

For the week ending Wednesday, 07 May 2025

Trim Ref: D25/8319

April 2025 summary

The Bureau of Meteorology reports that rainfall for the month of April varied across the southern Murray–Darling Basin from very much below average to very much above average. Large parts of the northern Basin received above average rainfall. (Figure 1).

The Bureau reports a monthly area-average rainfall total for the Murray-Darling Basin of 33 mm. This is 14% below the long-term average for April.

April 2025



Australian Gridded Climate Data

Murray-Darling rainfall deciles

Figure 1: Murray-Darling Basin rainfall deciles for April 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).

River Murray System inflows for April (excluding Snowy, Darling, IVT and environmental inflows) were approximately 103 GL, which is below the long-term median for April of 162 GL. In comparison with the historical record since 1896, 84% of previous monthly April totals have been higher than the inflows observed in April 2025.





The Bureau reports that Australia's national area-average mean temperature for April was 1.0 °C above the longterm (1961–1990) average. Notably, Victoria's state area-averaged mean temperature was 2.37 °C above the longterm average, making it the warmest April on record. 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 April 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).



The Bureau advises that there is low probability for above median rainfall across the Basin in May. In June, most of the southern Basin has no strong signal for above or below median rainfall, while parts of the northern Basin show a lower likelihood (25-40%) of exceeding median rainfall (Figure 4 and Figure 5).



Figure 4: Climate outlook issued 28 April 2025 for the chance of above median rainfall for May 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorlogy).



Figure 5: Climate outlook issued 28 April 2025 for the chance of above median rainfall for June 2025 (Source: Bureau of Meteorology).





Rainfall and inflows

Little to no rainfall was recorded across the Murray-Darling Basin this week (Figure 6).

Murray-Darling Rainfall Totals (mm) Week Ending 7th May 2025 Australian Bureau of Meteorology



Figure 6: Rainfall totals across the Murray-Darling Basin for the week ending 7 May 2025 (Bureau of Meteorology)

The Bureau of Meteorology is <u>forecasting</u> rainfall totals of between 1 to 5 mm across much of the Murray-Darling Basin in the coming week.





River operations

- Releases from Hume Dam lower as the irrigation season draws to a close
- Inflows to Menindee Lakes increasing
- Storage in Lake Victoria increasing towards end May storage target

River Murray System update

With the irrigation season drawing to a close, releases from storages are expected to reduce toward minimum flow requirements in the coming weeks.

In managing the River Murray system, the MDBA is:

- Conserving water in upper Murray storages
- Continuing to balance the volume of water stored in Dartmouth and Hume storage
- Continuing to call small volumes of Inter-Valley Trade (IVT) water from the Goulburn system to help meet demands in the mid-Murray.
- Using water from Menindee Lakes to help meet system demands in the lower Murray, including refilling Lake Victoria to the end May target of 350 to 396 GL.

The MDBA reminds river users that River Murray levels downstream of Hume Dam to South Australia can vary and stakeholders are encouraged to review our <u>River Data</u> page and read the weekly report to keep up to date with current flows and river levels.

Water Quality

<u>WaterNSW</u> advises recreational blue-green algae (BGA) red alerts for Lake Menindee, with various other Menindee Lakes and lower Darling-Baaka amber/green alerts. There remain numerous recreational BGA amber and green alerts in the River Murray from Lake Hume to the SA border.

<u>Goulburn-Murray Water</u> has issued recreational BGA alerts for central Victoria at Lake Eppalock, Hepburns Lagoon, and Newlyn, Tullaroop, Laanecoorie and Cairn Curran Reservoirs, and in the north at Lake Boga.

<u>SA Health</u> has issued a recreational BGA alert for the Goolwa Channel (Point Sturt to Goolwa Barrage) and advise of a marine algal bloom close to the Murray Mouth which can travel depending on conditions.

