



RIVER MURRAY WEEKLY REPORT

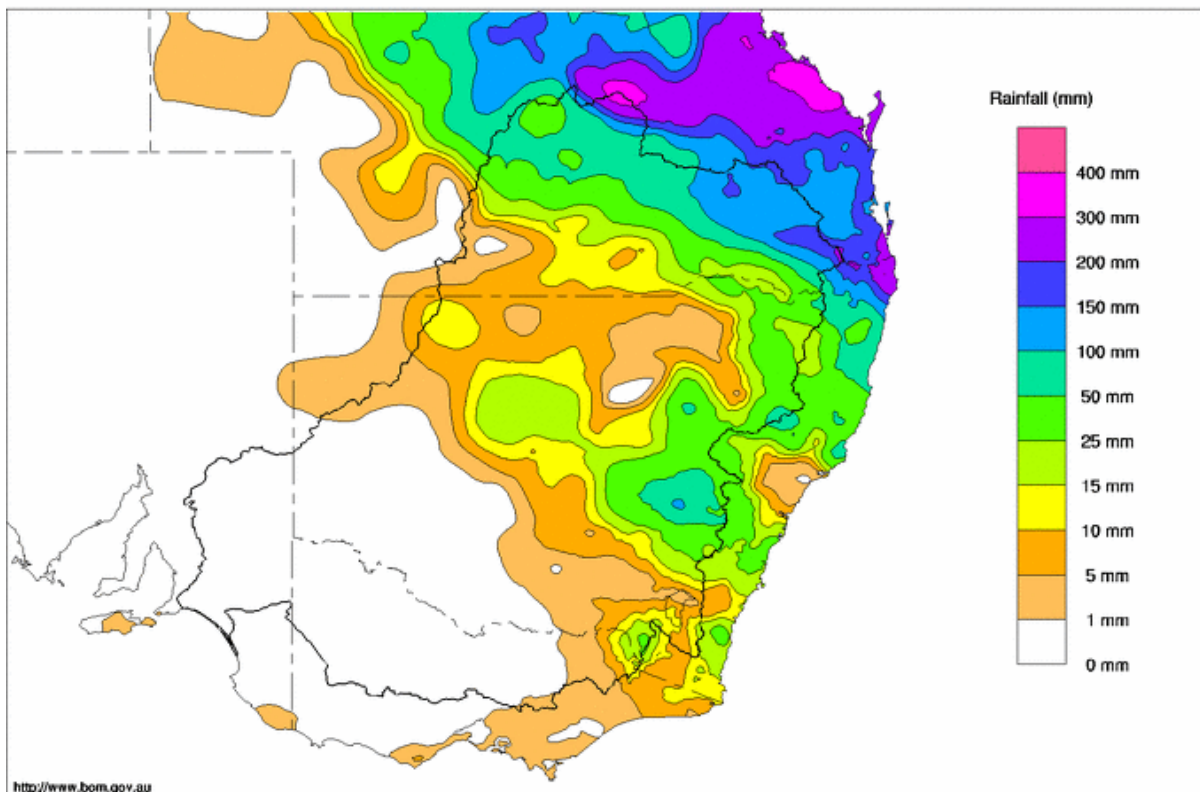
FOR THE WEEKS ENDING WEDNESDAY, 29 DECEMBER 2010 & 5 JANUARY 2011

Trim Ref: D11/246

Rainfall and Inflows

In the week ending 29 December 2010, there was a strong gradient in rainfall across the Murray-Darling Basin with falls of up to 200 mm in southern Queensland declining to dry conditions in the south-western third of the Basin (Map 1). Notable rainfalls occurred at Pittsworth (242 mm), Millmerran (162 mm) and Miles (151 mm) in southern Queensland and also Orange (103 mm) in central NSW.

Murray Darling Rainfall Totals (mm) Week Ending 29th December 2010
Product of the National Climate Centre



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Issued: 29/12/2010

Map 1 - Murray-Darling Basin rainfall for the week ending 29 December 2010 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology)

