980 | 15 000 |
| Rufus Junction | - | 3.32 | 20.25 | 5 620 | F | 6 370 | 7 890 |
| Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s) | - | -0.08 | - | 6 370 | F | 7 320 | 5 770 |
| **Tributaries** | | | | | | | |
| Kiewa at Bandiana | 2.7 | 1.02 | 154.25 | 570 | F | 1 400 | 560 |
| Ovens at Wangaratta | 11.9 | 8.28 | 145.96 | 1 600 | F | 2 460 | 1 730 |
| Goulburn at McCoys Bridge | 9.0 | 1.75 | 93.17 | 1 360 | F | 2 000 | 770 |
| Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s) | - | 0.96 | 80.73 | 700 | F | 820 | 1 160 |
| Edward at Liewah | - | 2.58 | 57.96 | 2 000 | F | 1 690 | 1 060 |
| Wakool at Stoney Crossing | - | 1.36 | 54.86 | 290 | S | 280 | 200 |
| Murrumbidgee at Balranald | 5.0 | 0.50 | 56.46 | 250 | F | 270 | 340 |
| Barwon at Mungindi | - | 5.96 | - | 8 130 | R | 8 860 | 6 740 |
| Darling at Bourke | - | 5.08 | - | 8 690 | R | 6 940 | 4 640 |
| Darling at Burtundy Rocks | - | 3.33 | - | 5 300 | F | 6 630 | 11 080 |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Natural Inflow to Hume** (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme) | 3 940 | 6 130 |

## 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 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Yarrawonga | 124.90 | -0.11 | - | No. 7 Rufus River | 22.10 | -0.01 | +1.04 |
| No 26 Torrumbarry | 86.05 | +0.00 | - | No. 6 Murtho | 19.25 | -0.05 | +0.00 |
| No. 15 Euston | 47.60 | -0.01 | - | No. 5 Renmark | 16.30 | -0.03 | +0.16 |
| No. 11 Mildura | 34.40 | +0.02 | +0.11 | No. 4 Bookpurnong | 13.20 | -0.02 | +0.76 |
| No. 10 Wentworth | 30.80 | +0.02 | +0.80 | No.3 Overland Corner | 9.80 | +0.02 | +0.40 |
| No. 9 Kulnine | 27.40 | +0.09 | -0.03 | No. 2 Waikerie | 6.10 | +0.06 | +0.39 |
| No. 8 Wangumma | 24.60 | -0.05 | +0.72 | No 1. Blanchetown | 3.20 | +0.06 | -0.83 |

| Murrumbidgee | FSL (m AHD) | relation to FSL | d/s gauge ht. local (m) | d/s gauge ht. (m AHD) | Flow (ML/day) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| No. 7 Maude | 75.40 | -0.35 | 1.052 | 70.402 | 867 |
| No. 5 Redbank | 66.90 | -0.16 | 0.14 | 61.44 | 261 |

## Lower Lakes

**FSL = 0.75 m AHD**

| | (m AHD) |
|---|---|
| Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days | -0.78 |

