



admin@mda.asn.au  
www.mda.asn.au  
T (03) 5480 3805  
ABN: 64 636 490 493

463 High Street  
P.O. Box 1268  
Echuca, Vic 3564

## PRESS RELEASE

---

### For Immediate Release

---

Contact	Cr David Thurley National President	Ms Emma Bradbury Chief Executive Officer
Phone	02 6023 8111 0419 510 274	03 5480 3805 0429 905 017
Email	<a href="mailto:dthurley@alburycity.nsw.gov.au">dthurley@alburycity.nsw.gov.au</a>	<a href="mailto:e.bradbury@mda.asn.au">e.bradbury@mda.asn.au</a>
Date	Monday, 10 April 2017	

---

#### Local Government urges Easter flows in the Murray

---

Water will flow down the Murray this Easter, providing confidence to tourism operators and visitors alike, and supporting high visitation for camping and tourism areas along the river.

The Murray Darling Association (MDA), the nation's peak representative body for local government and communities across the Murray-Darling Basin, has secured an assurance from the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) that flows in the River Murray downstream of Yarrawonga Weir over the Easter period will remain at about 8 000 ML per day, maintaining a river height that has been fairly constant since January.

Flows released to meet irrigation demand will be augmented by a component of environmental water from the "River Murray Increased Flow" account, a water account established as part of the process to corporatize Snowy Hydro Ltd.

In confirming that flows over Easter will be maintained at a rate consistent with what it has been for most of this year, MDBA's Executive Director of River Management David Dreverman said "The MDBA has no water that can be released only for recreation and tourism purposes. However, the particular circumstances this year should ensure that flows are adequate for most recreation and tourism purposes."

The announcement comes after the MDA's National President Cr David Thurley wrote to both the Murray Darling Basin Authority and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH), seeking a tripartite meeting to explore integrated management strategies of our Basin water resources to optimize economic, social and environmental outcomes.

"There have been several years, particularly those where Easter falls later in April, where the river has dropped sharply coinciding with Easter holidays, with a resultant loss in visitation numbers and a loss tourism product value across our tourism dependent regions." Cr David Thurley wrote.

---

“The economic cost to businesses and communities across a number of local government areas has been immediate and in many communities devastating, with longer term costs associated with rebuilding confidence in the regions and their tourism product also significant.”

Both the Murray Darling Basin Authority and The Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder have agreed to meet with the MDA in search of a longer-term solution.

Murray Darling Association CEO Emma Bradbury was pleased with the commitment from the MDBA to ensure that flows over the Easter period this year will be adequate for most recreation and tourism purposes.

“Tourism is a significant contributor to the Basin’s economic and social wellbeing. It makes sense that we manage the releases of our environmental water, as well as our irrigation allocations to optimise social, economic and environmental outcomes.” Ms Bradbury said. “It is important that local government, as the third level of government in Australia and the one most directly connected to the communities we represent has a role in informing the decisions the effect the social and economic wellbeing of our local communities.”

“We welcome the invitation to continue to work with the MDBA and the CEWH to discuss flow ranges over future Easter periods, acknowledging that NSW and Victorian state governments, as managers of the State watering resource plans may also have a role in determining a solution. This will provide a real opportunity to see a long term solution to what has been an ongoing challenge for our tourism operators, visitors and residents in the Murray Region.”

[End]

