

15 December 2015

## NSW Murray and Lower Darling: Water availability and allocation update

### Allocations

NSW Murray general security allocation has **increased by 4 per cent** to 19 per cent of entitlement. There is no change to Lower Darling allocations.

The improvement for NSW Murray results from a number of factors including:

- Improved inflows to the Snowy scheme produced an increase in assured Required Annual Release (RAR)
- A hydrographic update (meter readings) provided additional resource to NSW
- Adjustment for usage through the multi-site environmental watering trial
- Actual river losses were less than forecast at the end of November accounts
- Slightly better than forecast tributary inflows in the Upper Murray since the last assessment

	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murray	97%	19%	30%
Lower Darling	50%	0%	Restricted access

### Upper Murray Storage levels (at 14 December 2015)

- Dartmouth Dam is currently 54 per cent full, holding 2,110,000 megalitres (ML)
- Hume Dam is 42 per cent full, holding 1,280,000 ML

### 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. The temperature outlook ranges from above average temperatures likely in the far east of the catchment to potentially cooler than average temperatures in western parts.

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.

### Trading

In the Murray, trade across the Barmah choke is restricted to 'no net trade downstream'; however there is currently capacity for downstream trade (by virtue of upstream trades).

Trade is permitted within the Lower Darling water source but inter-valley trade is closed due to the water shortage. NSW Murray water users can trade **into** the Murrumbidgee valley but trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee valley is closed.

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## 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 NSW Murray 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.

## NSW Murray Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution (as at 15 December) for 2015-16	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource	1,348
<b>less</b>	
Carryover	500
Rules based Environmental Water <sup>(1)</sup>	56
Towns, Stock, Domestic	54 (100%)
Reserves <sup>(2)</sup>	48
Conveyance <sup>(3)</sup>	189
Announced High Security	183 (97%)
Announced General Security	318 (19%)

*\*See notes below.*

### Notes:

- (1) Primarily rules-based environmental water – water required to be set aside under water sharing plans to provide for riverine environments. In the Murray this includes Additional Environmental Allowance (AEA) (6 GL), the Barmah Millewa Allowance (B-MA) (which is currently 100 per cent borrowed) and Wakool system requirements (50 GL). Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water.
- (2) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans; used for emergency purposes and critical needs.
- (3) 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 current high and general security allocations.

## Resource Distribution 2015-16 NSW Murray - 15 December 2015

