

2 December 2019

Murrumbidgee Valley

Water allocation update

There is **no change** to Murrumbidgee regulated river water allocations.

Inflows into the storages remain well below average. Due to the extremely dry catchment conditions and significant soil moisture deficits from a long period of low rainfall and higher than average temperatures, soaking rainfall is required to improve runoff and inflow conditions.

The planning horizon for the Murrumbidgee resource assessment runs through to June 2021. The latest resource assessment shows that the current reserves, combined with assumed future minimum inflows, are sufficient to deliver next year's high priority needs, including carryover.

Water users are advised to consider available weather and climatic information together with the allocation outlooks when planning their water needs in 2019-20 and beyond.

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. Drought conditions across NSW continue to persist and the resource situation is being monitored closely to ensure Murrumbidgee high priority needs can remain secure for 2020-21.

More information on NSW's Extreme Events 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 November 2019)

- Blowering Dam is 47 per cent full – falling – holding 797,000 megalitres (ML).
- Burrinjuck Dam is 32 per cent full – steady – holding 340,000 ML.

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook for December 2019 to February 2020 indicates that the Murrumbidgee catchment is likely to experience hotter and drier than average conditions.

The Bureau also 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 and into 2020. Positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions are forecast well into summer, suppressing likely rainfall and increasing temperatures.

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

Trade

Trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee Valley is closed; however, trade **into** and **within** 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. Trade **out** of the valley will open again when the IVT balance falls to 85 GL but will then close again should it rise to 100 GL.

Next announcement

The next water allocation statement for the Murrumbidgee Valley will be on **Monday 16 December 2019**. This statement will be the last for this water year that includes updated probability analysis (rocket diagrams) showing likely improvement in water availability under different inflow scenarios. From mid-March 2020 onward, the forecasts will focus on the potential starting allocations for 1 July 2020 and the water for next (2020-21) water year.

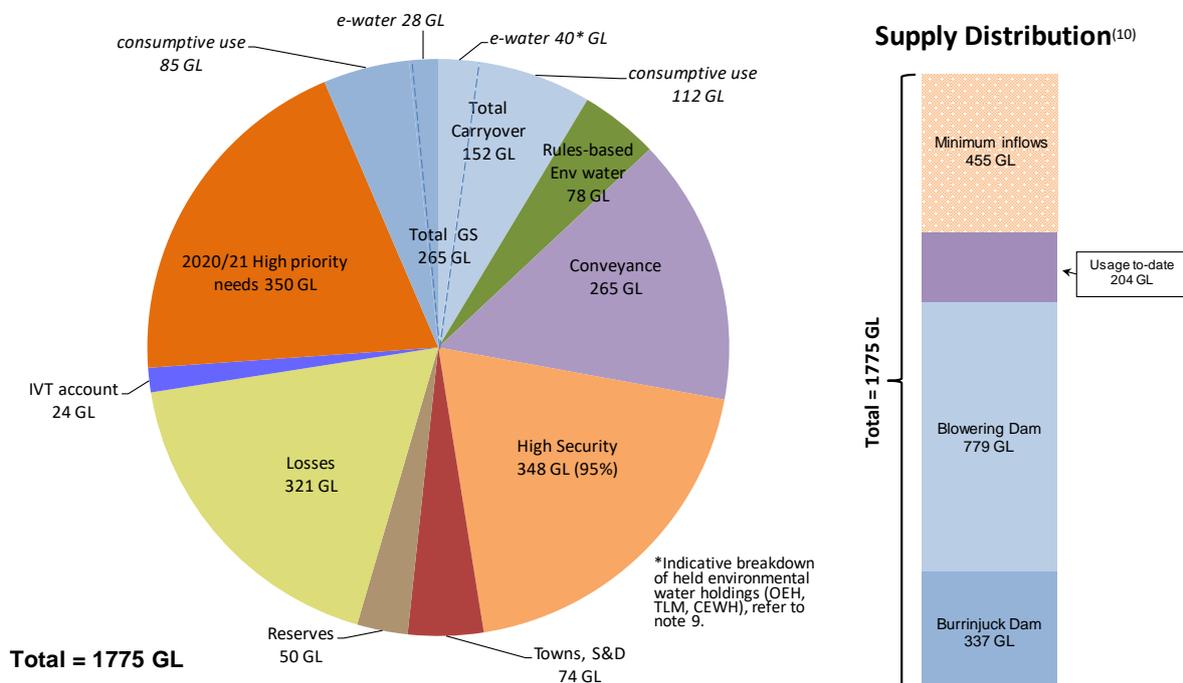
No statement will be published on 2 January 2020, with fortnightly statements resuming on 15 January 2020. However, if significant changes in weather patterns or water availability are observed, interim allocation announcements will be provided.

Murrumbidgee resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution (2 December) for 2019-20	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	1,775
less	
Carryover (GS and Conveyance)	152
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	78
Towns, Stock, Domestic	74 (100%)
Reserves ⁽³⁾	50
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	265
Announced High Security	348 (95%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) ⁽⁵⁾	321
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 – 2 December 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 around 615 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 64 GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 0 GL, EWA2 = 14 GL, EWA3 = 0 GL). Excludes ‘licence-based’ environmental water also known as held environmental water (HEW). This total volume typically reduces as 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. Conveyance licences in the Murrumbidgee valley can also carryover 30% of their 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 updated monthly.
- 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, as it can create an expectation that the water is available for delivery 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 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 forecast, 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 e-water 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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