

1 February 2019

Murrumbidgee Valley

Water allocation update

The Murrumbidgee regulated river water allocation remains **unchanged at seven per cent of entitlement**.

The improvement in the Murrumbidgee Valley resource since the last assessment is 60 gegalitres (GL). This has been set aside to meet 1 July 2019 (2019/20) high priority commitments. Although some recent rainfall produced minor inflows, most of the improvement is from an adjustment to the transmission loss budget as we near the end of the peak summer demand period.

Currently at least 30 GL more water is needed to assure 2019/20 commitments before further allocation can be made this year to general security licences.

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

Storage levels (as at 31 January 2019)

- Blowering Dam is 31 per cent full – falling – holding 522,000 megalitres (ML).
- Burrinjuck Dam is 37 per cent full – falling – holding 382,000 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: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/extreme-events

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for February to April shows no clear indication of drier or wetter conditions. Temperatures are likely to continue above average.

The Bureau's El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) Outlook has changed to El Niño WATCH, with recent observations and models suggesting that the immediate risk of El Niño has passed. Although main climate drivers remain neutral, there remains about a 50 per cent chance of El Niño developing in autumn or winter.

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 15 February 2019**.

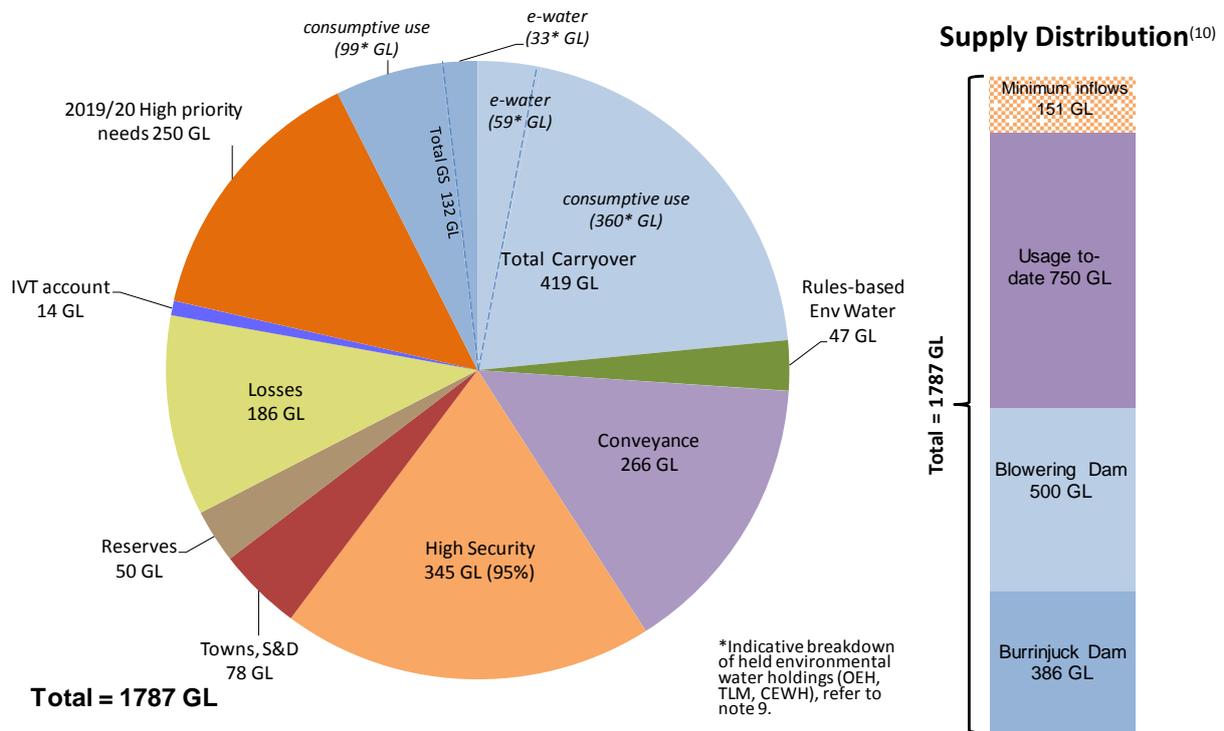
From mid-February, mid-monthly statements will provide indicative 1 July 2019 allocations as the new water year approaches. This aims to help water users with their end of year water management decisions – whether to use, trade or carryover their account balances.

Murrumbidgee resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution 2018-19 (at 1 February 2019)	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	1,787
less	
Carryover (GS and Conveyance)	419
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	47
Towns, Stock, Domestic	78 (100%)
Reserves ⁽³⁾	50
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	266
Announced High Security	345 (95%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) ⁽⁵⁾	186
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⁾	250

**See notes below.*

Murrumbidgee resource distribution 2018-19 – 1 February 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 716 GL, 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 46GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 1GL, EWA2 = nil, 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. The impact on all Murrumbidgee water users of a negative IVT balance is resolved by those who trade **out** of the valley during the water year, thereby lifting the IVT balance. There is currently a small negative balance (- 0.4 GL).
- 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 280GL of which 250GL 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).

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