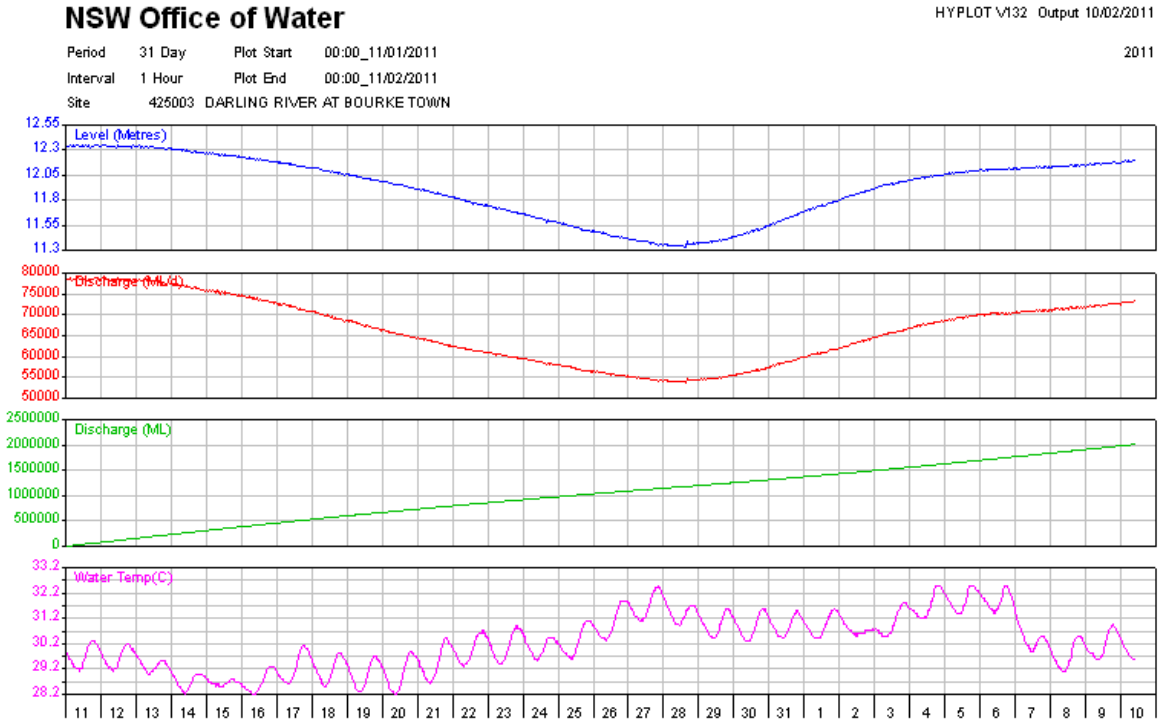
February 11th 2011

A snapshot of recent flood events across South Eastern Australia

The Darling River at BOURKE as of 10/02/2011 at noon today
Flow volume: 75,680ML a day and rising (but suggest close to the peak)
Source: Toowoomba / Chinchilla floods Dec 2011
(Chinchilla and Dalby's second event within a month or so)
Chinchilla peak was 302,661 on 15/01/11 at 10.00am
St George peak was 246,600 on the 23/1/11 (its third peak within 9mths commencing in March 2010 when the peak went over the gauge at 300,00megalitres per day)
Due to arrive at Murray's mouth: Late April / mid May 2011.



