

12 April 2021

## Lachlan Regulated River Water Source

### Water allocation update

There is a **20% increase in allocation to general security (GS) entitlements** in the Lachlan regulated river water source this month, bringing the total allocation for this water year to 64%.

This allocation increase also elevates the total volume of water in GS accounts above 75%, which means that the Wyangala and Brewster Environmental Water Allowances (EWAs) are credited with a total of 20 gigalitres (GL) in line with the Water Sharing Plan.

During mid to late March, the Lachlan catchment experienced very wet conditions, with rainfall in some parts of the catchment breaking records. Recessions from this rainfall have generated high inflows into Wyangala Dam and high tributary flows, providing a substantial resource improvement of approximately 198 GL for the Lachlan valley. There has also been a further reduction in the budget for essential requirements including river operations with the system being saturated at present. Inflows into Wyangala Dam and useable tributary flows totalled 181 GL over March. Replenishment flows to the effluent creeks in the Lower Lachlan have commenced using tributary flows from recent rainfall. Approximately 25 GL will be delivered to effluent creeks by the end of the water year.

Releases from the Lachlan Water Quality Allowance (WQA) ceased at the end of March. Due to the high rainfall across the catchment, it was deemed not necessary to continue these releases to mitigate the risk of low Dissolved Oxygen (DO) levels. Altogether, a total of 6.7 GL was used from the Lachlan WQA to maintain the target flow of 100 ML/day at Booligal Weir throughout January to March. The releases were successful in avoiding any major water quality events.

Based on historical inflows, there is more than a 10% chance that the major storages within the system will spill by the end of June 2021. Should a spill occur, general security accounts will be reset and equalised in accordance with the Water Sharing Plan.

Inflows in excess of 5 GL are required in April to facilitate an increase in general security allocations in the next assessment. The planning outlook runs to May 2023 and ensures that all high priority needs can be met through this period before further allocations to general security are made.

General security water users are advised that the Annual Use Limit that applies in the 2020/21 water year is a volume equivalent to 100% of their entitlement. This is the maximum amount that can be used in the 2020/21 water year, plus any up or down adjustments for trade.

### Wyangala Dam Penstock Outage

Maintenance on Wyangala Dam penstock is planned to begin in the first week of May and end in early July 2021. The penstock outage will reduce the maximum release capacity to 250 ML/day. Irrigation demand will be low throughout these months, so this dam release capacity combined with continued high tributary flows should be adequate to meet water orders. Water users are encouraged to check with WaterNSW for more details.

### Resource outlook for 2021/22

- Domestic and stock, towns and high security licences will be allocated 100% of entitlement.
- Approximately 400GL of GS water is expected to be carried over into the new water year and will be fully available. This equates to about 68% of share component for GS licences.
- As forecast GS balance is over 50% at the start of the new water year, the Wyangala and Brewster EWAs will be credited with 10 GL each in the new water year. Note that if the capacity of Lake Brewster falls below 10 GL, the volume of the Brewster EWA available for release will reduce accordingly.
- There is no limit of cumulative allocations to GS users in a water year. The department will allocate any surplus water as it becomes available in the remainder of this water year.
- There is no limit on GS carryover provided the account limit does not exceed 2 ML/unit share.

2020-21	High Security	General Security	Drought Stage
Lachlan Regulated River Water Source	100%	64%	 Stage 1

### Storage levels (as at 12 April 2021)

- Wyangala Dam is 70.1% full – rising – currently at about 853,000 ML.
- Lake Cargelligo is 71.7% full – steady – currently at about 28,000 ML.
- Lake Brewster is 18.3% full – rising – at about 28,000 ML.

### Drought stage

Under the NSW Extreme Events Policy, the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source is in Stage 1, meaning normal river operations. There is enough resource available to meet critical human and high priority needs for the assessment period based on assumed minimum future inflows.

### Seasonal rainfall and inflow forecast

The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for April to June indicates that rainfall in the Lachlan catchment is likely to be below average. Daytime temperatures are likely to be above average while night-time temperatures are likely to be about average. The La Niña has faded and the El Niño-Southern Oscillation is now neutral.

For further details: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/rainfall/summary)

The Bureau of Meteorology also issues a seasonal flow forecast of the Abercrombie River that drains into Wyangala Dam (see the figure below). This provides an indicative distribution of potential inflows. All forecast flow quartiles are much higher than the historical flows for next 2 to 3 months. This is indicating a potential for higher flows than the historical volumes throughout these months.

