

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 16 February 2005

Our Ref : RMW305/01/01/dg
Trim Ref :05/703

18 February, 2005



Rainfall and inflows

Mainly dry and warm conditions prevailed across the Murray-Darling Basin this week, with the highest rainfall occurring in the Namoi catchment in northern NSW (*see attached map*). The raised inflows to the River Murray resulting from the rainfall in early February have receded, with the inflow from the Ovens and Goulburn Rivers currently at about 2 000 and ML/day and 1 000 ML/day respectively.

River Murray System

The flow along the River Murray peaked at 20 000 ML/day at Torrumbarry Weir on 11 February and at 17 500 ML/day at Swan Hill on 14 February. The flow is expected to peak at Euston at about 18 000 ML/day on 19 February and in the Edward River at Deniliquin at about 4 000 ML/day, also on 19 February.

The Euston, Mildura and Wentworth weir pools are currently partially drawn down to provide airspace to assist in mitigating the flow peak before it reaches Lock 9 at Kullnine. This operation is to minimise the disruption to major works on the navigation pass at Lock 9 and will also assist in maximising the conservation of water by storage in Lake Victoria. The weir pools will be refilled as the flow peak passes.

Lake Victoria storage is expected to increase to about 570 GL (85% capacity) as a result of this flow event. In response to the current level of Lake Victoria storage, the transfer of water from Hume Reservoir to Lake Victoria is being reduced.

Some environmental observations from this small flood event

This event has provided natural flooding to some low lying areas of the floodplain, such as small areas of the Gunbower-Perricoota Forest, which has had little significant flooding since 2000. However, there are still large areas of the floodplain, particularly along the lower River Murray, that will not be flooded and remain highly stressed due to the ongoing drought.

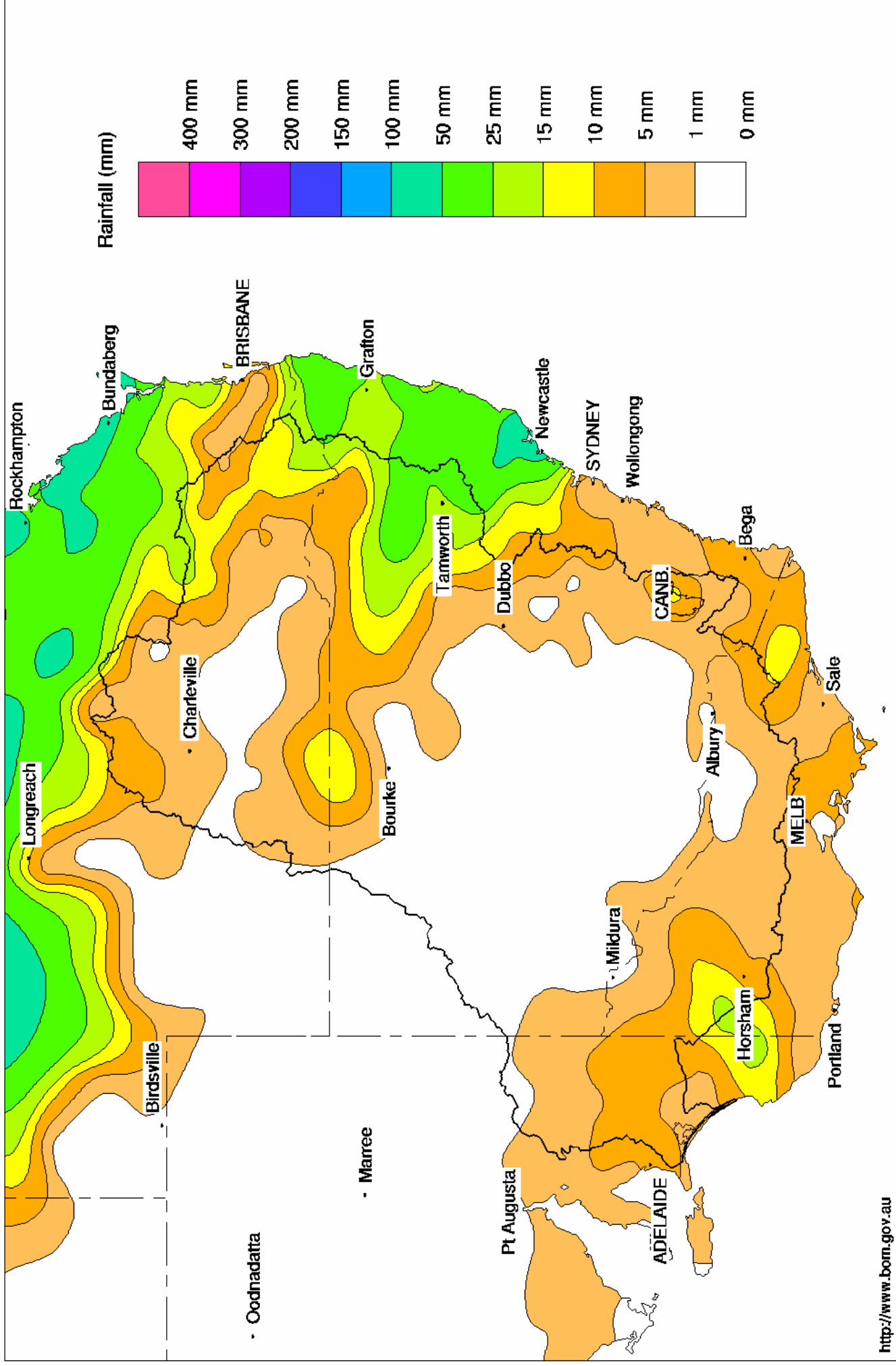
It has been observed that the floodwater returning to the river from the Barmah-Millewa Forest has a very dark 'tea' colouring. This is known as *blackwater* and is the result of a natural process whereby water flowing through the forest picks up tannins from fallen leaf litter, primarily from River Red Gums. In some instances the rapid decomposition of the leaf litter can reduce the dissolved oxygen levels in the water to very low levels, which can cause some fish to die and yabbies and crayfish to leave the water. The occurrence of this flood in February, coinciding with warmer temperatures that increase the rate of decomposition, is likely to have intensified this *blackwater* effect. Various state agencies are closely monitoring the water quality and fish populations, while RMW is exploring operational options that might be required to mitigate any emerging problems.

