

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 9 April 2003

Our Ref: MDBC:269 :ng:bwh

9 April, 2003



Rainfall

Rainfall was generally confined to the northeast of the Murray-Darling Basin with the highest falls of about 40 mm being recorded in the Macquarie, Castlereagh and Namoi River catchments in New South Wales. Light falls of between 1 and 5 mm were recorded across the upper River Murray catchments where no rise in streamflows has been observed.

Darling River Flow Pulse Reaches Menindee Lakes

Flow in the Darling River at Wilcannia rose rapidly from zero flow on 2 April to a peak on 5 April of about 3 900 ML/day, and has since declined to 3 200 ML/day and continue to gradually recede. Flow reached Lake Wetherell today – the first significant inflow to Menindee Lakes in more than eighteen months. The NSW Department of Sustainable Natural Resources (DSNR) (formerly Department of Land and Water Conservation) estimates that over coming weeks a volume of more than 30 GL will have arrived at Menindee Lakes storage.

DSNR has reported that salinity levels upstream in Darling River at Tilpa peaked at more than 12 000 EC on 28 March before receding to 370 EC by 9 April. It can therefore be expected that salinity levels in Lake Wetherell (the most upstream of the major lakes in the Menindee Lakes group) will initially rise before being diluted with less saline inflows over coming weeks. Further advice will be provided in future weekly reports.

System Operation Update

In response to declining irrigation demand, release from Dartmouth Reservoir was gradually reduced from 2 500 ML/day on 28 March to 1 000 ML/day by 4 April to conserve resources in Dartmouth. Release will be further gradually reduced, commencing Monday 14 April, to 600 ML/day (*see Media Release attached*).

Release from Hume Dam was reduced from 10 000 to 9 000 ML/day during the week in response to declining irrigation demand and river losses. Release from Yarrawonga Weir was also reduced marginally from 5 900 to 5 800 ML/day. River flows in the reach from Hume Dam to Torrumbarry Weir are unusually low for this time of year due to the combined effects of low resource availability and reducing crop demands (*see Media Release attached*).

River Murray level at Swan Hill fell from 0.85 to 0.75 m on the local gauge, and is expected to fall to about 0.70 m next week. Without significant rain it is expected that river levels at Swan Hill will remain above the target minimum level of 0.6 m over the coming weeks.

Flow to South Australia

Storage in Lake Victoria continues to be drawn down to assist in supplying South Australia's entitlement flow. Storage decreased by 28 GL to 309 GL (45% of capacity, or 23.5 m AHD which is 3.5 m below the full supply level of 23.5 m AHD), and if dry conditions persist, the level of the lake will continue to be drawn down throughout April and May.

DAVID DOLE
General Manager

MEDIA RELEASE



Wednesday, 9 April 2003

Further Reduction in Release from Dartmouth Reservoir

River Murray Water announced today that a further reduction in release from Dartmouth Reservoir will be made commencing on Monday 14 April to conserve water resources. Irrigation demand along the River Murray has declined over recent weeks, and there is sufficient storage in Hume Reservoir to currently enable a further reduction in release from Dartmouth Reservoir.

If conditions are extremely dry in coming weeks, it is possible that a temporary increase in Dartmouth Release may be required to assist in meeting downstream demand, however, there is a low likelihood that such an increase would be required.

Storage in Dartmouth is currently 1 139 GL (29.2% of capacity). Commencing 8:00 am Monday 14 April, flow downstream of Dartmouth at Colemans will be gradually reduced from 1 000 ML/day (1.41 m gauge height) to 600 ML/day (1.23 m) by Thursday 17 April. Further downstream at Tallandoon, the gauge height can be expected to fall from the current level of 1.55 m to about 1.41 m, without significant rain in tributaries downstream of Dartmouth.

Storage in Hume Reservoir is currently 192 GL (6.3% of capacity), and has been falling slowly since mid March as the rate of release has exceeded inflows from Dartmouth and from the Snowy Mountains Scheme. Storage in Hume is expected to continue falling slowly in coming weeks if conditions remain dry. It is unlikely that the level in Hume will fall below the level experienced in late January.

Effects of Bushfire on Water Quality

Catchments of Dartmouth Reservoir and the Mitta Mitta River downstream of Dartmouth have been severely impacted by the recent bushfires. There is currently potential for heavy rain to produce significant inflows of ash and sediment from bushfire affected areas. Upstream of Dartmouth Dam, there is little that can be done to respond to such an event. However, if a significant influx of ash and sediment occurs downstream of Dartmouth, River Murray Water will consider making a temporary increase in release from Dartmouth to provide a small “flush” in order to reduce impacts in the Mitta Mitta River. Any action will need to be balanced against the need to conserve water for future use, and the scale of the impacts. Water quality will continue to be closely monitored to identify significant changes.