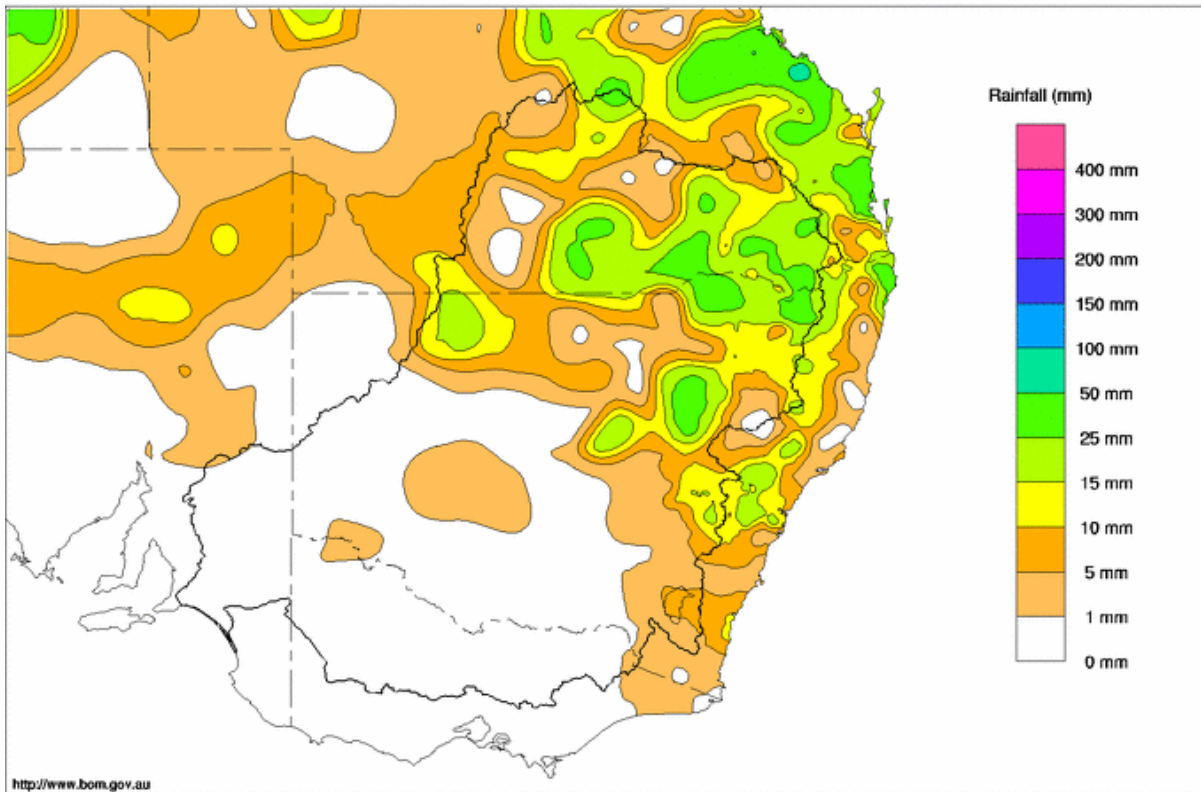
The following week, ending 5 January 2011, had a similar pattern of rainfall distribution but falls were much lower. For example, Coonabarabran in central NSW recorded 44 mm and Toowoomba in southern Queensland recorded 55 mm.

In southern Queensland, there has been major flooding along the Condamine and Balonne Rivers and some of their tributaries. The flood peak is currently upstream of St George, where the river height is already more than 6 m above the major flood level. There is also flooding along parts of the Weir, Moonie and Warrego Rivers. These floods may be exacerbated by further rain which has been forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology. For more information regarding flood warnings, see the Bureau of Meteorology at <http://www.bom.gov.au/>.



Murray Darling Rainfall Totals (mm) Week Ending 5th January 2011

Product of the National Climate Centre



<http://www.bom.gov.au>

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Issued: 05/01/2011

Map 2 - Murray-Darling Basin rainfall for the week ending 5 January 2011 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology)

At Bourke in NSW, the flow in the Darling River is close to the expected peak at 84,490 ML/day. This flow peak was generated by the rain which fell in southern Queensland and the NSW catchments of the Macquarie, Castlereagh and Namoi Rivers in early December. A further peak, due to the current flooding in the Balonne-Condamine system, will arrive at Bourke in about another 4 weeks.

The flow in the Darling River at Wilcannia is currently 25,200 ML/day and rising. Menindee Lakes are at 98% capacity and the stored volume is expected to slowly decline during the coming week before inflows begin to exceed releases and the lakes are surcharged again. The release from Menindee Lakes has remained steady at 22,000 ML/day since 21 December. For more information regarding the management of the Menindee Lakes, see the NSW Office of Water website (<http://www.water.nsw.gov.au/>).

On the Murrumbidgee River, the flow downstream of Balranald is currently 15,370 ML/day and slowly rising. The flow at this site may reach a peak of 20,000–25,000 ML/day later in January.

On the Edward River, the flow past Deniliquin peaked on 24 December 2010 at 38,800 ML/day with minor flooding. The Wakool River at Stoney Crossing is currently 17,480 ML/day and still rising. The peak at Stoney Crossing will depend to a large extent on the magnitude of ungauged return flows from the floodplains upstream.

At Rices Weir on the Broken Creek, flows to the River Murray have declined from nearly 4,000 ML/day to 2,500 ML/day while inflows to the River Murray from the Goulburn River have declined from 15,500 ML/day to 2,720 ML/day at McCoys Bridge.

Inflows to the upper River Murray have declined after the high flows generated by the rain in early December. Upstream of Hume Reservoir, the River Murray at Jingellic has receded from 17,100 ML/day to 5,360 ML/day during the last two weeks while, at Wangaratta, the flow in the Ovens River has declined from 10,900 ML/day to 3,630 ML/day.

