RIVER MURRAY WEEKLY REPORT

FOR THE WEEK ENDING WEDNESDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2011

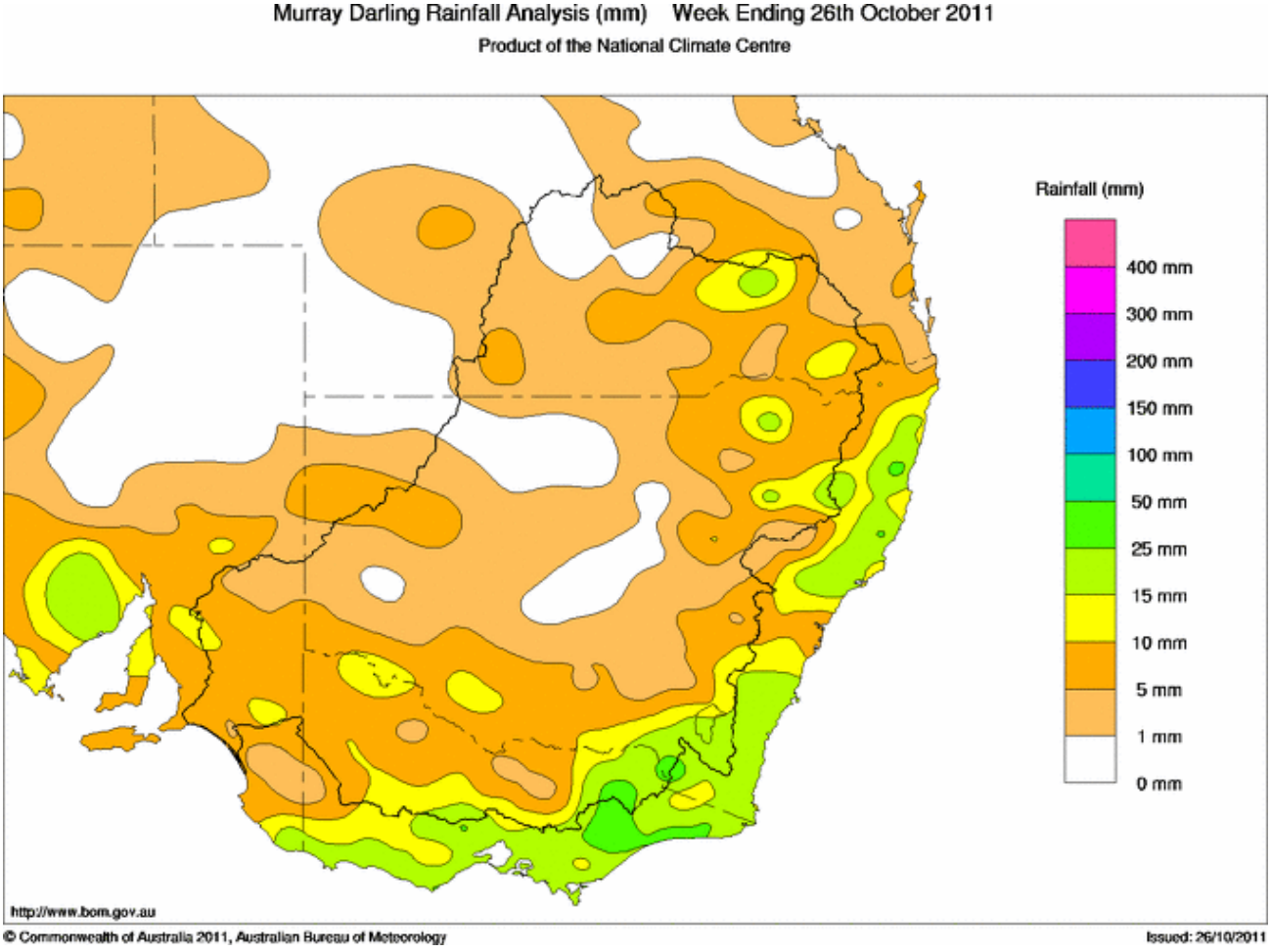
Trim Ref: D11/31641

Rainfall and Inflows

A high pressure cell in the Tasman Sea was the dominant influence on the past week's weather, with fine and warm conditions across most of the Murray-Darling Basin until late in the week when a low pressure trough crossed the region bringing rainfall to some areas and cooler air from the south.

