

REPORT FOR THE WEEK ENDING

Wednesday, 1 March 2006

Our Ref : M2006/00012/prs, sc
Trim Ref : 06/6080

3 March, 2006



Rainfall

Parts of the north-eastern and southern Murray-Darling Basin received up to 50 mm of rain. However, the majority of the Basin received less than 10 mm. Despite falls of up to 30 mm in the Ovens and Dartmouth catchments there were only modest short-lived stream rises due to the dry catchment conditions.

System Operations

The storage volume in Dartmouth Reservoir decreased by 4 GL and Hume Reservoir by 102 GL, which is a comparable rate of fall to the previous week. Hume is now at around 48% of capacity.

An entitlement release from Dartmouth Dam for purposes of electricity generation resulted in a temporary increase in flow at Colemans to around 1 500 ML/d (on 25-27 February). RMW has advised that low flow variable releases (trials recently) will continue over coming weeks, with flow at Colemans ranging between ~200 and ~400 ML/d on a weekly cycle. The variable releases will assist improving water quality in the Mitta Mitta River whilst warm and dry conditions persist.

The release from Hume Dam was reduced late last week in view of the outlook for rain over the weekend and in anticipation of reducing irrigation demand. The average flow at Doctor's Point to mid this week was about 19 400 ML/d and is likely to increase over the coming days.

The release from Yarrawonga Weir has been maintained at channel capacity of 10 000 ML/d to meet downstream supplies as well as to transfer water to Lake Victoria. Available capacity within the Edward-Wakool system and Murray Irrigation Limited (MIL) channels is being utilised by RMW to transfer as much water as possible downstream. Calls on the Goulburn River inter-valley trade account held in Eildon Reservoir continue to assist flows in the River Murray. Inflows to the Murray from the Goulburn River averaged about 1 600 ML/d at McCoys Bridge this week, but can be expected to reduce to around 1 450 ML/d.

The Gulpa Creek Offtake flow is being steadily reduced towards 350 ML/d through the final stages of a highly successful waterbird breeding event in the Barmah-Millewa Forest. Local rainfall on the weekend resulted in a small rise in the river level at Picnic Point (currently ~ 2.67 m) which is expected to reduce back to usual levels for this time of the year (~2.60 m) if conditions remain dry.

Flows along the mid Murray increased slightly this week and were about 400 ML/d higher at Euston and Wentworth compared to last week (6 700 ML/d and 4 500 ML/d respectively). The storage volume of Lake Victoria fell by around 30 GL this week (compared to 35 GL last week). Storage in Lake Victoria is now at 45 % of capacity.

Temporary increases to weir pool levels in the mid Murray and an adjustment to the daily flow rate to South Australia are currently being implemented as part of a package of precautionary measures to assist in meeting flow requirements along the River Murray over the coming months (*see attached media release*).

The fishways at the Murray Mouth Barrages remain open, passing about 80 ML/d.

DAVID DREVERMAN
General Manager

MEDIA RELEASE

Friday, 3 March 2006 Temporary Changes to River Murray flow and Weir Pool levels

TRIM Ref: 06/6184

Temporary increases to weir pool levels in the mid Murray and an adjustment to the daily flow rate to South Australia are currently being implemented as part of a package of precautionary measures to assist in meeting flow requirements along the River Murray over the coming months.

River Murray Water (RMW) General Manager, Mr David Dreverman, said these measures were necessary due to the hot and dry conditions experienced since Christmas resulting in high irrigation diversions, high river losses and a relatively low storage volume in Lake Victoria for this time of year.

“Storage in Lake Victoria is forecast to continue to fall to very low levels over the coming months, if conditions remain dry. The lake has a reduced outlet capacity at low storage levels and in view of this, a change to the daily delivery of the South Australian entitlement flow is being introduced,” Mr Dreverman said.

“The South Australian entitlement flow for March is 186 GL and current plans are to deliver this at a rate of 6 600 ML/day initially and then at 5 400 ML/day during the second half of the month. It would normally be delivered at a steady rate of 6 000 ML/day over the entire month,” he said.

Mr Dreverman said RMW will continue to call on water from the Goulburn and Murrumbidgee inter-valley trade accounts and utilise the Murray Irrigation Limited and Goulburn-Murray Water irrigation channel systems to pass as much water as possible from Hume Reservoir around the Barmah “choke” and into the mid and lower reaches of the River Murray.

“In addition, the water levels of Mildura (Lock 11), Wentworth (Lock 10), Kulnine (Lock 9), Wangumma (Lock 8) and Rufus River (Lock 7) Weir Pools are being raised above Full Supply Level (FSL) to store additional water that can later be released during April to supplement flows in the River Murray if required at that time,” he said.