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







River operations

Over the last week active storage increased by 80 GL to 3,933 GL (46% capacity). The last time active storage was round this volume on 1 May was 2021 (Figure 7).



Figure 7 – MDBA total storage (showing contribution from individual storages) and active storage as at 1 May each year since Dartmouth Dam was completed in 1979

At **Dartmouth Dam**, the <u>storage</u> reduced by 35 GL over the week to 2,933 GL (76% capacity). The release, measured at the Colemans gauge, is currently targeting around 6,000 ML/day. Releases are being varied to better mimic natural variability in the Mitta Mitta River while transferring enough volume to Hume Dam to meet the objectives of:

- balancing risk of spill in Dartmouth and Hume storages should conditions over winter and spring 2025 turn wet and;
- meeting system demands downstream of Hume in 2025-26 should conditions remain dry.

Communities, landholders, and river users along the Mitta Mitta River are encouraged to continue to monitor water levels in the coming weeks. For more information, see the Mitta Mitta <u>flow advice</u> and the <u>forecast</u> for flows at the Coleman's gauge on the MDBA website.

Hume Dam storage remained relatively steady at around 22% capacity. The release, currently 9,000 ML/day, is expected to reduce in the coming week in anticipation of diversions to the major irrigation off-takes ceasing on 15 May.







Lake Mulwala is currently at 124.75 m AHD and within the normal operating range (124.6 to 124.9 m AHD). Diversions at Mulwala Canal varied this week and averaged around 2,000 ML/day (Figure 8), while at Yarrawonga Main Channel diversions steadily increased to 1,600 ML/day (Figure 9). At this time of year, water is predominantly being used to water pasture and help establish winter cereal crops.



Figure 8: Diversion to Mulwala Canal in autumn 2025 compared with recent years



Figure 9: Diversion to Yarrawonga Main Channel (YMC) in autumn 2025 compared with recent years





The release downstream of Yarrawonga Weir reduced to 4,000 ML/day and is expected to be maintained around this higher base flow during May on behalf of environmental water holders for the benefit of native fish along the length of the Murray. The additional release from Hume Dam to maintain this flow rate above the operational requirement downstream of Yarrawonga Weir (Figure 10) will be debited from environmental water holder accounts and delivered to South Australia.



Figure 10: Actual and forecast release downstream of Yarrawonga Weir showing operational requirement and the environmental water holder flow target



Figure 11: River Murray downstream of Yarrawonga Weir with flow at 4,000 ML/day (Photo: Luke Cruikshank)







Flow through the **Kolety** (pronounced Kol-etch)/**Edward River offtake** and **Gulpa Creek offtake** eased this week as the level in the River Murray reduced. Downstream on the Kolety, inflows from the Edward Escape ceased because irrigation demands at Wakool Canal remained low and delivery of higher flows into Yallakool and Colligen Creeks, the Wakool River and the Kolety downstream of Steven's Weir on behalf of environmental water holders have concluded.

Inflow to the Murray from the **Goulburn River**, measured at McCoy's Bridge, increased this week as delivery of a small pulse of IVT water was delivered to help meet Murray System demands. Information regarding opportunities for allocation trade between the Goulburn and Murray systems is available at the Victorian Water Register <u>website</u> and the <u>Goulburn-Murray Water website</u>.

At **Torrumbarry Weir**, the <u>diversion</u> to **National Channel** is around 800 ML/day and expected to remain around this rate until 15 May when irrigation diversions cease. The flow downstream of **Torrumbarry Weir** averaged 6,400 ML/day.

On the **Murrumbidgee River**, the flow at <u>Balranald</u> increased to around 1,500 ML/day. This flow is above the normal end of system target for May (~300 ML/day) as WaterNSW deliver a flow pulse on behalf of environmental water holders. The <u>Murrumbidgee IVT</u> account balance is currently 11.2 GL and trade from the Murrumbidgee to the Murray is open.

