

News release



5 October 2006

NO CHANGE FOR MURRUMBIDGEE VALLEY WATER USERS

The NSW Department of Natural Resources today announced that allocations for general security water users in the Murrumbidgee Valley for the 2006-2007 season would remain at 18 % for the full season with 15% being available by the end of February.

There has been a great deal of speculation on the ability to deliver the announced allocation this year. Allocations are calculated based on the worst inflows recorded since 1890. While the inflows during the past months have been about the same as the worst inflows previously recorded, the announced allocations can be delivered. However, it is important that water users and river operators continue to work together to make sure needs are properly forecast and water is not lost to the system

This season inflows to the Murrumbidgee system are tracking a little below minimum levels so at this time, 18% allocations can be delivered. 15% can be delivered before the end of February because of the substantial release from the Snowy last season, together with early releases from Snowy this season

Together, the Department and Murrumbidgee Irrigation today advised summer croppers to be aware of the continuing dry conditions when making their planting decisions. While there is still a chance that allocations would increase, the probability of significant increase is not good. The Bureau of Meteorology has stated in its website that the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI), which has been negative for the fourth straight month, dropped from -9 in July to a low -16 in August. The indications are that drier than normal conditions will persist and because of the dry state of the catchment, the chances of significant runoff is low.

Brett Tucker, Chief Executive of Murrumbidgee Irrigation, reminded all customers of the need to accurately predict their requirements, to work with company staff to ensure the system met expectations and to not interfere with the system and cause water loss.

Mr Tucker also advised Murrumbidgee Irrigation customers to make summer planting decisions with great care and not over commit themselves, especially as inflows to the dams is placing pressure on announced allocations.

Customers of Murrumbidgee Irrigation are advised to visit the company website for up to date information.

See DNR Water Allocation Announcements and data sheets
www.naturalresources.nsw.gov.au

See State Water Water Delivery Announcements and Media Releases at
<http://www.statewater.com.au>

See Murrumbidgee Irrigation information at
mirrigation.com.au

For more information about State Water storage levels and river heights
go to the **Waterinfo Website** at:
<http://waterinfo.nsw.gov.au/>