The highest totals were recorded in the south-east ranges, with lesser amounts over other parts of the Great Divide, and generally only light rain further inland (Map 1). The stand out totals were recorded in the NSW Snowy Mountains, where just a short distance beyond the Basin divide, there was 112 mm at Charlotte Pass and 49 mm at Perisher Valley; while in the Victorian High Country, there was 43 mm at Mt Hotham and 42 mm at Falls Creek. Elsewhere in the Basin, rainfall totals were lower. North of the Murray, there was rain in the Brindabella Ranges, with 26 mm at Mt Ginini; while in the Namoi River catchment, there was 29 mm at Gunnedah. Other totals of note in Victoria included 27 mm at Daylesford, 17 mm at Inglewood and 14 mm at Mildura.

Despite the rain, there was little response in the upper tributaries. Upstream of Hume Reservoir, there were slight rises in both the Tooma River and upper River Murray, which resulted in the flow at Jingellic increasing to 7,600 ML/day after averaging around 5,500 ML/day over the preceding 6 days. On the Kiewa River, the flow increased from a low of around 500 ML/day earlier in the week to 1,300 ML/day at Mongans Bridge; while at Wangaratta, the Ovens River had receded to 2,100 ML/day prior to the rain but has now risen to a flow of 2,700 ML/day.



Map 1. Murray-Darling Basin rainfall for the week ending 26 October 2011 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology)

River Operations

MDBA active storage decreased by 26 GL during the week to 7,521 GL (88% capacity). At Dartmouth Reservoir, the total storage increased by 11 GL to 2,843 GL which is 74% capacity. The release remained steady at the normal minimum of 200 ML/day.

At Hume Reservoir the storage decreased by 63 GL to 2,858 GL, which is 95% capacity. Release averaged around 15,500 ML/day over the week, but has been reduced to around 12,500 ML/day over the last few days in response to a slight easing of downstream demands following the rain.

At Lake Mulwala, the weir is currently being operated to maintain a release of between 11,000 and 12,000 ML/day, with the pool level rising to 124.861 m AHD during the week in order to buffer a drop in irrigation diversions. Demand at the major irrigation off-takes has eased somewhat, with diversions to the Mulwala Canal decreasing from 6,450 to 4,650 ML/day, and diversions to the Yarrawonga Main Canal decreasing from 2,250 to 1,300 ML/day. The release is currently at 12,500 ML/day (on Thursday 27 October), and is expected to be reduced back to around 12,000 ML/day in the next few days.

The flow target at Yarrawonga Weir is being maintained using water from environmental accounts, released from Hume Reservoir. Up to 26 October, around 110 GL of environmental water has been released, providing – on average – an extra 3,000 to 5,000 ML/day of water into the river downstream. Releases at the current target rate maintain over-bank flows into the Barmah-Millewa Forest, supporting the wetland ecosystem, including active bird breeding events at many sites that are expected to continue through to the early summer period (Photo 1).

Photo 1. Cormorant eggs in a nest surrounded by water in the Barmah-Millewa Forest on 20 October 2011. (Photo courtesy Keith Chalmers, Goulburn-Broken CMA)

On the Edward River, the release from Stevens Weir reduced during the week from 4,700 to 1,900 ML/day. Further downstream, inflow from Billabong Creek (measured at Darlot) peaked at 1,400 ML/day and is now at around 1,000 ML/day; while on the Wakool River, the flow at Stoney Crossing has increased to around 3,300 ML/day, which is expected to be close to the peak.

