Water Allocation Statement

15 January 2019

Murrumbidgee Valley

Water allocation update

Water allocations in the Murrumbidgee regulated river water source remain unchanged.

Inflows from last month, including from the mid-December 2018 rainfall event, combined with reduced river losses, produced 51,000 megalitres (ML) of resource improvement which has been set aside to meet 1 July 2019 high priority commitments. Currently at least 120,000 ML more water is needed before further allocation can be made to general security licences.

2018-19	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover	Drought Stage
Murrumbidgee	95%	7%	22%	Stage 1

Storage levels (as at 14 January 2019)

- Blowering Dam is 36 per cent full – falling – holding 605,000 megalitres (ML).
- Burrinjuck Dam is 41 per cent full – falling – holding 427,000 ML.

Drought stage

The NSW extreme events policy introduces a staged approach to managing extreme events such as severe droughts or poor water quality events. Currently, the Murrumbidgee Valley is in Stage 1, meaning it can deliver all account water under normal regulated river operations.

Further information on the policy and related drought stages can be found at:
https://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/extreme-events

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for January to March, issued on 20 December 2018, shows conditions are likely to be drier than average for the eastern and headwater parts of the catchment while the majority of the central and western parts of the catchment show no clear indication of drier or wetter than average conditions. Daytime and overnight temperatures are very likely to be above average.

The Bureau's El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Outlook remains at El Niño ALERT and a positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) event, which was present late in 2018, has ended. Ocean surface temperatures have reduced to neutral ENSO levels, but remain above average. Atmospheric ENSO indicators continue to remain neutral.

Trade

Water allocation can currently be traded **within** and **out** of the Murrumbidgee Valley, but trade **into** the Murrumbidgee Valley remains closed. Water users should monitor the

WaterNSW website (www.waternsw.com.au) for information about the Murrumbidgee inter-valley trade (IVT) account balance and the status of trade.

Next announcement

The next allocation update for the Murrumbidgee regulated river valley will be issued on **Friday 1 February 2019.**

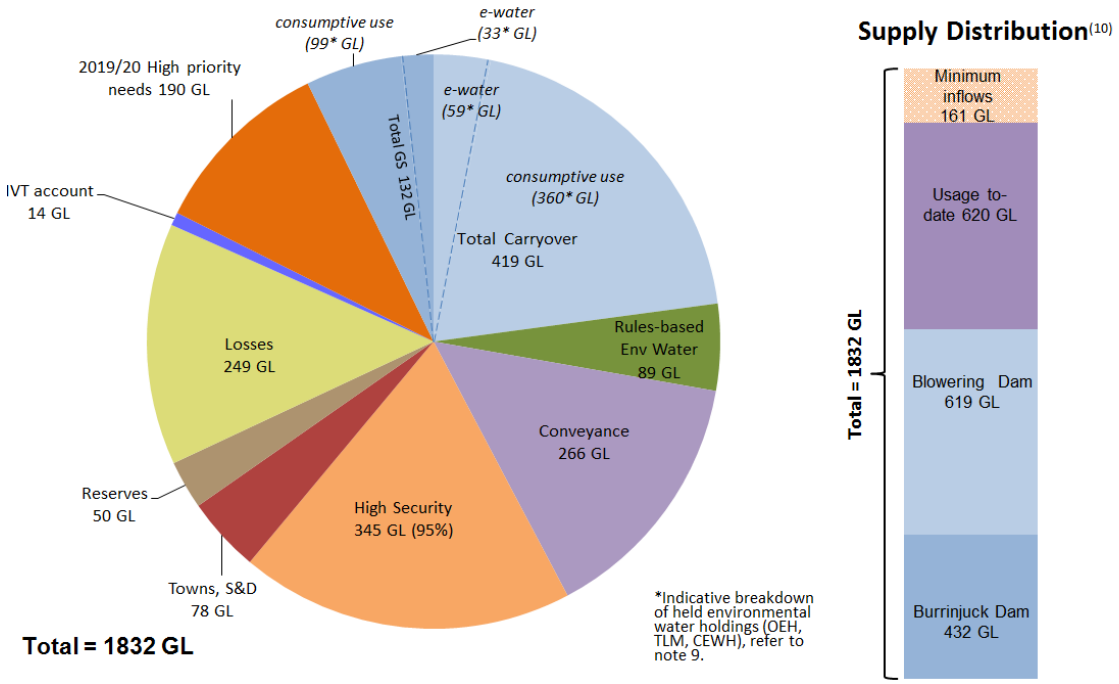
From mid-February, mid-monthly statements will provide indicative 1 July 2019 allocations as the new water year approaches. This aims to help water users with their end of year water management decisions – whether to use, trade or carryover their account balances.

Murrumbidgee resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution 2018-19 (at 15 January 2019)	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource[1]	1,832
less	
Carryover (GS and Conveyance)	419
Rules based Environmental Water[2]	89
Towns, Stock, Domestic	78 (100%)
Reserves[3]	50
Conveyance[4]	266
Announced High Security	345 (95%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational)[5]	249
Murrumbidgee IVT account (carryover as of 1 July)[6]	14
Late Season Inflows[7]	0
Announced General Security	132 (7%)
Future (including 2019/20) high priority needs[8]	190

See notes below.

Murrumbidgee resource distribution 2018-19 – 15 January 2019



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 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 Jounama Release for this year (2018-19) to date is estimated to be about 697GL, and 200GL of flex release was pre-released in 2017-18.
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 51GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 38GL, EWA2 = 0GL, EWA3 = nil). 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 25GL per dam as an operational reserve, and Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV1 = nil, PSV2 = nil).
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) IVT account – this represents the carryover value into 2018/19. As the account status was negative on 1 July 2018, meaning Murray water was 'owed' to the Murrumbidgee that could not be delivered, this volume of 14GL was set aside from allocation in the Murrumbidgee. As the IVT balance at the time of the assessment has increased to a positive value of 2.4GL, it means that about 16GL has been traded out of Murrumbidgee valley since the beginning of the water year negating the adverse impact on Murrumbidgee water users. Effectively the impact on all Murrumbidgee water users has been resolved by those choosing to trade out of the valley thereby eliminating the negative IVT balance.
7) Late Season Inflows – 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 delivery and use before it is captured in storage.

8) Future high priority needs – it is required to look ahead to next water year (2019/20) to ensure there is sufficient resource available to meet high priority commitments on 1 July. This volume is currently estimated to be about 310GL of which 190GL has been met. This value changes from month to month based on the complex interaction of climatic factors, projected historical inflow sequence, usage/potential carryover, and actual transmission and operational losses as the water year unfolds.
9) Held environmental water (HEW) – licenced 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 the total credited to accounts (not usage) and is estimated to be 33GL of GS, 12GL of HS, 37GL of conveyance allocation and 51GL of GS carryover and 8GL conveyance 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.
10) Supply Distribution – the distribution of supply includes volumes at the time of the assessment for the following categories: active volumes in the dams (excludes early release volumes of next year's Snowy Hydro commitments), 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, and late season inflows).