

21 October 2016

Lachlan Valley

Water availability and allocation update

Allocations

The total allocation for general security licence holders in the 2016/17 water year **remains unchanged at 124 per cent of entitlement.**

Further rainfall during September and early October on an already saturated catchment saw widespread flooding across the Lachlan Valley, with all regulated river storages effectively full. Since inflows cannot currently be stored, and there has been no usage of previously allocated water, no improvement to general security allocations can be made at this time.

General security water users are reminded of the Annual Use Limit that applies. A volume equivalent to **100 per cent of entitlement is the maximum amount that can be used in the 2016/17 water year**, plus any adjustments up or down for trade in or out of account.

	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Lachlan valley	100%	124%	0%

Dam releases

WaterNSW is continuing to release water from Wyangala Dam under airspace operations. The translucent flow period at Wyangala Dam for the 2016/17 water year has now ended. Inflows are currently being passed through the power station, and the dam will be managed by WaterNSW to target 100 per cent capacity at the start of the peak demand season in mid-November. WaterNSW is also planning to keep both on-route storages surcharged at the start of the irrigation season.

For the purposes of this resource assessment, Wyangala Dam is assumed to have filled by the end of October, followed by a return to dry conditions in November. Ongoing contributions to the mid-Lachlan from Lake Cowal are expected to reduce transmission losses in the coming months and have been considered in this assessment.

Dam levels

- As of 19 October, Wyangala Dam was 99 per cent full, holding 1,206,000 megalitres.
- Lake Cargelligo is surcharged to 176 per cent full (59,600 megalitres) and Lake Brewster is surcharged to 113 per cent full (164,000 megalitres).

Outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology has forecast a 70 to 75 per cent chance of median rainfall being exceeded in the Lachlan Valley during the three month period October to December 2016.

The current outlook reflects a negative Indian Ocean Dipole, warmer than average ocean temperatures surrounding northern Australia and an ENSO-neutral tropical Pacific, showing some La Niña-like characteristics.

Next announcements

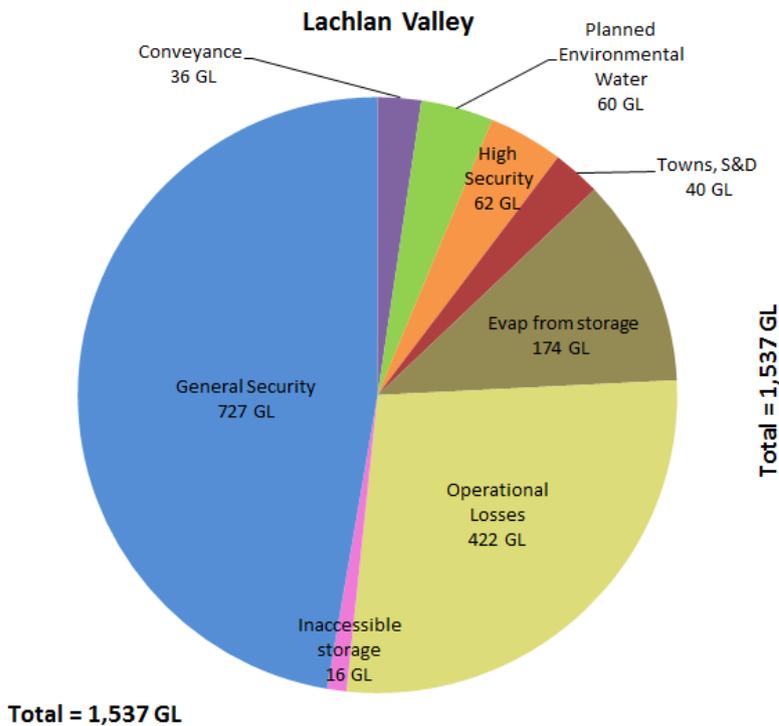
The next Water Allocation Statement is scheduled for mid-December, however; in the meantime, resource availability will be closely monitored and any significant resource improvements before then will be announced.

The autumn statement will include the water availability outlook for the 2017/18 water year.

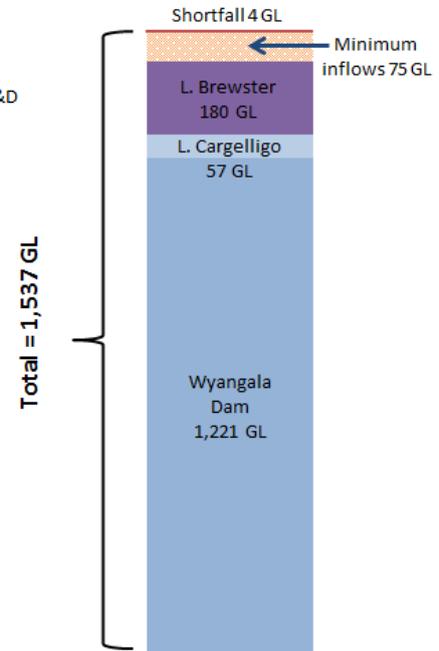
Lachlan Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution: November 2016 to May 2018		
	Volume (GL)	
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	1,533	
less		
General Security	727 (124%)	
Carryover remaining in accounts ⁽²⁾	0	
Conveyance	36	
Planned Environmental Water ⁽³⁾	60	
High Security ⁽⁴⁾	62 (100%)	
Towns, Stock, Domestic ⁽⁴⁾	40 (100%)	
Evaporation from storage ⁽⁵⁾	174	
Operational Losses (transmission, operations) ⁽⁶⁾	422	Total demand
Inaccessible storage	16	1,537

Resource Distribution November 2016 to May 2018



Supply Distribution



Notes:

- (1) Total available resource: End of October estimated storage volume in Wyangala Dam, Lake Cargelligo and Lake Brewster, minimum forecast inflows from 1 Nov.
- (2) Carryover remaining in accounts: Zero following account reset.
- (3) Planned environmental water: water allocated to the Water Quality Allowance and/or the Environmental Contingency Allowances under the water sharing plan. Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water.
- (4) Towns, Stock, Domestic and High Security: reserves required to meet 100% of entitlement through to 31st May 2018.
- (5) It is assessed that the lakes are likely to be drawn down slowly in the current water year and will hold water until next summer, increasing storage evaporation.
- (6) 'Operational Losses': best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions to meet all demands. This mostly comprises natural transmission losses as water soaks into the river bed sands. It is assumed that current tributary inflows will return to dry conditions. This loss allowance is regularly refined as the year unfolds. In this assessment the total loss allowance for 2016/17 has been reduced by 50 GL. Of this reduction, about 30 GL is assessed as contributed by flows from Lake Cowal and 20 GL by water draining out of the flood plain.

Further information

DPI Water website - www.water.nsw.gov.au