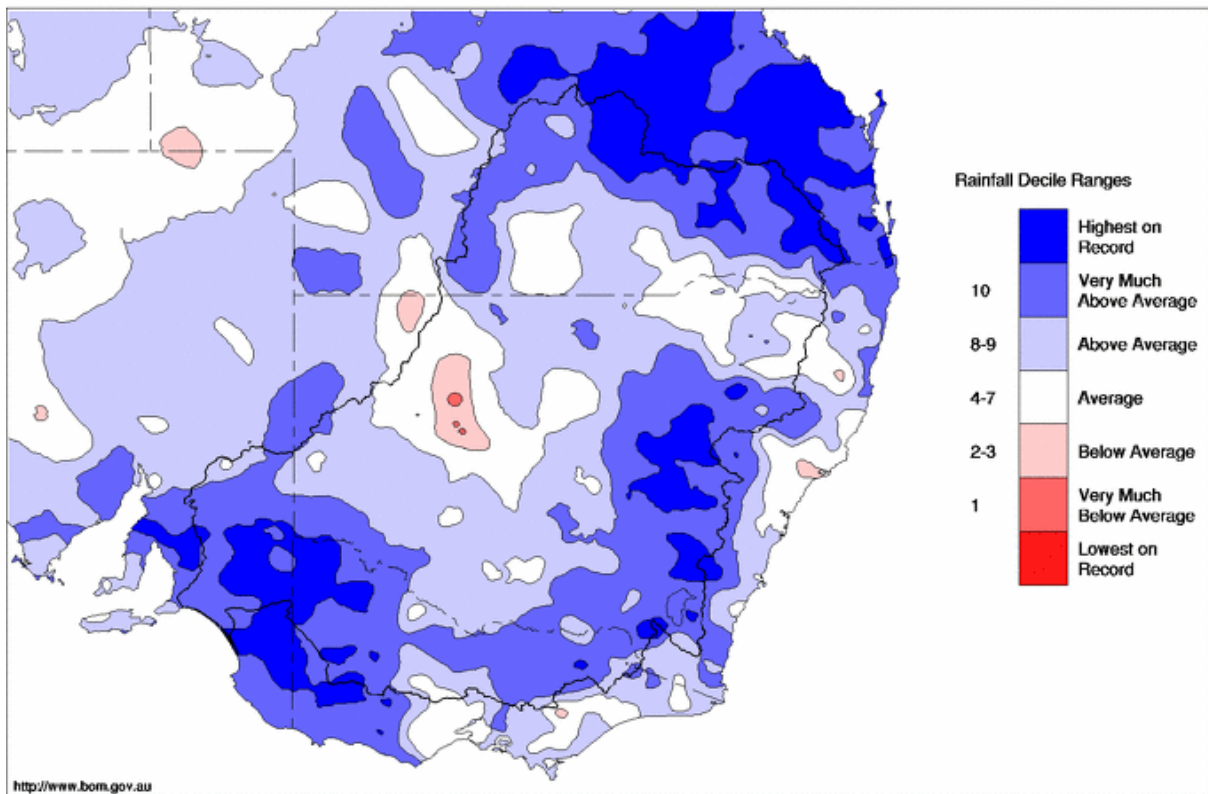


December 2010 Summary

High rainfalls were recorded across large areas of the Murray-Darling Basin in December 2010 (Map 3). Locations including Lake Victoria in western NSW (140 mm rainfall in December), Manildra in central NSW (253 mm) and Pittsworth in southern Queensland (434 mm) recorded rainfalls which were the highest on record for December.

Murray system inflows totalled 2,976 GL for December which surpasses the previous record of 1,830 GL in December 1992, and is many times the long-term average for December of 420 GL.

Murray-Darling Rainfall Deciles December 2010
Distribution Based on Gridded Data
Product of the National Climate Centre



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Map 3 - Murray-Darling Basin rainfall deciles for December 2010 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology)

2010 Rainfall Summary

The Murray-Darling Basin had its wettest year on record, according to the Bureau of Meteorology. Rainfall was very much above average over almost all the Basin during 2010, with some areas recording their highest annual totals on record (Map 4). For example, Surat in south-western Queensland recorded 1,127 mm rainfall compared with the long-term average of 571 mm, Orange in central NSW recorded 1,592 mm (long-term average 936 mm), and the annual total at Mildura in north-western Victoria was 597 mm, about twice the long-term average of 286 mm.

