

REPORT FOR THE **TWO WEEKS** ENDING

Wednesday, 1 January 2003

Our Ref : MDBC:269 :ng:bwh

3 January, 2003



Rain brings some relief

Almost all of the Murray-Darling Basin received some rain over the last two weeks of December 2002. In the week ending 25 December, falls were mostly in the northern portion of the Basin. Over the last week ending 1 January, good falls of rain were then recorded across much of the Basin, with large areas receiving between 10 and 30 mm. Mildura, on the River Murray, received the highest weekly total of 66 mm all in the 24 hours to 9 a.m. on 31 December.

Unfortunately, the catchment areas of Hume Reservoir received little rain, and the response in tributary flows in the upper Murray and other Murray tributaries has been negligible. However, the rain, particularly over the Victorian Murray irrigation areas, has led to a temporary reduction in irrigation demand, and enabled a temporary reduction in release from Hume Reservoir from 18 000 to 14 000 ML/day at Albury/Wodonga since 29 December. Diversion from Lake Mulwala has been reduced from 6 500 to 4 000 ML/day in response to the rain, and the partially rejected irrigation orders are currently being captured in the Lake. Release from Yarrawonga Weir is expected to be maintained at 10 300 ML/day without further rain.

Flow in the River Murray at Barmah has receded from 11 500 to 8 900 ML/day since the rate of transfer of water to Lake Victoria was reduced in mid December. It is expected that the flow at Barmah will continue to slowly fall over the next couple of weeks to about 8 000 ML/day as the rate of water slowly draining from Barmah Forest declines after an extended period of inundation of some areas to facilitate a higher rate of transfer to Lake Victoria. Further downstream, the river height at Swan Hill has fallen from 1.6 m in mid December to about 1.25 m, and is forecast to gradually fall to 0.9 m by mid January.

Flow downstream of Mildura Weir temporarily rose from about 8 100 to 11 000 ML/day over the two days from 30 December to 1 January in response to the heavy local rainfall, but is expected to begin to recede early next week, and then gradually recede to about 7 000 ML/day by mid January.

Water in storage

Over the past two weeks, storage in Dartmouth Reservoir declined by 138 GL to 1 900 GL or 49% of capacity, and is continuing to fall by about 2% each week. Over the two weeks, storage in Hume Reservoir has fallen by 89 GL to 235 GL (7.7% of capacity) - this is significantly lower than has ever been seen in Hume for this time of year, and is about 135 GL below the storage level experienced at the end of December 1982. Further details regarding projected low storage levels at Hume, and associated issues, is given in the attached Media Release.

Storage in Lake Victoria is currently steady at about 560 GL or 83% of capacity. Following the recent falls of rain on the Lake and throughout the Sunraysia region, the Lake level is forecast to hold steady next week (about one week later than previously expected) and then begin to gradually fall from about the end of next week. Storage in Menindee Lakes, which remains in New South Wales control, has declined by 10 GL over the last two weeks to 137 GL or 8% of capacity.

DAVID DOLE
General Manager

MEDIA RELEASE

Tuesday, 24 December 2002

Hume Reservoir Operations Update



River Murray Water confirmed today that Hume Reservoir will be drawn down to very low water levels over the remainder of this summer under ongoing drought conditions.

Storage volume in Hume Reservoir is currently 293 GL, or 9.7% of capacity. This is the lowest level experienced in Hume at this time of year. Hume storage is typically greater than about 1 600 GL, or 53% capacity, at this time of year. On 24 December 1982 (during the last drought of similar severity to the current drought), Hume storage was 381 GL or 12.5% capacity.

The current drought is having a severe impact on water users in the River Murray system, and the Murray Darling Basin Commission is working with Commonwealth and State Governments to manage its water supply system to ensure the least disruption.

If the extremely dry conditions continue, storage in Hume Reservoir could fall to less than 2% of capacity by the end of February 2003. This would be the lowest the lake has been drawn down to since April 1968 when storage fell to 0.9%. At these levels, the water surface will be largely confined to the original river course with shallow flooding across the original floodplain upstream. It is expected that the water level in Hume will slowly rise in March and April as inflows increase and releases recede.

Boating

State authorities are continuing to monitor the conditions at Lake Hume and in the interests of protecting public safety have instigated measures for the imposition of boating speed limits in early January 2003.

Marine Safety Victoria advises boat operators to:

- Take extreme caution and operate their vessel at a safe speed, taking into account the low water levels - if in doubt, slow down to 5 knots;
- Seek out local knowledge on conditions and hazards;
- Keep a good lookout;
- Ensure the motor kill switch lanyard is attached to the driver;
- Take notice of signage at the boat ramp; and
- Ensure their vessel is equipped with the required safety equipment and that it is in good condition and readily accessible.