At Torrumbarry Weir, diversions to the National Channel were around 1,700 ML/day for most of the week, but following the patchy rain, have now reduced to 1,000 ML/day. Flow downstream of the Weir continued to decrease during the week and is currently at 9,700 ML/day. Downstream at Swan Hill, the flow peaked on 20 October at 15,800 ML/day and has now fallen away to 11,000 ML/day and is expected to keep receding over the coming days.

On the Murrumbidgee River the flow at Balranald has fallen to below 1,000 ML/day after remaining above this mark throughout the winter. Back on the Murray at Euston Weir, a broad flow peak of between 20,000 and 20,500 ML/day was observed throughout the week. The flow should hold on for another day or so before receding steadily from around the coming weekend.

At Menindee Lakes, the total storage decreased by 11 GL, primarily due to evaporation, and remains surcharged at 1,871 GL (108% capacity). The release, measured at Weir 32, continues to be pulsed around an average of 500 ML/day. With summer approaching it can be expected that significant transfers of water from Menindee Lakes to Lake Victoria may soon be needed and updates on any planned increase in release rates will be provided in coming weeks.

Lake Victoria continued filling this week. Total storage increased by 37 GL to 623 GL which is 92% capacity. The rate of filling will fall away over the coming weeks due to the reducing head difference between the River Murray upstream of Lock 9 and the storage. Flow to South Australia averaged 13,200 ML/day during the week, and is expected to average slightly above this for the coming week.

The average level at the Lower Lakes rose 0.03 m and is currently 0.77 m AHD. The operational target is to surcharge the Lower Lakes to around 0.8 m AHD over the coming weeks.

For media inquiries contact the Media Officer on 02 6279 0141

DAVID DREVERMAN
Executive Director, River Murray

Water in Storage

Week ending Wednesday 26 Oct 2011

MDBA Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage (GL)	Current Storage (%)	Dead Storage (GL)	Active Storage (GL)	Change in Total Storage for the Week (GL)
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 856	469.09	2 843	74%	71	2 772	+11
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	191.26	2 858	95%	23	2 835	-63
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	26.54	623	92%	100	523	+37
Menindee Lakes		1 731*		1 871	108%	(480 #)	1 391	-11
Total		**9 269**		**8 195**	**88%**	**- -**	**7 521**	**-26**
Total Active MDBA Storage							88% ^	

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026		954	93%	3	951	-46
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		1 511	93%	24	1 487	-10
Eildon Reservoir	3 334		3 329	100%	100	3 229	+6

* Menindee surcharge capacity – 2050 GL ** All Data is rounded to nearest GL **
# NSW takes control of Menindee Lakes when storage falls below 480 GL, and control reverts to MDBA when storage next reaches 640 GL
^ % of total active MDBA storage

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 25 Oct 2011

Storage	Active Storage (GL)	Weekly Change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This Week	From 1 May 2011
Lake Eucumbene - Total	1 818	n/a	Snowy-Murray	-0	274
Snowy-Murray Component	550	n/a	Tooma-Tumut	+5	182
Target Storage	1 400		Net Diversion	-5	92
			Murray 1 Release	+8	500

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL) *

New South Wales	This Week	From 1 July 2011	Victoria	This Week	From 1 July 2011
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	49.3	310	Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	11.5	68
Wakool Sys Allowance	0.0	-2	Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	13.2	132
Western Murray Irrigation	0.5	4	Sunraysia Pumped Districts	2.6	17
Licensed Pumps	6.3	49	Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	2	8
Lower Darling	0.3	10	Licensed pumps - LMW	6.2	51
TOTAL	**56.4**	**371**	**TOTAL**	**35.5**	**276**

* 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 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 entitlement for October due to Additional Dilution Flow and Unregulated Flows.

