

12 March 2019

Macquarie and Cudgegong valleys

Water allocation update

Allocations for the Macquarie Cudgegong regulated river water sources **remain unchanged**.

2018-19	High Security	General Security	Drought Stage
Cudgegong	100%	0%	 Stage 1
Macquarie	100%	0%	 Stage 3

The system continues to experience **record low inflows to Burrendong Dam**. Inflows to the dam since the last water allocation in August 2017 total about 85,000 megalitres (ML). This is just 37 per cent of the previous record low inflow.

A temporary water restriction has operated below Burrendong Dam in 2018-19 to limit water usage and protected critical supplies. Macquarie regulated river (general security and EWA) users have been limited to 70 per cent of the volume of water in their carryover sub-account as at 1 July 2018. It is likely that restrictions will need to continue into 2019-20 unless there is significant rainfall and system recovery beforehand.

Cudgegong regulated river access licences, including general security, are not restricted.

There was just 8,851 ML of inflow to Burrendong Dam during February 2019.

The current restrictions can be eased when sufficient inflows to assure high priority entitlements for the 2019-20 water year are captured in storage. Water users are advised to plan their programs accordingly and to maximise water use efficiency. Update information will be provided each month on inflows and resource availability.

Deliveries under drought operations in 2018-19, including for stock and domestic purposes, will be weather-dependent and involve water conservation measures to prolong essential water supplies. Water users should liaise with WaterNSW for their water delivery arrangements.

Storage levels (as at 11 March 2019)

- Burrendong Dam is 7.2 per cent full – falling – currently at 117,000 ML.
- Windamere Dam is 34 per cent full – falling – currently at 126,000 ML.

Drought stage

The NSW Extreme Events Policy introduced a staged approach to managing extreme events, such as severe droughts or poor water quality events. The Macquarie regulated river water source is in Stage 3. The Cudgegong regulated river water source remains in Stage 1. Account restrictions are in force in the Macquarie as described above. Water supplies are being managed to meet high priority needs for as long as possible. Increased operational contingency measures will be introduced as needed to protect critical water supplies.

For further details: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/extreme-events

Outlook on water availability for 2019/20

Under a continuation of the worst-case scenario of little rain and zero dam inflows, it is likely that allocations for higher security entitlements such as Local Water Utility, Stock and Domestic, and High security will be less than 100 per cent on 1 July 2019. The temporary water restriction currently limiting general security and EWA access to only 70 per cent of their 1 July 2018 account volumes will likely continue into 2019-20.

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for March to May shows conditions are likely to be drier than average with temperatures likely to be above average.

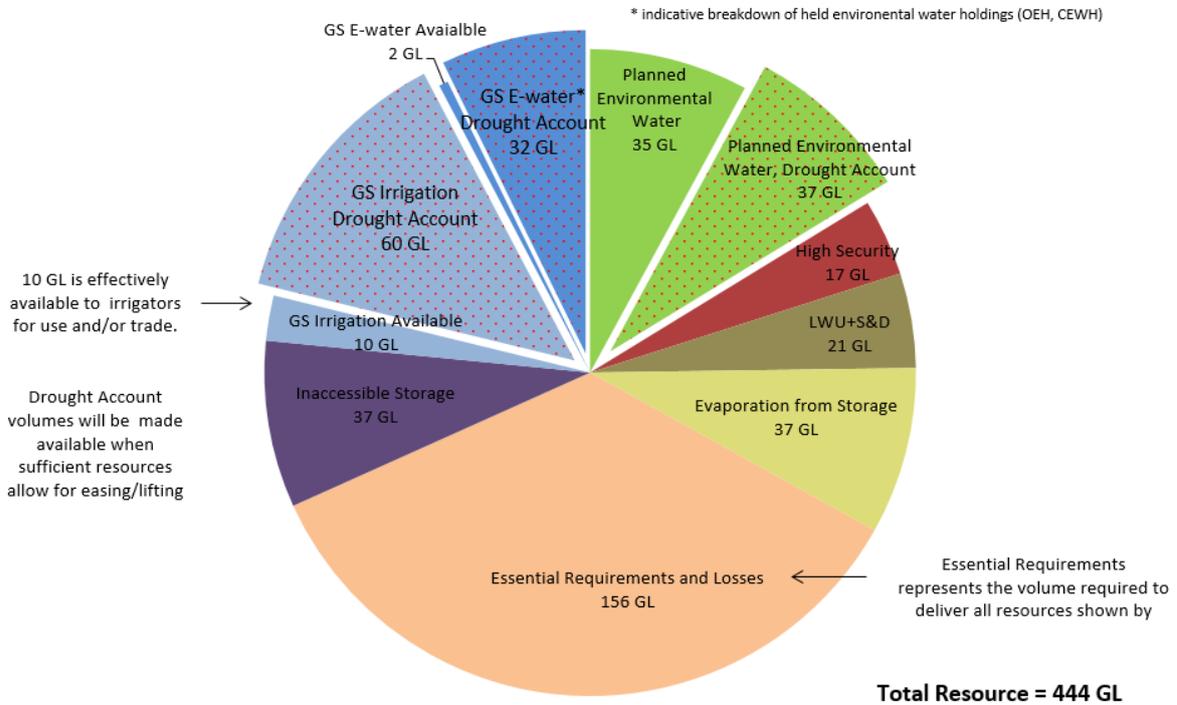
The Bureau's El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Outlook remains at El Niño WATCH. Sea surface temperatures have warmed and are around El Niño thresholds. There is an even chance of an El Niño event forming in autumn or winter. The Indian Ocean Dipole, which has little influence on the Australian climate from December to April, is neutral.