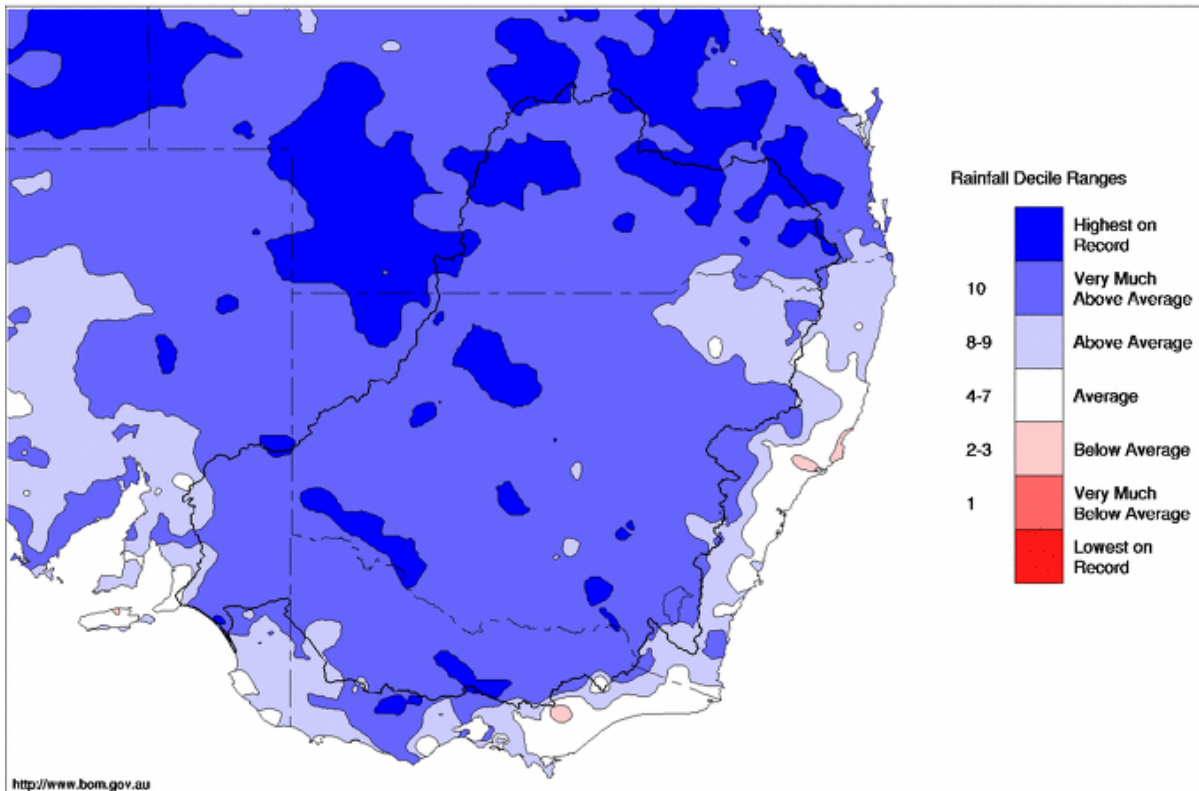
These high rainfalls have dramatically reversed the extreme dry conditions of recent years, with floods occurring multiple times during the year along parts of the River Murray, Darling River system, Murrumbidgee River, Goulburn River, Ovens River and many other rivers in the Basin.



At the end of 2010, storage levels are high in Hume Reservoir and the Menindee Lakes and the Lower Lakes are full. There are also large volumes of water in transit in the Darling, Murray and Murrumbidgee Rivers.

Murray-Darling Rainfall Deciles 1 January to 31 December 2010

Distribution Based on Gridded Data
Product of the National Climate Centre



http://www.bom.gov.au
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Map 4 - Murray-Darling Basin rainfall deciles for 1 January to 31 December 2010 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology)

River Operations

MDBA active storage is currently 6,559 GL (76% capacity), about three times higher than this time last year (2,143 GL, or 25% capacity).

Storage in Dartmouth Reservoir steadily increased by 27 GL over the Christmas–New Year period to 2,189 GL (57% capacity). The storage volume in Dartmouth will probably remain higher than 50% capacity during 2011 as it is unlikely that significant transfers of water from Dartmouth to Hume Reservoir will be required during the next 12 months. Hume Reservoir remains close to full at 2,914 GL (97% capacity), and releases from the reservoir have varied between 18,000–23,300 ML/day during the last 2 weeks. During the next week or so, the flow past Doctors Point is likely to remain close to 25,000 ML/day.

The water level in Lake Mulwala has varied between 124.6 and 124.7 m AHD, and is likely to remain close to 124.7 m AHD in the coming weeks. The release from Yarrowonga Weir has declined from 32,730 ML/day on 23 December to 18,000 ML/day on 2 January. Releases are likely to remain in the range 17,000–20,000 ML/day for the next week or two as water from environmental accounts is used to provide benefits downstream.

On the Edward River, the flow past Stevens Weir reached a peak gauge height of 6.26 m on 24-25 December—a flow of about 19,000 ML/day. The flow past Stevens Weir is currently 11,700 ML/day. Further downstream at Moulamein, the flow peaked at 4.83 m (10,900 ML/day) on



5 January. Water continues to be added to the Edward River system via the Edward Escape in an effort to improve water quality.