Entitlement this month	170.0 *
Flow this week	92.2
Flow so far this month	431.1
Flow last month	910.4

(13 200 ML/day)

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

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2011
Swan Hill	120	130	150
Euston	130	140	130
Red Cliffs	-	-	110
Merbein	160	170	110
Burtundy (Darling)	390	390	350
Lock 9	180	160	120
Lake Victoria	190	180	200
Berri	310	270	200
Waikerie	-	-	-
Morgan	280	300	240
Mannum	280	280	220
Murray Bridge	250	230	210
Milang (Lake Alex.)	490	480	540
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	240	240	260
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	5 560	5 440	5 560
Goolwa Barrages	510	480	1 540

River Levels and Flows

Week ending Wednesday 26 Oct 2011

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	-	-	-	4 000	F	2 560	2 660
Jingellic	4.0	2.06	208.58	7 610	R	5 770	7 000
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.65	218.54	1 050	R	940	990
Heywoods	5.5	2.82	156.45	13 340	F	15 880	14 030
Doctors Point	5.5	2.99	151.46	14 230	F	16 560	15 700
Albury	4.3	1.95	149.39	-	-	-	-
Corowa	3.8	3.38	129.40	16 030	F	17 560	14 350
Yarrawonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.91	116.95	11 950	F	11 870	12 090
Tocumwal	6.4	2.61	106.45	11 850	S	12 350	15 120
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.01	81.56	9 730	F	12 130	15 500
Swan Hill	4.5	2.11	65.03	10 990	F	14 090	15 890
Wakool Junction	8.8	5.35	54.47	20 780	F	20 720	20 270
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	3.33	45.17	20 470	R	20 200	20 320
Mildura Weir (d/s)		-	-	20 860	F	20 680	-
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.94	28.70	18 020	S	18 050	17 250
Rufus Junction	-	4.34	21.27	11 940	R	12 170	13 820
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	1.19	-	12 300	R	11 910	14 540
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.61	154.84	1 450	R	1 320	1 910
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	8.80	146.48	2 720	R	2 360	3 110
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.38	92.80	760	F	940	3 230
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	1.95	81.73	1 920	F	2 330	5 620
Edward at Liewah	-	3.72	59.10	3 790	R	3 270	2 150
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	2.29	55.78	3 300	S	2 810	1 400
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	1.45	57.41	990	F	1 250	2 500
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.47	-	770	R	990	1 090
Darling at Bourke	-	4.35	-	1 880	R	1 820	1 270
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.90	-	570	F	540	380

Natural Inflow to Hume	10 650	14 090

(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
Yarrawonga	124.90	-0.04	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.34	+2.05
No. 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	-0.15	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	-0.01	+0.60
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.04	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.02	+0.60
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.05	+0.99	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.06	+1.46
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.04	+1.30	No. 3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.05	+0.80
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.14	+0.39	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.16	+0.76
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.10	+0.82	No. 1 Blanchetown	3.20	+0.04	+0.44

Lower Lakes FSL = 0.75 m AHD

Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days (m AHD)	0.77

Barrages

	Openings	Level (m AHD)	Fishways at Barrages: No. Open	Rock Ramp	Vertical Slot
Goolwa	128 openings	0.83	5	-	Open
Mundoo	26 openings	0.79	All closed	-	-
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	1	-	-
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	3	-	-
Tauwitchere	322 gates	0.79	10	Open	Open