For further details: www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary

Next announcement

The next water allocation statement for the regulated Macquarie-Cudgegong valleys will be on **Wednesday 10 April 2019**.

Resource Distribution and Drought Restrictions (March 2019 to May 2020)



Macquarie-Cudgegong Resource Assessment Data Sheet

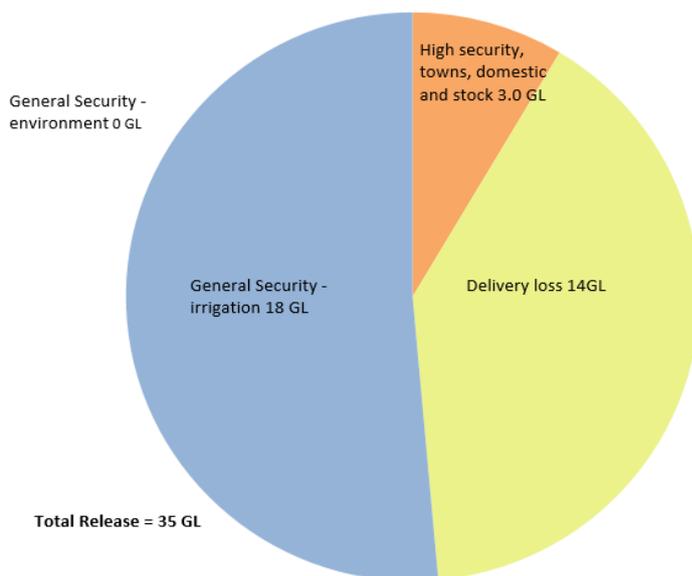
Macquarie Resource Distribution (March 2019 to May 2020)	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	171*
less	
Carryover remaining in accounts ^{(2), (7)}	104
Planned Environmental Water ⁽³⁾	72
Towns, Stock, Domestic ⁽⁴⁾	21 (100%)
Inaccessible storage ⁽⁶⁾	37
High Security ⁽⁴⁾	17 (100%)
General Security 2018/2019 AWD ⁽⁷⁾	0 (0%)
Essential Requirements (transmission, operations) ⁽⁵⁾	156
Evaporation from storage	37

* 273GL of additional inflow required to meet the 444GL budget.

Notes:

- (1) Storage volume in Burrendong Dam plus minimum forecast dam inflows plus transfers from Windamere Dam.
- (2) Carryover remaining in accounts: volume remaining in carryover sub-accounts (excludes Cudgegong), discounted for evaporative losses.
- (3) Planned environmental water: water allocated to the Environmental Water Allowance (EWA) under the water sharing plan (WSP) to provide for the Macquarie Marshes and the riverine environment. Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water.
- (4) Towns, Stock, Domestic and High Security: reserves required to meet 100 per cent of entitlement over the assessment horizon. This represents total entitlement below Burrendong Dam.
- (5) Essential Requirements: best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions over the next 15 months to meet all demands. This includes transmission losses and operational loss. It is conservatively assumed that forecast inflows correspond to dry conditions. This estimate is regularly refined as the year unfolds.
- (6) Inaccessible storage: Dead storage of 34 GL plus 3 GL to ensure valve operations at very low storage levels.
- (7) Held environmental water (HEW): as a trial, we are reporting held environmental water administered by the environmental water holders, with the associated portions of general security allocation also identified in the above pie chart. This reporting of held environmental water is indicative only, prior to reconciliation of usage and net trade, and is estimated to be 34GL of GS and 0GL of HS. 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) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). Details on environmental holdings can be found on individual agency websites.

Release Distribution for February 2019



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