River Murray Weekly Report

For the week ending Wednesday, 02 Apr 2025

Trim Ref: D25/5823

March 2025 summary

According to the Bureau, rainfall for the month of March varied from below average to above average across most of the southern Basin, while large parts of the northern Basin saw above average to highest on record rainfall. (**Figure *1***).

The Bureau reports a monthly area-average rainfall total for the Murray–Darling Basin of 81.2 mm. This is 90 % above the long-term average for March.

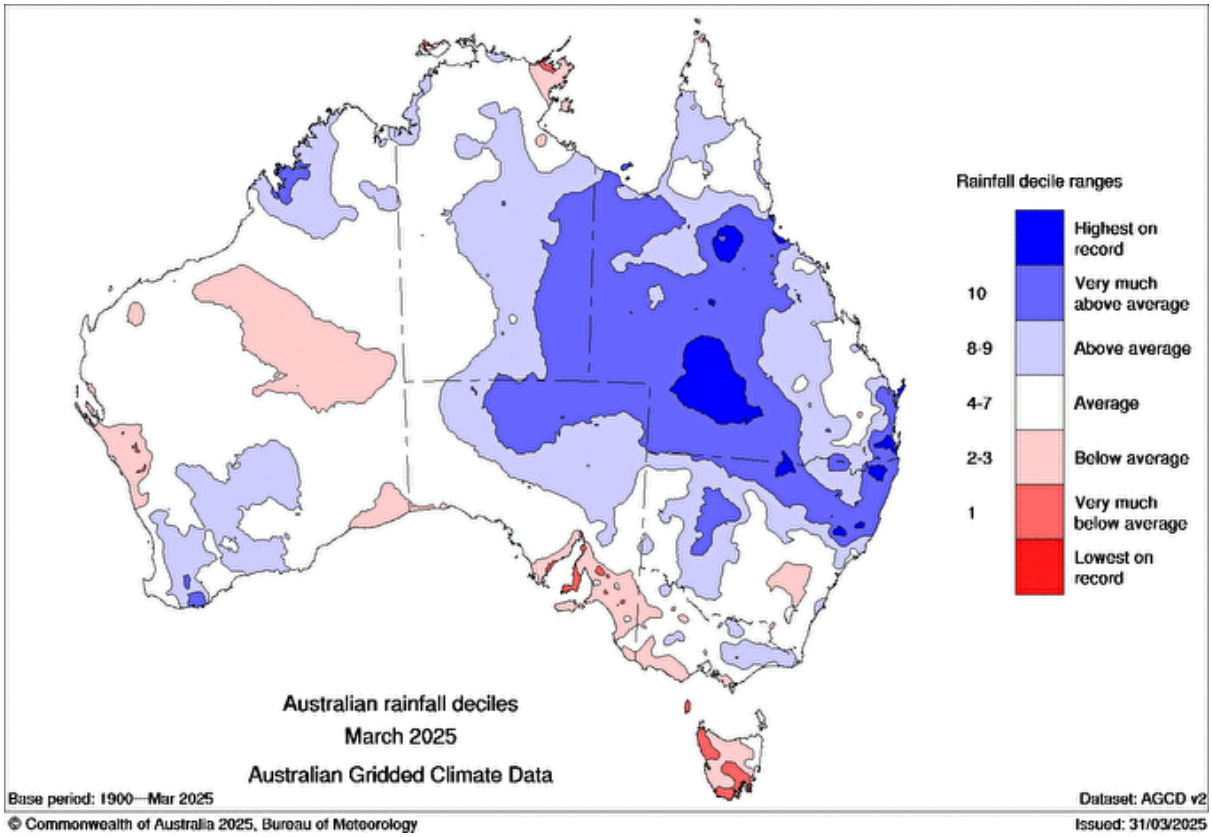

Figure 1: Murray–Darling Basin rainfall deciles for March 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology)

River Murray System inflows for March (excluding Snowy, Darling, IVT and environmental inflows) were approximately 111 gigalitres, which is below the long-term average for March of 146 GL. In comparison with the historical record since 1896, 73% of previous monthly March totals have been higher than the inflows observed in March 2025.

