

1 October 2019

Murrumbidgee Valley

Water allocation update

There is **no change** to general security allocations in the Murrumbidgee regulated water source.

Inflows into the storages have been minimal since the last assessment as rainfall has been well below average. More rainfall during spring is required to increase volumes of water that can be made available for distribution.

The southern valleys typically receive more rainfall and inflow in winter and spring. With well below average inflows through winter and forecast dry conditions for spring, the chances of improved inflows are now receding. Statistically there is now a low likelihood that allocations will improve significantly before summer, but in reality storms can bring rainfall and inflows at any time.

2019-20	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover	Drought Stage
Murrumbidgee	95%	6%	8%	 Stage 1

Drought stage

The **Murrumbidgee Valley** regulated river water source is in Stage 1 drought criticality, meaning all allocated water can be delivered under normal regulated river operations. However drought conditions across NSW continue to persist and threaten, therefore the resource situation is being closely monitored to ensure Murrumbidgee high priority needs can remain secure for 2020-21.

A Critical Water Advisory Panel has been formed for southern valleys to provide advice on drought management options and remains ready to reconvene when required.

Further information on the policy and related drought stages can be found at:

www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/droughts-floods/extreme-events

Storage levels (as at 29 September 2019)

- Blowering Dam is 57 per cent full – rising – holding 948,000 megalitres (ML).
- Burrinjuck Dam is 33 per cent full – steady – holding 345,000 ML.

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for October to December indicates that the Murrumbidgee catchment is very likely to experience drier than average conditions across the catchment. Daytime temperatures over this period are very likely to be above average, while overnight temperatures are likely to be below average.

The Bureau indicates that the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral. Modelling suggests that the ENSO is likely to remain neutral over the remainder of 2019. Positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are forecast for the remainder of spring. A positive IOD will likely result in below average spring rainfall and above average temperatures.

For further details: www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary

Trade

Trade out of the Murrumbidgee Valley is closed; however, trade into the valley is open. Water users are encouraged to monitor the WaterNSW website (www.waternsw.com.au) for daily information about the IVT account balance and status of trade.

Next announcement

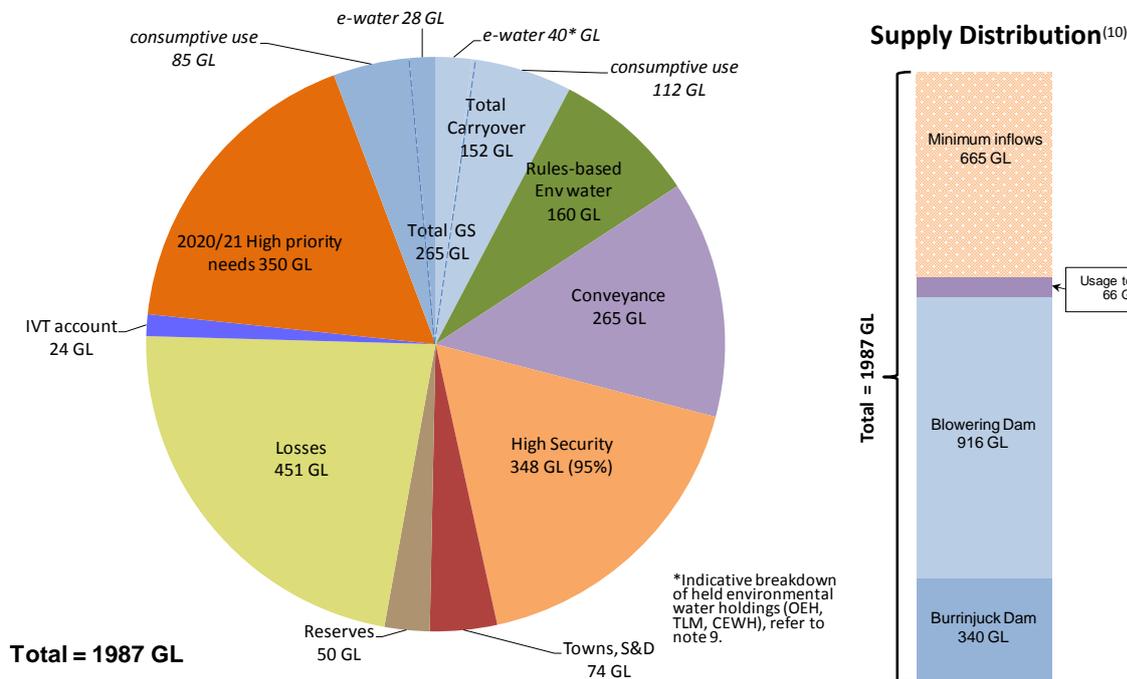
The next water allocation statement for the Murrumbidgee valley will be on **Tuesday 15 October 2019**. It will include updated probability analysis showing likely improvement in water availability under different inflow scenarios. The two-year resource assessment, used to ensure future high priority needs can be met before further allocating in the current year, will also be provided.