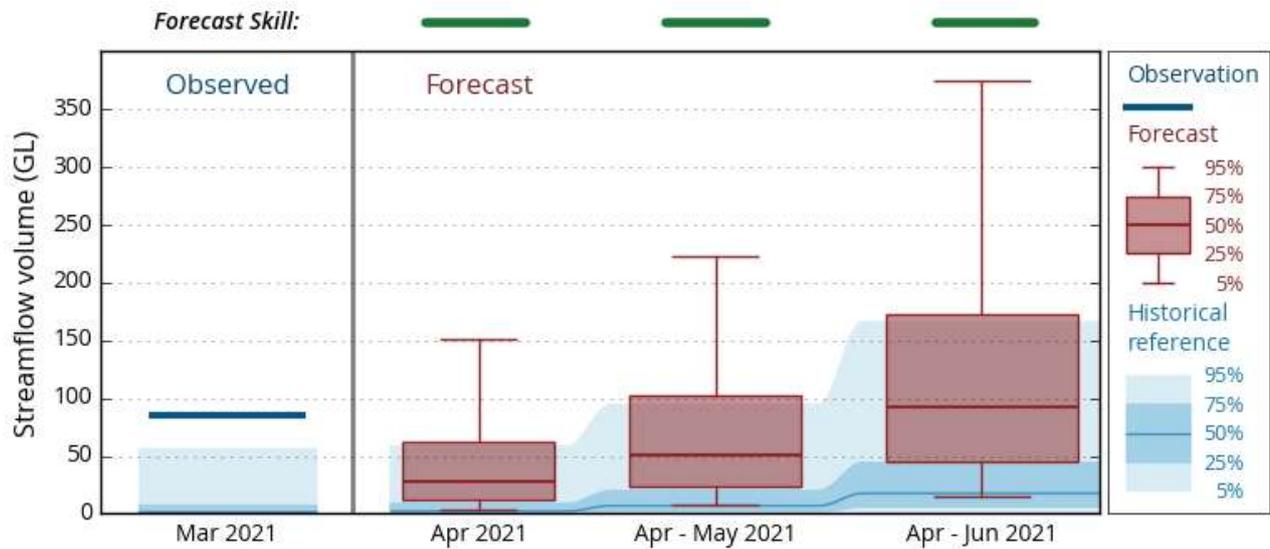
# Water Allocation Statement

Water availability and allocation update



## Abercrombie River at Abercrombie (ID: 412028)

Forecast for Apr 2021 – Jun 2021



For further details: <http://www.bom.gov.au/water/ssf/?ref=ft#id=412028>

### Next announcements

The next water allocation announcement for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source will be issued on **Monday 10 May 2021**.

# Water Allocation Statement

Water availability and allocation update



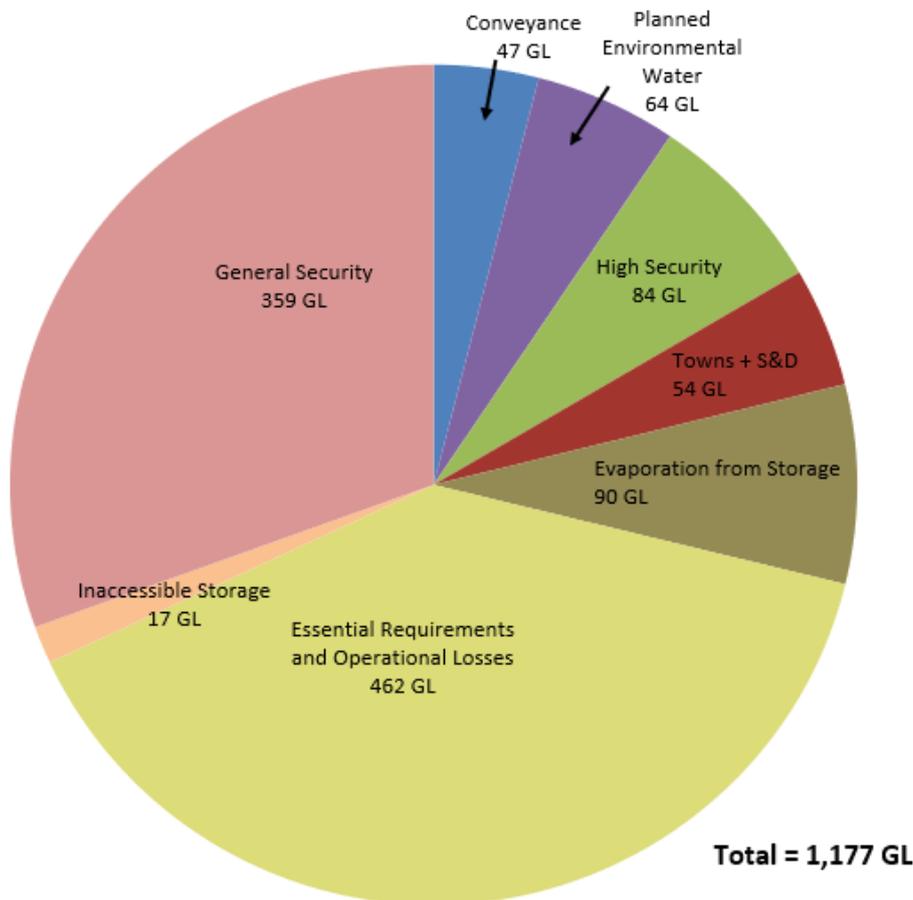
## Lachlan Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution (April 2021 to May 2023)	Volume (GL)
Current and Future Resources <sup>(1)</sup>	1,177
<i>less</i>	
General Security account balance <sup>(6)(7)</sup>	359
Conveyance	47
Planned Environmental Water <sup>(2)</sup>	64
High Security <sup>(3) (6)</sup>	84
Towns, Stock, Domestic <sup>(3)</sup>	54
Evaporation from storage <sup>(4)</sup>	90
Essential Requirements and Losses <sup>(5)</sup>	462
Inaccessible storage	<u>17</u>
<i>equals</i>	
Water available for allocation (or deficit)	<u>0</u>

