

1 July 2021

Opening water allocations 2021-22

Regulated River water users

The NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment today announced opening water allocations for regulated river water users for the 2021-22 water year.

Drought recovery year 2020-21

A major improvement in water resources across the state has been observed since January 2021, with all regulated river systems having recovered from severe drought conditions experienced over the previous two water years. The total volume of water held in major NSW active storage has increased by nearly 30% from this time last year to 64% of full capacity. Some of the larger storages have improved by even more including Menindee Lakes, Burrendong and Keepit dams.

The 2020-21 water year could be characterised as drought-breaking. General security users on seven river systems commenced the year with no allocation, however; all but Belubula River water users had received some allocation by summer.

After dry conditions from about 2017, all river systems were returned to drought criticality Stage 1, meaning normal river operations. General security water users on the Lachlan, Macquarie and Lower Namoi rivers received their first allocation in 3 years in September 2020. By January 2021, Peel general security water users had received their first allocation since 2018.

It was only water users on the Belubula regulated river who received no allocation in 2020-21. However, they enjoyed access to uncontrolled flows for most of the year, due to regular rainfall and runoff events that could not be regulated within the Belubula system.

There was a significant volume of supplementary water available during the year from runoff events that could not be fully regulated, especially in the northern parts of the state. Supplementary access licence holders on Hunter regulated river saw a rare increase in allocation to 200%.

During May 2021 the Menindee Lakes system rose above the 640 gigalitres (GL) threshold and became a shared Murray resource with other states, in accordance with the Murray Darling Basin Agreement.

Opening allocations of 2021-22

All critical needs, including town water supplies, are secure for this 2021-22 water year. Full allocation has been made to all town supplies and domestic and stock water users.

Opening allocations (1 July) are mostly about ensuring licence categories that cannot carryover water from year to year, are provided with a new annual allocation. Resource assessments and allocations for general security water users will continue to their usual timetable, meaning that water allocation statements for respective regulated river water sources will be issued as scheduled in July, based on the end of June resource assessment.

The general security water users on all regulated coastal rivers, except on Bega-Brogo Rivers, are receiving maximum 100% allocation. Inland, the Upper Namoi and Lower Darling users are also receiving their maximum 100% allocation. General security water users have full access to unused account water carried over into the new water year, subject to relevant water sharing plan rules.

Full allocation is provided to supplementary licence holders in all applicable river systems, except in the Gwydir (50%) and NSW Border Rivers (75%). The reduced allocation in these two systems results from the implementation of growth in use requirements under the relevant water sharing plan. Access to supplementary water is only available in periods of announced supplementary flow.

Water allocation statements for major inland regulated river systems are published and updated on the department's website at least monthly. The statements explain the latest information on the sharing of available resources.

Brief descriptions of allocations across major regulated rivers are provided below, followed by a table of the volumes in major storages and a summary of allocations for each licence category.

NSW Border Rivers regulated river

- All licence categories, except general security and supplementary, have received their maximum allocation.
- Water held in general security accounts is accrued on a continuous basis and has been carried forward in full. The maximum volume that may be held at any time is 1.0 megalitre (ML)/share.
- General security (A class) licence holders have received a 37% allocation.
- Allocation to General security (B class) will begin once A class has reached 100%.
- Supplementary licence holders have received a reduced allocation of 0.75 ML/share, resulting from the implementation of growth in use rules.
- Inflows up to 200 ML/day into Pindari will be passed during winter months in accordance with transparency flow rules in the water sharing plan.

Gwydir regulated river

- All licence categories, except general security and supplementary, have received their maximum allocation.
- Supplementary licence holders have received a reduced allocation of 0.5 ML/share, resulting from the implementation of growth in use rules.
- Water held in general security accounts accrue on a continuous basis and has been carried forward in full. The maximum volume that may be held at any time is 1.5 ML/share.
- The allocation for general security water users will be based on the end of June hydrographic data and will be provided in the next routine water allocation statement due on 7 July 2021.

Upper and Lower Namoi regulated rivers

- All higher priority licence categories have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security licence holders in the Upper Namoi have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Supplementary licence holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Water held in Lower Namoi general security accounts are accrued on a continuous basis and has been carried forward in full. The maximum volume that may be held in Lower Namoi general security accounts at any time is 2 ML/share.
- The allocation for general security water users in the Lower Namoi will be based on the end of June hydrographic data and will be provided in the next routine water allocation statement due on 7 July 2021.

Peel regulated river

- All higher priority licence holders including domestic and stock, local water utilities, and high security water access categories, have received their maximum (100%) allocations.

- General security licence holders have received 43% allocation, with commensurate volume allocated to Environmental Contingency Allowance.
- All categories of licence in this water source are accounted on an annual basis. The account balances have been forfeited at 30 June 2021.
- The next water allocation statement is due to be released on 9 July 2021.