The Bureau reports that Australia's national area-average mean temperature for March was 2.41°C above the long-term (1961–1990) average – the warmest March on record for Australia since 1910. Across much of the Murray–Darling Basin, minimum and maximum monthly average temperatures were average to highest on record (**Figure *2*** and **Figure *3***).

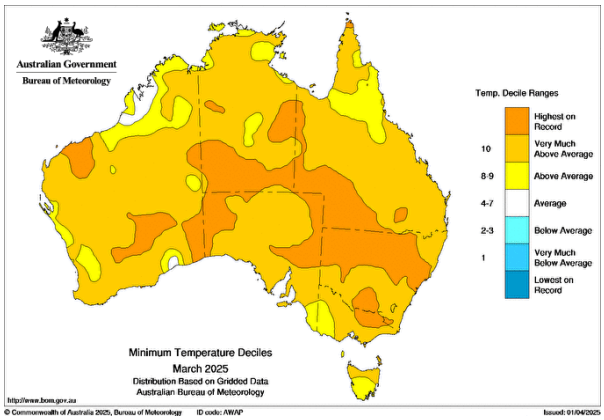

Figure 2: minimum temperature decile for March 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).

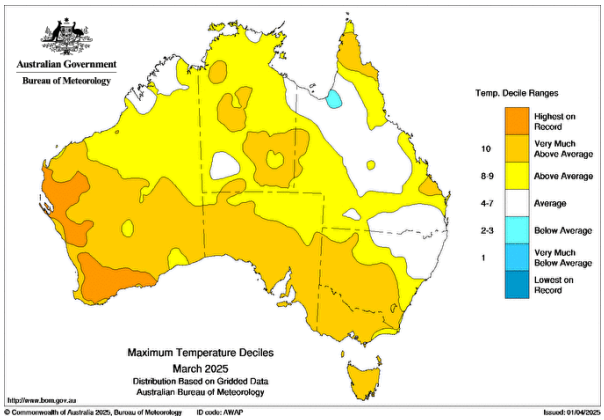

Figure 3: maximum temperature decile for March 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).

The Bureau advises that April is showing no strong signal for above or below median rainfall across the southern Basin, while the northern Basin is likely (60 - 70 %) to see above median rainfall. In May, most of the Basin has a low likelihood (20 - 35 %) chance of exceeding median rainfall (**Figure *4*** and **Figure *5***).

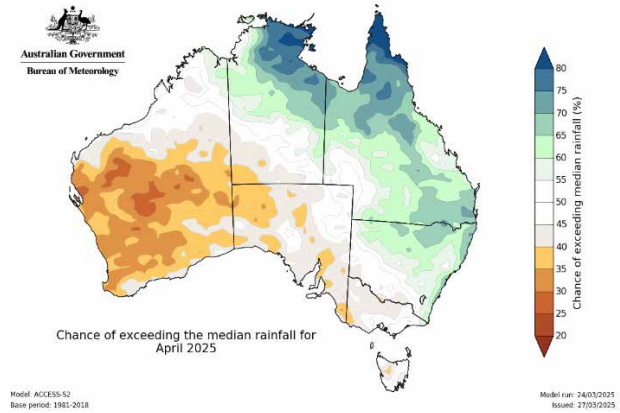

Figure 4: climate outlook issued 27 March 2025 for the chance of above median rainfall for April 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).

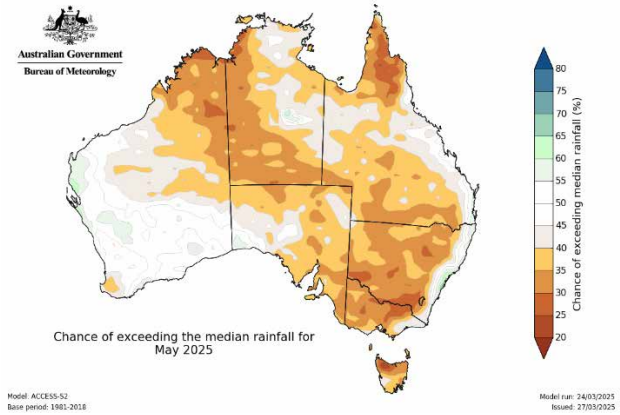

Figure 5: climate outlook issued 27 March 2025 for the chance of above median rainfall for May 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).

