

# MEDIA RELEASE



28 October 2014

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## Choke trade restricted

From 5.00pm today, Tuesday 28 October 2014, trade from above the Barmah Choke to below the choke will be restricted to protect delivery of downstream water entitlements.

Trade downstream can only occur if upstream trade of the same or greater net volume has already occurred.

Entitlement holders downstream of the choke can continue to trade allocations upstream. This will create more opportunities for downstream trading through the choke.

MDBA River Management executive director David Dreverman said the restriction was to prevent water trades from making additional demands on the channel capacity at the choke.

"We've made this decision following an assessment of current water resource and operational conditions," Mr Dreverman said.

"At the moment it's very dry and the dry conditions are forecast to continue—that means we're probably heading into a period of high demand for water entitlements.

"Furthermore, there are reasonable water allocations currently available and most water is stored in our major storages upstream of the choke, meaning there will be heavy demand on the channel.

"There's also no ability to draw on water from the Menindee Lakes.

"So, to protect delivery of existing entitlements, it's necessary to re-instate the trade restriction.

"Water planning for summer is now relying on meeting downstream demands by drawing water from the Goulburn and Murrumbidgee rivers, and using the Mulwala Canal and its escapes to bypass the choke."

Water is available to be called from the Goulburn and Murrumbidgee rivers as a result of earlier trades.

Mr Dreverman said the MDBA would continue to monitor the situation and if circumstances allowed, the restriction would be relaxed.

“This restriction reduces the risk of excessive demands on the channel, but very high temperatures and hot wind causing excessive evaporation may still pose a risk.”

The trade restriction across the Barmah Choke has been relaxed since the 2007/08 water year because the conditions in recent years have limited risks to channel capacity.

Trade in (permanent) water entitlements from above to below the choke remains restricted, in accordance with the rules of the basin governments’ Murray–Darling Basin Agreement.

Basin states will be working with the MDBA to track trades through the choke and determine trade opportunities. The current trade balance for the choke can be found at [www.mdba.gov.au/river-data/barmah-choke](http://www.mdba.gov.au/river-data/barmah-choke)

Trade applications will continue to be processed by Basin states as per standard processes. In the first instance, water market participants should contact their state trading authority for more information.

ENDS

**For more information, contact the MDBA Media office at [media@mdba.gov.au](mailto:media@mdba.gov.au) or 02 6279 0141**

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