Macquarie-Cudgegong regulated rivers

- All higher priority licence categories have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Supplementary licence holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- The water carried over from 2020-21 water year by general security users, estimated to be about 404 gigalitres (64%), is fully deliverable.
- A maintenance outage of Burrendong Dam (main) penstock is in place to mid-July 2021.
- The account reset rule of any dam spilling event has been deferred until the end of August 2021. If necessary, this pause will allow affected water users to order water ahead of any forfeiture and reset operation.
- Allocation to general security accounts will be assessed and announced at the next routine water allocation statement due on Monday 12 July.

Lachlan regulated river

- All higher priority licence categories have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Conveyance licence holders have received 100% allocation.
- Wyangala and Brewster Environmental Water Allowances are fully allocated with 10 gigalitres each.
- Annual use limit for 2021-22 water year is 100% of entitlement.
- A maintenance outage of Wyangala Dam penstock is currently in place to mid-July 2021.
- The water carried over from 2020-21 water year by general security users, estimated to be about 408 gigalitres (69% of share component), is fully deliverable.
- Allocation to general security accounts will be assessed and announced at the next routine water allocation statement due on Thursday 8 July.

Belubula regulated river

- All higher priority licence categories have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- Supplementary licence holders have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- Water held in sub-accounts of general security licences has been carried forward, subject to the rules of the water sharing plan.
- An additional 3,100 megalitres of inflow into Carcoar Dam is required in July to secure all current commitments and high priority needs until June 2023, after which further inflow will assist an allocation to general security entitlement holders.
- Tributary inflows downstream of Carcoar Dam have been creating surplus flow conditions and meeting the end of system flow targets and water orders.
- Access to uncontrolled flows and supplementary take will continue to be made available while ever surplus flows persist.
- No significant release from Carcoar Dam is envisaged during winter and early spring.
- The next water allocation statement will be published in September 2021, or earlier if storage levels or stream flow conditions change significantly.

Murrumbidgee regulated river

- All high priority licence holders including domestic and stock, local water utilities, and sub-category high security water access categories, have received their maximum (100%) allocations.
- High security license holders have received their full (95%) opening allocation.
- Water carried over from 2020-21 water year, estimated around 500 gigalitres (26%), is fully available.
- General security license holders are commencing with a 30% opening allocation.
- Conveyance licences have received an allocation in accordance with the water sharing plan and commensurate with the announced general security allocation.
- Supplementary access license holders (including Lowbidgee) have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Inter-valley trade is subject to the Murrumbidgee IVT account balance, which is currently showing that trade out of the valley is closed, but trade into the valley is allowed. Trade within the Murrumbidgee Valley is permitted in accordance with the water sharing plan.
- Regular fortnightly water allocation statements will commence on Thursday 15 July 2021.

NSW Murray regulated river

- All high priority licence holders including domestic and stock, local water utilities, and sub-category high security water access categories, have received their maximum (100%) allocations.
- High security license holders have received their full (97%) opening allocation.
- The water carried over from 2020-21 water year by general security users, estimated to be about 650 gigalitres (39%), is fully available.
- Conveyance licences have received an allocation in accordance with the water sharing plan and commensurate with the announced general security allocation.
- General security license holders are commencing with a 3% opening allocation.
- Supplementary licence holders have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- The NSW Barmah-Millewa Allowance, around 344 gigalitres, is fully borrowed to underpin the announced water allocations. Payback will commence when general security allocation reaches 30% of entitlement in accordance with the water sharing plan.
- Trade downstream across the Barmah choke opened on 1 July, but will close when the opening trade balance is exhausted. It will then only re-open to the extent of upstream (back) trades.
- Regular fortnightly water allocation statements will commence on Thursday 15 July 2021.

Lower Darling regulated river

- All water access licence categories including domestic and stock, local water utility, high security, general security and supplementary, have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- The Menindee Lakes System became a shared resource with the Murray system in early May 2021, in accordance with the Murray Darling Basin Agreement. It will remain a shared Murray resource until total storage next falls below 480 gigalitres.
- Trade to and from the Lower Darling water source is open, as is trade within the Lower Darling water source.
- The Wentworth to Broken Hill pipeline is operational and supplying water to Broken Hill from the Murray River. Water availability for this is linked to the local water utility allocations in the NSW Murray.

- Regular fortnightly water allocation statements will commence on Thursday 15 July 2021.

Bega-Brogo regulated river

- All higher priority licence categories have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security licence holders have received 40% allocation. Note: the small storage capacity of Brogo Dam cannot support a full general security allocation at the start of the year.
- Supplementary licence holders have received their maximum allocation of 100%.
- The next water allocation statement will be published in August, or earlier if conditions or forecasts change significantly.

Hunter regulated river

- All higher priority licence categories have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security licence holders have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- Environmental Water Allowance has been credited with 20 gigalitres.
- Supplementary licence holders have received full opening allocation of 100%.
- Unused water in applicable licence categories has been carried forward from last water year, subject to allowable limits and maximum account balance rules.
- As water resources have been fully allocated for 2021-22, no further water allocation statement is envisaged unless the situation changes significantly.

