



1 November 2016

NSW Murray and Lower Darling

Water allocation update

Allocations

NSW Murray general security allocation has **increased by 9 per cent to 72 per cent** of entitlement. There has been a commensurate increase in allocation to conveyance entitlements.

The increase is underpinned by improvement in storage at Menindee Lakes and Dartmouth Dam.

	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murray	97%	72%	27%
Lower Darling	100%	100%	34%

The forfeiture of water from full accounts continues as allocations increase, meaning that those with little or no carryover can benefit the most from further resource improvements.

The general security account limit in the NSW Murray is 110 per cent of entitlement, therefore at full allocation (100 per cent), a maximum carryover of 10 per cent can remain in accounts.

General security licence holders can no longer divert supplementary water 'without debit', as allocation is greater than 60 per cent. Supplementary access holders should refer to WaterNSW's website for further information regarding the times and reaches where access applies:

www.watnsw.com.au/customer-service/news/supplementary

Hume Dam is effectively full and some minor air-space operations are continuing to safely pass inflows after the weekend rainfall. Dartmouth Dam is about 75 per cent full and rising.

Full allocations in the Lower Darling water source have been announced and the Menindee Lakes system is currently about 47 per cent full.

Now that the Menindee system holds more than 640 GL it has become a shared resource in accordance with the Murray Darling Basin Agreement. The MDB Authority can now consider Menindee water when operating the River Murray to most efficiently meet obligations and demands on behalf of the States. When Menindee next falls below 480 GL it will again become local NSW-only resource.

Water quality in the Lower Darling has continued to improve with salinity and pH levels now within the normal range of natural conditions.

Upper Murray storage levels (as at 31 October 2016)

- Dartmouth Dam is currently about 75 per cent full - rising - holding 2,881,000 ML.
- Hume Dam is 99 per cent full, holding 2,971,000 ML.

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www.water.nsw.gov.au

Climate outlook

The recent climate outlook from the Bureau of Meteorology indicates that November is likely to be drier than average across southern mainland Australia. For the Murray Basin generally, there is an even chance of getting about average rainfall conditions in the three months from November to January.

The current negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is weakening and is expected to end by December 2016. The tropical Pacific Ocean remains El-Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) neutral, with a weak La Niña-like pattern. Both a negative IOD and La Niña typically contribute to increased rainfall in spring for eastern and central Australia.

Trade

In the Murray, trade across the Barmah choke remains restricted to 'no net trade downstream'. Downstream trade opens automatically to the extent of the volume of any upstream trade. The trade restriction prevents water trades from placing excessive physical water delivery demand on choke channel capacity during the year, which could affect the water security of existing entitlement holders. Water users are encouraged to monitor the MDBA website at www.mdba.gov.au/managing-water/water-markets-trade/interstate-water-trade/barmah-choke-trade-balance for information about the trade balance and status of trade.

With improvement in the Menindee Lakes and forecast significant inflows, trade to and from the Lower Darling River water source has been re-opened. Trade within the valley has not been affected.

Trade **into** (and within) the Murrumbidgee Valley is open, but trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee Valley is closed. Water users are encouraged to monitor the WaterNSW website at www.watarnsw.com.au/customer-service/trading/murrumbidgee for information about the Murrumbidgee IVT account balance and the current status of Murrumbidgee trade.

Resource Distribution (as at 1 November) for 2016-17	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	2,480
less	
Carryover	438
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	276
Towns, Stock, Domestic ⁽³⁾	54 (100%)
Announced High Security subcategory (community & education, research) ⁽³⁾	1 (100%)
Announced High Security ⁽³⁾	184 (97%)
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	268
Reserves ⁽⁵⁾	55
Announced General Security	1,204 (72%)

