

News release



NSW Government

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

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NO CHANGE FOR MURRUMBIDGEE VALLEY WATER USERS

The NSW Department of Natural Resources (DNR) today announced no change to allocations for water users in the Murrumbidgee Valley and high security allocations would remain at 85% and general security at 10 %.

DNR's Executive Director Water Management, David Harriss, said conditions remain extremely dry and rainfall would need to be well above average to produce even low inflows to storages.

"Total valley system inflows for the season to date, July to January have been close to the previous recorded minimum in 1983, and river losses for the season remain at record levels," he said.

"Burrinjuck and Blowering Dams currently hold 272,000 Megalitres (26%) and 191 000 Megalitres (10%) respectively.

"There has been a slight improvement in water availability but not to the extent that an increase, to re-credit water that had previously been suspended in accounts of water users, can be considered.

"There is still uncertainty about river losses for the rest of the season and there is insufficient water to secure anything other than some essential urban and domestic supplies next year."

Whilst the probability of the current extreme scenario continuing is very low, if it does at its current intensity, the first priority in 2007-08 will be to ensure water supply for urban and domestic and stock purposes.

The DNR is working with a high level group established by the Prime Minister's Department to consider options for securing urban and town water supplies in 2006-07 for the Murray Basin.

The Department will issue an information sheet outlining the rules for carryover, re-crediting of suspended allocation and trade in the near future.

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