At Torrumbarry, the high flow has continued to recede from 52,000 ML/day on 23 December to 29,520 ML/day currently. The flow will continue declining, and could be about 10,000 ML/day by late January. The radial gates at the weir were re-instated on 3 January and the weir pool level is being gradually raised to its normal operating height of 86.05 m AHD.

Further downstream on the River Murray at Euston, the flow is currently 54,810 ML/day and still rising. The peak flow at Euston will depend on the timing and peak flows from the Murrumbidgee and Wakool Rivers, but the Bureau of Meteorology currently expects the peak to be lower than the minor flood level. For more information regarding flood warnings, see the Bureau of Meteorology at <http://www.bom.gov.au/>.

Flows past Mildura and Wentworth Weirs will follow a similar trend to Euston, although the Darling River will contribute an additional 15,000 ML/day (approximately) to the flow at Wentworth as steady releases of 22,000 ML/day have continued from Menindee Lakes.

At Lake Victoria, the level has been fairly steady for the last two weeks at 24.8–24.9 m AHD (currently 438 GL or 65% capacity). The flow to South Australia is currently 56,560 ML/day and rising as the higher flow from Wentworth arrives.

There have been high outflows from the barrages at the Lower Lakes, facilitated by lower tides, and the level of the lakes has dropped to about 0.73 m AHD. Releases from the Lower Lakes to the sea are expected to continue at high rates for at least the next two months.

Water Quality

There is 'blackwater' in the River Murray from the Barmah Forest, upstream of the Edward River offtake, extending as far downstream as Wentworth, and including the Edward-Wakool River system (*see media release attached*). There have been reports of large- and small-scale fish deaths in many reaches of the river, and Murray crays have been observed avoiding the blackwater. The blackwater has a low dissolved oxygen content due to the decomposition of large amounts of organic matter which have been added to the river system by the widespread natural flooding. The low dissolved oxygen contents have also been exacerbated by higher temperatures as the flooding has continued well into summer.

The MDBA, with New South Wales and Victorian agencies, have implemented several measures to lessen the impact of the blackwater, including the delivery of dilution flows from the Goulburn River and from the Mulwala Canal into the Edward River near Deniliquin.

The blackwater is expected to move further downstream into South Australia in the coming weeks. However, mixing of the River Murray water with the Darling River water below Wentworth will assist with increasing the dissolved oxygen content of the Murray water.

For media inquiries contact the Media Officer on 02 6279 0141

DAVID DREVERMAN

Executive Director, River Murray

Week ending Wednesday 29 Dec 2010

Water in Storage

MDBA Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	MDBA Active Storage (GL)	Change in Total Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 856	455.89	2 178	56%	71	2 107	+16
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	191.87	2 980	99%	23	2 957	-17
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	24.91	427	63%	100	327	-22
Menindee Lakes		1 731 *		1 729	100%	(480 #)	1 249	-30
Total		9 269		7 314	79%	--	6 640	-54

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL

% of Total Active MDBA Storage = **77%**

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		1 015	99%	3	1 012	-2
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		1 623	99%	24	1 599	-32
Eildon Reservoir	3 334		2 546	76%	100	2 446	+20

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 28-Dec-2010

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2010
Lake Eucumbene - Total	911	+9	Snowy-Murray	+42	749
Snowy-Murray Component	527	-26	Tooma-Tumut	+10	307
Target Storage	1 510		Net Diversion	32.2	442
			Murray 1 Release	+54	1 112

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL) *

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2010	Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2010
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	22.0	243.0	Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	-8.9	27.0
Wakool Sys Allowance	0.0	3.0	Torrumbary System + Nyah (net)	0.0	111.0
Western Murray Irrig.	0.8	4.0	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	6.1	22.0
Licensed Pumps	N/A	N/A	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.3	3.0
Lower Darling	N/A	N/A	Licensed pumps - LMW	9.0	126.0
TOTAL	22.8	250.0	TOTAL	6.5	289.0

* 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	217.0 *	
Flow this week	437.3	(62 500 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	1,829.5	
Flow last month	1,245.0	

* Flow to SA will be greater than entitlement for December due to Additional Dilution Flow and Unregulated Flow s.

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2010
Swan Hill	260	270	160
Euston	200	200	140
Red Cliffs	180	170	140
Merbein	210	200	130
Burtundy (Darling)	260	240	260
Lock 9	230	230	190
Lake Victoria	190	180	170
Berri	310	310	210
Waikerie	-	-	210
Morgan	N/A	N/A	260
Mannum	350	360	290
Murray Bridge	330	340	300
Milang (Lake Alex)	670	700	2 570
Pottaloch (Lake Alex)	360	350	960
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	7 240	7 260	9 840
Goolwa Barrages	800	780	7 770