While there are still opportunities for recreational activities at Lake Hume, including fishing and swimming, lake users are urged to take care and have regard for the changed conditions brought about by the lower than normal operating levels. Enquires can be made to the Waterways Authority (NSW) and Goulburn-Murray Water contacts listed below.

Water Quality

There is a possibility of blue-green algal blooms occurring on the lake in the hotter months. The Department of Land and Water Conservation is continuing to monitor water quality in Lake Hume, and will notify users if any problems occur. Water quality problems can be reported to the Albury office of DLWC on 02 6041 6777.

Recreation and Tourism

Albury Wodonga Tourism General Manager, Carol Bartley, said that there are many sectors of the community feeling the effects of the drought - from water restrictions in urban areas to little or no water on farms, and a reduced level of amenity for many water enthusiasts.

“We have seen the level of Lake Hume this low in some previous years, particularly at the end of the irrigation season. When water levels are very low, there is an issue with access and submerged objects near the water surface.”

Maps of Lake Hume; including relevant information on emergency services, the volunteer coastguard, locations of beaches and reserves, and other services; are available from the Waterways Authority (NSW) at 440 Swift Street, Albury.

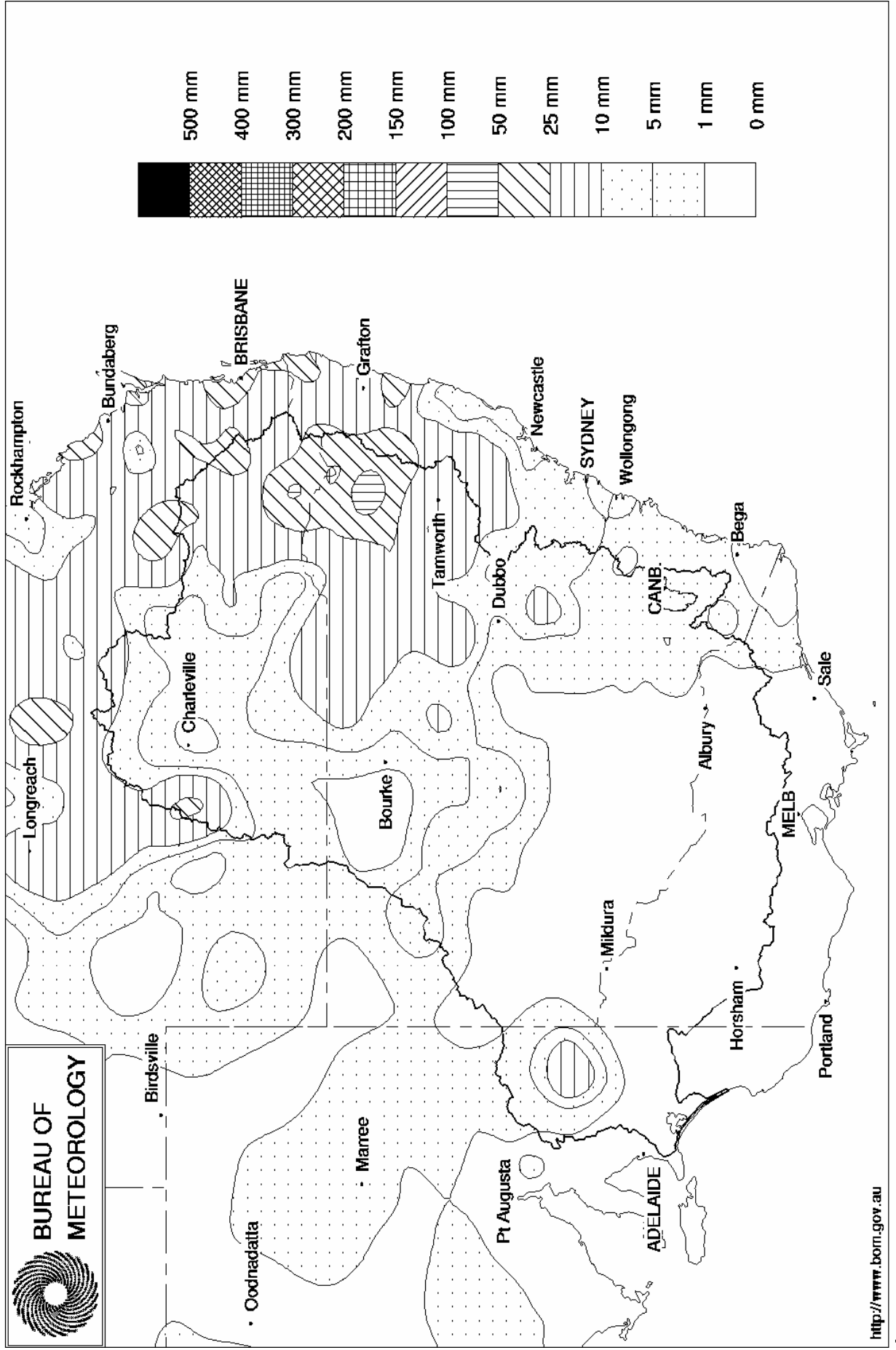
For further information contact: Phone: (02) 6279 0100
Allison Hicks Mobile:
Media Liaison Officer Email: allison.hicks@mdbc.gov.au

