

17 May 2021

## Murrumbidgee Valley

### Water allocation update

Murrumbidgee regulated river water source allocations to general security reached 100% in January 2021. No further allocations are allowed this water year. Improvements in resource since January have been captured in storage as much as possible for future allocation. This statement aims to provide an indicative outlook of opening water availability for 2021-22.

This is the last statement to be published for 2020/21. An opening allocations announcement will be made on 1 July 2021, with regular fortnightly statements commencing on 15 July 2021.

2020-21	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover	Drought Stage
Murrumbidgee	100%	100%	18%*	 Stage 1

\*General security account limit is 100% of entitlement, therefore allocation plus individual carryover cannot exceed 100% in any given water year. Water users who carried over water into 2020/21, forfeited allocation improvement to the extent of their carryover volume.

### Storage levels (as at 14 May 2021)

- Blowering Dam is 82% full – steady – holding 1,340,000 ML.
- Burrinjuck Dam is 79% full – steady – holding 815,000 ML.

### Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for June to August indicates that rainfall is likely to be above average across the catchment. Daytime and overnight temperatures are likely to be average to warmer than average.

The Bureau's ENSO indicator has returned to inactive, with the El Niño–Southern Oscillation thresholds in a neutral phase. Other major climate indicators are also neutral. Models indicate that negative Indian Ocean Dipole conditions may develop in winter, which may increase the chances of above average rainfall in winter-spring.

For further details: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary)

### Trade

The normal operating range for the Murrumbidgee IVT account is between 0 GL and 100 GL. Trade **out** and **into** the Murrumbidgee valley is **open** (as of 14 May 2021).

Water users should monitor the WaterNSW website ([www.waternsw.com.au](http://www.waternsw.com.au)) for daily information about the IVT account balance, the status of trade, and end of year trade closure dates. The IVT account balance at the end of the water year carries forward into the new water year.

### Next announcement

This is the final water allocation statement for the 2020/21 water year. Opening water allocations will be made on Thursday 1 July 2021 for the 2021/22 water year. Regular fortnightly statements will commence on Thursday 15 July 2021.

## Outlook for 2021-22

### Key information

- This outlook for 1 July 2021 water allocation is conservatively based on assumed extreme dry (99%) inflows for the remainder of the current 2020-21 water year and similarly through 2021-22. Indicative forecast general security allocations for September and November 2021 under a range of inflow scenarios are provided to assist water users to plan ahead.
- For context, the Murrumbidgee regulated system has experienced wet (about 25th percentile) conditions this water year. That is, based on long term inflow statistics, about 25 out of a 100 years would generally experience conditions that are wetter than those experienced this year. This is not necessarily indicative of conditions that may be experienced in the near future.
- The forecast information is not guaranteed and should be used at one's own risk.
- Although extreme dry conditions are conservatively assumed to continue, heavy rainfall and significant inflows can occur at any time, and forecasts will be adjusted accordingly.
- In the Murrumbidgee regulated water source, general security and conveyance licences can carry over water up to a maximum of 30% of entitlement, and the account limit (allocation plus carryover) is 100% of entitlement.
- It is difficult to reliably predict end-of-year carryover, however, it is estimated that general security carryover could be around 28% (some 530 GL) on average.
- Access to inter-valley trade in 2021-22 is dependent on the balance of the IVT account. The 30 June 2021 balance will carry forward unchanged to 1 July 2021.
- Once the commencing allocations are announced on 1 July 2021, regular assessments will be undertaken and allocation announcements made fortnightly on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of each month, or the following working day, until full allocations are achieved.
- There is a forecast high risk that Burrinjuck and/or Blowering storages could physically spill which increases the prospects of supplementary access.

### Indicative allocations on 1 July 2021

- Full (100%) allocation can be expected for **towns, domestic and stock** access licences, and **sub-category high security** entitlements.
- **Supplementary** (including Lowbidgee) access licence holders can expect to receive a full allocation, which is available subject to announced periods of supplementary access.
- It is forecast that **high security** allocation may receive 95% of entitlement in accordance with the water sharing plan.
- **Conveyance** allocation will likely be available in accordance with the water sharing plan.
- **General security** allocations may start around 27% based on current forecast.
- All **carryover** water allowed under the water sharing plan is expected to be fully deliverable.

## Chances of improvement

The chances of improved general security allocations after 1 July 2021, based on a repeat of historical inflows, are provided in the following table under a variety of conditions. The forecast is

based on all available historical data, which gives a better outlook than using just the driest years on record (dry tercile).

It is important to note that these estimates are indicative improvements only and are not guaranteed allocations. Estimates may change based on weather variability, water management decisions and other events. This means water users should use this information with caution and at their own risk, as it currently projects many months ahead.

### Forecast general security allocations (%)

(Any carryover water can be added to these indicative allocations)

Repeat of historical inflow conditions	1 Sept 2021	1 Nov 2021
99 chances in 100 (extreme) (99%)	27%	27%
9 chances in 10 (very dry) (90%)	38%	48%
3 chances in 4 (dry) (75%)	49%	57%
1 chance in 2 (mean) (50%)	60%	66% <sup>3,4</sup>

Note 1: Estimated values indicative only, not guaranteed and subject to change based on actual events unfolding.

Note 2: Forecast assumes 28% carryover on average.

Note 3: A physical spill under 50% inflow conditions is possible by spring. A physical spill limits resource improvements as inflows are unable to be captured.

Note 4: With 28% carryover assumed, general security allocations approaching 72% will result in 100% being announced for the valley due to internal accounts spilling (similar to this year). Current forecasts indicate that this is possible for inflow conditions wetter than around 50%.

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