

17 July 2023

# Murrumbidgee Regulated River Water Source

## Water allocation update

**There is no increase to allocations in the Murrumbidgee regulated river water source.**

The current general security allocation is 37%, as announced on 1 July 2023. Incorporating carryover, total water availability across all general security licences is around 65% of entitlement.

Full and spilling storages, coupled with very low demand, means that airspace in storages is not available to capture new resource, and therefore, resources have not improved since the previous assessment. As was the case last year, allocations are unlikely to increment significantly until usage increases and makes it possible for the system to regulate new water.

The forecast dry conditions anticipated to develop over the coming months mean that inflows are likely to reduce significantly compared to the recent wet conditions experienced in the valley. Once airspace is available, resource improvements will be driven by higher than assumed minimum inflows occurring, rather than the usage in the valley.

Furthermore, with Blowering Dam spilling, the Required Annual Release from Snowy Hydro (a release which is assured to occur and therefore already incorporated into the resource assessment as a minimum inflow) is spilling, unused, down the system. This could lead to a resource shortfall since resource already allocated can be lost without being able to be used. Conditions will be closely monitored and updated information will be provided.

Information on the **spill of Murrumbidgee Intervalley Trade (IVT)** and a **temporary restriction to interstate trade** is provided below in this statement.

## Year to date allocations for 2023/24

2023/24	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murrumbidgee	95%	37%	28%

## Storage levels (as of 17 July 2023)

- Blowering Dam is about 92% full – stable – holding about 1,510,000 megalitres (ML).
- Burrinjuck Dam is about 94% full – stable – holding about 960,000 ML.

## Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's seasonal outlook for August to October shows that rainfall is very likely to be below median. Daytime and overnight temperatures are likely to be hotter than median.

The Bureau's El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) index outlook indicator is on El Niño Alert. Models indicate that El Niño conditions may develop in the coming weeks. Furthermore, positive Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) conditions may develop in the coming weeks also. Should El Niño or negative IOD conditions develop, rainfall will likely be drier than median conditions.

Further details at: [www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary](http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/#/overview/summary)

## Trade

Trade **out of the Murrumbidgee and into the Murrumbidgee is open** (as of 17 July 2023). Water users should monitor the WaterNSW website ([www.waternsw.com.au](http://www.waternsw.com.au)) for daily information about the IVT account balance, the status of trade, and other information including seasonal trade closures. The Murrumbidgee IVT account is operated between its normal 0 GL and 100 GL range. The IVT balance can fluctuate rapidly, therefore information presented here is current at the time of writing.

## IVT in 2023/24

When water physically spills from Murrumbidgee storages (including pre-releases for airspace operations), a decision must be made to spill or retain any IVT balance. With NSW Murray allocations full while Murrumbidgee allocations substantially lower than the NSW Murray, a decision to spill the IVT balance has been made, with the **spill to take effect on 14 August 2023**. The removal of water from the IVT account balance on the morning of 14 August 2023 will mean additional trade opportunity will be available for trade out of the Murrumbidgee. Water users should monitor the WaterNSW website ([www.waternsw.com.au](http://www.waternsw.com.au)) for detailed information on trade.

## Interstate Trade

A **temporary restriction on interstate water trades** (clause 71V of the *Water Management Act 2000*) into the NSW Murray, Lower Darling and Murrumbidgee regulated river water sources from other states is **currently in place, until 31 August 2023** (subject to change based on spill risk at Hume).

Interstate trades are accompanied by a reassignment of physical water (resource) in storages from the selling state to the buying state. When storages are full or near full, there is limited capacity to hold reassigned resource and a high risk that any reassigned resource will spill. Therefore, interstate trades into NSW cannot be safely underpinned by resource. Accepting incoming interstate trades in such conditions puts NSW Murray allocations and water users at risk.

More information on temporary water restrictions can be found at:

[www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/temporary-water-restrictions](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/temporary-water-restrictions)

## Next announcement

The next water allocation statement will be published on **Tuesday 1 August 2023**. It will be a short statement, updating any improvements in resource and allocations.

The next comprehensive statement, including the likely improvement in general security allocations under various inflow scenarios, will be published on Tuesday 15 August 2023.