This small flood was also sufficient to trigger the migration of native fish. At Yarrawonga Weir, the number of native fish utilising the fish lift temporarily increased during the peak flow from about 5-10 per day up to 80-90 per day and included species such as Silver perch, Golden perch and Murray cod.

DAVID DREVERMAN
General Manager

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 16th February 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	444.61	1 722	44%	80	1 642	+3
Hume Reservoir	192.00	3 038	179.80	1 135	37%	30	1 105	-32
Lake Victoria	27.00	677	25.58	511	75%	100	411	+2
Menindee Lakes		1 731 *		418	24%	(- -) #	0	-9
Total		9 352		3 785	40%	--	3 157	-35

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL

% of Total Active MDBC Storage = **37%**

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	251	24%	3	248	-2
Blowering Reservoir	1 631	379	23%	24	355	+25
Eildon Reservoir	3 390	1 289	38%	100	1 189	-8

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 15-Feb-2005

Storage	Active storage (GL)	Weekly change (GL)	Diversions (GL)	This week	From 1 May 2004
Lake Eucumbene - Total	2 545	-21	Snowy-Murray	+5	419
Snowy-Murray Component	1 197	+3	Tooma-Tumut	+16	265
Target Storage	1 460		Nett Diversion	-10.6	154
			Murray 1 Release	+3	761

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

New South Wales	This week	From 1 July 2004
Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net)	7.5	498.5
Wakool System loss	-0.5	10.4
Western Murray Irrig.	1.0	22.8
Licensed Pumps	7.6	187.1
Lower Darling	1.0	20.2
TOTAL	16.6	739.1

Victoria	This week	From 1 July 2004
Yarrowonga Main Channel (net)	8.4	233
Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net)	8.3	396
Sunraysia Pumped Districts	4.8	118
Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s)	0.8	24
Licensed pumps - SRW	7.3	191
TOTAL	29.5	960

Flow to South Australia (GL)

Entitlement this month	194	
Flow this week	46.9	(6 700 ML/day)
Flow so far this month	109	
Flow last month	225	