Details of how high the weir pools may be raised above their full supply level (FSL) are as follows. The pools may not need to be raised to these levels if river flows increase in response to reduced water demands and losses with the onset of wetter and/or cooler weather.

| Weir | Current Weir Pool Level | Estimated Maximum Raising |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------|
| Mildura (FSL = 34.40m AHD) | + 4 cm | 10 cm above FSL |
| Wentworth (FSL = 30.80m AHD) | + 1 cm | 10 cm above FSL |
| Lock 9 (FSL = 27.40m AHD) | + 15 cm | 20 cm above FSL |
| Lock 8 (FSL = 24.60m AHD) | + 16 cm | 50 cm above FSL |
| Lock 7 (FSL = 22.10m AHD) | + 17 cm | 20 cm above FSL |

AHD is Australian Height Datum

Mr Dreverman said that: “river pumpers, boat operators and other river users are advised to take these changed water levels and flow conditions into account and make any necessary adjustments to their river activities”.

For further information contact:

Allison Hicks

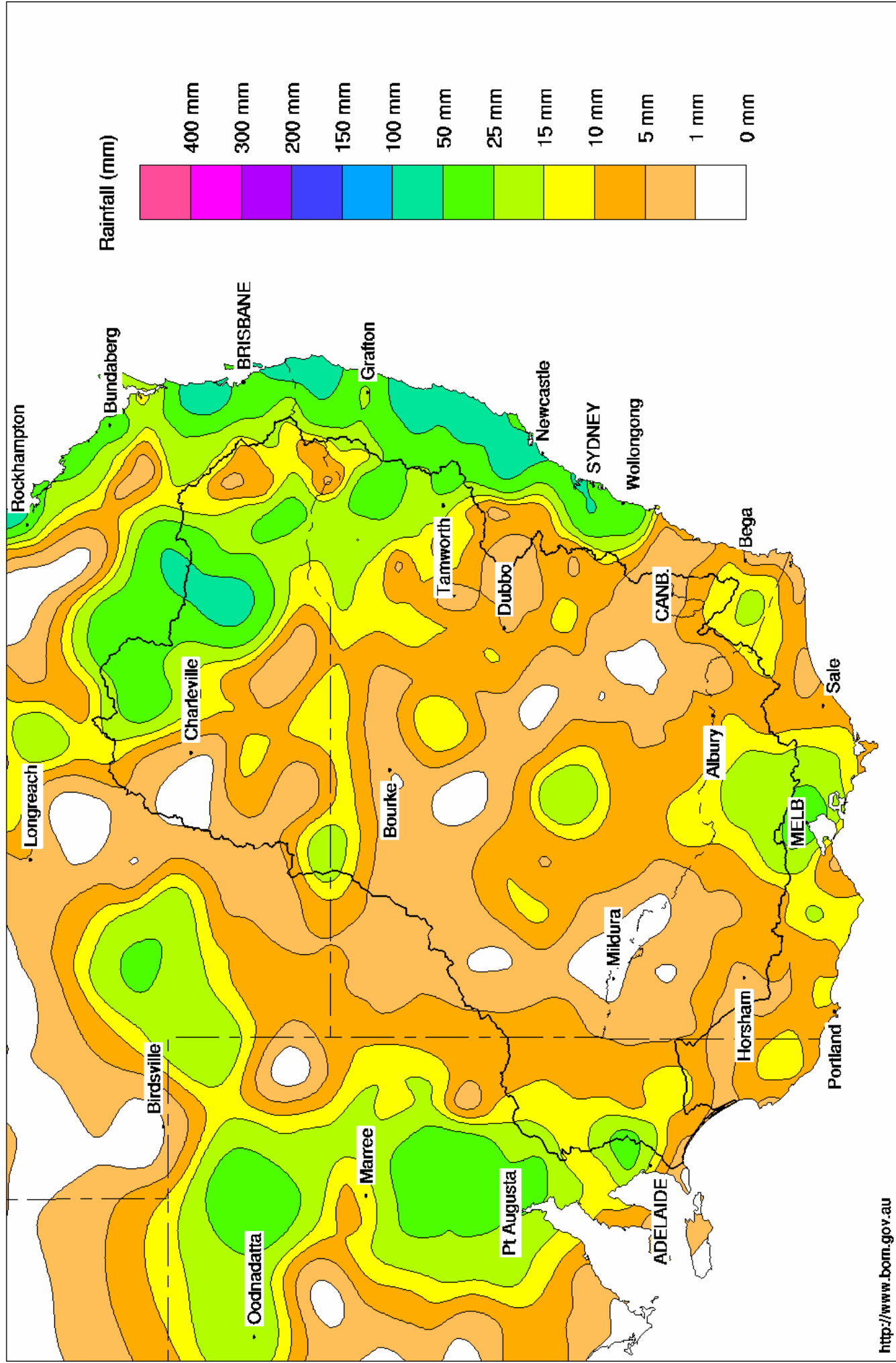
Corporate Media Relations

Phone: 02 6279 0129; Mobile: 0407 704609

E-mail: allison.hicks@mdbc.gov.au *(Allison Hicks is not to be quoted as a spokesperson.*