For further information contact:

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(Lawrie Kirk is *not* to be quoted as a spokesperson)

MEDIA RELEASE

Wednesday, 9 April 2003

River Murray Flows Unusually Low



River Murray Water reported today that flows and river levels in the River Murray between Hume Dam and Torrumbarry Weir are unusually low for this time of year. This has been brought about by the low water resource availability this season which has contributed to low irrigation allocations in New South Wales and Victoria, and has resulted in lower than usual irrigation demand during the season. Irrigation demand along the River Murray has also declined in recent weeks as summer crops are nearing completion.

In response to the decreasing irrigation demand, release from Hume Dam as measured at Albury/Wodonga has been reduced in recent weeks from 13 000 ML/day in mid March to 9 000 ML/day by 3 April 2003. In most irrigation seasons, flow at Albury/Wodonga would not typically be reduced to this level until mid to late April. The last time this river level was observed at this time of the year was in early April 1983.

Similarly, release from Yarrawonga Weir has been reduced from the nominal regulated channel capacity of about 10 000 ML/day in mid February to 6 000 ML/day by 26 March 2003. The reduction to 6 000 ML/day has occurred about four to five weeks earlier than would typically be observed. Release is currently 5 800 ML/day and further reductions are expected to be made over the coming weeks.

River pumpers and recreational river users are advised to take this into account in planning their activities over the remainder of the irrigation season.

For further information contact:

Lawrie Kirk

Manager Communication

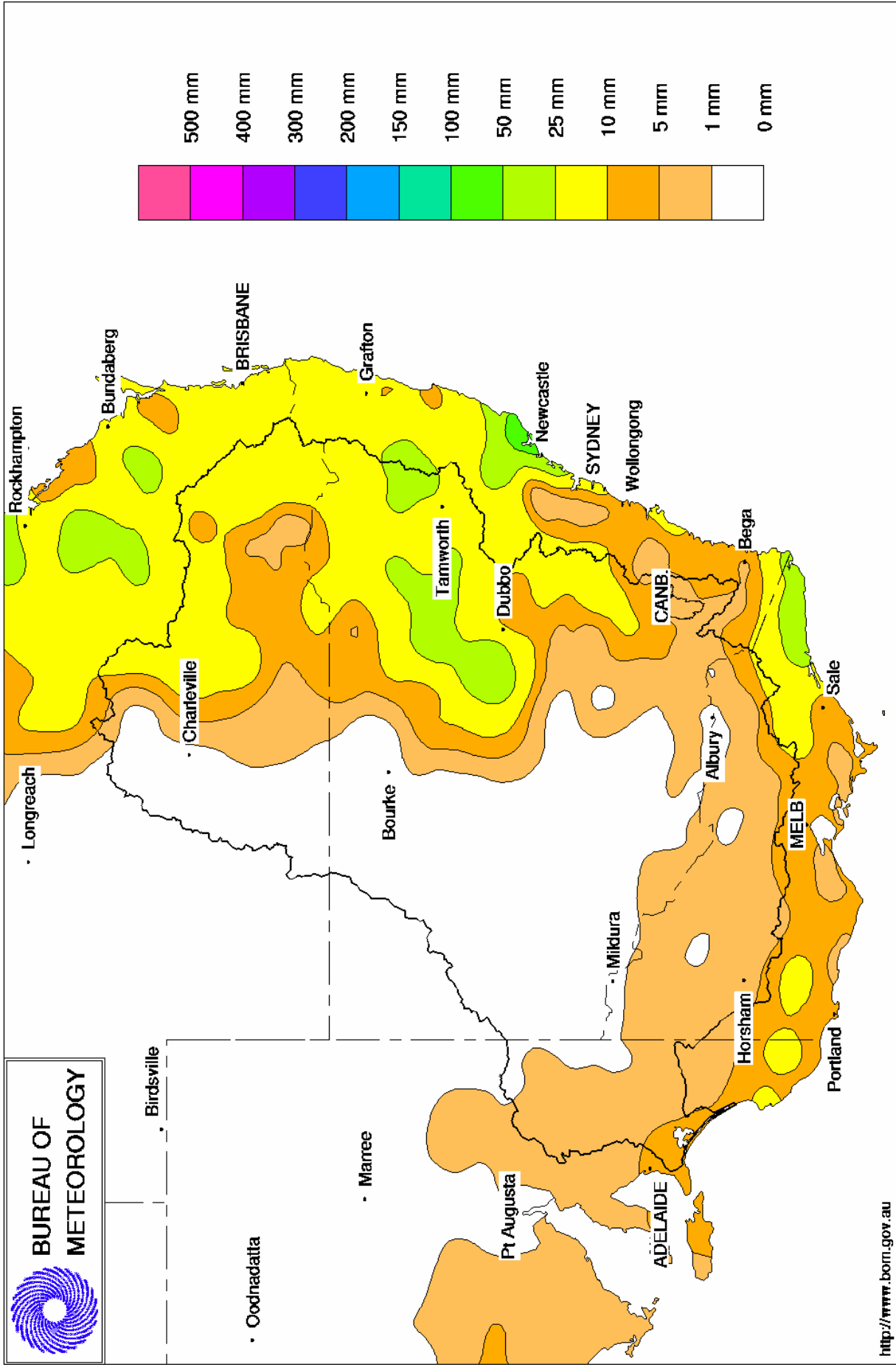
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(Lawrie Kirk is not to be quoted as a spokesperson)

