

1 April 2019

NSW Murray and Lower Darling

Water allocation update

Current water allocations in the NSW Murray and Lower Darling regulated river water sources **remain unchanged**.

The allocation statements at this time of the water year are typically provided mid-monthly, however; given the water shortage conditions, this abbreviated statement will be issued at the start of each month until 1 May to confirm conditions and keep water users updated should there be any significant change in outlook.

March is traditionally a low rainfall month and the rainfall to date has been limited. Coupled with very dry catchment conditions, runoff and inflows are tracking well below average. A minor improvement of 5,000 megalitres (ML) has been set aside to meet 1 July 2019 commitments.

The Lower Darling is at the maximum Stage 4 drought criticality with the Menindee Lakes system at record low levels of only 1.2 per cent full, holding just 20,100 ML. Remaining supplies are restricted to critical needs only.

2018-19	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover	Drought Stage
Murray	97%	0%	31%	 Stage 1
Lower Darling	100%	0%	15%	 Stage 4

Murray storage levels (as at 29 March 2019)*

- Dartmouth Dam is 63 per cent full – steady – holding 2,444,000 ML.
- Hume Dam is 20 per cent full – falling – holding 605,000 ML.
- Lake Victoria is 35 per cent full – falling – holding 237,000 ML.

* NSW share of this water is approximately 24%, 49% and 48% for these storages respectively.

Next announcement

The next allocation update for the NSW Murray and Lower Darling regulated river water sources will be issued on **Monday 15 April 2019**. It will be a comprehensive statement and provide indicative 1 July 2019 water availability conditions to assist water users in their business decisions as the new water year approaches. However, it must be remembered that forecast conditions are 'best estimates' only and do not guarantee water availability. They should be used with caution, particularly when projecting many months ahead.

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