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

	Current	Average over the last week	Average since 1 August 2004
Swan Hill	170	230	110
Euston	230	120	120
Red Cliffs	120	120	110
Merbein	110	120	120
Burtundy (Darling)	690	680	510
Lock 9	150	180	140
Lake Victoria	190	190	180
Berri	210	210	240
Waikerie	-	-	370
Morgan	330	320	390
Mannum	400	400	480
Murray Bridge	370	380	530
Milang (Lake Alex.)	1 370	1 320	1 300
Poltalloch (Lake Alex.)	1 190	1 150	1 030
Meningie (Lake Alb.)	2 250	2 250	2 110
Goolwa Barrages	2 220	2 200	1 910

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	-	-	-	730	R	1 120	2 900
Jingellic	4.0	1.34	207.86	2 220	F	3 750	5 570
Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River)	4.2	1.66	218.55	1 380	R	1 440	1 950
Heywoods	5.5	2.74	156.37	11 670	S	9 190	5 860
Doctors Point	5.5	2.84	151.31	12 200	R	10 260	8 480
Albury	4.3	1.87	149.31	-	-	-	-
Corowa	7.0	2.64	128.66	12 400	R	9 080	12 490
Yarrowonga Weir (d/s)	6.4	1.76	116.80	10 000	R	11 810	19 860
Tocumwal	6.4	2.31	106.15	10 500	F	15 010	17 830
Torrumbarry Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.39	81.94	11 130	F	15 930	10 800
Swan Hill	4.5	2.79	65.71	16 440	F	16 020	7 890
Wakool Junction	8.8	5.00	54.12	18 500	R	15 440	8 560
Euston Weir (d/s)	8.8	2.88	44.72	16 940	R	13 050	7 550
Mildura Weir (d/s)	-	-	31.15	11 720	F	9 140	5 670
Wentworth Weir (d/s)	7.3	3.20	27.96	10 800	R	8 320	4 960
Rufus Junction	-	3.34	20.27	5 790	F	6 310	6 570
Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s)	-	-	-	4 540	R	4 650	5 250
Tributaries							
Kiewa at Bandiana	2.7	1.14	154.37	810	R	1 030	2 800
Ovens at Wangaratta	11.9	8.46	146.14	1 997	S	2 750	11 720
Goulburn at McCoys Bridge	9.0	1.63	93.05	1 119	F	4 900	7 060
Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s)	-	-	-	2 920	F	2 890	2 850
Edward at Liewah	-	3.05	58.43	2 740	R	2 470	2 190
Wakool at Stoney Crossing	-	0.68	55.17	915	R	690	460
Murrumbidgee at Balranald	5.0	2.38	58.34	2 380	R	1 340	300
Barwon at Mungindi	-	3.19	-	40	F	80	110
Darling at Bourke	-	4.19	-	887	F	960	590
Darling at Burtundy Rocks	-	0.74	-	153	S	180	240

Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme)	6 910	9 770
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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	-0.05	-	No. 7 Rufus River	22.10	+0.08	+1.06
No. 26 Torrumbarry	86.05	+0.00	-	No. 6 Murtho	19.25	+0.02	+0.13
No. 15 Euston	47.60	-0.35	-	No. 5 Renmark	16.30	-0.01	+0.09
No. 11 Mildura	34.40	-0.08	+0.35	No. 4 Bookpurnong	13.20	+0.00	+0.66
No. 10 Wentworth	30.80	-0.08	+0.56	No.3 Overland Corner	9.80	+0.00	+0.19
No. 9 Kulnine	27.40	+0.01	+0.01	No. 2 Waikerie	6.10	+0.02	+0.12
No. 8 Wangumma	24.60	-0.04	+0.23	No 1. Blanchetown	3.20	+0.02	+0.01

Murrumbidgee	FSL (m AHD)	relation to FSL	d/s gauge ht.		Flow (ML/day)
			local (m)	(m AHD)	
No. 7 Maude	75.40	-0.11	1.96	71.31	2780
No. 5 Redbank	66.90	+0.04	2.32	63.62	3170

Barrages

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

	Openings	Level	Status
Goolwa	128 openings	0.67	All closed
Mundoo	26 openings	0.68	All closed
Boundary Creek	6 openings	-	All closed
Ewe Island	111 gates	-	All closed
Tauwichee	322 gates	0.65	All closed



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