MDBA Active storage volume continues to decline, as of 2 April it was 4,024 GL versus the long-term average at the end of March of 4,882 GL.

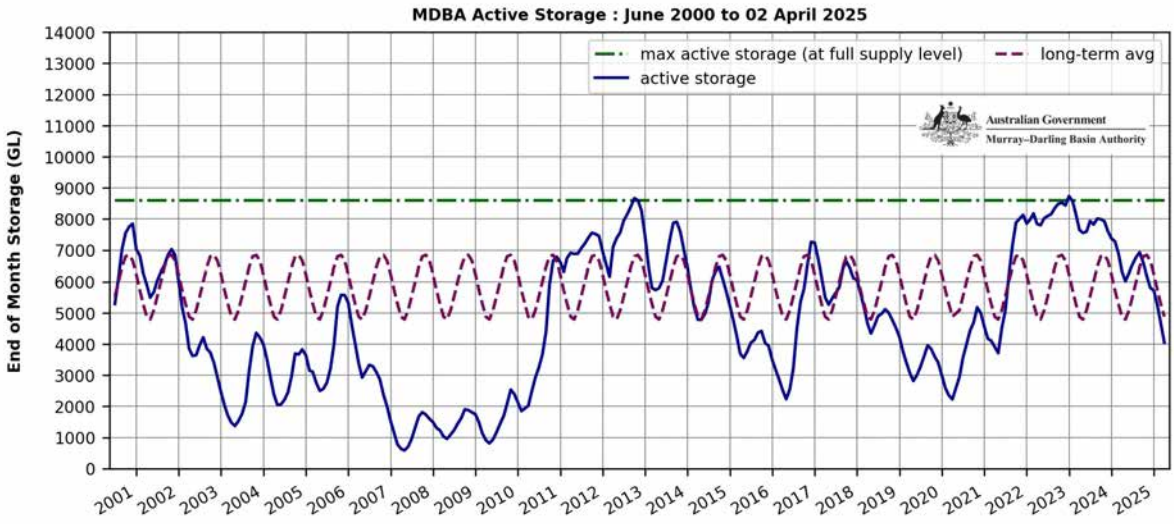

Figure 6: MDBA Active Storage from June 2000 to April 2025

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Weekly rainfall and inflows

Last week rainfall varied across the Murray–Darling Basin from dry in the south to wet in the north. In the northern Basin, rain continued to fall in the Paroo, Warrego, and Condamine–Balonne catchments, with rainfall between 50 to 240 mm. Smaller totals fell in the southern Basin with 5 to 15 mm across the central and upper Murray.

The heaviest falls were in northern NSW with notable totals of 239 mm at Wee Waa and 207 mm at Walgett. In Queensland 79 mm fell at Texas and 62 mm at Toowoomba. In Victoria 35 mm fell at Omeo and 32 mm at Jokers Creek. Conditions remained dry in South Australia.