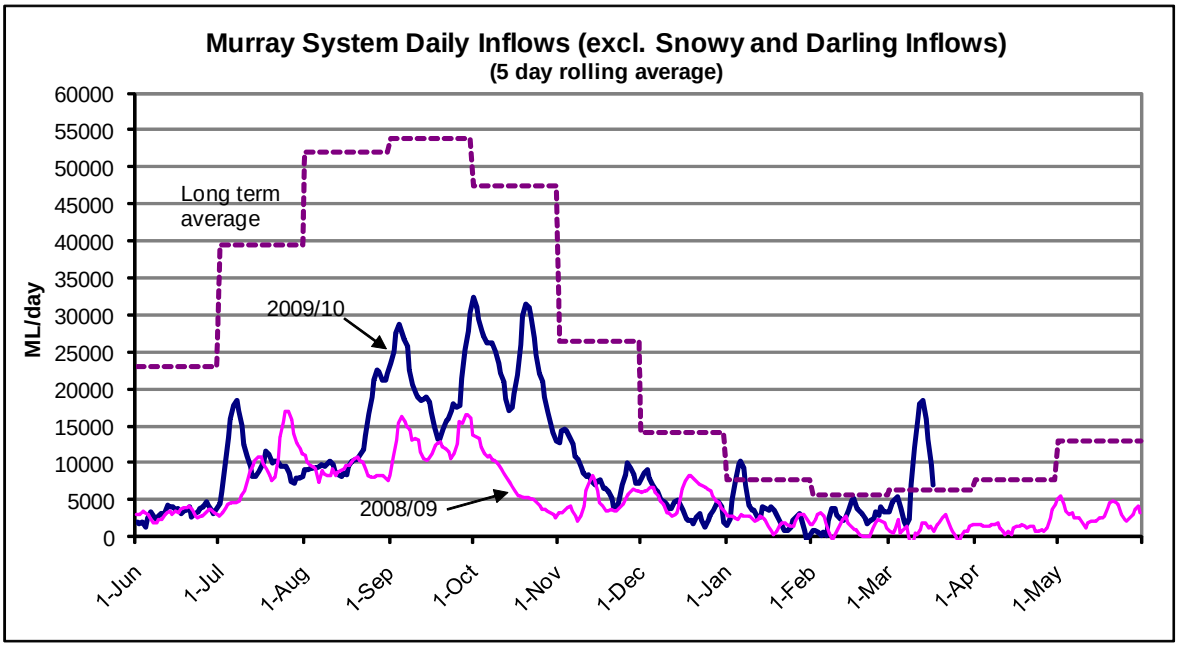
## Barrages

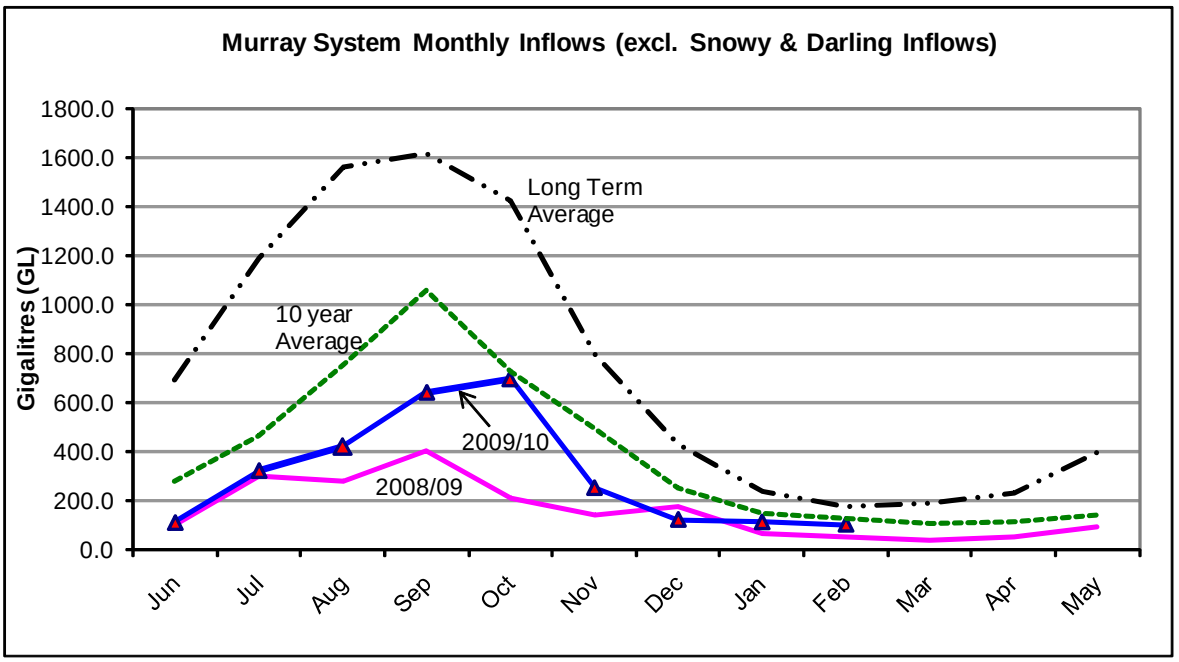
**Fishways @ Barrages**

| | Openings | Level (m AHD) | Status | Rock Ramp | Vertcal Slot |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Goolwa | 128 openings | -0.01 | All closed | - | Closed |
| Mundoo | 26 openings | - | 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

## Week ending Wednesday 17 March 2010




### State Allocations (as at 17 March 2010)

**NSW - Murray Valley**

| | |
|---|---|
| High security | 97% |
| General security | 22% |

**NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley**

| | |
|---|---|
| High security | 95% |
| General security | 26% |

**NSW - Lower Darling**

| | |
|---|---|
| High security | 100% |
| General security | 100% |

**Victoria - Murray Valley**

| | |
|---|---|
| high reliability | 78% |

**Victoria - Goulburn Valley**

| | |
|---|---|
| high reliability | 69% |

**South Australia - Murray Valley**

| | |
|---|---|
| High security | 62% |

NSW : http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/About-us/Media-releases/media/default.aspx
VIC : http://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/allocations/current.asp
SA : http://www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/media.html