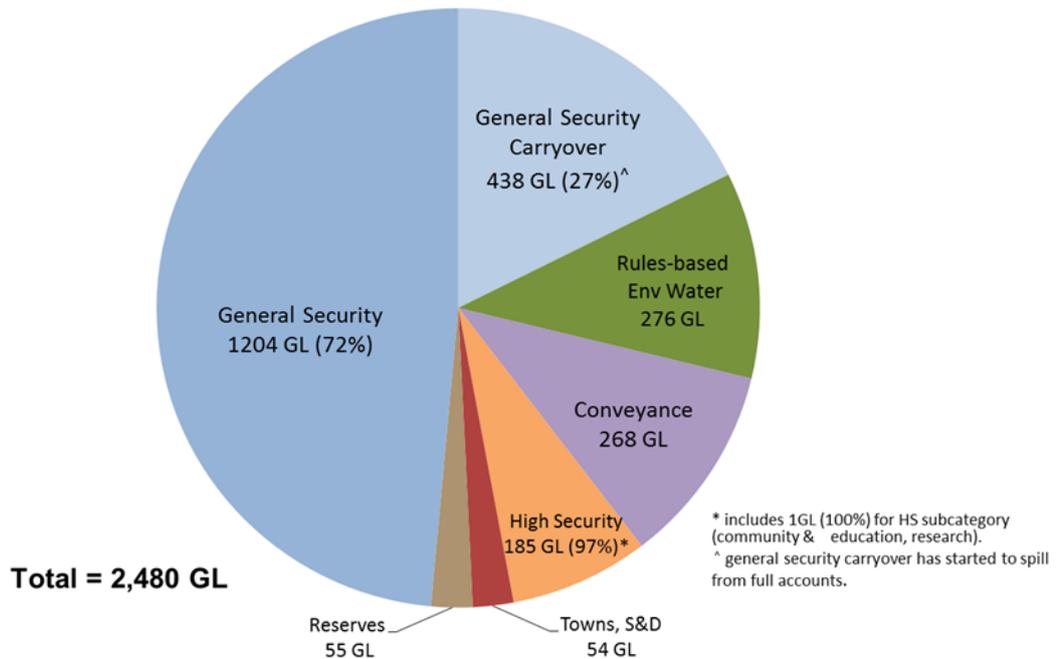
Next announcement

The next resource assessment and allocation update for the NSW Murray and Lower Darling valleys will be on **Tuesday 15 November 2016**. If necessary this mid-month statement will contain additional detailed information on likely improvements, including an update of the rocket diagram.

NSW Murray Resource Assessment Data Sheet

*See notes below.

Resource Distribution 2016-17 NSW Murray - 1 November 2016



Notes:

- (1) NSW is currently in Special Accounting with South Australia. Special accounting is triggered when NSW is forecast unable to meet the required reserve of 1,250 GL by the end of the year to supply South Australia (SA) with its entitlement in the following water year. Details can be found in the MDB Agreement Clauses 123-129. When resources improve sufficiently to allow NSW to leave special accounting, probably in November or December, the current imbalance with South Australia will mean NSW must 'pay' about 110 GL to the Minimum Reserve. This has been budgeted in the allocation announcements from forecast improvements so as not to impact allocations.
- (2) Carryover – NSW Murray general security water users can carryover a maximum of 50 per cent of their entitlement into the following water year. The account limit is 110 per cent of entitlement, which can consist of both allocation and carryover. This means that those with maximum carryover have now forfeited 12 per cent of improvement, and this has been assigned to others. From now on allocations will be boosted because carryover water will increasingly cause the forfeiture of water from full accounts and those with little or no carryover will benefit the most.
- (3) Rules-based planned environmental water – water required to be set aside under water sharing plans to provide for riverine environments. In the NSW Murray this includes Additional Environmental Allowance (AEA) (6 GL), Wakool system requirements (70 GL), and the Barmah-Millewa Allowance (B-MA). The current B-MA account balance (NSW share) remains at the minimum 200 GL for 2016/17 (does not accrue while Hume Dam is spilling). The borrow by consumptive water users has been fully repaid. Licence-based environmental water is not included in this rules-based environmental water category.
- (4) The *Water Sharing Plan for the New South Wales Murray and Lower Darling Regulated Rivers Water Sources 2016* has subcategories of high security licenses in the Murray Water Source. High security subcategory licences under *Part 7 Division 2 Clause 46(2)* that are present in the Murray include community and education, research, and town water supply. These licences are to receive 100% allocation at the commencement of each water year. Remaining high security licences are to receive 97% allocation. For the purposes of this water allocation statement, the high security town water supply allocation volume has been grouped as "Towns, S&D".
- (5) 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 plan and is a function of current high and general security allocation.
- (6) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans; used for emergency purposes and critical needs.