

1 October 2021

Murrumbidgee Valley

Water allocation update

There is no change to Murrumbidgee regulated river water allocations. Cumulative allocation for general security remains at a total of 52% of entitlement for the 2021-22 water year. Incorporating carryover, average general security water availability is approximately 74%.

Wet conditions have kept storages full, prompting ongoing airspace releases and supplementary access across the regulated valley. Water users can monitor the WaterNSW website (waterinsights.waternsw.com.au/) for publication of supplementary announcements.

With full storages and low regulated usage, airspace is not available to capture substantial new resources for further allocation increases. Current demand in the system is mostly being met through water take from unregulated flows, with general security users continuing to exercise their entitlement's without-debit take provisions. These provisions allow the taking of water from unregulated flows without debit to accounts under certain circumstances. Under regulated conditions, this take would have been met from storages and therefore created airspace to capture new resources. However, with unregulated conditions, this take is not currently reducing future general security liability which must be met from storage and therefore not freeing up resource for further allocation.

Without-debit take is reducing the total new future allocations general security accounts can benefit from (for those exercising without-debit provisions). Therefore, should resource improvements eventuate to support future allocation increases, the rate of allocation increase will be quicker than if without-debit take had not occurred. This is because after allocations increase above certain thresholds (dependent on individual account balances and water sharing plan rules), without-debit take converts to debit take, reducing future general security liability that must be met from storage, and effectively creating new resource.

Demand is expected to ramp up in coming weeks. Should regulated conditions return, demand will be primarily met from storage releases, creating airspace and therefore opportunity to capture new resource from higher than minimum inflows and potentially increase allocations. If unregulated conditions continue, general security entitlement holders can continue to exercise the without-debit provision of their entitlement until the without-debit limit is reached, after which, debit take will commence. Account rules can be found in the Murrumbidgee regulated river water sharing plan.

Further resource improvements will be used to allocate to general security while also assuring high priority needs for 2022-23.

2021-22	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murrumbidgee	95%	52%	22%

Storage levels (as at 29 September 2021)

- Blowering Dam is 94% full – stable – holding about 1,535,000 megalitres (ML).
- Burrinjuck Dam is 92% full – stable – holding about 945,000 ML.

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for October to December indicates that rainfall is very likely to be above average across the catchment. Daytime temperatures are likely to be below average while overnight temperatures are likely to be near or warmer than average.

The Bureau's El Niño-Southern Oscillation is neutral, however the Bureau has lifted its ENSO Outlook status to La Niña WATCH. The negative Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) has weakened. Models suggest this weak negative IOD pattern could persist at borderline levels through October before easing further. A negative IOD increases the chances of above-average spring rainfall for much of southern and eastern Australia.

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

Trade

The normal operating range for the Murrumbidgee IVT account is between 0 gigalitres (GL) and 100 GL. Trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee is **closed**, while trade **into** the Murrumbidgee Valley is **open** (as of 30 September 2021). Water users should monitor the WaterNSW website (www.watnsw.com.au) for daily information about the IVT account balance, the status of trade, and other information. The IVT account balance at the end of the previous water year has carried forward into this water year.

Next announcement

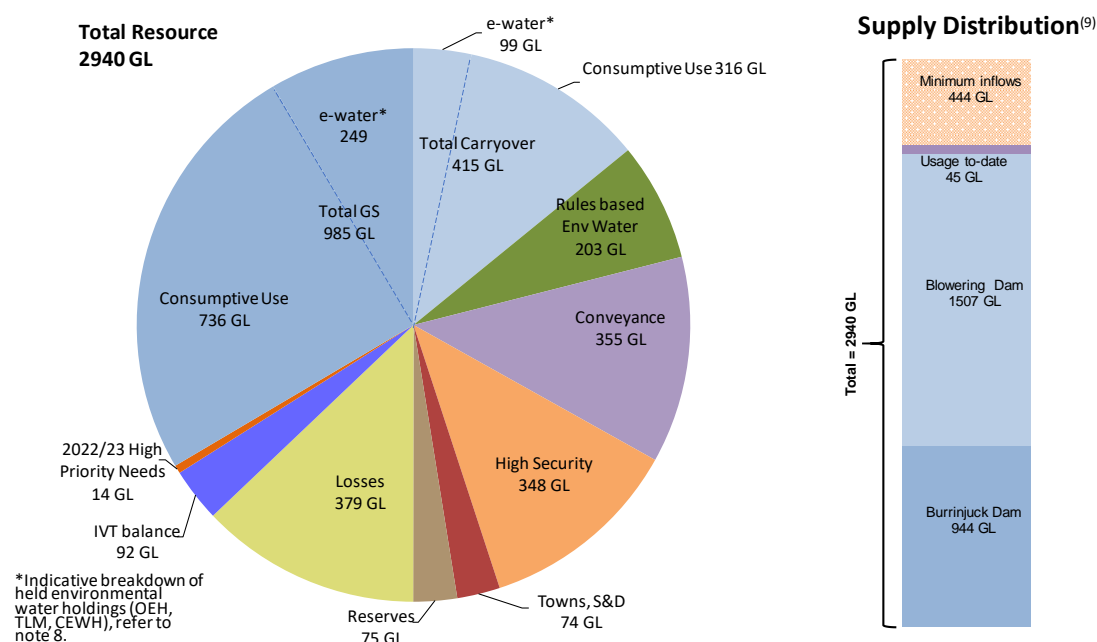
The next water allocation statement will be published on **Friday 15 October 2021**. It will be a comprehensive statement, including the likelihood of improvement in general security allocations under various inflow scenarios.

Murrumbidgee resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution* (1 October) for 2021-22	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	2940
<i>less</i>	
Carryover ⁽⁸⁾	415
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	203
Towns, Stock, Domestic (100%)	74
Reserves ⁽³⁾	75
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	355
Announced High Security (95%)	348
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) ⁽⁵⁾	379
Murrumbidgee IVT account (carryover on 1 July) ⁽⁶⁾	92
Announced General Security (52%) ⁽⁸⁾	985

*See notes below

Murrumbidgee resource distribution 2021-22 – 1 October 2021



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 minimum 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 (2021-22) is estimated to be about 395 GL (includes montane release).
- 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 117 GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 53 GL, EWA2 = 33 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 25 GL per dam as an operational reserve, and Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV1 = 25 GL, 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 – 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 carryover value into 2021-22. Does not reflect the current IVT balance.
- 7) 2022-2023 high priority needs on 1 July 2022 - volume set aside to cover high priority needs on 1 July 2022, for ‘Year 2’, including potential carryover.
- 8) 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 249 GL of GS, 15 GL of HS, 67 GL of conveyance allocation and 99 GL of GS carryover. These entitlements are held and/or managed either singly or jointly by various environmental holder groups, including the NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), The Living Murray (TLM) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH). Details on environmental holdings can be found on individual agency websites.
- 9) 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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