

1 August 2018

NSW Murray and Lower Darling

Water allocation update and outlook

There has been **no increase in allocations in the NSW Murray regulated river system**. July rainfall in the upper Murray catchment has been well below average and likely to be in the lowest 10 to 20 per cent on record. On the back of a prolonged dry period, there has been no appreciable improvement in resources.

Accounts for 2017-18 have been finalised and carryover figures firmed at 31 per cent of general security water on average or some 520,000 megalitres. Access to all carryover is available and future inflows will accrue as a priority to a shortfall in conveyance and environmental commitments, and then to general security entitlements.

Allocations in the Lower Darling also remain unchanged. The Menindee Lakes system is at 11 per cent of full supply capacity (holding about 197,000 megalitres) and critically low.

	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murray	97%	0%	31%
Lower Darling	100%	0%	15%

Murray storage levels (as at 31 July 2018)*

- Dartmouth Dam is 89 per cent full – steady – currently at 3,440,000 megalitres (ML).
- Hume Dam is 45 per cent full – steady – currently at 1,359,000 megalitres (ML).
- Lake Victoria is 55 per cent full – steady – currently at 372,000 megalitres (ML).

* NSW share of this water is approximately 41%, 31% and 43% for these storages respectively.

State sharing of Murray resource

The monthly accounts to 1 July indicate 5,600 GL of total Murray resource in the very dry (99 percentile) case, of which 1,970 GL is needed to run the system and 3,630 GL is distributed under the Murray Darling Basin Agreement to NSW and Victoria. The NSW share of this is about 1,290 GL and the upper States are required to supply equally South Australia's entitlement flow leaving NSW currently with 940 GL of available resource to distribute.

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology outlook for August to October indicates conditions are very likely to be dry and temperatures most likely to be above average for the region.

The Bureau's climate models show that the El Nino-Southern Oscillation and Indian Ocean Dipole indicators are likely to remain neutral over the forecast period, but having a greater than usual chance of an El Nino event forming later in the year.

Trade

In the Murray, trade across the Barmah choke remains restricted to ‘**no net trade downstream**’. Downstream trade opens to the extent of the volume of any upstream trade.

The trade restriction helps to protect existing downstream entitlement holders from an increased risk of delivery shortfall due to the limited physical capacity of the Barmah choke.

Water users are encouraged to monitor the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) website (www.mdba.gov.au) for information about the trade balance and status of trade.

The Menindee Lakes system is below 480 GL, the threshold at which the Lower Darling becomes administratively separated from the Murray. Temporary trade with the Murray is therefore closed. Trade typically remains closed until the system recovers to above 640GL. Trade within the Lower Darling water source remains unaffected.

Trade **out** and **within** the Murrumbidgee Valley is open, but trade **into** the Murrumbidgee Valley is closed. Trade into the Murrumbidgee Valley will re-open when the Murrumbidgee inter-valley trade (IVT) account balance climbs to 15 GL. Water users are encouraged to monitor the WaterNSW website (www.waternsw.com.au) for information about the current IVT account balance and status of trade.

