



NSW Police Force

MEDIA RELEASE

Coordinated emergency response concludes on the Darling-Baaka River

Issued at 4.15pm, Wednesday 5 April 2023

The coordinated emergency response on the lower Darling-Baaka River has concluded following recent results of ongoing monitoring and assessments of water quality and conditions.

An Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) was established at Menindee on Saturday 18 March 2023 at the direction of State Emergency Operations Controller, Deputy Commissioner Emergency Management Peter Thurtell, following a large-scale fish kill in the river near the township.

After delivering on its priorities, the Menindee EOC transferred coordination to the Wentworth EOC last Friday (31 March 2023) to monitor and take action if new risks were identified further downstream.

Since that time, the Wentworth EOC has coordinated operations of NSW, Commonwealth and local government agencies to ensure increased monitoring and assessment of water supply for the area – which has not been affected and continues to meet Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.

Importantly, experts were closely monitoring, sampling, testing, and taking actions to try to improve conditions throughout the Murray Darling Basin to best prevent further fish kills.

Throughout this week, experts reported promising improvements from water testing results, including dissolved oxygen (DO) levels, which informed the decision to stand-down the Wentworth EOC this morning (Wednesday 5 April 2023).

Responsible agencies are continuing to meet regularly and operate throughout the Murray-Darling Basin and beyond.

In the unlikely event that conditions deteriorate, there is a capacity to immediately stand-up an EOC and initiate an emergency response.

The results of various tests will continue to be made available to members of local communities, as well as being posted on the websites of the responsible agencies.

For information about the monitoring, management and maintenance of water quality, including detailed community updates from the Department of Planning and Environment, visit:

<https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/drought-update/managing-drought-recovery/blackwater>

For information about blue-green algal blooms in river systems and storages managed by WaterNSW, visit:

<https://www.watnsw.com.au/water-services/water-quality/algae-alerts>

For information and results of water testing conducted by the NSW Environment Protection Authority, visit:

<https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/>

For more information about fish kills, as well as recent reports of observations and causes, visit:

<https://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/fishing/habitat/threats/fish-kills>

Members of the community are still urged to report observations of struggling fish or deaths directly to DPI Fisheries on 1800 043 536.

 www.police.nsw.gov.au  (02) 8263 6100  media@police.nsw.gov.au

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