

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 14 December 2005

Our Ref : M2005/00066 /hap,dan
Trim Ref : 05/24191

16 December, 2005



Rainfall and Inflow

There was no significant rainfall recorded in the Murray catchment during the past week. Tributary inflows are slowly receding but remain about average for this time of the year. Storage in Dartmouth Reservoir increased by 9 GL to around 2 520 GL (64% capacity) this week, whilst Hume Reservoir storage fell from around 2 660 GL to 2 620 GL (86% capacity).

River Murray Operations

Release from Hume Reservoir over the past week averaged 14 600 ML/day. The warmer weather has seen a general increase in irrigation diversions and the current release rate is 16 000 ML/day, which includes a release of about 3 000 ML/day of environmental water for the Barmah-Millewa Forest.

The release from Yarrowonga Weir over the past week has been reduced from 14 500 ML/day to 12 300 ML/day. This will be further reduced over the coming week and is expected to reach 10 000 ML/day by Friday 23 December unless there is significant rainfall. Further changes in the release from Yarrowonga Weir will be assessed taking into account any rainfall, the environmental needs within the forest and water requirements further downstream.

To date approximately 480 GL has been released from the Barmah-Millewa Forest Environmental Water Account held in Hume Reservoir. Reports from Victorian and NSW forest managers indicate that waterbird breeding activity in the forest is at a level not experienced for decades. The significant number of waterbirds that are breeding includes Nankeen Night Herons, Royal Spoonbills, Ibis and threatened species of Egrets. The vegetation response has also been significant, with River Red Gums showing new growth and Moira Grass flowering.

There is significant waterbird breeding at Reed Beds Swamp, which is watered from the Gulpa Creek. In order to sustain this breeding event, River Murray Water and NSW State Water will be operating the Edward River offtake in conjunction with the Gulpa Creek offtake, in an effort to maintain sufficient flow levels within the Gulpa Creek system until the chicks have fledged.

The period of "flow surplus to regulated requirements", is now only available in the reach from Wentworth to the South Australian border. The flow to South Australia is currently 8 600 ML/day (15 November) and is expected to gradually return to the December entitlement flow over the coming week.

As mentioned in previous weekly reports, the raising of the upper pool levels at a number of weirs along the Lower Murray has been undertaken in recent months for environmental purposes. The weirs in South Australia are now gradually being lowered to their full supply level commencing with Lock 6 then proceeding downstream. The upstream water level of Lock 6 has been lowered by about 8 cm over the past week, from 19.37 m to 19.29 m AHD. The Lock 6 weir pool will be returned to the full supply level of 19.25 m AHD in the next few days after which lowering of Lock 5 will commence.

DAVID DREVERMAN
General Manager

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 16 December 2005

Blackwater being monitored downstream of the Barmah-Millewa Forest



TRIM Ref: 05/24030

Following the recent watering of the Barmah-Millewa Forest, there is a possibility of some blackwater entering the Murray and Edward-Wakool Rivers.

David Dreverman, General Manager, River Murray Water said "Blackwater is a common response when river red gum forests are flooded and results from the breakdown of organic matter on the forest floor. In some instances it can result in low dissolved oxygen levels."

"State agencies and River Murray Water are currently monitoring the quality of water returning from the forest into rivers and streams. Observations to date indicate that dissolved oxygen levels in the Murray, Edward and Wakool Rivers remain within the appropriate range."

In the event that the concentration of blackwater does increase and dissolved oxygen levels fall, River Murray Water and State agencies will endeavour to minimise the impacts on river users and the environment, where possible.

From an environmental perspective, the movement of carbon from organic matter on the forest floor into the river is vital for the health of the river system. River Murray Environmental Manager, Dr Tony McLeod, said "The ecological processes necessary to sustain the life of the aquatic organisms, from the smallest microbes to the largest fish, need carbon for their energy supply".

River users are advised to be aware of the situation and to take it into account with their activities on the river.