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

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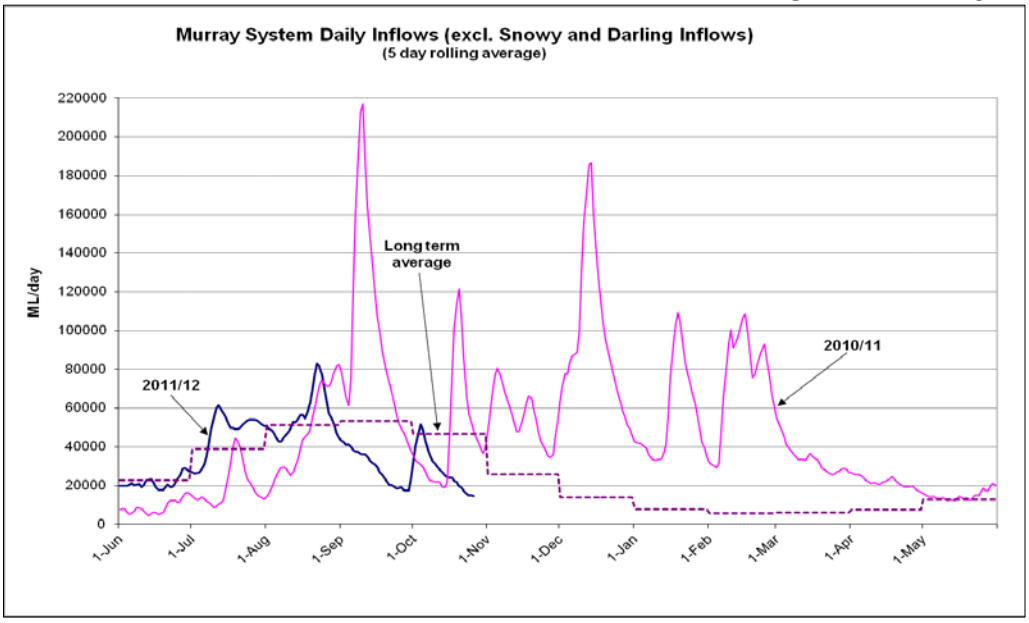

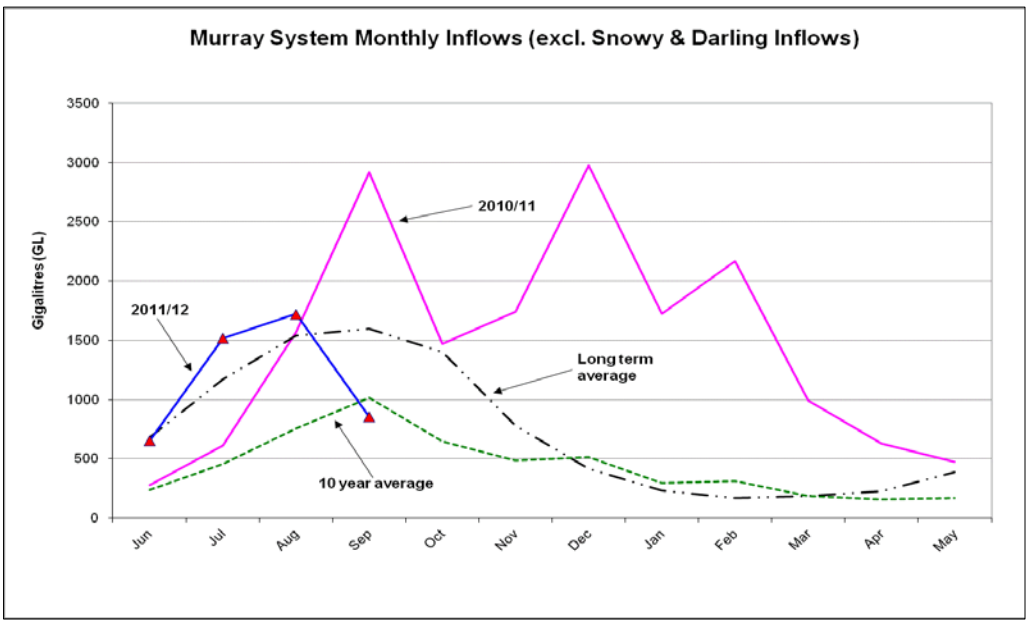

State Allocations (as at 26 Oct 2011)

NSW - Murray Valley

High security	97%
General security	26%

Victorian - Murray Valley

High reliability	86%
Low reliability	0%

NSW – Murrumbidgee Valley

High security	95%
General security	65%

Victorian - Goulburn Valley

High reliability	100%
Low reliability	0%

NSW - Lower Darling

High security	100%
General security	100%

South Australia – Murray Valley

High security	100%

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/