Week ending Wednesday 29 Dec 2010

River Levels and Flows

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	-	-	-	9 660	S	9 730	9 730
Jingellic	4.0	2.75	209.27	14 340	F	15 560	17 420
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.75	218.64	1 350	F	1 540	2 220
Heywoods	5.5	3.38	157.01	20 000	S	20 000	19 190
Doctors Point	5.5	3.69	152.16	22 090	F	22 940	23 460
Albury	4.3	2.78	150.22	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	4.25	130.27	27 430	F	28 440	36 240
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	3.26	118.30	24 430	F	29 890	53 090
Tocumwal	6.4	4.24	108.08	28 100	F	33 970	67 450
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	7.42	85.97	44 820	F	49 430	51 380
Swan Hill	4.5	4.20	67.12	26 300	S	26 380	25 820
Wakool Junction	8.8	8.81	57.93	51 730	R	49 580	44 130
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	6.05	47.89	50 520	R	48 830	45 020
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	44 330	F	42 480	37 340
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	6.26	31.02	61 400	R	60 630	59 340
Rufus Junction	-	7.21	24.14	58 120	F	62 490	66 650
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	3.38	-	54 900	S	54 560	52 840
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.87	155.10	1 940	F	2 970	4 840
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	9.58	147.26	5 850	F	7 840	15 010
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	3.80	95.22	5 850	F	10 400	30 900
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	6.12	85.90	N/A	N/A	N/A	6 390
Edward at Liewah	-	5.35	60.73	8 100	R	7 800	7 550
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	5.49	58.98	15 730	R	15 160	13 780
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	6.13	62.09	14 510	R	14 210	14 270
Barwon at Mungindi	-	6.10	-	8 810	R	7 610	5 170
Darling at Bourke	-	11.60	-	66 040	R	51 510	33 800
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	6.32	-	14 630	R	14 480	14 180

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	17 660	20 990
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Weirs and Locks

Pool levels above or below Full Supply Level (FSL)

Murray	FSL (mAHD)	u/s	d/s		FSL (mAHD)	u/s	d/s
Yarrowonga	124.90	-0.22	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+2.17	N/A
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.04	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.37	+3.17
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.72	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.11	+3.00
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	N/A	+2.79	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.94	+4.12
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.32	+3.62	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.10	+3.69
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.28	+2.99	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+1.05	+3.74
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+1.33	+3.70	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.26	+2.63

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	+1.07	6.97	76.32	25754
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	+0.19	5.77	67.07	10800

Lower Lakes

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	(m AHD)
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days	0.83

Barrages

Fishways @ Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	Status	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	0.54	107	-	Open
Mundoo	26 openings	0.65	15	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	6	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	67	-	-
Tauwitchere	322 gates	0.75	179	Open	Open

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

Week ending Wednesday 05 Jan 2011

Water in Storage

MDBA Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	MDBA Active Storage (GL)	Change in Total Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 856	456.12	2 189	57%	71	2 118	+11
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	191.54	2 914	97%	23	2 891	-66
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	24.90	438	65%	100	338	+11
Menindee Lakes		1 731 *		1 692	98%	(480 #)	1 212	-37
Total		9 269		7 233	78%	--	6 559	-80

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL

% of Total Active MDBA Storage = **76%**

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		1 021	100%	3	1 018	+7
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		1 587	97%	24	1 563	-36
Eildon Reservoir	3 334		2 545	76%	100	2 445	-1

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 04-Jan-2011

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2010
Lake Eucumbene - Total	924	+13	Snowy-Murray	+27	776
Snowy-Murray Component	412	-114	Tooma-Tumut	+5	312
Target Storage	1 520		Net Diversion	22.2	464
			Murray 1 Release	+33	1 147

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL) *

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2010	Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2010
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	32.6	275.0	Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	8.6	36.0
Wakool Sys Allowance	0.0	3.0	Torrumbary System + Nyah (net)	1.9	113.0
Western Murray Irrig.	1.2	6.0	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	5.5	28.0
Licensed Pumps	N/A	N/A	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.2	4.0
Lower Darling	N/A	N/A	Licensed pumps - LMW	11.3	137.0
TOTAL	33.8	284.0	TOTAL	27.5	318.0

* 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	217.0 *	
Flow this week	394.7	(56 400 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	280.4	
Flow last month	1,943.9	

* Flow to SA will be greater than entitlement for January due to Additional Dilution Flow and Unregulated Flow s.

