

14 November 2018

Namoi Valley

Water restrictions

System inflows, particularly to Split Rock and Keepit Dams, have reached unprecedented low levels and, despite water savings initiatives such as block releases, transmission losses have reached near record levels. The severe water shortage in the regulated Namoi Valley has escalated significantly, meaning temporary water restrictions have become necessary to protect critical supplies for as long as possible.

Upper Namoi Regulated River (general security) users can access 85 per cent of the volume of water held in their accounts as of 5 November 2018. Those who have already used more than 85 per cent can use no more.

Lower Namoi Regulated River (general security) users can access 85 cent of the water associated with orders placed by 5 November 2018. No water orders will be processed beyond 5 November 2018.

To give effect to the restrictions, temporary trading of water is also affected.

The replenishment flow along Pian Creek has been deferred indefinitely with WaterNSW arranging to supply affected households with potable water through alternative means.

Water users should consult with WaterNSW for water delivery details and trade limitations.

Any easing of the current restriction will be dependent on rainfall and observed inflows into upper storages. Water users will be advised monthly about the current resource availability.

Water allocation

Lower Namoi general security allocation this year remains unchanged at 0 per cent of entitlement. The last allocation increment for general security water users was more than a year ago with 7 per cent announced in August 2017.

Apart from Lower Namoi general security, all other categories of licence in the regulated river valley have received their maximum allocation for the 2018-19 water year.

Dam levels (as at 13 November)

- Keepit Dam is 6.4 per cent full – falling – currently holding about 33,000 megalitres (ML).
- Split Rock Dam is 7.2 per cent full – falling – currently holding about 32,000 ML.

Key facts

- There was no significant inflow to Spilt Rock and Keepit Dams during October 2018.
- Storage inflow since the last water allocation in August 2017 has been 30,600 ML. This is 70 per cent of the previous worst recorded inflow of about 44,000 ML, which was experienced during August 1939 to October 1940.
- The total account shortfall has worsened from 64 GL last month to 73 GL this month.
- A block release from Keepit Dam commenced last month. Extreme transmission losses were recorded. No further block release will be possible until conditions improve.

Seasonal climate outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for November to January indicates that rainfall conditions are likely to be variable over this period, with drier than average conditions early in the period. Daytime and overnight temperatures are expected to be above average.

The Bureau's El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Outlook remains at El Niño ALERT and observations indicate that a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) event is likely underway. Models indicate that El Niño thresholds may be met during November, while the positive IOD event will dissipate. When combined, an El Niño and positive IOD event increase the chances of dry and warm conditions, particularly during spring.

For more details on the seasonal climatic outlook:

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/archive/outlooks/latest-outlook.shtml>

Further information

The next water allocation statement for the Namoi regulated river will be available in early December 2018.

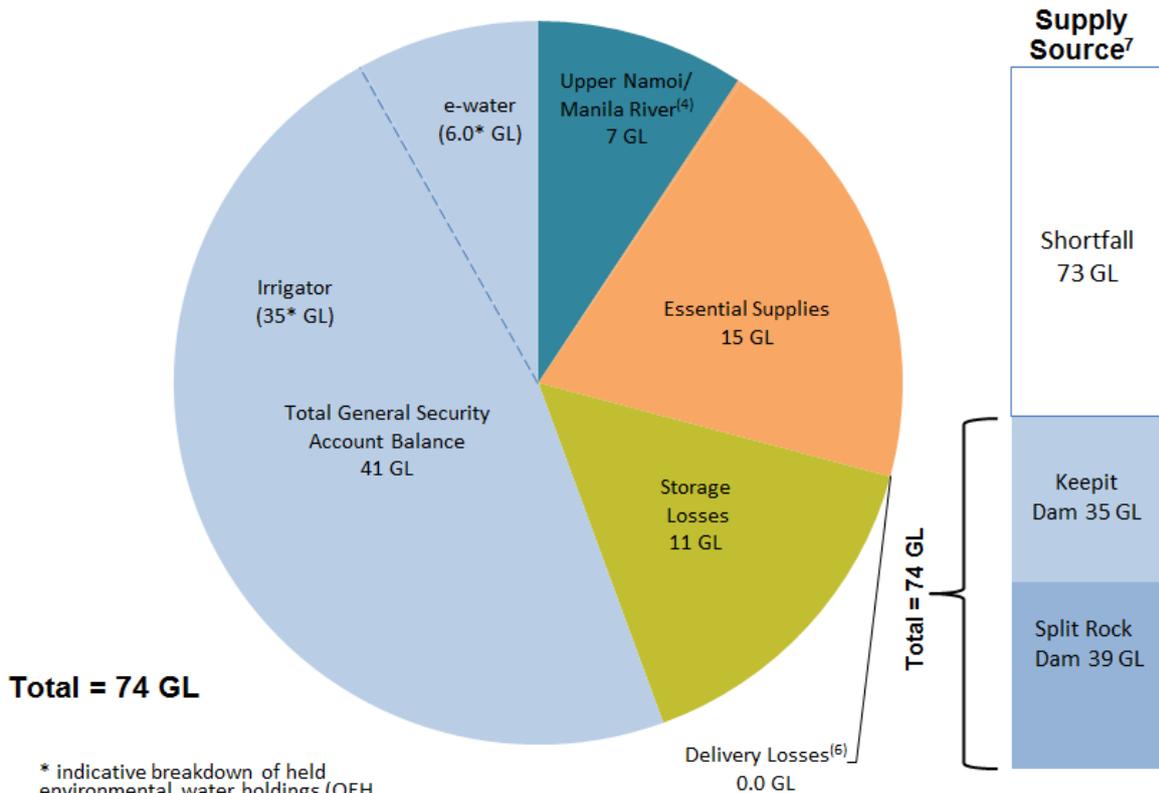
Information on available water determinations and water sharing plans is available on the Department of Industry website - www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water

Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution (as at 31 October 2018)	
	Volume (GL)
Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	74.04
less	
Storage Losses ⁽²⁾	11.29
Essential Supplies ⁽³⁾	14.65
General Security Account Balance ⁽⁴⁾	41.15
Upper Namoi/Manilla River accounts ⁽⁴⁾	6.95
Peel Trade Account ⁽⁵⁾	0.00
Delivery Loss Account ⁽⁶⁾	0.00

See notes below.

Resource Distribution (as at 31 October 2018)



* indicative breakdown of held environmental water holdings (OEH, CEWH), refer to note 4.

Notes:

- (1) Available Resource: includes total active storage (Split Rock & Keepit Dams).
- (2) Storage Losses: evaporation loss based on forecast storage behaviour and maximum historical evaporation rates over 2 years. The current shortfall is 15.24GL.
- (3) Essential Supplies: water required to be set aside under water sharing plans to provide for Towns, Stock & Domestic, High Security and riverine environments. Includes Gunidgera/Pian stock and domestic replenishments, delivery loss allowance and end-of-system flow requirements. This commitment is offset by minimum forecast inflows into the storages. The current shortfall is 43.59GL.
- (4) Held environmental water (HEW): as a trial, water administered by environmental water holders is reported here, with the associated portions of general security allocation also identified in the above pie chart. This reporting of held environmental water is indicative only and, prior to reconciliation of usage and net trade, estimated to be about 6 GL of GS in the Lower Namoi and 0.11 GL of GS in the Upper Namoi. No HS water is held. These entitlements are held and/or managed either singly or jointly by various environmental holder groups, including the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH).
- (5) Peel Trade Account: the Peel water sharing plan, at Clause 86(4), provides for limited allocation assignment from the Peel to the Namoi valleys. It requires a volume to be set aside in Keepit Dam equal to the AWD times 3,000 (maximum of 6,000 ML), for trade from the Peel valley. The current account balance is zero (0) ML meaning all available trade water has been delivered.
- (6) This account reflects the water needed to deliver general security water (delivery losses). Zero balance means that water must be borrowed to continue the delivery of general security water, in accordance with prior practice. The payback of any borrow will occur before further general security allocation increase. The current shortfall is 14.43GL.
- (7) Supply Distribution – the distribution of supply includes active volumes in the dams at the time of the assessment, and it is also include any estimated shortfall in meeting the full account limits. High transmission losses create account shortfalls in very dry years. It is estimated that about 85 GL of inflow is required to meet the shortfall and increased losses prior to next GS allocation increment.

Resource Assessment as at 31 October 2018

Volumes in GL	Budget	Current	Additional	Balance
Storage Loss	26.54	15.29	-4.00	11.29
Essential Supplies	58.24	23.42	-8.77	14.65
Upper Namoi / Manilla River		6.95	0.00	6.95
Delivery Loss	14.43	0.00	0.00	0.00
General Security Irrigation		41.15	0.00	41.15*
Peel Trade Account		0.00	0.00	0.00
Additional Resource for Sharing		-12.77	12.77	0.00
Total		74.04	0.00	74.04

Upper Namoi (General Security)	Value	Unit
Incremental Increase CREDITED	0.00	GL
Available Water Determination	0.0000	ML per unit share

Lower Namoi (General Security)	Value	Unit
Incremental Increase CREDITED	0.00	GL
Available Water Determination	0.0000	ML per unit share

*estimated based on dam releases