The Murrumbidgee River at Wagga Wagga,

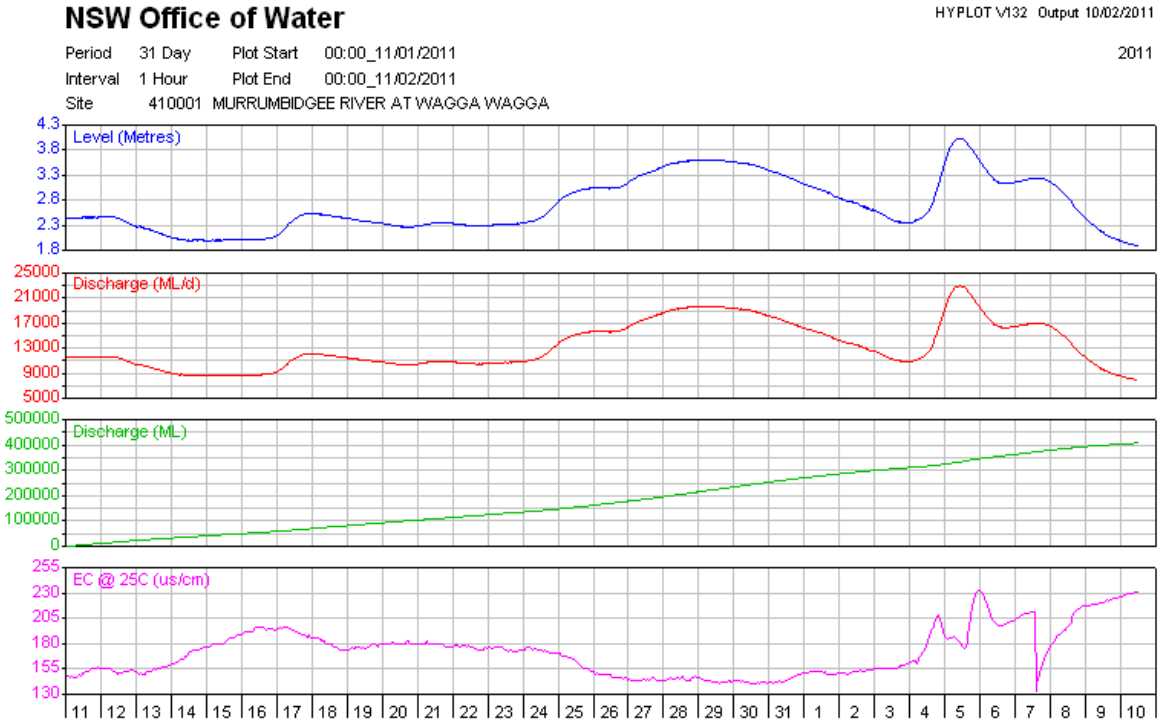
Peaked at 204,000 megalitres per day on December 8th 2010.

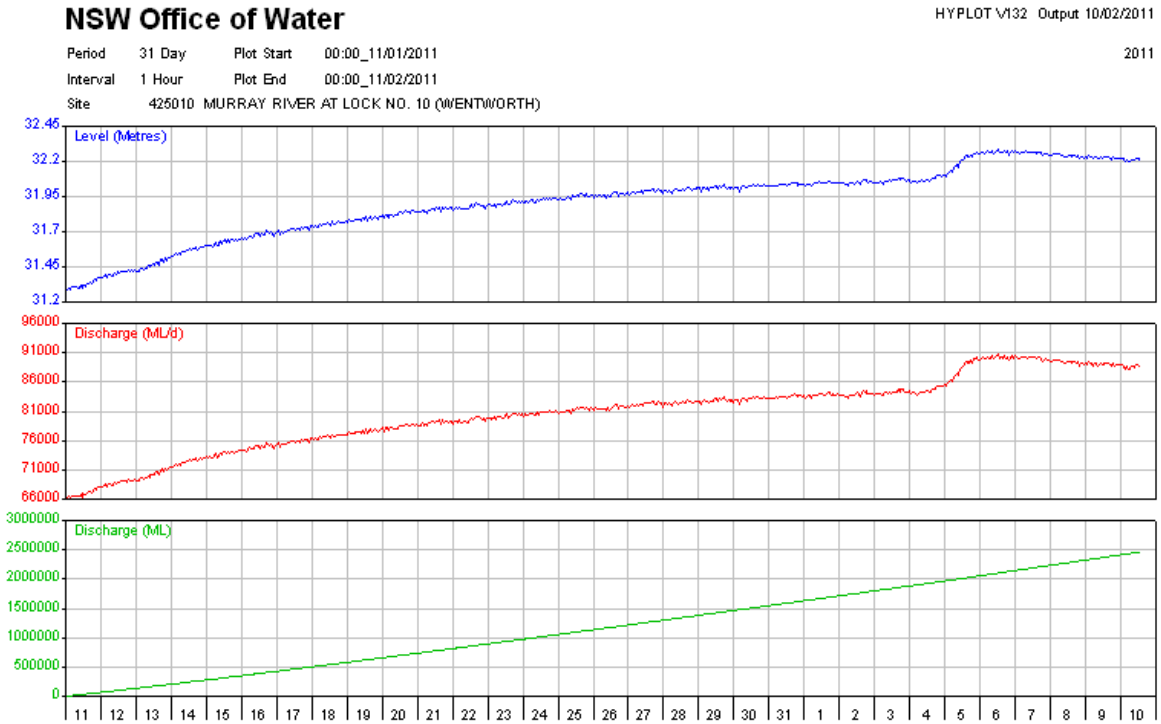
The peak at the junction of the Murray between Easton on the Murray and Balranald on The Murrumbidgee was approximately 30,925 megalitres on 16th January 2011.