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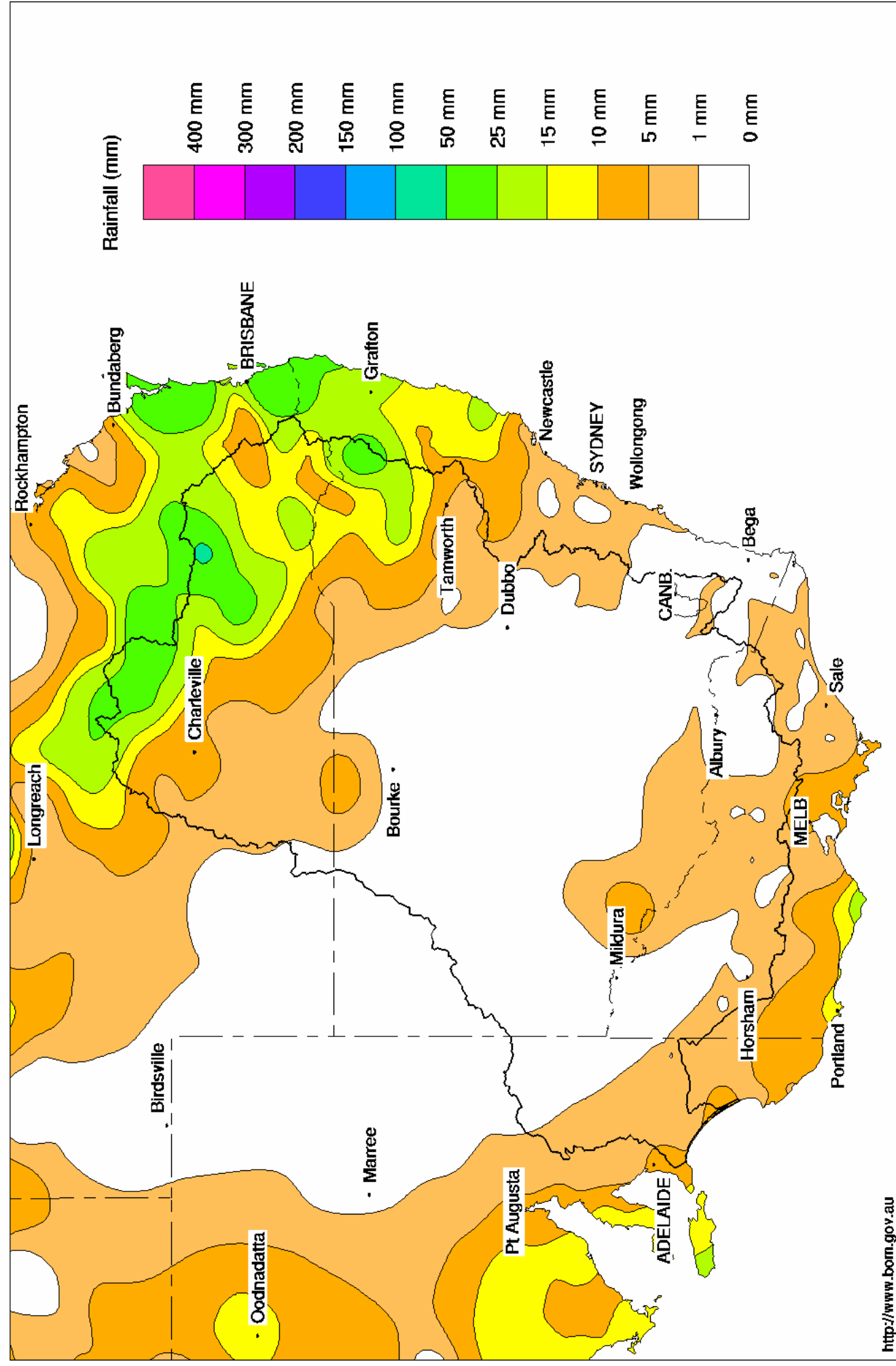
(Lawrie Kirk is not to be quoted as a spokesperson)

River Murray Water

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Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 14th December 2005

Product of the National Climate Centre



Water in Storage

| MDBC Storages | Full Supply Level (m AHD) | Full Supply Volume (GL) | Current Storage Level (m AHD) | Current Storage | | Dead Storage (GL) | MDBC Active Storage (GL) | Change in Storage for the week (GL) |
|---------------------|------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------|------------|----------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| | | | | (GL) | % | | | |
| Dartmouth Reservoir | 486.00 | 3 906 | 462.14 | 2 518 | 64% | 80 | 2 438 | +11 |
| Hume Reservoir | 192.00 | 3 038 | 189.84 | 2 620 | 86% | 30 | 2 590 | -40 |
| Lake Victoria | 27.00 | 677 | 26.96 | 672 | 99% | 100 | 572 | -2 |
| Menindee Lakes | | 1 731 * | | 406 | 23% | (-) # | 0 | -7 |
| Total | | 9 352 | | 6 216 | 66% | -- | 5 600 | -39 |