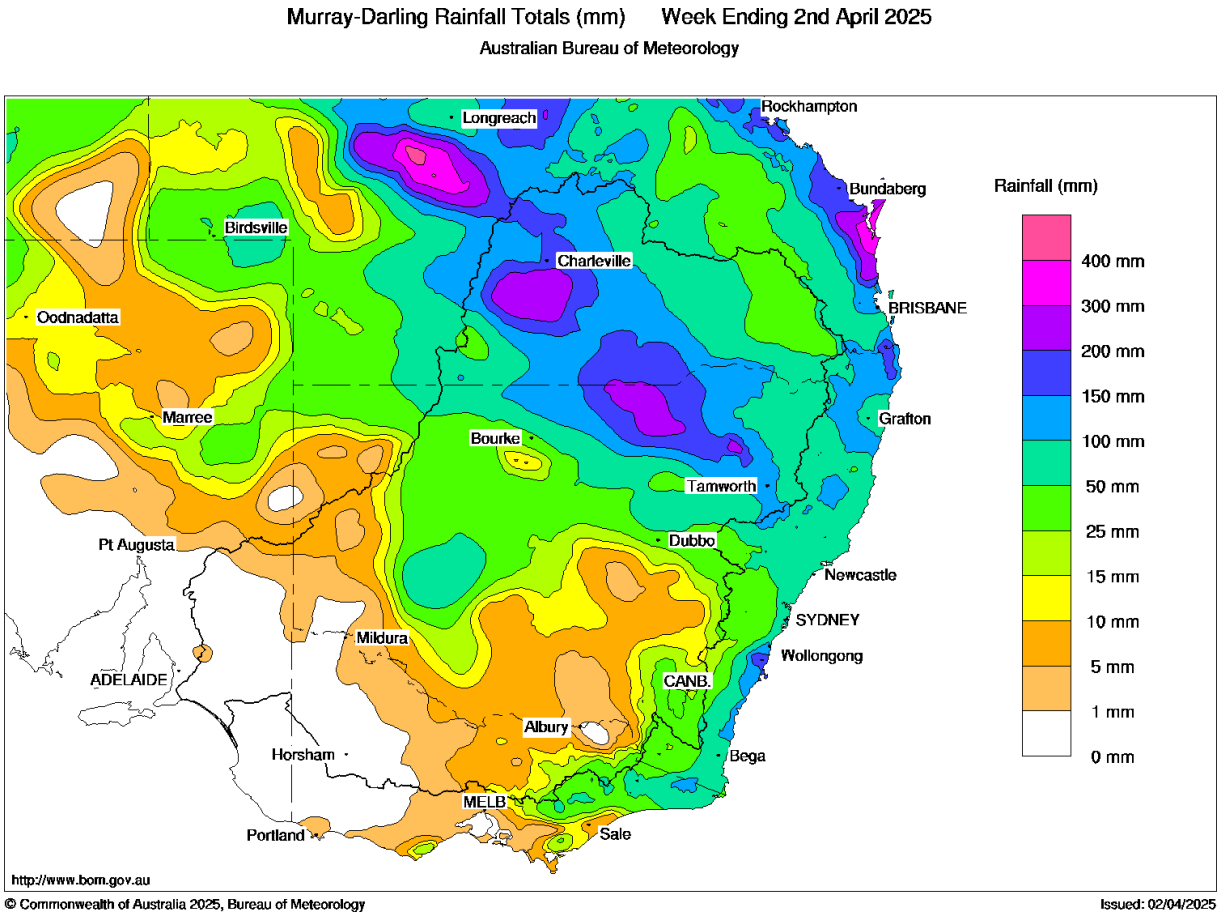

Figure 7: Rainfall totals across the Murray–Darling Basin for the week ending 2 April 2025 (Bureau of Meteorology)

The Bureau of Meteorology's 8-day rainfall forecast is indicating totals between 1 to 5 mm could fall over the southern Basin with heavier falls in the northern Basin of around 5 to 25 mm.

River operations

- Bulk Transfers from Dartmouth to Hume continue
- Transfers of operational water through the Edward system have ceased
- Flows downstream of Yarrawonga decreased

River Murray System update

Although some rain did fall over the southern Connected Basin over the last week, Murray System inflows for the 2024-25 water year continue to track below the long-term average.

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While the rain did not result in large streamflow responses it did lead to irrigation demands and system losses reducing. This has meant that more water is in transit to Lake Victoria than was originally planned and, as a result, some planned transfers have been reduced during the week. Over the last week:

- Water has continued to be transferred from Dartmouth to Hume Dam (transfers are expected to continue during autumn and winter if conditions remain dry)
- Water being delivered downstream of Yarrawonga Weir has been reduced to slightly below the channel capacity of the Barmah–Millewa reach (it had been at or above capacity since September 2024)
- Transfers of water around the Barmah–Millewa reach via Murray Irrigation Limited (MIL) infrastructure to the Kolety/Edward River has ceased
- Water continues to be called from Inter Valley Transfers (IVT) in the Goulburn system
- Water continues to be called from the Menindee Lakes

The MDBA reminds river users that River Murray levels downstream of Hume Dam to South Australia may vary. Stakeholders are encouraged to review our River Data page and the weekly report to keep up to date with current flows and river levels over the coming weeks.

Water Quality

WaterNSW advises recreational blue-green algae (BGA) red alerts for Lake Menindee, with various other Menindee Lakes and lower Darling–Baaka sites under BGA amber/green alerts.

In the River Murray, there remains numerous BGA amber/green alerts from Lake Hume to the SA border. Multiple sites on the Edward–Wakool system are at BGA amber/green alerts.