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2010
Swan Hill	200	230	160
Euston	210	210	140
Red Cliffs	190	180	140
Merbein	230	220	130
Burtundy (Darling)	270	270	260
Lock 9	250	240	190
Lake Victoria	200	190	170
Berri	250	310	210
Waikerie	-	-	210
Morgan	N/A	N/A	260
Mannum	370	360	290
Murray Bridge	340	330	300
Milang (Lake Alex.)	730	730	2 490
Potalloch (Lake Alex.)	360	360	930
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	7 050	7 050	9 710
Goolwa Barrages	870	870	7 470

Week ending Wednesday 05 Jan 2011

River Levels and Flows

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	-	-	-	1 400	F	4 860	9 730
Jingellic	4.0	1.81	208.33	5 360	F	10 310	15 560
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.64	218.53	1 050	F	1 160	1 540
Heywoods	5.5	3.63	157.26	23 060	F	20 530	20 000
Doctors Point	5.5	3.94	152.41	24 910	F	22 620	22 940
Albury	4.3	3.07	150.51	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	4.17	130.19	26 620	R	26 150	28 440
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	2.63	117.67	18 030	S	20 150	29 890
Tocumwal	6.4	3.40	107.24	20 020	F	22 810	33 970
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	6.52	85.07	29 520	F	35 560	49 430
Swan Hill	4.5	3.95	66.87	24 640	F	25 510	26 380
Wakool Junction	8.8	9.21	58.33	57 360	R	54 790	49 580
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	6.31	48.15	54 810	R	52 870	48 830
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	46 920	F	46 920	-
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	6.39	31.15	63 700	R	62 410	60 630
Rufus Junction	-	7.16	24.09	56 560	R	56 480	62 490
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	3.20	-	50 600	S	50 670	54 560
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.77	155.00	1 770	F	2 000	2 970
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	8.96	146.64	3 630	F	4 480	7 840
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	2.50	93.92	2 720	F	3 750	10 400
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	5.23	85.00	11 700	F	15 030	N/A
Edward at Liewah	-	-	-	9 000	R	8 610	7 800
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	5.73	59.22	17 480	R	16 690	15 160
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	6.20	62.16	15 370	R	14 840	14 210
Barwon at Mungindi	-	5.60	-	6 690	F	7 830	7 610
Darling at Bourke	-	12.25	-	84 490	R	78 300	51 510
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	6.39	-	14 880	S	14 770	14 480

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	13 130	17 650
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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	-0.25	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+2.13	N/A
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.42	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.23	+3.03
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+1.04	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	-0.07	+2.83
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	N/A	+2.97	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.81	+3.99
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.45	+3.75	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.04	+3.67
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.37	+3.08	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+1.05	+3.82
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+1.40	+3.76	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.33	+2.45

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	+1.09	7.01	76.36	26424
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	+0.15	5.78	67.08	10900

Lower Lakes

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	(m AHD)
Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days	0.73

Barrages

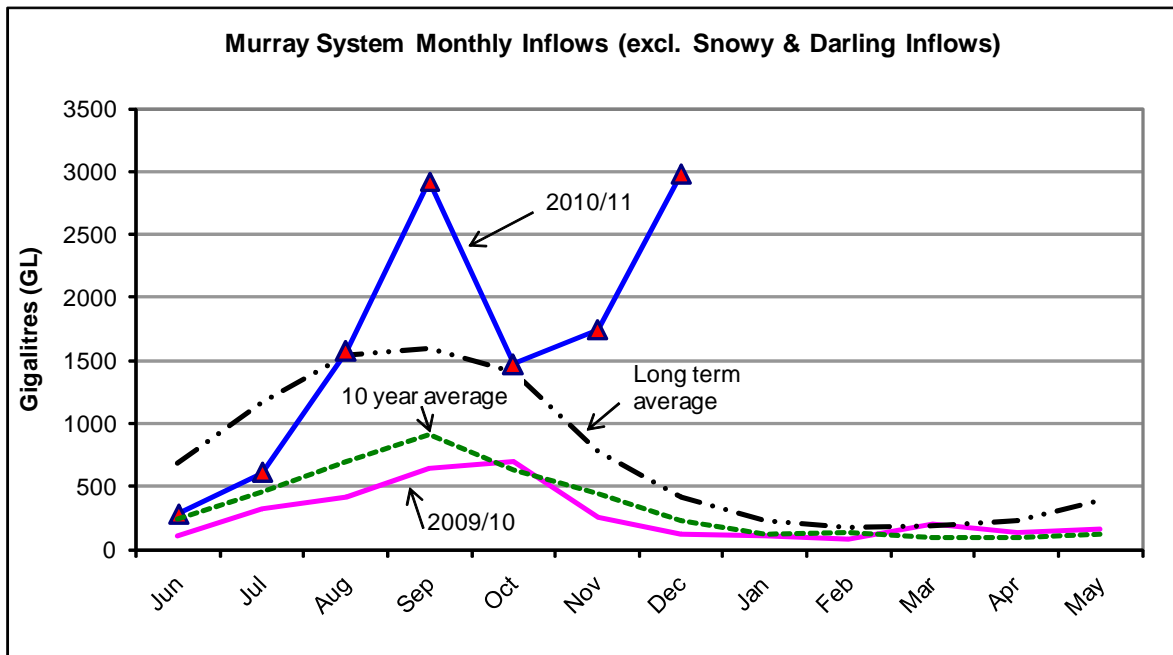
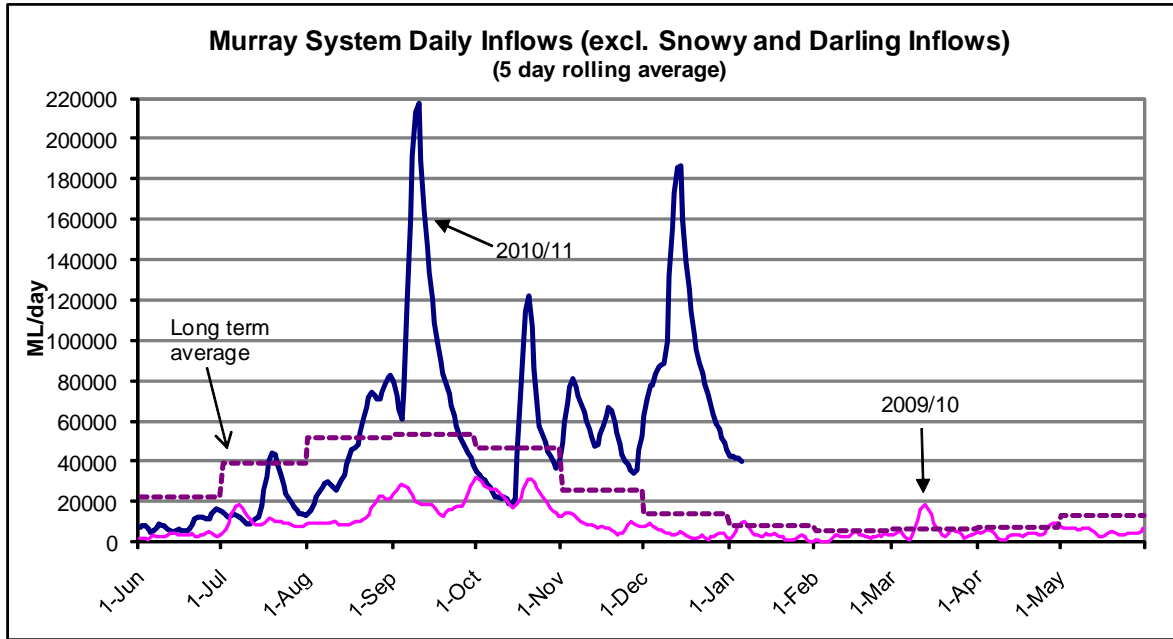
Fishways @ Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	Status	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	0.57	107	-	Open
Mundoo	26 openings	0.61	15	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	6	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	67	-	-
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.70	179	Open	Open