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **66%**

NSW takes control of Menindee Lakes when storage falls below 480 GL, and control reverts to MDBC when storage next reaches 640 GL

Major State Storages

| | | | | | | |
|----------------------|-------|-------|-----|-----|-------|-----|
| Burrinjuck Reservoir | 1 026 | 746 | 73% | 3 | 743 | -13 |
| Blowering Reservoir | 1 631 | 1 033 | 63% | 24 | 1 009 | -23 |
| Eildon Reservoir | 3 390 | 1 636 | 48% | 100 | 1 536 | -4 |

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 13-Dec-2005

| Storage | Active storage (GL) | Weekly change (GL) | Diversion (GL) | This week | From 1 May 2005 |
|------------------------|------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Lake Eucumbene - Total | 2 252 | -31 | Snowy-Murray | +27 | 484 |
| Snowy-Murray Component | 1 134 | -15 | Tooma-Tumut | +4 | 234 |
| Target Storage | 1 510 | | Nett Diversion | 23.0 | 250 |
| | | | Murray 1 Release | +30 | 774 |

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

| New South Wales | This week | From 1 July 2005 | Victoria | This week | From 1 July 2005 |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|---------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net) | 31.4 | 404.8 | Yarrowonga Main Channel (net) | 15.7 | 102 |
| Wakool System loss | 0.0 | 7.2 | Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net) | 11.7 | 251 |
| Western Murray Irrig. | 1.2 | 7.8 | Sunraysia Pumped Districts | 6.5 | 42 |
| Licensed Pumps | 8.8 | 108.3 | Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s) | 1.1 | 12 |
| Lower Darling | 3.7 | 25.2 | Licensed pumps - SRW | 6.8 | 107 |
| TOTAL | 45.1 | 553.3 | TOTAL | 41.7 | 515 |

Flow to South Australia (GL)

| | | |
|------------------------|------|-----------------|
| Entitlement this month | 217 | (10 900 ML/day) |
| Flow this week | 76.3 | |
| Flow so far this month | 156 | |
| Flow last month | 339 | |

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

| | Current | Average over the last week | Average since 1 August 2005 |
|-------------------------|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Swan Hill | 90 | 90 | 110 |
| Euston | 110 | 120 | 130 |
| Red Cliffs | 140 | 130 | 140 |
| Merbein | 120 | 120 | 120 |
| Burtundy (Darling) | 650 | 640 | 540 |
| Lock 9 | 120 | 130 | 140 |
| Lake Victoria | 190 | 190 | 190 |
| Berri | 170 | 170 | 230 |
| Waikerie | - | 250 | 370 |
| Morgan | 250 | 250 | 340 |
| Mannum | 270 | 290 | 390 |
| Murray Bridge | 320 | 330 | 410 |
| Milang (Lake Alex.) | 1 250 | 1 250 | 1 340 |
| Poltalloch (Lake Alex.) | 760 | 790 | 900 |
| Meningie (Lake Alb.) | 2 170 | 2 160 | 2 090 |
| Goolwa Barrages | 1 670 | 1 650 | 1 780 |

