

Burdekin River

This brochure describes the flood risk and previous flooding in the Burdekin River catchment, last updated in June 2025.

Flood Risk

The Burdekin River basin drains a vast area of about 130,000 square kilometres. Two main tributaries drain the catchment, the Burdekin River flowing from the north and the Belyando from the south, which join at the Burdekin Falls Dam. Downstream of the dam, the Bowen and Bogie Rivers join the Burdekin River before it flows into the sea near Ayr/Home Hill.

Major floods, causing inundation of properties and closure of main roads, can occur along the major rivers both upstream and downstream of the Burdekin Falls Dam. Downstream of the dam, major flooding in the Ayr and Home Hill areas results from either flood waters travelling down from the upper Burdekin and Belyando basin or from intense rain in areas below the dam. Ayr and Home Hill occasionally experience severe flooding with many houses and businesses affected, especially in the Home Hill township.

Previous Flooding

Records of large floods at Ayr extend back as far as 1911. Significant floods in the Burdekin catchment include 1958, 1974, 1991, 2008, 2009, 2019 and 2025.

In 2019, an active monsoon trough and slow-moving low pressure system over the northern tropics produced extremely heavy rainfall in tropical Queensland from late January into early February. Major flood levels were recorded along the upper Burdekin River (upstream of Burdekin Falls Dam).

At Sellheim along the upper Burdekin River, the river level reached 18.1 m with major flooding at 10:00 pm on 5 February 2019. The highest river level recorded is 21.79 m in March 1946.

At Inkerman Bridge, along the lower Burdekin River (downstream of Burdekin Falls Dam) between Ayr and Home Hill, the river level reached 11.1 m with moderate flooding at 11:51 pm on 9 February 2019. This was the highest river level at this location since 11.55 m in 2009. The highest river level recorded is 12.62 m in April 1958.

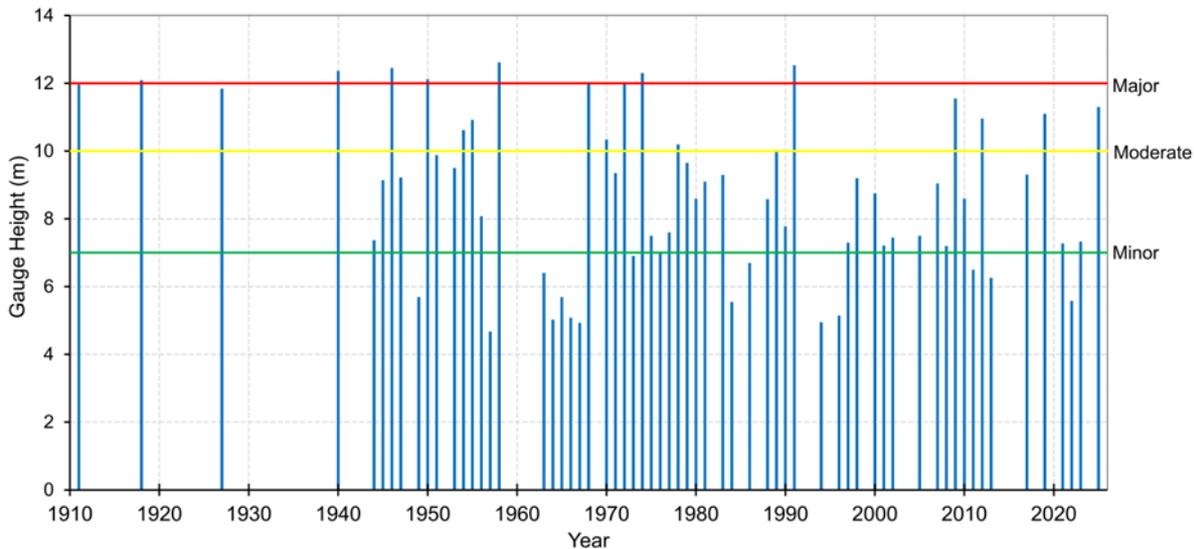
More recently in February 2025, an active monsoon trough and several tropical lows produced a prolonged period of heavy rainfall over parts of northern Queensland. This led to major flooding across the upper and lower Burdekin River, with water levels reaching 19.27 m at Sellheim on 3 February and 11.30 m at Inkerman Bridge on 12 February.

Flood Event	Sellheim	Inkerman Bridge
Mar 1946	21.79	-
Apr 1958	-	12.62
Feb 1991	19.51	12.53
Feb 2019	18.10	11.10
Feb 2025	19.27	11.30*

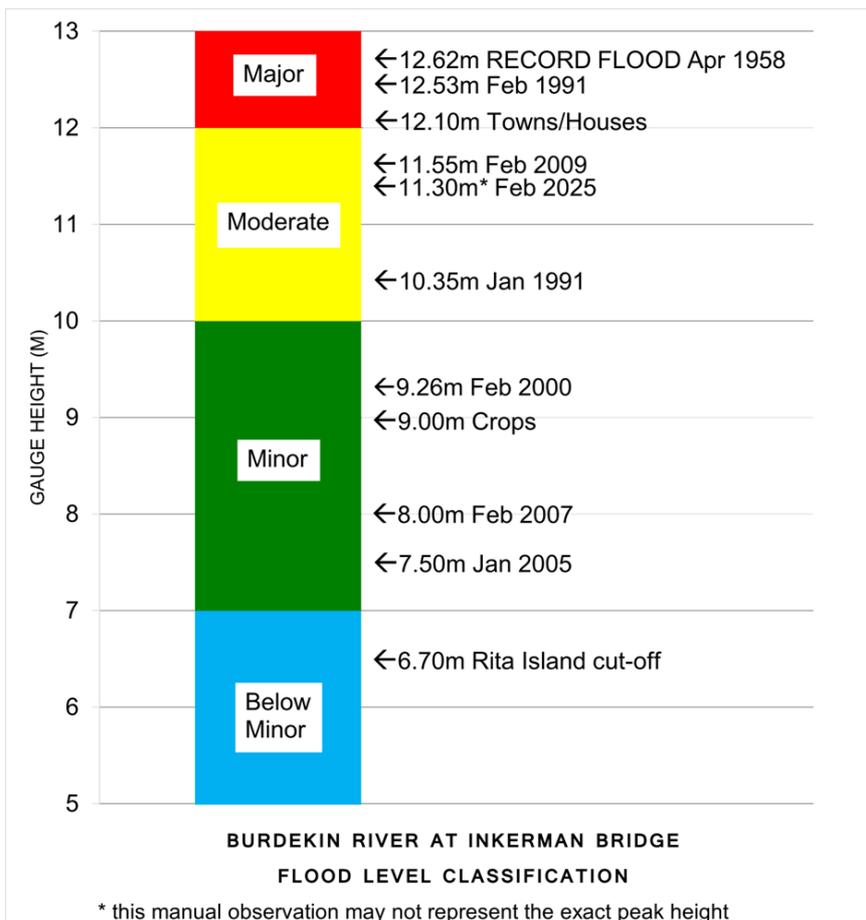
All heights are in metres on flood gauges.

* This was a manual observation that may not represent the exact peak height

Burdekin River at Inkerman Bridge Highest Annual Flood Peaks



Australian Government Bureau of Meteorology



Further Information

- [Latest rainfall and river heights](#)
- For information on the flood warning service for the Burdekin River: [Queensland Service Level Specification](#)
- Catchment map: [Burdekin Basin map](#)
- [National Arrangements for Flood Forecasting and Warning](#)