

15 December 2015

Murrumbidgee Valley: Water availability and allocation update

Allocations

Murrumbidgee general security allocation has increased **1 per cent** to 32 per cent of entitlement.

Resource availability increased slightly in the Murrumbidgee River over the past two weeks mainly due to reduced river losses. Transmission loss in the main river below Wagga Wagga was lower than forecast due to intermittent showers.

	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murrumbidgee	95%	32%	23%

Dam levels (as at 14 December)

- Blowering Dam is 34 per cent full, falling, holding 579,000 megalitres
- Burrinjuck Dam is 65 per cent full, falling, holding 672,000 megalitres

Outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) seasonal outlook for December to February indicates average rainfall is likely across most of the region, with roughly equal chances of a wetter or drier summer. Average temperatures are also likely during these months.

Current climate influences include a combination of a strong El Niño in the Pacific, a decaying positive Indian Ocean Dipole, and very warm Indian Ocean temperatures.

Trade

Allocation trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee valley remains closed with the Inter-Valley Trade (IVT) account balance above its upper limit, however trade **into** and **within** the valley is unaffected.

Next Announcements

Conditions are being constantly monitored and any significant changes in water availability or outlook will be promptly announced, otherwise:

- The next allocation update for the Murrumbidgee will be on 15 January 2016 (no 1 January allocation announcement is currently planned).
- Water availability forecasts for the start of the next water year (1 July 2016) will be provided on 15 February and updated on 16 May 2016.

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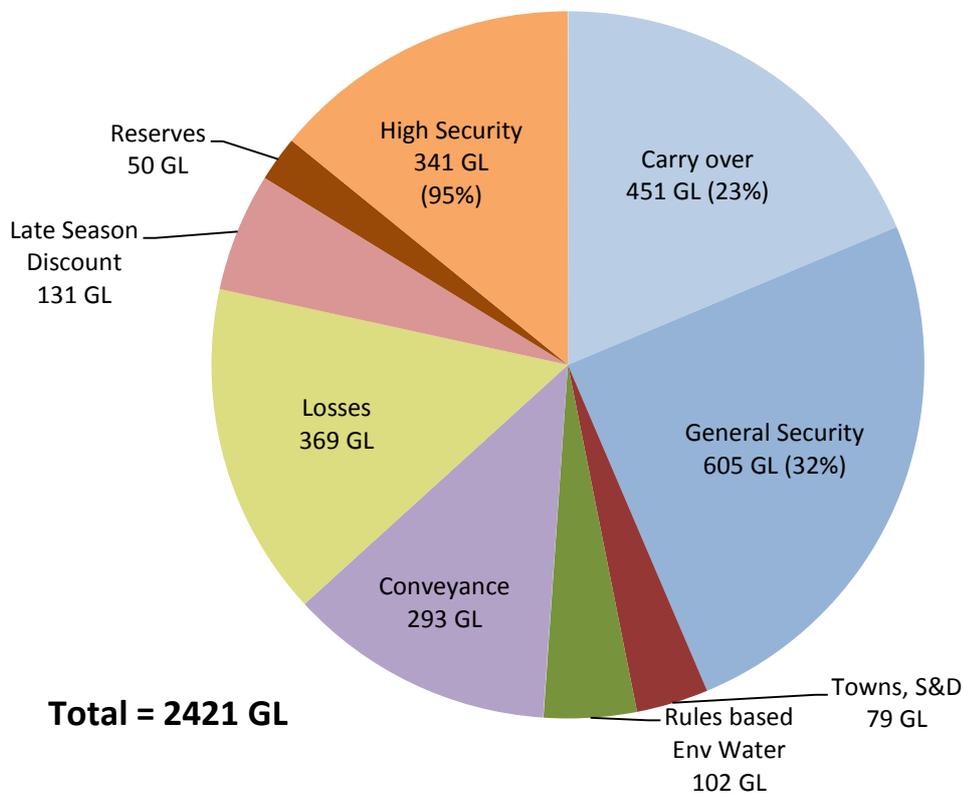
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Murrumbidgee Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution (as at 15 December) for 2015-16	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	2,421
less	
Carryover (incl. Murrumbidgee IVT carryover)	451
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	102
Towns, Stock, Domestic	79 (100%)
Reserves ⁽³⁾	50
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	293
Announced High Security	341 (95%)
Announced General Security	605 (32%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) ⁽⁵⁾	369
Late Season Discount ⁽⁶⁾	131

*See notes below.

**Resource Distribution 2015-16
Murrumbidgee Valley - 15th December 2015**



Notes

- (1) Total available resource: total active storage volume (Blowering & Burrinjuck Dams) at the day of assessment plus any usable flows in transit plus drought inflows for rest of the year plus Snowy Hydro's assured Required Annual Release (RAR) plus usage to date.
- (2) Rules-based environmental water – water required to be set aside under water sharing plans to provide for riverine environments. Includes end-of-system flow requirements and environmental water allowances. Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water. Usage has decreased this account volume since last assessment.
- (3) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans, and mainly used for emergency purposes and critical needs. Includes Murrumbidgee Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV).
- (4) Conveyance entitlement – a category of access licence originally issued to Irrigation Corporations to facilitate delivery of water through their channel systems. Allocation to this category is prescribed in the water sharing plans and is a function of high and general security allocations. (This category of licence in the Murrumbidgee valley, like general security, can carry over up to 30% of entitlement).
- (5) 'Losses' is the best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions to meet demands for the remainder of the year. This includes storage evaporation, transmission losses and operational loss. It is assumed there is no further rainfall and that inflow returns to dry conditions. This estimate is regularly refined as the year unfolds.
- (6) Late season inflow is the estimated volume available after the peak irrigation demand season (post-February). The Late Season Discount can be any late season inflow that is surplus to the regulated requirements and cannot contribute to current allocations. This consists of a proportion of assured annual inflows from Snowy Hydro Limited (SHL) as well as assumed drought inflow sequence flows from other parts of the catchment.

A bias toward later delivery of RAR this year will support an allocation improvement of 3 to 5 per cent on 1 March 2016, if not before. (If this water was included in current allocations, the water could be ordered and the storages emptied before the Snowy inflow actually arrives).