

Community update for Barwon–Darling, Menindee Lakes and Lower Darling–Baaka river

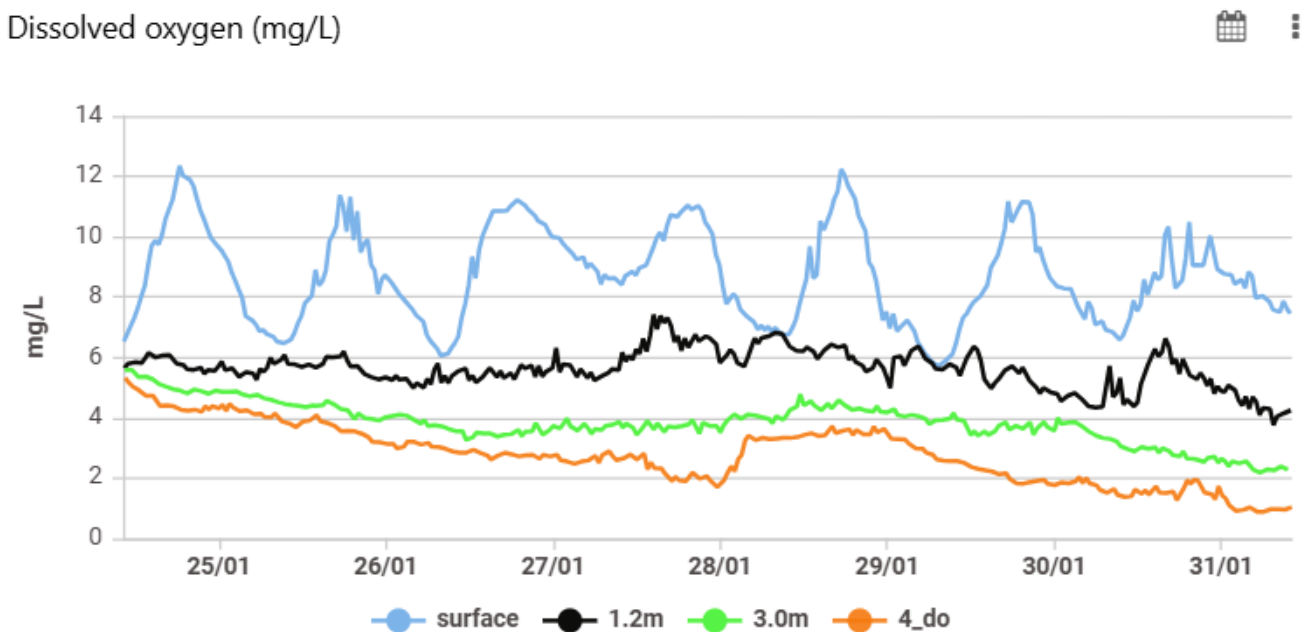
Pulse flow through town

A pulse flow of 1,500 ML/day will be released from Lake Pamamaroo **today**, for one day only, to increase dissolved oxygen (DO) levels within the weir pool. The Incident Action Plan (IAP) DO level for initiating a pulse flow has been triggered.

The release will be operational water. This will increase Weir 32 flow from the current 1,765 ML/day to ~2,500 ML/day and will cause the Weir 32 river height to rise from 1.87 m to ~2 m.

Persistent stratification within the weir pool is causing falling DO in the lower layers of the water to levels not suitable for fish. While the upper layers remain sufficiently oxygenated for native fish, dissolved oxygen could fall to critical levels when the water mixes. Due to algal activity, oxygen levels are lowest in the morning, and highest in the evening. Destratification or ‘mixing’ is predicted to occur tomorrow morning when oxygen levels will be at their lowest. The predicted DO at mixing is <3 mg/L which can stress fish and levels below 2 mg/L can be lethal. A flow will be released immediately to encourage mixing this evening when DO levels are at their highest to prevent these conditions occurring.

Figure 1. DO profile at Menindee Town buoy showing persistent stratification



The department advises users in the weir pool and downstream of Weir 32 that flows will fluctuate over the coming days and are advising customers and landholders to monitor warnings and river levels closely to make necessary arrangements to ensure infrastructure and livestock are not impacted. We apologise for any inconvenience this may cause community. This action is being taken to prevent fish deaths in the weir pool.

Fish Deaths

Following fish deaths earlier this week, agencies have continued to monitor the situation and are ready to respond if necessary. Dead fish numbers remain in the 100s – the majority being carp with small numbers of natives affected. Reports of dead fish have reduced, and the likely cause remains extreme water quality conditions in Lake Menindee.

Fisheries are urging community to **report dead fish, fish struggling or gasping at the water surface** by calling the NSW Department of Primary Industry **Fisheries Phonenumber on 1800 043 536**. Noting the location of the dead fish and suspected species is also important.

Inflows

WaterNSW released an updated inflow forecast on 15 January 2026. Flow from the northern Basin has been relatively low over the past month. At this time, there are no significant inflows forecast. Updated forecasting indicates a further 15–25 GL is expected to enter the Menindee Lakes to the end of February. A portion of that inflow is protected environmental water. Flows past Wilcannia are currently 71 ML/day while flows at Bourke have increased over the past week to 639 ML/day.



System error – sorry we spammed you!

We experienced a system error on Friday 30 January that meant the SMS we sent was delivered multiple times.

We are working to make sure it doesn't happen again and apologise for any frustration we caused.

Additional information

- To notify the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water of potential blackwater events email: water.enquiries@dcceew.nsw.gov.au
- To view community updates issued, visit water.nsw.gov.au/menindee-updates
- If you've got any questions regarding this update or other water matters **contact your local implementation officer, Kate McBride on 0458 945 149** or kate.mcbride@dcceew.nsw.gov.au
- To report dead fish, fish struggling or gasping at the water surface, or crayfish leaving the water please call the **NSW Department of Primary Industry Fisheries Phonenumber 1800 043 536** or fill in a fish kill protocol and report form at: 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 department's website at: water.nsw.gov.au/hypoxic-blackwater
- Additional information is also available on the Murray–Darling Basin Authority website at: www.mdba.gov.au/climate-and-river-health/water-quality/fish-deaths
www.mdba.gov.au/water-management/infrastructure/menindee-lakes
- WaterNSW operational updates are available in [WaterInsights](#)
- Water quality data collected after the fish deaths at Menindee is available on the Environment Protection Authority web page at: www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/updates-on-issues/menindee-fish-kill
- Real-time water quality data from The department – Strategic Science & Engagement monitoring buoys can be accessed from the [Darling–Baaka River Health Project dashboard](#)
- Data from the WaterNSW gauging network can be found in WaterInsights at: <https://waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/12104-lower-darling-regulated-river/river-data>