



15 December 2017

## Murrumbidgee Valley

### Water allocation update

#### Allocations

Murrumbidgee regulated river general security allocation **remains unchanged at 33 per cent of entitlement.**

As we move into summer, resource improvements must first be set aside to ensure high priority commitments can be met on 1 July 2018, for the 2018-19 water year, before allocating further to general security entitlements in the current water year.

Rainfall earlier this month provided some good inflows into Murrumbidgee storages which provided about 85 per cent of the 2018/19 high priority commitment; some 220,000 megalitres (ML) out of the 260,000 ML currently required.

It should be noted that this apparent shortfall, currently 40,000 ML, changes from month to month based on the projected historical inflow sequence used in the assessment.

Once the shortfall has been met, further resource improvements must then accrue to environmental water (EWA1) and provisional storage volume (PSV1) accounts, some 50,000 and 25,000 ML respectively, in accordance with the water sharing plan.

Once these commitments are met, further resource improvement can be allocated to general security entitlement holders.

The recent rainfall also provided tributary responses downstream of the storages which allowed supplementary access to be made available along the full length of the regulated river, including Lowbidgee. Currently supplementary access is available in the lower reaches of the river.

|              | High Security | General Security | Average Carryover |
|--------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Murrumbidgee | 95%           | 33%              | 27%               |

#### Storage levels (as at 14 December)

- Blowering Dam is 56 per cent full – steady – holding 928,000 ML.
- Burrinjuck Dam is 70 per cent full – steady – holding 721,000 ML.

#### Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for summer (December to February) indicates that above average rainfall conditions are expected over the eastern part of the Murrumbidgee catchment. The rest of the catchment is expected to experience average rainfall conditions. Summer daytime temperatures are expected to be average, with above average overnight temperatures.

The Bureau's El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) outlook issued on 5 December has been raised to LA NIÑA, as the tropical Pacific has reached La Niña thresholds. Climate models are forecasting this La Nina event to be weak and short lived, persisting into early autumn 2018.

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As the sea surface temperature patterns in the Indian Ocean and closer to Australia are not typical of a La Niña event, this reduces the likelihood of widespread, above average summer rainfall which is often associated with La Niña events. La Niña can also increase the chance of prolonged warm spells for southeast Australia.

## Trade

Trade **out** and **within** the Murrumbidgee Valley is open, but trade **into** the Murrumbidgee Valley is closed. Water users are encouraged to monitor the WaterNSW website at - <http://www.waternsw.com.au/customer-service/trading/murrumbidgee> - for information regarding the Murrumbidgee inter-valley trade (IVT) account balance and status of trade.

## Next announcements

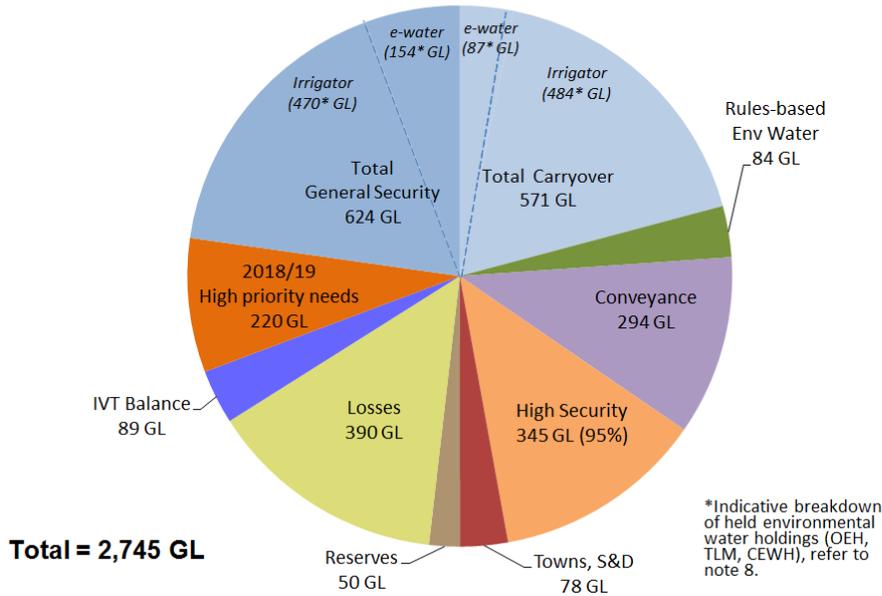
There will be no statement on 2 January 2018. Fortnightly assessments and statements for the Murrumbidgee regulated river will resume in the new year on **Monday 15 January 2018**.

