



NSW Government

Department of Water & Energy

## Media Release

---

Tuesday 1 April, 2008

### NO CHANGE IN SOUTHERN BASIN WATER AVAILABILITY

The NSW Department of Water and Energy today announced that there would be no change to current water allocations in the Southern Murray-Darling Basin of New South Wales.

“Rainfall over the Easter period was patchy and failed to improve water storage levels because the minor inflows generated were lost to evaporation in the last two weeks of March, which were very hot,” said Deputy Director General, David Harriss.

“We really need a substantial autumn break across the Basin in order to improve the water outlook for 2008/09,” he said.

Mr Harriss said that the Department has set aside enough water to meet critical human needs in the NSW Southern Murray-Darling Basin in 2008/09, but that the outlook for water availability for irrigation remains poor.

“Flows in the Darling River from the Northern NSW and Queensland floods are now receding and the Bureau of Meteorology is predicting only moderate rainfall in Murray-Darling catchments over coming months.

“The Department will continue its Critical Water Planning Program to try and meet the needs of critical water dependent industries, such as permanent plantings.

“I’d like to thank all licence holders for their support of the Program and cooperation with the extraordinary water sharing rules we’ve put in place during the drought,” stated Mr Harriss.

Licence holders in the Murray and Lower Darling valleys are reminded that whilst the water sharing plan remains suspended, all water remaining in accounts can be carried over into the 2008/09 water year.

Should the water sharing plan be reinstated prior to 1 July 2008, the carryover rules provided in the plan will take effect. These rules specify a maximum carryover for general security of 50 percent of entitlement and no carryover permitted for high security users.

In the Murrumbidgee Valley, carryover is limited to 15 per cent of licensed entitlement for both general and high security licence holders.

Carryover will occur automatically on 1 July 2008 and licences holders are reminded that all applications for trade in the Murray, Murrumbidgee and Lower Darling must be lodged by close of business 30 April 2008.

More detailed information will be available in the Department’s April resource assessment and communiqué, which will be issued on 16 April 2008 and published on line at

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

---

**Media contact:** Bunty Driver 03 5898 3910 or 0407 403 234