River Levels and Flows

| | 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) | | | | |
| River Murray | | | | | | | |
| Khancoban | - | - | - | 3 080 | F | 5 220 | 4 960 |
| Jingellic | 4.0 | 1.00 | 207.52 | - 10 | F | 7 670 | 8 070 |
| Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River) | 4.2 | 1.52 | 218.41 | 900 | F | 1 000 | 1 330 |
| Heywoods | 5.5 | 3.07 | 156.70 | 15 730 | R | 14 630 | 12 180 |
| Doctors Point | 5.5 | 3.27 | 151.74 | 17 400 | R | 16 340 | 14 210 |
| Albury | 4.3 | 2.29 | 149.73 | - | - | - | - |
| Corowa | 7.0 | 3.20 | 129.22 | 17 000 | F | 16 030 | 17 440 |
| Yarrawonga Weir (d/s) | 6.4 | 2.04 | 117.08 | 12 300 | F | 13 230 | 15 110 |
| Tocumwal | 6.4 | 2.67 | 106.51 | 13 620 | F | 14 800 | 16 130 |
| Torrumbarry Weir (d/s) | 7.3 | 2.66 | 81.21 | 8 150 | F | 8 810 | 9 610 |
| Swan Hill | 4.5 | 1.63 | 64.55 | 8 420 | F | 8 880 | 10 040 |
| Wakool Junction | 8.8 | 3.91 | 53.03 | 12 600 | F | 13 530 | 15 330 |
| Euston Weir (d/s) | 8.8 | 2.15 | 43.99 | 11 300 | F | 13 170 | 14 800 |
| Mildura Weir (d/s) | - | - | 31.29 | 11 950 | F | 12 540 | 14 590 |
| Wentworth Weir (d/s) | 7.3 | 3.28 | 28.04 | 9 840 | S | 10 430 | 10 860 |
| Rufus Junction | - | 3.88 | 20.81 | 8 940 | R | 10 460 | 11 040 |
| Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s) | - | - | - | 8 640 | F | 10 140 | 9 400 |
| Tributaries | | | | | | | |
| Kiewa at Bandiana | 2.7 | 1.52 | 154.75 | 1 430 | R | 1 870 | 2 610 |
| Ovens at Wangaratta | 11.9 | 8.56 | 146.24 | 2 281 | F | 2 770 | 3 860 |
| Goulburn at McCoys Bridge | 9.0 | 1.34 | 92.76 | 670 | F | 780 | 870 |
| Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s) | - | - | - | 3 200 | F | 3 400 | 3 700 |
| Edward at Liewah | - | 2.86 | 58.24 | 2 430 | S | 2 580 | 3 110 |
| Wakool at Stoney Crossing | - | 0.89 | 55.38 | 1 780 | S | 1 900 | 2 450 |
| Murrumbidgee at Balranald | 5.0 | 0.52 | 56.48 | 224 | R | 200 | 210 |
| Barwon at Mungindi | - | 3.39 | - | 430 | F | 840 | 820 |
| Darling at Bourke | - | 4.04 | - | 156 | R | 160 | 280 |
| Darling at Burtundy Rocks | - | 0.71 | - | 63 | F | 70 | 60 |

| | | |
|---|-------|--------|
| Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme) | 8 190 | 12 170 |
|---|-------|--------|

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 | -0.12 | - | No. 7 Rufus River | 22.10 | +0.11 | +1.58 |
| No 26 Torrumbarry | 86.05 | -0.01 | - | No. 6 Murtho | 19.25 | +0.04 | +0.65 |
| No. 15 Euston | 47.60 | +0.00 | - | No. 5 Renmark | 16.30 | +0.44 | +0.59 |
| No. 11 Mildura | 34.40 | -0.01 | +0.49 | No. 4 Bookpurnong | 13.20 | +0.28 | +1.13 |
| No. 10 Wentworth | 30.80 | +0.00 | +0.64 | No.3 Overland Corner | 9.80 | -0.02 | +0.40 |
| No. 9 Kulnine | 27.40 | +0.02 | +0.72 | No. 2 Waikerie | 6.10 | -0.01 | +0.40 |
| No. 8 Wangumma | 24.60 | +0.61 | +0.48 | No 1. Blanchetown | 3.20 | +0.08 | +0.25 |

| Murrumbidgee | FSL (m AHD) | relation to FSL | d/s gauge ht. | | Flow (ML/day) |
|---------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| | | | local (m) | (m AHD) | |
| No. 7 Maude | 75.40 | -0.03 | 1.66 | 71.01 | 2140 |
| No. 5 Redbank | 66.90 | +0.25 | 1.16 | 62.46 | 1440 |

Lower Lakes

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

| | (m AHD) |
|--|---------|
| Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days | 0.86 |

Barrages

| | Openings | Level (m AHD) | Status |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| Goolwa | 128 openings | 0.82 | 1 |
| Mundoo | 26 openings | 0.90 | All closed |
| Boundary Creek | 6 openings | - | All closed |
| Ewe Island | 111 gates | - | All closed |
| Tauwichee | 322 gates | 0.90 | 2 |

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