At **Euston Weir**, the weir pool level has been lowered to vary within the range of 20 to 30 cm below the full supply level (FSL) as part of the weir pool variability program. Varying pool levels helps restore a more natural wetting and drying cycle to riverbanks and adjacent wetlands within the influence of the weir. The flow at Euston Weir increased to around 9,500 ML/day this week and will continue around this rate over the coming days.

Upstream of the **Menindee Lakes**, there is currently a minor to moderate <u>flood warning</u> for the Darling River. The main flood peak is now around Louth with a flow rate of around 37,000 ML/day. Downstream on the Darling River at Wilcannia, the flow rate is currently 22,500 ML/day and rising. The latest <u>WaterNSW</u> forecast (issued 7 May) indicates a further 450 to 850 GL of inflow is expected to the Menindee Lakes from this event with around 350 GL having arrived so far.

The storage volume at the Menindee Lakes increased by 84 GL this week to 761 GL (44% capacity). The renewed inflows have provided the MDBA the opportunity to call additional water from the Lakes to meet demands in the River Murray during autumn, conserving water in Hume and Dartmouth Dams. The release from the Menindee Lakes, measured at **Weir 32**, is currently 3,700 ML/day, but will be gradually reduced during the remainder of May toward minimum flow rates.

Operational releases from Lake Cawndilla to the River Murray via the Great Darling Anabranch (GDA) continued around 700 ML/day through the week. 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 Darling/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.

The <u>storage</u> at **Lake Victoria** increased by 28 GL to 255 GL (38% capacity). Over the remainder of May, the volume in Lake Victoria will be managed to meet the end of May target of between 350 GL to 396 GL in the lake in accordance with the Lake Victoria Operating Strategy (LVOS) and the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement.

At **Locks 7 and 8**, the weir pool levels are currently lowered as part of the weir pool variability program. The Lock 8 pool level is being varied within the range of around 5 to 20 cm below FSL whilst the Lock 7 pool level will vary between FSL and down to around 50 cm below FSL.







The **flow to South Australia** is currently targeting 4,500 ML/day. This is above the normal May entitlement volume of 3,000 ML/day with water being delivered to South Australia from Billabong Creek and the Edward/Kolety, Murrumbidgee and Loddon Rivers on behalf of environmental water holders.

The **Lower Lakes** 5-day average water level is approximately 0.62 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 <u>River Murray Flow Report</u> and the <u>Water Data SA</u> website.

For media inquiries contact the Media Officer on 02 6279 0141

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Australian Government









Water in Storage

Week ending Wednesday 07 May 2025

MDBA Storages	Full Supply Level	Full Supply Volume	Current Storage Level	Current	Storage	Dead Storage	Active Storage	Change in Total Storage for the Week
	(m AHD)	(GL)	(m AHD)	(GL)	%	(GL)	(GL)	(GL)
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 856	470.74	2933	76%	71	2862	-35
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 005	175.36	658	22%	23	635	2
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	23.08	255	38%	100	155	28
Menindee Lakes		1 731*		761	44%	(480) #	281	84
Total		9 269		4607	50%		3933	80
Total Active MDBA Storage 46%^								

* 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 06 May 2025

Storage	Active Storage (GL)	Weekly Change (GL)	Diversion (GL)	This Week	From 1 May 2025
Lake Eucumbene - Total	1506	-26	Snowy-Murray	16	16
Snowy-Murray Component	487	10	Tooma-Tumut	0	0
Target Storage	1290		Net Diversion	16	16
			Murray 1 Release	12	10

Flow to South Australia (GL)

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

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	Entitlement this month	93.0*	
	Flow this week	36.4	(5,200 ML/day)
	Flow so far this month	36.4	
	Flow last month	220.9	

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 07 May 2025)

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 (%)

ocation	High Security
Murray Valley	

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

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

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





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Week ending Wednesday 07 May 2025



Murray System Monthly Inflows (excl. Snowy, Darling, inter-valley trade and environmental inflows)