Murray Darling Rainfall Analysis (mm) Week Ending 1st March 2006

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 | 462.30 | 2 526 | 65% | 80 | 2 446 | -4 |
| Hume Reservoir | 192.00 | 3 038 | 182.39 | 1 454 | 48% | 30 | 1 424 | -102 |
| Lake Victoria | 27.00 | 677 | 23.64 | 308 | 46% | 100 | 208 | -30 |
| Menindee Lakes | | 1 731 * | | 305 | 18% | (- -) # | 0 | -6 |
| Total | | 9 352 | | 4 594 | 49% | -- | 4 078 | -142 |

* Menindee surcharge capacity 2050 GL % of Total Active MDBC Storage = **48%**

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 | | 350 | 34% | 3 | 347 | -15 |
| Blowering Reservoir | 1 631 | | 796 | 49% | 24 | 772 | -3 |
| Eildon Reservoir | 3 390 | | 1 046 | 31% | 100 | 946 | -61 |

Snowy Mountains Scheme

Snowy diversions for week ending 28-Feb-2006

| Storage | Active storage (GL) | Weekly change (GL) | Diversions (GL) | This week | From 1 May 2005 |
|------------------------|---------------------|--------------------|------------------|-----------|-----------------|
| Lake Eucumbene - Total | 1 761 | -50 | Snowy-Murray | +26 | 776 |
| Snowy-Murray Component | 864 | -26 | Tooma-Tumut | +4 | 251 |
| Target Storage | 1 410 | | Nett Diversion | 21.6 | 525 |
| | | | Murray 1 Release | +20 | 1 082 |

Major Diversions from Murray and Lower Darling (GL)

| New South Wales | This week | From 1 July 2005 |
|-------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Murray Irrig. Ltd (Net) | 32.2 | 892.0 |
| Wakool System loss | 0.5 | 19.9 |
| Western Murray Irrig. | 1.0 | 23.4 |
| Licensed Pumps | 13.7 | 243.1 |
| Lower Darling | 0.4 | 56.3 |
| TOTAL | 47.9 | 1 234.6 |

| Victoria | This week | From 1 July 2005 |
|---------------------------------|-------------|------------------|
| Yarrowonga Main Channel (net) | 10.9 | 284 |
| Torrumbarry System + Nyah (net) | 21.4 | 501 |
| Sunraysia Pumped Districts | 4.7 | 119 |
| Licensed pumps - GMW (Nyah+u/s) | 1.8 | 38 |
| Licensed pumps - LMW | 4.9 | 192 |
| TOTAL | 43.7 | 1 134 |

Flow to South Australia (GL)

| | | |
|------------------------|------|----------------|
| Entitlement this month | 186 | |
| Flow this week | 48.7 | (7 000 ML/day) |
| Flow so far this month | 6 | |
| Flow last month | 199 | |

Salinity (EC)

(microsiemens/cm @ 25° C)

| | Current | Average over the last week | Average since 1 August 2005 |
|-------------------------|---------|----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Swan Hill | 80 | 80 | 110 |
| Euston | 100 | 100 | 120 |
| Red Cliffs | 130 | 130 | 140 |
| Merbein | 130 | 130 | 130 |
| Burtundy (Darling) | 610 | 590 | 560 |
| Lock 9 | 150 | 160 | 140 |
| Lake Victoria | 200 | 200 | 190 |
| Berri | 230 | 230 | 220 |
| Waikerie | 300 | 310 | 340 |
| Morgan | 330 | 330 | 320 |
| Mannum | 340 | 340 | 360 |
| Murray Bridge | 340 | 340 | 380 |
| Milang (Lake Alex.) | 1 190 | 1 190 | 1 270 |
| Poltalloch (Lake Alex.) | 1 120 | 970 | 960 |
| Meningie (Lake Alb.) | 2 260 | 2 240 | 2 120 |
| Goolwa Barrages | 1 900 | 1 900 | 1 810 |