Murrumbidgee resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution (1 October) for 2019-20	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	1,987
less	
Carryover (GS and Conveyance)	152
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	160
Towns, Stock, Domestic	74 (100%)
Reserves ⁽³⁾	50
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	265
Announced High Security	348 (95%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) ⁽⁵⁾	451
Murrumbidgee IVT account (carryover as of 1 July) ⁽⁶⁾	24
Late Season Inflows ⁽⁷⁾	0
Announced General Security	113 (6%)
Future (2020-21) high priority needs ⁽⁸⁾	350

**See notes below.*

Murrumbidgee resource distribution 2019-20 – 1 October 2019



Data sheet notes

- 1) Total available resource – total active storage volume (Blowering & Burrinjuck Dams) at the day of assessment plus any usable flows in transit plus drought inflows for rest of the year plus Snowy Hydro’s assured Required Annual Release (RAR) (including any flex (pre-release) from the prior year), as well as estimated usage to date. Snowy Hydro’s net Jounama Release for this year (2019-20) is estimated to be about 880GL (includes montane release). Net Jounama release from 1 May 2019 to date has been 407 GL.
- 2) Rules-based environmental water – water required to be set aside under water sharing plans to provide for riverine environments. Includes end-of-system flow requirements (currently 121 GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 0 GL, EWA2 = 39 GL, EWA3 = 0 GL). Excludes ‘licence-based’ environmental water also known as held environmental water (HEW). This total volume typically reduces as commitments are met and water is used during the year.
- 3) Reserves – required primarily under statutory plans, and mainly used for emergency purposes and critical needs. Includes 25GL per dam as an operational reserve, and Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV1 = nil, PSV2 = nil).
- 4) 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 plans and is a function of high and general security allocations. This category of licence in the Murrumbidgee valley, like general security, can carry over up to 30% of entitlement.
- 5) Losses – is the best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions to meet demands for the remainder of the water year. This includes storage evaporation, transmission losses and operational loss. This estimate is regularly updated as the year unfolds.
- 6) IVT account – this is the carryover value into 2019-20, a positive balance of 24 GL.
- 7) Late Season Inflows – is the estimated inflow volume that will arrive into storage late in the year, after the peak irrigation demand season (usually post-February). This water cannot be allocated to water users at the start of the water-year, otherwise there could be an expectation that the water is available for delivery and use before it is captured in storage.
- 8) Future high priority needs – it is required to look ahead to next water year (2020-21) to ensure there is sufficient resource available to meet high priority commitments on 1 July 2020. This volume is currently estimated to be about 350 GL. This value changes from month to month based on the complex interaction of climatic factors, projected historical inflow sequence including Snowy Hydro Required Annual Releases, usage/potential carryover, and actual transmission and operational losses as the water year unfolds.

- 9) Held environmental water (HEW) – licenced water administered by environmental water holders is reported here, with the associated portions of general security allocation and carryover also identified in the above pie chart. This reporting of held environmental water is the total credited to accounts (not usage) and is estimated to be 28GL of GS, 15 GL of HS, 43 GL of conveyance allocation and 40 GL of GS carryover. These entitlements are held and/or managed either singly or jointly by various environmental holder groups, including the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), The Living Murray (TLM) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). Details on environmental holdings can be found on individual agency websites.
- 10) Supply Distribution – the distribution of supply includes volumes at the time of the assessment for the following categories: active volumes in the dams, indicative usage to-date (may be estimates prior to reconciliation with hydrographic updates) and assumed minimum future inflows (includes Snowy Hydro's guaranteed inflows for the water year, and late season inflows).

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