Of the 2,400 gigilitres that have passed through Wagga Wagga since that event approximately only 800 gigilitres have actually made it into the Murray.

This only translates into combining with events from Qld and Northern NSW and Victoria which peaked at Wentworth on 6th Feb 2011 at 90,232 gigilitres per day has had a slight fall, but rose again to 88,800 gigilitres as of noon today.

Wentworth is on average, at these velocities approximately 30 days from the Murray mouth but the volume will dissipate to about 75,000 megalitres per day by the time it reaches the end of it's journey in the Lower lakes.





Victoria has had three events since Early September 2010.
On September the 8th the Murray peaked at the Yarrawonga Weir at 110,000megalitres per day.

This dissipated dramatically by the time it reached Echuca on September 15th to approximately 45,000 megalitres per day due to the off takes of the forests and the Edward and Wakool river systems.
SA did receive the benefits of those upstream events by recording excess of 25,000megalitres per day by early October at Lock one.

The Second event happened slightly west of the Kiewa and Ovens system week ending 20th October 2010, but with generally moderate to high consistent flows into the Murray at the junctions of the Goulburn and Campaspe Rivers.

The Third event which triggered floods in the Loddon River back in early January have also petered out significantly and reduced the flood warning in Swan Hill from moderate to low but helping to maintain high flows past Mildura on into SA which is mentioned above by the Wentworth Graph.

Unfortunately gauging stations went out of commission due to levels but the estimates from upstream Loddon at the Lannecoorie storage was a sharp sudden peak in excess of 214,00 megalitres per day for a short period and was estimated to still be over 100,000 per day at Kerang. (high dissipation due to very flat terrain and water spread out over 6,000 sq kilometres as it crept forward.

The current synopsis, unless there are some new major events at those same sites, is for a long slow gradual drain off over the next two months, equating to positive high flows (75,000 down to 50,000) into South Aust for the next two to three months.

Of course the northern monsoon season in Sth'n Qld is still young so we need to watch this space.

Regarding Qld Floods of Christmas 2010, it was amazing to see Wivenhoe dam go from 100% capacity to almost 200% in less than a week when it had taken two good years to get it up from 30 to 100% before that freakish event.

The 1956 flood saw 380,000 megalitres per day flow into SA for many weeks.

The flows on the Brisbane River rose from a sleepy stream to over 600,000megalitres per day on 12th January and fall to 220,000 by 16th January.

It's tributary, the Bremer River, recorded 80,000 megalitres on 12th January and dropped to 637 megalitres on 16th January , demonstrating how suddenly it can rise and then fall again. (An inland tsunami is a very apt title).

Cyclone Yasi is yet to show it's colours in the Murray Darling Basin, but certainly has given central Australia a top up on last year's events of March 2010 after leaving it's trail of destruction over north and central QLD.

Ray Najar
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February 2011