

Tuesday, 15 December 2009

RIVER MURRAY IRRIGATION ALLOCATIONS REMAIN AT 48%

Minister for the River Murray Karlene Maywald said today irrigation allocations are to remain at 48% due to low inflows across the Murray-Darling Basin.

Minister Maywald says there hasn't been sufficient improvement across the Murray Darling Basin since the previous update on 1 December to increase irrigation allocations at this time.

"Hot and dry conditions in the first half of November 2009 dried out many of the key run-off areas across the catchment," Minister Maywald says.

"As a result, the River Murray system inflow for November 2009 was 250 GL, well below the long-term average November inflow of 765 GL.

"From this inflow, South Australia has received 20GL, which has been allocated to the Lower Lakes in accordance with the decision-making framework.

"Water allocated to South Australia this water year has been distributed to the following users:

Irrigators	275 GL (74%)
Critical Human Needs Reserve 2010/11	30 GL (8%)
Critical Environmental Needs Reserve	10 GL (3%)
Lower Lakes Environmental Reserve	54 GL (15%)

"In addition, 390GL has been carried over from the previous water year and distributed as follows:

Irrigators	100 GL
Critical Human Needs Reserve 2009/10	201 GL
Critical Human Needs Reserve 2010/11	39 GL
Critical Environmental Needs Reserve	0 GL
Lower Lakes Environmental Reserve	50 GL

"River Murray storages also remain low. The current volume in Hume, Dartmouth, Menindee Lakes and Lake Victoria is about 2,800 GL or 30% of capacity."

Allocation updates will continue to be issued on the 1st and 15th of each month, or the first business day following that date if it falls on a weekend.

For more information about conditions in the River Murray or wider Murray-Darling Basin visit www.dwlbc.sa.gov.au/murray/drought/