



MDBA plans operations for a range of water availability scenarios

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The 2018-19 River Murray System Annual Operating Plan, published today, outlines possible operations across a range of water availability scenarios for the River Murray in the coming year.

Murray–Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) Executive Director of River Management, Andrew Reynolds, said the annual plan provided water users with information about operational strategies that could be employed for extreme dry through to wet conditions.

"Actual conditions will be different to those in our scenarios but our hope is that the plan provides a useful indication to states and stakeholders about the breadth of potential river operations in the 2018-19 water year," Mr Reynolds said.

"We experienced relatively dry conditions last year resulting in low inflows to the River Murray system and while there is a strong possibility that dry conditions will persist into the coming season, the MDBA plans for the full range of scenarios from extreme dry to wet.

"Our planning includes ways to manage the continuing risk of a delivery shortfall during peak irrigation times, where demand could potentially outstrip the ability to move water through the system because there is not the capacity for the river system to carry the water or extremely hot weather results in a spike in orders.

"By undertaking this type of planning we're looking to ensure that the river system is operated efficiently and effectively so that state water entitlements are delivered and we maximise the water available to the southern Basin states.

Mr Reynolds said the plan was also a demonstration of the MDBA's commitment to accountability and transparency as outlined in the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement.

"Typically the River Murray system receives most of its rainfall and inflows during the winter period so catchment and dam storage levels can change significantly in the coming weeks and months.

"That's why later in the year we'll review the plan and publically update it in line with prevailing conditions."

The annual plan is prepared by the MDBA with input from the Australian Government and the Basin states of New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia.

The 2018/19 River Murray system Annual Operating Plan is available on the MDBA [website](#).