**Note: Murrumbidgee statements are available from around 2:30pm on the day of the publication.**

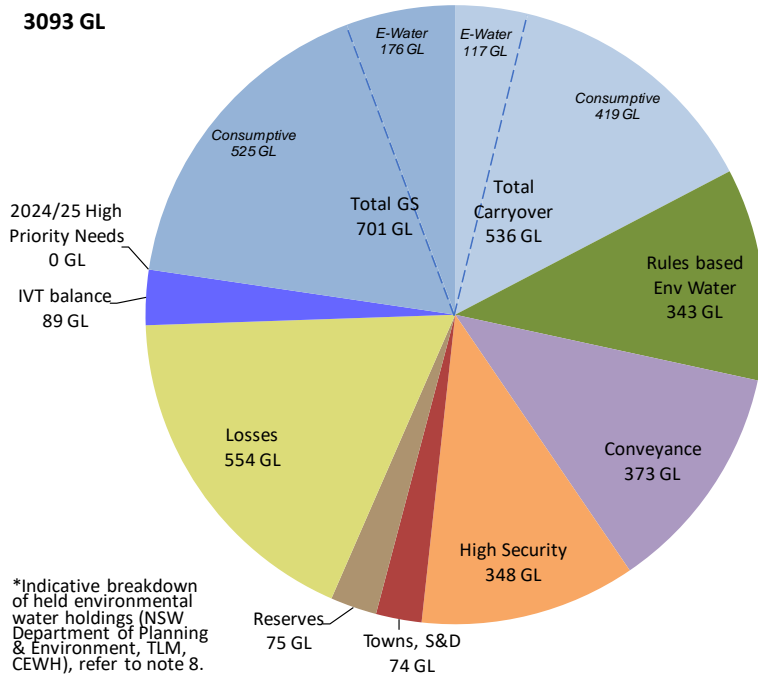
## Murrumbidgee resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution* (17 July) for 2023-24	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource <sup>(1)</sup>	3,093
<b>less</b>	
Carryover <sup>(8)</sup>	536
Rules based Environmental Water <sup>(2)</sup>	343
Towns, Stock, Domestic (100%)	74
Reserves <sup>(3)</sup>	75
Conveyance <sup>(4)</sup>	373
Announced High Security (95%)	348
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) <sup>(5)</sup>	554
Murrumbidgee IVT account (carryover on 1 July) <sup>(6)</sup>	89
Announced General Security (37%) <sup>(8)</sup>	701
Year 2 (2024-25) high priority needs <sup>(7)</sup>	0

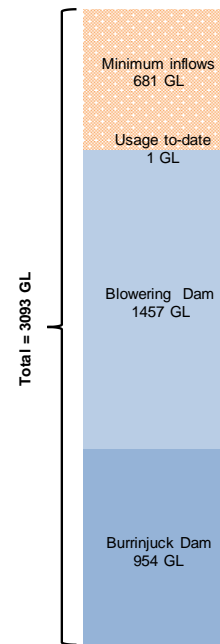
\*See notes below

### Murrumbidgee resource distribution 2023-24 – 17 July 2023

**Total Resource**  
3093 GL



**Supply Distribution<sup>(9)</sup>**



\*See notes below

## 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 (2023-24) is estimated to be about 290 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 208 GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1 = 100 GL, EWA2 = 35 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 2023-24. Does not necessarily reflect the current IVT balance.
- 7) 2024-2025 high priority needs on 1 July 2024 - volume set aside to cover high priority needs on 1 July 2024, 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 177 GL of GS, 11 GL of HS, 60 GL of conveyance allocation and 117 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 and Environment, The Living Murray and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder. 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).

## Chances of improvement

The chances of improved Murrumbidgee general security allocations based on a repeat of historical inflows, are provided in the table below under a variety of conditions. The forecast is based on all available historical data, which gives a better outlook than using just the driest years on record (dry tercile).

It is important to note that these estimates are indicative improvements only and are not guaranteed allocations. Estimates are likely to change based on weather conditions, water user behaviour, water management decisions and other events. This means water users should use this information with caution and at their own risk, particularly as it projects many months ahead.

**Triggering of the IVT spill will likely increase the numbers shown in the table below by up to 5%, depending on the volume of the IVT balance on the day of IVT spill.**

### Forecast general security allocations (%)

(Any carryover water can be added to these indicative allocations)

Repeat of historical inflow conditions	1 Sept 2023	1 Nov 2023
99 chances in 100 (extreme dry) (99%)	37%	37%
9 chances in 10 (very dry) (90%)	37%	37%
3 chances in 4 (dry) (75%)	37%	40%*
1 chance in 2 (median) (50%)	38%*	47%*
1 chance in 4 (wet) (25%)	38%*	50%*

Note 1: Estimated values indicative only, not guaranteed and subject to change based on actual events unfolding.

Note 2: Forecast assumes 28% carryover on average.

\* Model indicates potential storage spills, limited capacity for resource improvement and constrained delivery from Blowering. High uncertainty exists and further allocation improvements in median and wet scenarios may be driven by water usage rather than inflows. Should demand not set in early in the 2023/24 water year, general security allocation improvements over the 75% inflow case will be very limited, and potentially lower than those shown in the table above.

## Water allocation guide

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment – Water has produced a series of guides to describe the water allocation methods for most NSW regulated river systems. The guide for the Murrumbidgee regulated system is available at: [www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/how-water-is-allocated/resource-assessment-process](http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/how-water-is-allocated/resource-assessment-process)

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