Other Relevant Contacts:

Albury Wodonga Tourism:	Carol Bartley, General Manager	0412 994 800
Waterways Authority (NSW):	Albury Office	(02) 6021 7188
Goulburn-Murray Water:	Shane McGrath, Acting Manager Bulk Water Services	(03) 5833 5500
Victoria Police:	Wayne Smith	
	Bethanga	(02) 6026 4204
NSW Police:	Ken Howe	
	Lake Hume Village	(02) 6026 4344

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 25th December 2002

Product of the National Climate Centre



Week ending Wednesday 25 Dec 2002

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	450.44	1 966	50%	80	1 886	-68
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	170.20	286	9%	30	256	-39
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	25.85	553	81%	100	453	-2
Menindee Lakes		1 682 *		141	8%	640 #	0	-7
Total		9 306		2 945	32%	850	2 594	-115

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1999 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **31%**

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026		269	26%	3	266	-15
Blowering Reservoir	1 631		127	8%	24	103	-35
Eildon Reservoir	3 390		605	18%	100	505	-23

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 24-Dec-2002

Storage (GL)	Current storage	Weekly change	Diversion	This week	From 1 May 2002
Lake Eucumbene - Total	3 069	-29	Snowy-Murray	+10	274
Snowy-Murray Component	1 546	-10	Tooma-Tumut	+0	180
Target Storage	1 510		Nett Diversion	10.4	94
			Murray 1 Release	+16	533

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2002
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	9.2	314.9
Wakool System loss	0.8	22.8
Western Murray Irrig.	1.5	14.5
Licensed Pumps	5.7	116.6
Lower Darling	0.6	85.2
TOTAL	17.8	554.0

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2002
Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	16.5	284
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	23.4	519
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	8.6	83
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	2.1	33
Licensed pumps - SRW	6.4	94
TOTAL	57.0	1 013

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	217	(7 100 ML/day)
Flow this week	49.5	
Flow so far this month	176	
Flow last month	181	

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2002
Swan Hill	60	70	90
Euston	80	80	130
Red Cliffs	90	90	150
Merbein	90	90	160
Burtundy (Darling)	970	960	880
Lock 9	100	100	200
Lake Victoria	270	270	330
Berri	240	240	370
Waikerie	360	360	500
Morgan	420	420	580
Mannum	-	-	650
Murray Bridge	660	670	720
Milang (Lake Alex.)	1 500	1 500	1 020
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	1 180	1 180	1 100
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	1 640	1 640	1 500
Goolwa Barrages	2 660	2 780	3 290



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	-	-	-	870	R	1 820	2 090
Jingellic	4.0	1.20	207.72	1 270	F	2 880	2 010
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	3.21	220.10	10 080	R	10 000	9 930
Heywoods	5.5	3.21	156.84	18 420	F	17 550	16 180
Doctors Point	5.5	3.32	151.79	18 000	F	17 830	16 400
Albury	4.3	2.35	149.79	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	3.52	129.54	19 400	R	18 230	17 870
Yarrawonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.80	116.84	10 300	S	10 310	11 540
Tocumwal	6.4	2.30	106.14	10 350	S	10 390	12 490
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.34	80.89	6 980	F	7 680	8 780
Swan Hill	4.5	1.44	64.36	7 250	S	7 540	8 260
Wakool Junction	8.8	3.68	52.80	10 660	F	11 070	11 670
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	2.11	43.95	10 780	F	11 440	12 410
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	31.12	10 160	F	10 120	8 710
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.14	27.90	8 010	F	8 250	9 060
Rufus Junction	-	3.45	20.38	6 420	R	6 450	6 400
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	-	3 410	F	3 580	4 420
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.64	153.87	190	F	320	240
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.55	145.23	78	R	60	160
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.12	92.54	315	R	310	350
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 900	S	2 910	2 910
Edward at Liewah	-	2.95	58.33	2 660	S	2 690	2 740
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.90	55.39	1 700	R	1 670	1 660
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.51	56.47	204	S	220	290
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.17	-	20	S	40	140
Darling at Bourke	-	3.34	-	0	F	0	0
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.68	-	70	S	80	40