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 9th April 2003

Product of the National Climate Centre



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

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Week ending Wednesday 09 Apr 2003

Water in Storage

MDBC Storages	Full Supply Level (m AHD)	Full Supply Volume (GL)	Current Storage Level (m AHD)	Current Storage		Dead Storage (GL)	Active Storage (GL)	Change in Storage for the week (GL)
				(GL)	%			
Dartmouth Reservoir	486.00	3 906	428.18	1 139	29%	80	1 059	-6
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	168.35	192	6%	30	162	-20
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	23.48	309	45%	100	209	-28
Menindee Lakes		1 682 *		62	4%	640 #	0	+5
Total		9 306		1 702	18%	850	1 430	-48

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1999 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **17%**

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026		50	5%	3	47	-1
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		51	3%	24	27	+7
Eildon Reservoir	3 390		311	9%	100	211	-10

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 08-Apr-2003

Storage (GL)	Current storage	Weekly change	Diversions	This week	From 1 May 2002
Lake Eucumbene - Total	2 284	-42	Snowy-Murray	+41	828
Snowy-Murray Component	1 048	-	Tooma-Tumut	+0	205
Target Storage	1 340		Nett Diversion	41.3	624
			Murray 1 Release	+41	1 046

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2002
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	19.1	490.6
Wakool System loss	1.8	48.0
Western Murray Irrig.	0.4	27.2
Licensed Pumps	3.6	188.2
Lower Darling	1.2	118.6
TOTAL	26.1	872.7

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2002
Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	8.6	452
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	12.9	768
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	2.4	145
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	1.0	68
Licensed pumps - SRW	3.4	170
TOTAL	28.3	1 603

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	135	(4 400 ML/day)
Flow this week	31.0	
Flow so far this month	40	
Flow last month	186	

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2002
Swan Hill	70	70	80
Euston	120	130	120
Red Cliffs	160	160	130
Merbein	170	170	140
Burtundy (Darling)	1 340	1 340	1 150
Lock 9	130	120	170
Lake Victoria	270	250	300
Berri	290	270	330
Waikerie	360	360	410
Morgan	390	390	490
Mannum	390	390	580
Murray Bridge	440	450	650
Milang (Lake Alex.)	1 240	1 210	1 160
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	1 110	1 210	1 160
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	1 700	1 740	1 620
Goolwa Barrages	2 820	2 980	3 250



Week ending Wednesday 09 Apr 2003

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	-	-	-	6 070	F	6 170	5 750
Jingellic	4.0	1.88	208.40	6 350	S	6 560	6 230
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.55	218.44	1 130	S	1 170	2 160
Heywoods	5.5	2.42	156.05	9 520	F	9 980	11 750
Doctors Point	5.5	2.56	151.03	8 850	F	9 450	10 810
Albury	4.3	1.54	148.98	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	2.30	128.32	10 500	F	10 970	12 190
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.12	116.16	5 770	F	5 830	5 980
Tocumwal	6.4	1.56	105.40	5 670	S	5 740	6 160
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	1.19	79.74	2 840	F	2 920	3 710
Swan Hill	4.5	0.74	63.66	2 670	S	2 920	3 320
Wakool Junction	8.8	1.77	50.89	3 090	F	3 370	3 380
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	0.80	42.64	3 390	F	3 450	3 250
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	30.81	2 900	F	2 840	2 640
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.95	27.71	2 200	R	2 040	1 930
Rufus Junction	-	3.04	19.97	4 150	R	4 130	5 390
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	-	2 720	S	3 130	3 680
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.51	153.74	60	F	80	70
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.47	145.15	52	S	70	50
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.15	92.57	349	F	400	440
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	150	S	150	270
Edward at Liewah	-	0.77	56.15	350	R	240	170
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	-	-	298	R	290	240
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.55	56.51	227	F	210	200
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.48	-	710	F	580	550
Darling at Bourke	-	4.16	-	740	F	970	2 610
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.69	-	90	S	90	80

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	550	1 590
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Weirs and Locks

Pool levels above or below design level

Murray	FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s		FSL (m AHD)	u/s	d/s
Yarrowonga	124.90	-0.17	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.04	+0.74
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.00	-0.01
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.01	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.00	+0.08
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.01	+0.01	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.00	+0.41
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.00	+0.31	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.04	+0.15
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.13	+0.04	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.05	+0.11
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.07	+0.04	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.04	-0.32

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-0.91	0.65	70	345
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.73	0.2	61.5	314

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.50	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.50	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwitchere	322 gates	0.47	All closed

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