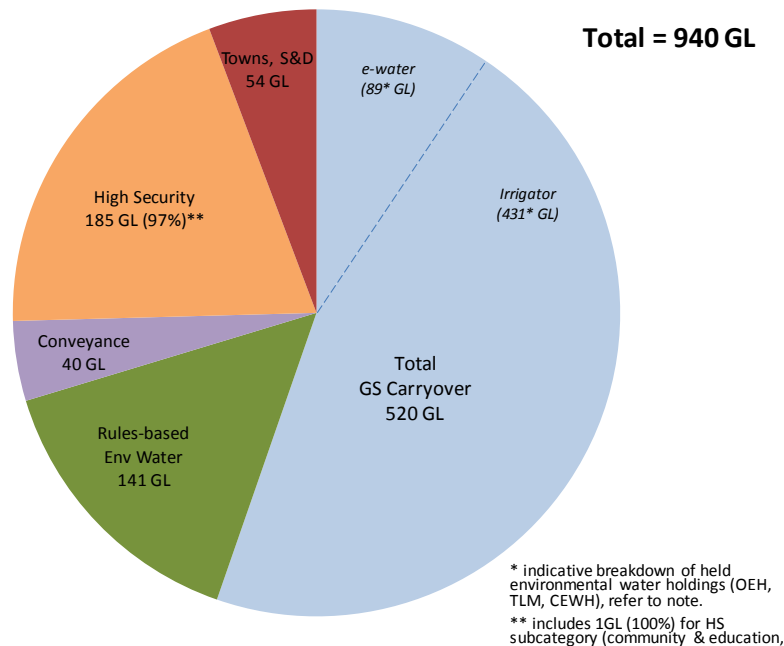
Next announcement

The next water allocation statement for the NSW Murray and Lower Darling valleys will be issued on **Wednesday 15 August 2018**. This statement will include updated probability analysis showing likely improvement in water availability under different inflow scenarios.

NSW Murray Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution (1 August) for 2018-19	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	940
less	
Carryover ^{(2), (7)}	520
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽³⁾	141
Towns, Stock, Domestic ⁽⁴⁾	54 (100%)
Announced High Security subcategory (education, research) ⁽⁴⁾	1 (100%)
Announced High Security ⁽⁴⁾	184 (97%)
Conveyance ⁽⁵⁾	40
Reserves ⁽⁶⁾	0
Announced General Security ⁽⁷⁾	0 (0%)

NSW Murray Resource Distribution 2018-19 – 1 August 2018



Resource Assessment Data Sheet Notes:

- (1) Total available resource - NSW's state share of active storage volume (Hume, Dartmouth, Menindee and Lake Victoria) as assessed and accounted for under the Murray-Darling Basin Agreement at the time of the assessment plus any usable flows in transit plus assumed (99%ile) inflows for the rest of the year plus Snowy Hydro's assured Required Annual Release (RAR) (including any flex (pre-release) from the prior year), as well as estimated usage to date. Snowy Hydro's net M1 releases to date for this water year (2018-19) is 383 GL, and 200 GL of flex was pre-released in 2017-18.
- (2) Carryover – NSW Murray general security water users can carryover a maximum account balance of 50 per cent of their entitlement into the following water year. The account limit is 110 per cent of entitlement, meaning that account credits from allocation and/or carryover cannot exceed 110% of entitlement in any water year. The limit does not include allocation trade.
- (3) Primarily rules-based planned environmental water – water required to be set aside to provide for riverine environments, as per water sharing plan and other interjurisdictional agreements. In the NSW Murray this includes the Murray Additional Allowance (MAA) (about 6 GL), Wakool system requirements (up to 70 GL, currently 40 GL available), and the Barmah-Millewa Allowance (B-MA) (234 GL – currently 100% borrowed). It also includes River Murray Increased Flows (RMIF) in Hume, accrued as part of the Snowy Water Initiative (currently about 95 GL available out of a total commitment of 131 GL). The total commitments to B-MA and RMIF will decrease over the water year as they are released from Hume for use. Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water also known as held environmental water (HEW).
- (4) The *Water Sharing Plan for the New South Wales Murray and Lower Darling Regulated Rivers Water Sources 2016* has subcategories of high security licenses in the Murray Water Source. High security subcategory licences under *Part 7 Division 2 Clause 46(2)* that are present in the Murray include community and education, research, and town water supply. At the commencement of each water year, these licences are to receive 100% allocation, while remaining high security licences are to receive 97% allocation. For the purposes of this water allocation statement, the high security town water supply allocation volume has been grouped as "Towns, S&D".
- (5) 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 plan and is a function of current high and general security allocation.
- (6) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans; set aside for emergency purposes and critical needs.
- (7) Held environmental water (HEW) – water administered by environmental water holders is reported here, with the associated portions of general security allocation and carryover also identified in the above pie chart. This reporting of held environmental water is limited to only NSW entitlements, reporting of credits to accounts (not usage or trade), and estimated to be 0 GL of GS, 24 GL of HS, 6 GL of conveyance allocation and 89 GL 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). Details on environmental holdings can be found on individual agency websites.