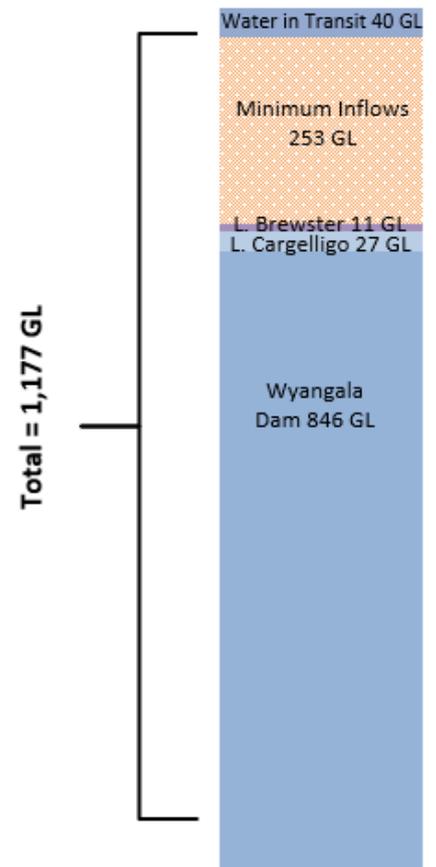
### Notes:

- (1) End of March 2021 storage volume in Wyangala Dam, Lake Cargelligo, and Lake Brewster, plus expected minimum inflows from April 2021 to May 2023.
- (2) Water allocated to the Water Quality Allowance and/or the Environmental Water Allowances (EWA) under the water sharing plan. The total volume represents the balance of the WQA and EWAs. There is ~4 GL of the WQA remaining for this water year plus 10 GL each year to May 2023. EWA allocation for 2020-21 is currently 20 GL and another 20 GL has been allowed for the Wyangala and Brewster EWAs in the 2021-22 water year. 'Licence-based' environmental water is excluded from this category.
- (3) Towns, Stock, Domestic and High Security: reserves are set aside to meet projected use of these users to 31 May 2023. Balances in high security accounts also include water traded in from general security licences, if any.
- (4) The evaporation from all three storages are based on the forecast drawdown over the assessment period.
- (5) Essential requirements include basic rights and any replenishment deliveries required. The loss budget (transmission and operational) is based on the best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions through to May 2023. This mostly comprises of natural transmission losses as water soaks into riverbed sands. The loss allowance is updated regularly.
- (6) This may include held environmental water (HEW) as shown in the pie chart. The reporting of HEW is indicative only, prior to reconciliation of usage and net trade, and is estimated to be 53 GL of GS, and 7 GL of HS. These reported entitlements are managed by agencies holding environmental water accounts. They include the NSW DPIE - Environment, Energy and Science (EES) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH).
- (7) The GS account balance includes any AWDs made this current water year and GS water carried over from the previous years.

## Resource Distribution: April 2021 Lachlan Regulated River Water Source



## Supply Source



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