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	1 300	1 310
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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
Yarrawonga	124.90	-0.29	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.19	+1.13
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	-0.00	+0.11
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.01	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.02	+0.16
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.03	+0.32	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.01	+0.60
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.03	+0.50	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	-0.02	+0.15
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.11	+0.11	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.02	+0.12
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.10	+0.25	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.02	-0.02

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-0.59	0.6	69.95	296
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-0.86	0.15	61.45	269

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.64	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.63	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwitchere	322 gates	0.62	All closed

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



Week ending Wednesday 01 Jan 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	448.83	1 896	49%	80	1 816	-69
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	169.26	235	8%	30	205	-51
Lake Victoria	27.00	680	25.90	559	82%	100	459	+6
Menindee Lakes		1 682 *		138	8%	640 #	0	-3
Total		9 306		2 828	30%	850	2 480	-117

* Menindee surcharge capacity 1999 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **29%**

NSW Menindee Lakes Reserve

Major State Storages

Burrinjuck Reservoir	1 026	252	25%	3	249	-17
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	83	5%	24	59	-44
Eildon Reservoir	3 390	589	17%	100	489	-15

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 31-Dec-2002

Storage (GL)	Current storage	Weekly change	Diversion	This week	From 1 May 2002
Lake Eucumbene - Total	3 064	-5	Snowy-Murray	+9	283
Snowy-Murray Component	1 536	-10	Tooma-Tumut	+0	180
Target Storage	1 520		Nett Diversion	9.3	103
			Murray 1 Release	+5	538

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2002
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	6.9	321.8
Wakool System loss	1.1	23.9
Western Murray Irrig.	1.0	15.4
Licensed Pumps	5.1	121.7
Lower Darling	2.8	87.9
TOTAL	17.0	570.7

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2002
Yarrawonga Main Channel (net)	12.3	296
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	22.3	541
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	5.8	88
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	1.6	34
Licensed pumps - SRW	5.2	100
TOTAL	47.2	1 060

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	217	
Flow this week	49.5	(7 100 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	7	
Flow last month	218	

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2002
Swan Hill	80	70	90
Euston	80	80	130
Red Cliffs	100	90	150
Merbein	90	90	150
Burtundy (Darling)	1 070	970	890
Lock 9	110	110	190
Lake Victoria	190	230	320
Berri	260	250	360
Waikerie	360	360	490
Morgan	390	400	570
Mannum	-	-	650
Murray Bridge	660	660	720
Milang (Lake Alex.)	1 990	1 780	1 060
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	1 450	1 330	1 110
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	1 340	1 460	1 500
Goolwa Barrages	4 130	2 900	3 270



Week ending Wednesday 01 Jan 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	-	-	-	800	F	850	1 820
Jingellic	4.0	1.19	207.71	1 200	S	1 210	2 880
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	3.17	220.06	9 830	F	9 990	10 000
Heywoods	5.5	3.07	156.70	16 470	F	17 870	17 550
Doctors Point	5.5	3.18	151.65	16 100	F	17 230	17 830
Albury	4.3	2.19	149.63	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	3.39	129.41	18 300	F	18 730	18 230
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.80	116.84	10 300	S	10 300	10 310
Tocumwal	6.4	2.35	106.19	10 700	R	10 420	10 390
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	2.07	80.62	6 040	R	6 080	7 680
Swan Hill	4.5	1.28	64.20	6 180	S	6 500	7 540
Wakool Junction	8.8	3.49	52.61	9 760	F	10 170	11 070
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	2.08	43.92	10 600	F	10 750	11 440
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	31.21	11 080	F	9 760	10 120
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.31	28.07	9 790	R	8 320	8 250
Rufus Junction	-	3.46	20.39	6 510	F	6 210	6 450
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	-	3 260	F	3 210	3 580
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	0.54	153.77	110	S	150	320
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	7.58	145.26	106	R	100	60
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.20	92.62	433	R	390	310
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 900	S	2 910	2 910
Edward at Liewah	-	2.97	58.35	2 690	R	2 650	2 690
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.87	55.36	1 570	R	1 610	1 670
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	0.58	56.54	244	R	220	220
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.14	-	0	F	40	40
Darling at Bourke	-	3.32	-	0	F	0	0
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.69	-	90	R	70	80

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	770	1 300
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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	-0.12	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.32	+1.13
No 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.04	+0.13
No. 15 Euston	47.60	+0.02	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	+0.01	+0.15
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	+0.04	+0.41	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.02	+0.64
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	+0.07	+0.67	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.03	+0.21
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.22	+0.27	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.05	+0.13
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	+0.23	+0.43	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.03	-0.09

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-0.61	0.59	69.94	287
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	-1.31	0.15	61.45	269

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.26	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.58	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.57	All closed

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

