



2 March 2015

No improvement for NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee general security water allocations

Department of Primary Industries Deputy Director General Water, Gavin Hanlon, today announced that as a result of dry conditions no further water will be allocated for general security users in the NSW Murray and Murrumbidgee valleys at this time.

“Rainfall has been patchy across catchments over the last two weeks and temperatures have remained high,” Mr Hanlon said.

“There has been little runoff into storages and there is insufficient improvement in water availability to make a further allocation to general security water users at this time.

“However, the seasonal rainfall outlook shows we can expect close to average rainfall conditions across most of NSW in the three months from March to May.”

Hume and Dartmouth storages are now 38 per cent and 78 per cent full respectively and levels are continuing to fall to meet downstream demand.

In the Murrumbidgee Valley, Burrinjuck and Blowering dams are also falling, currently holding 37 per cent and 31 per cent of capacity respectively.

Mr Hanlon said there is also no change to inter-valley trade arrangements, which are currently unrestricted for the Murrumbidgee Valley and closed for the Lower Darling.

“In the Murray Valley, trade is restricted around the Barmah Choke, meaning that there can be no net trade downstream across the choke,” Mr Hanlon said.

“To assist water users plan their end of year activities, as well as manage possible autumn cropping, trade and carryover decisions, the NSW Office of Water will provide preliminary estimates of water availability for 2015-16 in association with the next water availability announcement on 16 March 2015.”

Ends

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Data Sheet

2014-15 Resource Distribution (as at 2 March 2015)

	NSW Murray Volume (GL)	Murrumbidgee Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource	2,245	2,720 ⁽⁶⁾
less		
Carryover (incl. M'bidgee IVT c/over)	498	632 ⁽⁵⁾
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽¹⁾	243	133
Towns, Stock, Domestic	54	79
Reserves ⁽²⁾	39	75
Conveyance ⁽³⁾	241	332
Announced High Security	183	341
Announced General Security	987 (59%)	965 (51%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation) ⁽⁴⁾		155

Notes

1. Rules based environmental water – water required to be set aside primarily under water sharing plan rules to provide for riverine environments. Includes end-of-system flow requirements. Excludes 'licence-based' environmental water.
2. Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans, and mainly used for emergency purposes and critical needs. Includes Murrumbidgee Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV).
3. 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 current high and general security allocations. (This category of licence can carry over up to 30% of entitlement in the Murrumbidgee but none in the NSW Murray).
4. 'Losses' is the best estimate of the volume required to run the river to meet demands for the remainder of the year. They do not appear in the Murray distribution because they are debited by Murray Darling Basin Authority before NSW is provided its share of Murray resource. They include storage evaporation, transmission losses, and operational loss and assume a return to dry conditions. This budget is constantly updated.
5. Carryover can 'spill' from accounts as allocations increase. This carryover volume can therefore decrease as allocation increases and account limits are reached. 'Spilled' carryover is immediately re-distributed and forms part of any allocation improvement.
6. Eight (8) GL remains unassigned from this (2 March) assessment. It will form part of the next resource assessment. At this time it takes about 20 GL for each 1% increase in general security allocation.

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