

15 February 2016

## Murrumbidgee Valley

### Water allocation update and outlook for 2016/17

#### Allocations

Murrumbidgee general security allocation has increased **1 per cent** to **36 per cent** of entitlement.

Rainfall earlier this month has provided some useful inflows and river losses below Wagga Wagga have trended lower, thereby providing a small improvement to available resources.

	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murrumbidgee	95%	36%	23%

#### Storage levels (as at 12 February)

- Blowering Dam is 29 per cent full - falling - holding 470,000 megalitres (ML)
- Burrinjuck Dam is 52 per cent full - falling - holding 541,000 ML

#### Outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) seasonal outlook for February to April 2016 indicates above average rainfall conditions are likely across most of the region, with chances increasing from east to west across the catchment. Cooler than average temperatures are also expected.

The current outlook reflects a combination of influences - a strong El Niño now in decline, record-warm Indian Ocean temperatures and warm localised sea surface temperatures, particularly around Tasmania.

#### Trade

On 9 February 2016, DPI Water announced an imminent opening of allocation trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee Valley and provided details about where to find information on trade procedures.

Trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee valley subsequently opened on 12 February 2016 using new procedures that are based on IVT account balance trigger levels. Water users are encouraged to monitor the WaterNSW website at [www.watnsw.com.au/customer-service/trading/Murrumbidgee](http://www.watnsw.com.au/customer-service/trading/Murrumbidgee) to keep informed of the Murrumbidgee IVT account balance, the status of trade, and to become familiar with the new procedures.

Trade **into** and **within** the Murrumbidgee valley remains open and unaffected.

#### Next announcements

The next allocation update for the Murrumbidgee valley will be on **1 March 2016**.

Water availability forecasts for the start of next water year (1 July 2016) are also reported in this Statement and will continue to be updated on a monthly basis as the new water year approaches, with the next forecast to be provided on 15 March 2016.

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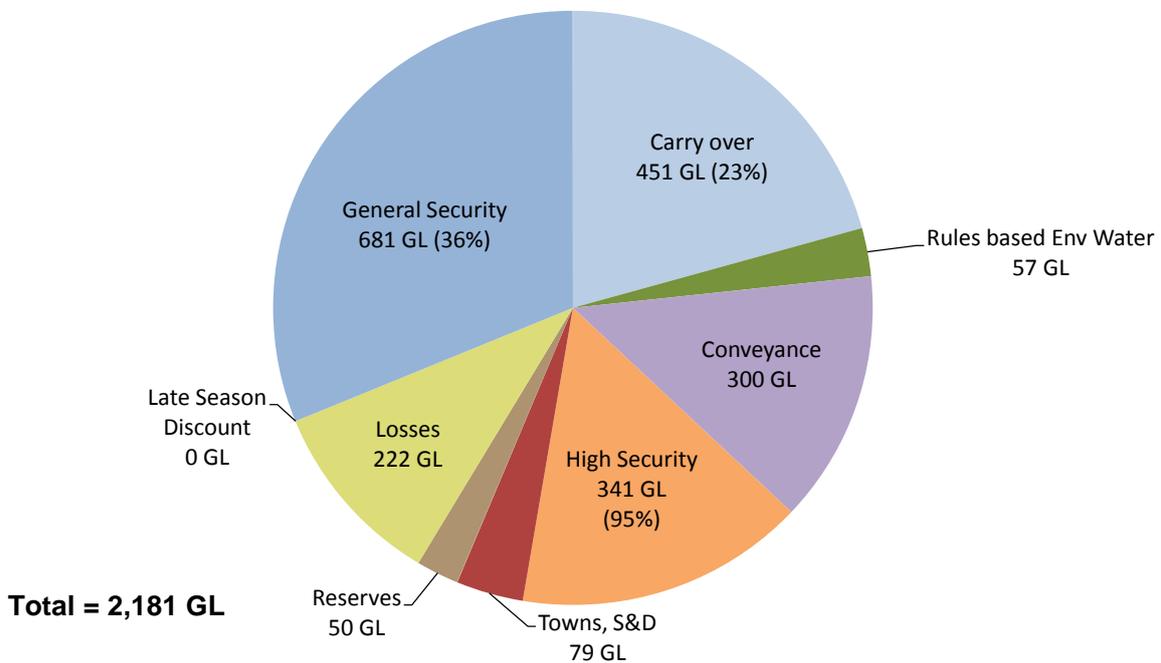
[www.water.nsw.gov.au](http://www.water.nsw.gov.au)

