

## Flows

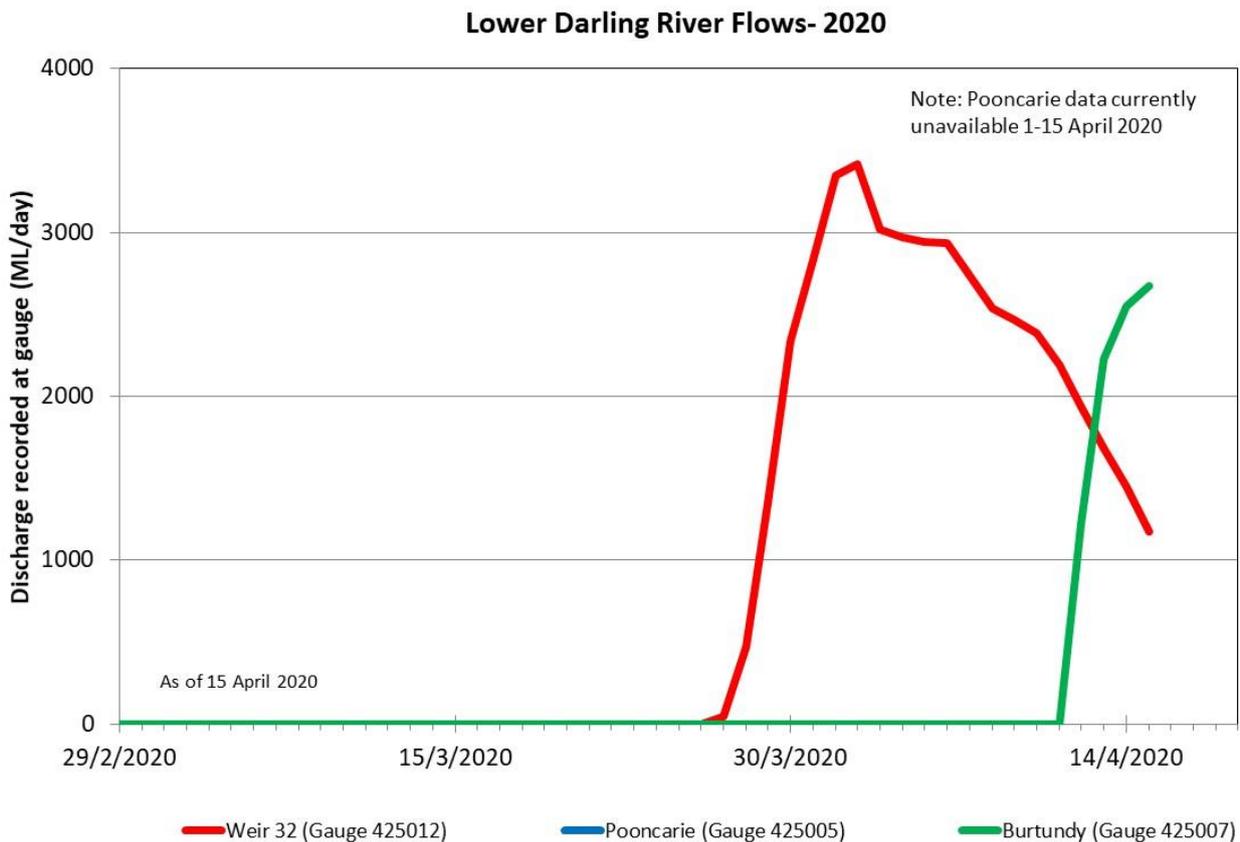
A total of 480 gigalitres (GL) has passed Bourke during this event, while Wilcannia has seen a total of 390 GL. However, flows from upstream catchments into the Barwon-Darling and along the Barwon-Darling are now reducing.

A total flow into Menindee Lakes of 400 GL to 440 GL is expected.

As at 16 April 2020, Menindee Lakes is holding 285 GL (17 % of capacity) spread across Lakes Wetherell, Pamamaroo and Tandure and including 2 GL in Copi Hollow.

Now that the initial high pulse release from the Lakes is complete, releases are being reduced progressively down to 300 megalitres (ML)/day base flow. This will then provide a continuous flow through the Lower Darling system for the next 12 to 18 months.

The following graph shows the flows at Weir 32 (where releases are being made) and the response at Burtundy as the flows arrived.



Along the Lower Darling, flows arrived at Burtundy on 11 April and are around 2,700 ML/per day.

Flows met the upper reaches of the Wentworth weir pool, over 500 river kilometres below Menindee Lakes, on Monday 13 April. It will take a few days for the head of the flow to pass through the weir pool and into the Murray River.

This will be the first time there has been full connectivity of the Barwon-Darling River from Mungindi in the north and along the Darling River through to the Murray River in two years. The photo below shows the water reaching the start of the Wentworth Weir pool.



**First Darling flows reaching Wentworth weir pool (photo courtesy of WaterNSW)**

WaterNSW has been working with MDBA to drawdown Wentworth Weir by up to 300 mm below full supply level. This will assist in moving the poorer quality water at the head of the flow front through the weir pool as quickly as possible.

The initial flow can be highly saline as it mixes with the water from the pools along the river. However, monitoring to date has shown that the salinity levels are quickly dropping as further water arrives behind the front.

## Allocations

The department published a comprehensive Water Allocation Statement on 15 April 2020. The outlook for Lower Darling allocations for 2020-21 is:

- Full (100 per cent) allocation can be expected for towns, domestic and stock access licences, and high security entitlements in 2020-21.
- The opening Lower Darling general security allocation is likely to be low or zero unless there is significant further recovery between now and 1 July.
- Carryover water is likely to be fully available in 2020-21.

- Until the Menindee system recovers to over 640 GL, flows will be managed to prioritise water supply to Lower Darling water users and ecosystems, ahead of delivery to the Murray.

For further information on water allocations go to - [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/statements](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/statements)

For further information on water quality of the water as it travels along the Lower Darling go to our water quality updates at - [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/drought-update/drought-recovery/menindee-lakes-lower-darling-river](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/drought-update/drought-recovery/menindee-lakes-lower-darling-river)