

Upcoming Operational Changes to the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages

From 1 July 2026, the start of the 2026-27 water year, Goulburn-Murray Water (GMW) will be changing how the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages are operated. This factsheet provides an overview of the changes, what they mean for the community and for the recreational use of the lakes.

About the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages

The Victorian Mid-Murray Storages are a key water storage system in the north-west of Victoria which GMW operates and manages. It is made up of four lakes. These are Lake Boga, Kangaroo Lake, Lake Charm and Ghow Swamp.

For more information about the lakes of the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages, please visit:

gmwater.com.au/water-operations/storages/murray

Purpose of the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages

The Victorian Mid-Murray Storages was created in 2010 to help Victoria meet its commitment to managing the Murray River flow of water and to support a reliable water supply for entitlement holders. Water from the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages helps:

- Farmers and food producers grow crops and raise livestock.
- Towns and businesses get the water they need to operate.
- Other water authorities manage their own supplies.

- Environmental efforts, like improving water quality in rivers and wetlands.
- Support all types of water entitlement holders, ensuring fair and reliable access.

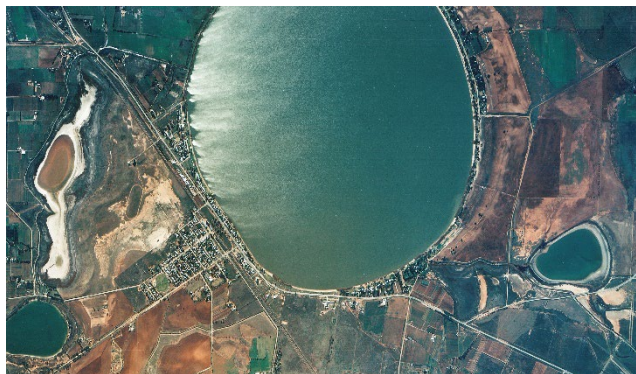
About the changes and what they mean for recreational use of the lakes

From 1 July 2026, GMW will be making some changes to how the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages are operated. Going forward, we will be changing how and when we store and release water from Lake Boga, Kangaroo Lake and Lake Charm. Noting, the operation of Ghow Swamp is being reviewed as part of a separate process.

As a result of these changes, there will likely be impacts on the water levels and salinity concentrations (salt levels) of the four lakes.

At times, these **changing water levels are likely to impact recreational activities** at the lakes, especially at **Lake Boga**. This is because water levels at Lake Boga might be lowered or might fluctuate more often.

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Lake Boga

Why the changes are necessary

The Victorian Mid-Murray Storages play a role in **reducing the risk of water delivery shortfalls** by helping to store and release water more flexibly. However, this **requires operational changes** to how the lakes are managed.

In recent years, GMW has been able to keep water levels of the lakes at levels suitable for recreational uses. This has been possible due to several factors including favourable weather conditions.

More recently, several external factors have increased pressures on the Murray River and the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages. These pressures include:

- Spikes in demand for water, especially during hot and dry periods.
- Population growth and changes in where and how water is used.
- Climate change, leading to more frequent and severe periods of dry conditions.
- Shifts in customer needs and land use, such as more permanent crops that require year-round water and which see demands peak over summer.

Because of these pressures, the Murray-Darling Basin Authority has identified an increasing risk of future water delivery shortfalls.

A **shortfall** is when actual water usage is higher than what was expected or planned for. It is most likely to occur during **heatwaves** or **peak irrigation periods**.

Our commitment to communities

GMW recognises how important the lakes of the Victorian Mid-Murray Storages and their surrounds are as places of community recreation, for supporting local tourism and for general community wellbeing.

We are committed to **upholding the recreational use of the lakes as much as possible**, noting that we must also manage the lakes within the limitations of our operating requirements.

We are committed to:

- Maintaining recreational usage of the lakes as much as possible.
- Balancing community needs with the need to deliver water to entitlement holders.
- Keeping you informed before changes happen and as they occur.
- Listening to your concerns and working with you to manage the impacts.

Have your say and contact us

GMW is motivated to understand how we can best support you with navigating these changes, including any concerns or suggestions you might have. To share your feedback, please visit: yoursay.gmwater.com.au/vmms

For further information, or to contact us, please call 1800 013.