Goulburn–Murray Water has issued BGA alerts for central Victoria at Hepburns Lagoons and Newlyn/Tullaroop/ Laanecoorie/Cairn Curran Reservoirs, and at Lakes Boga and Charm in the north.

There are no current BGA alerts within the SA Basin (SA Health).

Further general information is available at Water quality threats | Murray–Darling Basin Authority (mdba.gov.au).

River operations

At **Dartmouth Dam**, the storage decreased by 57 GL over the week to 3,129 GL (81 % capacity). Releases, measured at the Colemans gauge, are currently around 9,500 megalitres /day and are expected to decrease over the coming week. Flows are being varied to better mimic natural variability in the Mitta Mitta River while transferring sufficient volume to Hume Dam to meet downstream demands for the following season.

Hume Dam storage reduced by 25 GL to 773 GL (26 % capacity). Releases from Hume Dam varied in response to climatic conditions and downstream demands. This week, due to rainfall along the Murray and reduced demands, Hume releases were stepped down to 12,000 ML/day. The release from Hume Dam is expected to continue to vary over the next week in line with irrigation demands.

At **Lake Mulwala**, diversions at the major irrigation off-takes varied throughout this week due to rain. At Mulwala Canal orders were around 5,000 ML/day prior to rainfall and following the rain dropped to around 3,100 ML/day before increasing again to around 3,800 ML/day. Similarly, Yarrawonga Main Channel orders increased to around 1,300 ML/day at the beginning of the week, dropping to around 700 ML/day due to rainfall and returned to around 1,300 ML/day by the end of the week.

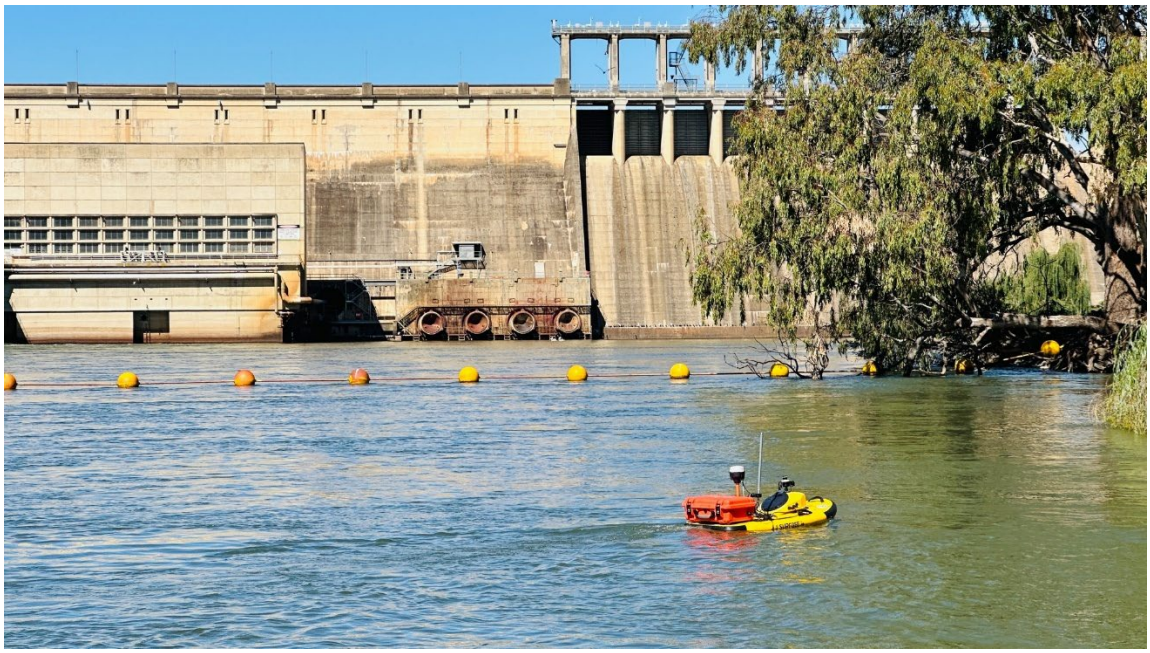

Figure 8: Remote boat undertaking bathymetric surveys downstream of Hume Dam this week (Source: 12P Consulting)

The release downstream of Yarrawonga remained around 8,900 ML/day for the majority of the week after peaking at around 10,500 ML/day on 22 March due to a rainfall rejection event. Today, releases from Yarrawonga Weir were reduced to 8,600 ML/day and are expected to decrease to around 7,800 ML/day over the coming week.