Paterson and Richmond regulated rivers

- All higher priority licence categories have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security licence holders have received maximum (100%) allocation.
- Supplementary licence holders have received maximum allocation (100%).
- All categories of licence in Richmond regulated river are accounted on an annual basis. The account balances have been forfeited at 30 June 2021.
- As the water resources has been fully allocated for 2021-22, no further water allocation statement is envisaged unless the situation changes significantly.

Water Allocation Statement

NSW Regulated River Water Sources



NSW Storage Report - 24 June-2021

River Valley	Gross Capacity	Dead storage	Current Status (Active Volume)		Annual Change	Annual Volume Last Year (GL)	% full at same time last year
			%	GL			
Storage Dam	(GL)	(GL)			(GL)		
Lower Darling							
Menindee Lakes, Broken Hill	1,633	0	66%	1,083	603	480	29%
Murray Valley							
Dartmouth, Mitta Mitta (Vic)	3,856	80	65%	2,443	455	1,988	53%
Hume Dam, Albury	3,005	30	52%	1,550	484		36%
Murrumbidgee Valley							
Burrinjuck Dam, Yass	1,026	3	84%	860	419	441	43%
Blowering Dam, Tumut	1,628	24	94%	1,507	617	890	56%
Lachlan Valley							
Wyangala Dam, Cowra	1,217	1	72%	878	680	198	16%
Carcoar Dam, Carcoar	36	0	33%	12	6	6	17%
Macquarie Valley							
Burrendong Dam, Wellington	1,189	34	61%	699	403	296	26%
Windamere Dam, Mudgee	368	1	34%	125	25	100	27%
Namoi Valley							
Keepit Dam, Gunnedah	425	7	75.6%	316	249	67	16%
Split Rock Dam, Manilla	397	3	31%	120	99	21	5%
Chaffey Dam, Tamworth	100	2	74%	73	55	18	18%
Gwydir Valley							
Copeton Dam, Inverell	1,364	19	46%	617	421	196	15%
Border Rivers							
Glenlyon Dam, Stanthorpe (Qld)	254	0	54%	138	102	36	14%
Pindari Dam, Inverell	312	0	56%	174	135	39	13%
Hunter Valley							
Glenbawn Dam, Scone	750		59%	443	152	291	39%
Glennies Ck Dam, Singleton	283		58%	164	60	104	37%
Lostock Dam, Gresford	20		102%	20	0	20	102%
Coastal Area							
Toonumbar Dam, Kyogle	11		101%	11	4	7	68%
Brogo Dam, Bega	9		101%	9	1	8	95%
MDBA South Storages (Total)	8,494	204	60%	5,076	1,543	3,533	42%
Grand Total	17,883	204	64%	11,242	4,970	6,272	35%

Legend	0%	10%	20%	30%	40%	50%	60%	70%	80%	90%	100%

Water Allocation Statement

NSW Regulated River Water Sources



Water Sources	Categories	Amount
BEGA AND BROGO REGULATED RIVERS WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.4 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
BELUBULA REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
BORDER RIVERS REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY A)	0.37 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY B)	0 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	0.75 ML/share
GWYDIR REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	0.5 ML/share

Water Allocation Statement

NSW Regulated River Water Sources



Water Sources	Categories	Amount
HUNTER REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	MAJOR UTILITY [POWER GENERATION]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
	LACHLAN REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK
DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]		100 %
DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]		100 %
LOCAL WATER UTILITY		100 %
REGULATED RIVER (CONVEYANCE)		1 ML/share
REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)		0 ML/share
REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)		1 ML/share
LOWER NAMOI REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
LOWER-DARLING REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
MACQUARIE AND CUDGEGONG REGULATED RIVERS WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %

Water Allocation Statement

NSW Regulated River Water Sources



Water Sources	Categories	Amount
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
MURRUMBIDGEE REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	COLEAMBALLY IRRIGATION (CONVEYANCE)	0.8585 ML/share
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	MURRUMBIDGEE IRRIGATION (CONVEYANCE)	0.7315 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (CONVEYANCE)	0.3 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.3 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	0.95 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [ABORIGINAL CULTURAL]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [ENVIRONMENTAL]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER (LOWBIDGEE)	1 ML/share
NEW SOUTH WALES MURRAY REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY [DOMESTIC AND COMMERCIAL]	100 %

Water Allocation Statement

NSW Regulated River Water Sources



Water Sources	Categories	Amount
	REGULATED RIVER (CONVEYANCE)	0.5116 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.03 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	0.97 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
PATERSON REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
PEEL REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.43 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100 %
RICHMOND REGULATED WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
UPPER NAMOI REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %

Water Allocation Statement

NSW Regulated River Water Sources



Water Sources	Categories	Amount
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share

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