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 | - | - | - | 1 780 | F | 2 600 | 6 680 |
| Jingellic | 4.0 | 1.36 | 207.88 | 2 220 | F | 3 750 | 6 690 |
| Tallandoon (Mitta Mitta River) | 4.2 | 1.43 | 218.32 | 700 | F | 1 090 | 550 |
| Heywoods | 5.5 | 3.33 | 156.96 | 17 730 | R | 18 480 | 19 590 |
| Doctors Point | 5.5 | 3.40 | 151.87 | 19 300 | S | 20 140 | 21 200 |
| Albury | 4.3 | 2.45 | 149.89 | - | - | - | - |
| Corowa | 7.0 | 3.49 | 129.51 | 19 700 | F | 21 430 | 20 770 |
| Yarrowonga Weir (d/s) | 6.4 | 1.76 | 116.80 | 10 000 | S | 10 000 | 10 010 |
| Tocumwal | 6.4 | 2.33 | 106.17 | 10 950 | F | 10 890 | 10 670 |
| Torrumbarry Weir (d/s) | 7.3 | 2.04 | 80.59 | 5 930 | R | 5 980 | 6 040 |
| Swan Hill | 4.5 | 1.17 | 64.09 | 5 450 | R | 5 270 | 5 130 |
| Wakool Junction | 8.8 | 2.91 | 52.03 | 7 630 | R | 7 490 | 7 210 |
| Euston Weir (d/s) | 8.8 | 1.42 | 43.26 | 6 870 | R | 6 730 | 6 320 |
| Mildura Weir (d/s) | - | - | 30.92 | 5 460 | F | 4 960 | 4 600 |
| Wentworth Weir (d/s) | 7.3 | 2.96 | 27.72 | 4 780 | R | 4 540 | 4 120 |
| Rufus Junction | - | 3.37 | 20.30 | 5 680 | F | 6 440 | 6 640 |
| Blanchetown (Lock 1 d/s) | - | - | - | 5 180 | F | 4 680 | 4 480 |
| Tributaries | | | | | | | |
| Kiewa at Bandiana | 2.7 | - | - | 194 | R | 180 | 320 |
| Ovens at Wangaratta | 11.9 | 7.74 | 145.42 | 344 | S | 260 | 240 |
| Goulburn at McCoys Bridge | 9.0 | 2.03 | 93.45 | 1 845 | R | 1 610 | 1 390 |
| Edward at Stevens Weir (d/s) | - | - | - | 2 910 | F | 2 900 | 2 910 |
| Edward at Liewah | - | 3.04 | 58.42 | 2 630 | S | 2 630 | 2 490 |
| Wakool at Stoney Crossing | - | 0.50 | 54.99 | 541 | R | 520 | 440 |
| Murrumbidgee at Balranald | 5.0 | 0.57 | 56.53 | 249 | R | 220 | 230 |
| Barwon at Mungindi | - | 3.64 | - | 1 240 | R | 1 020 | 410 |
| Darling at Bourke | - | 4.05 | - | 191 | S | 250 | 490 |
| Darling at Burtundy Rocks | - | 0.68 | - | 33 | F | 40 | 30 |

| | | |
|---|-------|----|
| Natural Inflow to Hume (ie pre Dartmouth & Snowy Mountains scheme) | 1 780 | 10 |
|---|-------|----|

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 | +0.12 | +1.05 |
| No 26 Torrumbarry | 86.05 | +0.00 | - | No. 6 Murtho | 19.25 | +0.01 | +0.18 |
| No. 15 Euston | 47.60 | +0.00 | - | No. 5 Renmark | 16.30 | +0.03 | +0.24 |
| No. 11 Mildura | 34.40 | +0.07 | +0.12 | No. 4 Bookpurnong | 13.20 | +0.02 | +0.76 |
| No. 10 Wentworth | 30.80 | +0.02 | +0.32 | No.3 Overland Corner | 9.80 | +0.04 | +0.28 |
| No. 9 Kulnine | 27.40 | +0.11 | +0.10 | No. 2 Waikerie | 6.10 | +0.07 | +0.20 |
| No. 8 Wangumma | 24.60 | +0.12 | +0.14 | No 1. Blanchetown | 3.20 | +0.05 | +0.07 |

| Murrumbidgee | FSL (m AHD) | relation to FSL | d/s gauge ht. | | Flow (ML/day) |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------------|---------------|---------|---------------|
| | | | local (m) | (m AHD) | |
| No. 7 Maude | 75.40 | -0.18 | 0.74 | 70.09 | 445 |
| No. 5 Redbank | 66.90 | -0.74 | 0.56 | 61.86 | 703 |

Lower Lakes

FSL = 0.75 m AHD

| | (m AHD) |
|--|---------|
| Lake Alexandrina average level for the past 5 days | 0.72 |

Barrages

| | Openings | Level (m AHD) | Status |
|----------------|--------------|---------------|------------|
| Goolwa | 128 openings | 0.75 | All closed |
| Mundoo | 26 openings | 0.76 | All closed |
| Boundary Creek | 6 openings | - | All closed |
| Ewe Island | 111 gates | - | All closed |
| Tauwichee | 322 gates | 0.73 | All closed |



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