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



Week ending Wednesday 05 January 2011



State Allocations (as at 05 January 2011)

NSW - Murray Valley

High security	97%
General security	100%

Victoria - Murray Valley

High reliability	100%
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NSW - Murrumbidgee Valley

High security	95%
General security	100%

Victoria - Goulburn Valley

High reliability	100%
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NSW - Lower Darling

High security	100%
General security	100%

South Australia - Murray Valley

High security	67%
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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.waterforgood.sa.gov.au/category/news/>

7 January 2011

The highs and lows of floods in the River Murray

Dead and dying fish are not what people expect to see when the River Murray is in flood, but that is exactly what can happen when a flood leads to a blackwater event.

Rob Freeman, Chief Executive of the Murray–Darling Basin Authority said; ‘The Murray–Darling Basin Authority is co-ordinating a monitoring program of blackwater to improve our understanding of the causes of blackwater and its effects’.

‘The water flows in the Murray–Darling Basin are complex and while flood waters can bring life back to a parched region, they sometimes bring undesirable consequences.’

‘Unfortunately these floods have caused a number of fish deaths, including in areas upstream and downstream of Robinvale’, said Mr Freeman.

These fish deaths appear to be associated with blackwater events occurring in the waters of the River Murray, in the Edward and Wakool river system and most recently in the Goulburn-Broken, Lower Darling Anabranche and Loddon rivers.

Measures to mitigate the event have been taken but it has not been possible to release even more water to dilute the blackwater event as most rivers are operating at full capacity or overbank. However, where possible, action has been taken as flooding recedes. This has occurred recently in the Goulburn River, where Living Murray environmental water has been released to improve water quality and provide suitable habitat for fish.

MDBA will continue to put out a weekly water quality update while these events continue.

Mr Freeman said ‘Despite the adverse consequences, we shouldn’t forget the benefits of high environmental flows which are having positive environmental impacts on plants and most animals by providing a welcome change after years of drought.’

‘River red gums are showing vigorous growth and endangered waterbirds such as Great and Intermediate Egrets are breeding.’

Blackwater events are a natural occurrence in low-lying river systems. The severity and extent of this event is a result of widespread floods washing the large accumulation of organic material from years of drought into the rivers. The low dissolved oxygen levels have been exacerbated by higher temperature as the flooding has continued well into summer.

Better quality water is also being released into the Edward River near Deniliquin from the Mulwala Canal to mix with poorer quality water.

END

For more information contact the MDBA Media office at media@mdba.gov.au

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