

# Community update on response to fish deaths in Menindee and Lower Darling-Baaka

## Update on positive impacts of recent flows released to support river health

The seven water pulses released between 10 November 2023 and 10 January 2024 have successfully improved dissolved oxygen throughout the water column and supported fish health.

NSW Government and Commonwealth agencies are continuing to carefully monitor the situation and adjusting releases as required to help prevent hypoxic conditions in the Menindee town weir pool upstream of Weir 32.

## Changes to flows being released down the Lower Darling Baaka

Recent heavy rain over the Goulburn and Campaspe catchments in Victoria will increase inflows to the River Murray. These inflows will be sufficient to meet most Murray system demands over coming weeks. In response, MDBA has ceased their call on water from the Menindee Lakes. As a result, the flow target at Weir 32, met by releases from Lake Pamamaroo and Lake Menindee, has now been reduced from 1100ML/day. Flows over Weir 32 will now be met by releases of the Environmental Water Allowance and guided by requirements to maintain healthy conditions in the Weir 32 weir pool and lower Baaka. At present, a flow of 800ML/day is being maintained, comprising 750ML/day from Lake Pamamaroo, and 50ML/day from Lake Menindee. 750ML/day is the flow that generally maintains destratified conditions in the weir pool. However, with warm temperatures, algae, and other contributing factors, this may not always achieve the desired result, and may require adjustment.

Water quality monitoring continues and should monitoring indicate water quality decline, actions to support river and fish health will be taken.

With the changes in releases, you may notice a drop in the level of the weir pools. Please be assured there is no impact on town water supply.

## Inflows topping up the Menindee Lakes

The Menindee Lakes have received approximately 32GL of inflows from the north, as of 8 January, 2024.

## Emergency Operations Centre on standby

An Emergency Operations Centre is on standby should a mass fish death event occur, and a contractor has been stood up to be available to remove dead fish from the river as soon as possible if a mass fish death event were to occur in the reach.

## Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: [waterqualitydata@dpie.nsw.gov.au](mailto:waterqualitydata@dpie.nsw.gov.au)
- To view community updates issued, visit [Community updates and frequently asked questions | Water \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
- To report dead fish, fish struggling or gasping at the water surface, or crayfish leaving the water please call the NSW DPI Fisheries Phoneline 1800 043 536 or fill in a fish kill protocol and report form at: <https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/habitat/threats/fish-kills-2019-2020/info-sheet>
- Information on recent fish deaths is available at: [Fish kills in NSW](#). When reporting, please include the name of the river/waterbody, location and date of your observation and provide photographs. If possible, please also record what species are affected and an estimate of number of each species observed.
- Further information on blackwater events can be found at the DCCEEW Water website at: [Hypoxic blackwater | Water \(nsw.gov.au\)](#)
- Additional information is also available on the Murray-Darling Basin Authority website at: <https://www.mdba.gov.au/publications/mdba-reports/water-management-101-factsheets>
- Operational updates are available at: [WaterInsights - WaterNSW](#)
- Water quality data collected after the fish deaths at Menindee is available on the Environment Protection Authority web page at: <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/updates-on-issues/menindee-fish-kill>