## Murrumbidgee Resource Assessment Data Sheet

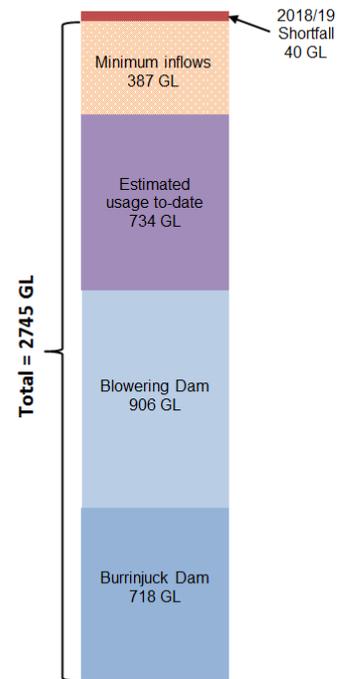
| Resource Distribution (15 December) for 2017-18                |             |
|--|-------------|
|  | Volume (GL) |
| Total Available Resource <sup>(1)</sup>                        | 2,745       |
| <b>less</b>  |             |
| Carryover (GS and Conveyance)                                  | 571         |
| Rules based Environmental Water <sup>(2)</sup>                 | 84          |
| Towns, Stock, Domestic   | 78 (100%)   |
| Reserves <sup>(3)</sup>  | 50          |
| Conveyance <sup>(4)</sup>                                      | 294         |
| Announced High Security  | 345 (95%)   |
| Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) <sup>(5)</sup> | 390         |
| Murrumbidgee IVT balance carryover at 1 July 2017              | 89          |
| Late Season Discount <sup>(6)</sup>                            | 0           |
| Announced General Security                                     | 624 (33%)   |
| Future (2018/19) high priority needs <sup>(7)</sup>            | 220         |

**\*See notes below.**

## Resource Distribution 2017-18 Murrumbidgee Valley - 15 December 2017



## Supply Distribution<sup>(9)</sup>



### 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 estimated usage to date including Snowy Hydro's net Jounama Release of 449 GL from 1 May 2017 to 12 December 2017.
- 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 (currently 59 GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 0 GL, EWA2 = 25 GL & EWA3 = 0 GL). Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water also known as held environmental water (HEW). This total volume typically reduces as commitments are met and water is used during the year.
- 3) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans, and mainly used for emergency purposes and critical needs. Includes 25 GL per dam as an operational reserve, as well as Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV1 and PSV2), which both currently have zero balances.
- 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 water year. This includes storage evaporation, transmission losses and operational loss. This estimate is regularly updated as the year unfolds.
- 6) Late Season Discount – is the estimated inflow volume that will arrive into storage late in the year, after the peak irrigation demand season (usually post-February). This water cannot be allocated to water users at the start of the water year otherwise there could be an expectation that the water is available for use before it is captured in storage.
- 7) Future high priority needs – at this time of year, we look ahead to next water year (2018/19) to ensure there is sufficient resource set aside to meet high priority needs on 1 July 2018. The required volume is currently 260 GL, 220 GL of which can be met, resulting in a 40 GL shortfall. Any further improvements in resource will first accrue to this requirement. Any subsequent improvements will accrue to environmental water accounts (EWA1 requires 50 GL, PSV1 requires 25 GL). Once these commitments are met, further improvements will be made available to the general security allocations.
- 8) Held environmental water (HEW) – as a trial, general security allocation and carryover water administered by the environmental water holder has been identified in the above pie chart. This reporting of held environmental water is total allocated in accounts (not usage) and includes 154GL of GS, 12GL of HS, 39GL of conveyance allocation and 87GL of GS carryover. 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), The Living Murray (TLM) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). Interested parties should refer to individual Agency websites for more detailed information on held environmental water holdings.

- 9) Supply Distribution – as a trial, the distribution of supply is being provided. This includes volumes at the time of the assessment for the following categories: active volumes in the dams, indicative usage to-date (may be estimates prior to reconciliation with hydrographic updates) and assumed minimum future inflows (includes Snowy Hydro's guaranteed inflows for the water year). At this time of year, it also indicates any existing shortfall in meeting next year's (2018/19) high priority needs (refer to note 7).