Regulators within the Barmah–Millewa Forest that were opened last week to manage the higher release from Yarrawonga Weir have now been closed.

Flow through the **Kolety** (pronounced Kol-etch)/**Edward River offtake** and **Gulpa Creek offtake** remained steady around their maximum regulated capacities. Significant volumes are being delivered via the Edward Escape to help meet demands in the Kolety/Edward–Wakool system. During the week transfers to move water around the Barmah–Millewa reach via the Edward system to help meet demands on the River Murray ceased.

Diversions into Yallakool and Colligen Creeks remained relatively high as WaterNSW delivered flow pulses or 'freshes' on behalf of environmental water holders. These freshes aim to help improve the condition of native fish populations by improving water quality and productivity (inundating benches and riverbanks to provide more food) and also providing opportunities for dispersal. Downstream on the Kolety at **Steven's Weir**, flows averaged 1,900 ML/day.

Inflow to the Murray from the **Goulburn River**, measured at McCoy's Bridge, continued to fall after peaking at around 5,500 ML/day on 22 March as the autumn pulse receded. The flow at McCoy's Bridge is currently around 2,400 ML/day and is expected to reduce in the coming week to around 1,100 ML/day. The pulse includes IVT to help meet Murray system demands and water delivered on behalf of environmental water holders to benefit native vegetation along the banks of the lower Goulburn River. Water delivered on behalf of environmental water holders will be delivered to South Australia to help sustain water levels in the lower lakes. Information regarding opportunities for allocation trade between the Goulburn and Murray systems is available at the Victorian Water Register website and the Goulburn–Murray Water website.

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Figure 9: The Edward River in NSW (J. Newman)

At **Torrumbarry Weir,** the diversion to **National Channel** remained around 2,200 ML/day through the week and is expected to remain around this level for the coming week. The flow downstream of **Torrumbarry Weir** began to recede to around 7,700 ML/day and is forecast to continue to reduce in the coming week as the Goulburn fresh moves through.

Figure 10: Sandy Point on the Murrumbidgee River (M. Southgate)

On the **Murrumbidgee River**, the flow at Balranald averaged around 1,000 ML/day and is expected to recede over the coming weeks toward the end-of-system target of 180 ML/day. The Murrumbidgee IVT account balance is currently 7.9 GL. Trade to the Murray from the Murrumbidgee is open.

At **Euston Weir** the pool is being gradually lowered to 30 cm below full supply level (FSL) to supplement flows downstream. Over much of summer, the weir pool was surcharged to around 20 cm above FSL to store additional water. This volume was kept in reserve to help meet any periods of particularly higher demand and to reduce the likelihood of a delivery shortfall.

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Storage in the **Menindee Lakes** reduced to 587 GL (34 % capacity). Inflows are persisting at low rates, with the flow at Wilcannia around 360 ML/day. The release from the Menindee Lakes, measured at **Weir 32**, is steady at around 1,200 ML/day. Transfers to the River Murray will continue in some capacity during autumn while conditions remain dry in the River Murray catchment (see the WaterNSW website for operational updates).

While flood warnings are current in the Monnie, Condamine/Balonne, Warrego, Paroo and Namoi catchments in the northern Basin it is too early to forecast how much water will make its way into the Barwon/Darling River and then the Menindee Lakes system. Over the coming weeks as water moves closer more accurate forecasts will be able to be determined (see the WaterNSW website for operational updates).

Figure 11: Lake Cawndilla (T. Milne)

Operational releases from Lake Cawndilla to the River Murray via the Great Darling Anabranch (GDA) are continuing at around 700 ML/day. The additional loss associated with delivering water to the Murray via the GDA compared with delivering it to the Murray via Weir 32 and the lower Baaka is being debited from environmental water holder entitlements. Delivering operational water via the GDA benefits native fish and maximises use of water stored in Lake Cawndilla/Menindee that may otherwise be stranded now that the storage water level is limiting the release to the lower Baaka.