**Murrumbidgee Resource Assessment Data Sheet**

<b>Resource Distribution (as at 1 February) for 2015-16</b>	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource <sup>(1)</sup>	2,181
<b>less</b>	
Carryover (incl. Murrumbidgee IVT carryover)	451
Rules based Environmental Water <sup>(2)</sup>	57
Towns, Stock, Domestic	79 (100%)
Reserves <sup>(3)</sup>	50
Conveyance <sup>(4)</sup>	300
Announced High Security	341 (95%)
Announced General Security	681 (36%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) <sup>(5)</sup>	222
Late Season Discount <sup>(6)</sup>	0

*\*See notes below.*

**Resource Distribution 2015-16  
Murrumbidgee Valley - 15 February 2016**



## 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) plus usage to date.
- (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 and environmental water allowances. Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water. This volume typically decreases as water is used during the year.
- (3) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans, and mainly used for emergency purposes and critical needs. Includes Murrumbidgee Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV).
- (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 year. This includes storage evaporation, transmission losses and operational loss. This estimate is regularly refined as the year unfolds.
- (6) Late season inflow is the estimated volume that will arrive into storage after the peak irrigation demand season (usually post-February). This Late Season Discount cannot be safely allocated at the start of the water year. It can consist of a proportion of the Required Annual Release from Snowy Hydro Limited (SHL) and/or the assumed drought inflow sequence for April, May and June. The full Late Season Discount volume has been released.

## Murrumbidgee outlook for 2016/17

### Indicative allocations on 1 July 2016

- This preliminary forecast is a month earlier than usual to keep water users informed so that business decisions can be made in the lead up to the new water year on 1 July.
- Full allocation can be expected for all water utility, and domestic and stock access licences.
- All carryover in general security accounts should be fully deliverable. At this stage, it is estimated that the average general security carryover will be around 15-20 per cent of entitlement, although this is highly dependent on weather conditions over the next few months and individual decisions by water users.
- It is anticipated that High Security access licences will receive an allocation of 95 per cent of entitlement.
- Under 'extreme' dry conditions it is anticipated there will be zero (0) commencing general security allocation for 2016/17, and probably five (5) per cent under 'very dry' conditions (see table below).
- Similarly, there is likely to be zero (0) general security allocation at 1 November 2016 if extremely low inflow conditions continue, whereas general security allocations could reach 23 per cent by November 2016 if 'very dry' conditions continue until then.
- Supplementary access licence holders will receive a full allocation with extraction allowed only during periods of announced supplementary access.
- Sufficient water will be available for conveyance entitlements, commensurate with the expected opening allocations above.
- Further increases this water year (2015/16) in water availability will favourably influence these forecast general security allocations for 2016/17.
- Access to inter-valley trade in 2016/17 will depend on the balance of the IVT account.
- Once the commencing allocation is announced on 1 July 2016, regular assessments will be undertaken and allocation announcements made fortnightly on the 1st and 15th of each month, or next working day following, for the remainder of the water year.
- DPI water will commit to monthly outlooks from this point on in the lead up to the commencement of the new water year on 1 July 2016.

### Chances of improvement

The chances of general security allocation based on different inflow conditions are as follows:

#### Forecast General Security allocation (per cent)<sup>#</sup>

Potential Inflow Conditions	1 July 2016	1 Sept 2016	1 Nov 2016
99 chances in 100 (extreme) (99%)	0	0	0
9 chances in 10 (very dry) (90%)	5	12	23
3 chances in 4 (dry) (75%) <sup>^</sup>	9	24	39
1 chance in 2 (mean) (50%)	14	40	66
1 chance in 4 (wet) (25%)	31	55	100

<sup>^</sup> Tracking at approximately this level of inflow so far in 2015/16

<sup>#</sup> Assumes an average carryover of 17%