



MEDIA RELEASE

Phil Koperberg

NSW Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water

INCREASE FOR HIGH SECURITY USERS IN MURRUMBIDGEE VALLEY

State Plan Priority E1: A secure and sustainable water supply for all users

Tuesday 2nd October, 2007

Minister for Climate Change, Environment and Water Phil Koperberg today announced an increase in the available water determination for high security users in the Murrumbidgee Valley from 60 per cent to 75 per cent.

Mr Koperberg also announced an increase for stock and domestic licence holders from 50 per cent to 100 percent and an increase to town water supply from 50 per cent to 70 per cent.

“While this drought has tightened its grip on much of NSW we have seen some improvements in the Murrumbidgee Valley,” he said.

“These improvements are due in part to additional water from the Snowy Mountains Scheme which can now be delivered into Murrumbidgee and in part to inflows into Burrinjuck Dam which have receded more slowly than anticipated.

“These increases trigger the end of the need for monthly allocations of critical survival water for high security users however there is currently still not enough water for an allocation to be made for general security users.

Mr Koperberg said high security licence holders could still carry over up to 15 per cent of their unused entitlement into the 2008/09 season.

“Whilst this small improvement is welcome, recent rain in the region is still well below average. All water users need to remain conservative with water use and that is why 3a restrictions are being encouraged,” he said.

“As of the 27th of September 2007 Burrinjuck Dam was at 40 per cent of capacity and Blowering Dam was at 28 per cent of capacity, compared to 31 per cent and 53 per cent respectively this time last year with further flows committed from the Snowy scheme.”

Mr Koperberg also clarified comment on water sharing in the Murrumbidgee and Murray Valley.

“If conditions continue to stay dry in the southern basin for the remainder of the season then we will need to consider adopting a “southern basin approach” to manage what will be a very limited resource across the whole area. This will include using resources from Murray, Murrumbidgee and the relevant Victorian tributaries,” he said.

The Minister said the issue was being considered by a senior officers group reporting to the Prime Minister and the Premiers of each state.

More information will be available in the Department of Water and Energy's critical water planning communiqué available on 15th October.

Contact: Shehana Teixeira 0418 238 373 or (02) 9995 6750