The MDBA continues to work with WaterNSW, the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (NSW DCCEEW) and NSW DPI Fisheries to support active management of the lakes until they reach the 480 GL storage trigger. NSW agencies indicate that having at least 195 GL of active storage in the upper lakes (Lakes Wetherell, Tandure and Pamamaroo) when Menindee Lakes reach this trigger will help extend supply for Menindee township and the lower Baaka.

Current forecasts indicate the Lakes could reach the 480 GL trigger in winter 2025 but, *this does not take into account any potential inflows from current rainfall events as how much water will reach the Lakes remains uncertain*. As this water moves closer, more accurate updates will able to be provided.

The storage at **Lake Victoria** decreased by 12 GL over the last week to 209 GL (31 % capacity). It is expected that the storage level in Lake Victoria will now begin to increase as upstream demands lower and transfers from upstream storages continue to reach the Lake. The storage volume and operations at Lake Victoria are being managed in accordance with the Lake Victoria Operating Strategy (LVOS) as specified in the Objectives and Outcomes for River Operations in the River Murray System.

At **Locks 7 and 8**, the weir pool levels are currently lowered as part of the weir pool variability program. Lock 8 pool level is being varied within the range of around 5 to 20 cm below FSL whilst Lock 7 pool level will vary down to around 50 cm below FSL. Varying pool levels aims to help restore a more natural wetting and drying cycle to riverbanks and adjacent wetlands within the influence of the weir pool.

The **flow to South Australia** averaged 7,700 ML/day over the past week. The release is expected to reduce to around 7,000 ML/day over the coming week with water continuing to be delivered on behalf of environmental water holders.

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The **Lower Lakes** 5-day average water level is approximately 0.57 m AHD. For further information about water levels, flow rates and barrage operations along the River Murray in South Australia see the South Australian Department for Environment and Water weekly River Murray Flow Report and the Water Data SA website.

For media inquiries contact the Media Officer on 02 6279 0141

JACQUI HICKEY
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Australian Government

Murray–Darling Basin Authority

River Murray Weekly Report

Water in Storage

Week ending Wednesday 02 Apr 2025

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	474.20	3129	81%	71	3058	-57
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	176.60	773	26%	23	750	-25
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	22.60	209	31%	100	109	-12
Menindee Lakes		1 731*		587	34%	(480) #	107	-22
Total		**9 269**		**4698**	**51%**	- -	**4024**	**-117**
Total Active MDBA Storage							**47%^**	

* 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

Major State Storages

NSW: https://www.waternsw.com.au/supply/regional-nsw/dam-levels

VIC: https://www.g-mwater.com.au/water-resources/catchments/storages

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling.

NSW: WaterInsights - WaterNSW

VIC: Water Measurement Information System

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 01 Apr 2025

Storage	Active Storage (GL)	Weekly Change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This Week	From 1 May 2024
Lake Eucumbene - Total	1650	-10	Snowy–Murray	12	770
Snowy–Murray Component	530	-11	Tooma–Tumut	0	149
Target Storage	1340		Net Diversion	12	621
			Murray 1 Release	13	905

Flow to South Australia (GL)

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

Entitlement this month	135.0*
Flow this week	54.2
Flow so far this month	14.5
Flow last month	246.1

(7,700 ML/day)

Salinity (EC)

List view | River Murray data (mdba.gov.au)

River Levels and Flows

List view | River Murray data (mdba.gov.au)

SA Water – River Murray reports

https://www.sawater.com.au/water-and-the-environment/south-australias-water-sources/river-sources/river-reports-daily-flow

Water Data SA – Barrage flow summary

https://water.data.sa.gov.au/Data/Dashboard/41

State Allocations (as at 02 Apr 2025)

NSW State Allocations (%)

Location	High Security	General Security
Murray Valley	100	110
Murrumbidgee Valley	95	39
Lower Darling	100	100

VIC State Allocations (%)

Location	High Reliability	Low Reliability
Murray Valley	100	0
Goulburn Valley	100	0

SA State Allocations (%)

Location	High Security
Murray Valley	100

NSW: https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/summary

VIC: http://nvrm.net.au/seasonal-determinations/current

SA: https://www.environment.sa.gov.au/topics/river-murray/water-allocation

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Week ending Wednesday 02 Apr 2025