

15 September 2016

Murrumbidgee Valley

Water allocation update

Allocations

There is sufficient water for the Murrumbidgee general security allocation to **increase by 7 per cent to 61 per cent**. This means that, with carryover, overall general security water availability is 80 per cent in the valley. Rainfall in the upper catchment has continued in the past fortnight ensuring that Burrinjuck Dam will remain full for the commencement of irrigation demand.

One reason for allocations not yet reaching 100 per cent in the Murrumbidgee Valley, despite Burrinjuck Dam being full and Blowering Dam reaching 85 per cent capacity, is the lack of account water used so far this year. When water is used and the resulting airspace in storage is backfilled with inflows, allocations rise. It is important to note too that, under the water sharing plan, general security allocations in the Murrumbidgee Valley slow after water availability reaches 80 per cent. It is required that water be set aside in bulk accounts, effectively saving water for the start of the next water year.

Supplementary access is available along the full length of the regulated river, including Lowbidgee. Strong tributary inflows are producing large unregulated flows in parts of the river. Communities and landholders in proximity to the river are reminded to monitor the latest Flood Watches and Warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology.

	High Security	General Security	Average Carryover
Murrumbidgee	95%	61%	19%

Storage levels (as at 14 September)

- Blowering Dam is 85 per cent full - rising - holding 1,398,000 megalitres (ML).
- Burrinjuck Dam is 97 per cent full - steady - holding 1,008,000 ML.

Climatic outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) climate outlook for Spring indicates the chances of a wetter or drier spring are equal. September is likely to be wetter in localised areas especially in the middle to lower catchment areas. Warmer spring days and nights are likely across western fringes and the eastern catchments have roughly equal chances of warmer or cooler spring days.

The current outlook reflects a weakening negative Indian Ocean Dipole and tropical Pacific Ocean temperatures potentially approaching La Niña thresholds.

Trade

Trade **into** and **within** the Murrumbidgee Valley is open, but trade **out** of the Murrumbidgee Valley is closed. Water users are encouraged to monitor the WaterNSW website at www.waternsw.com.au/customer-service/trading/murrumbidgee for information about the Murrumbidgee IVT account balance and status of trade.

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www.water.nsw.gov.au

Next announcements

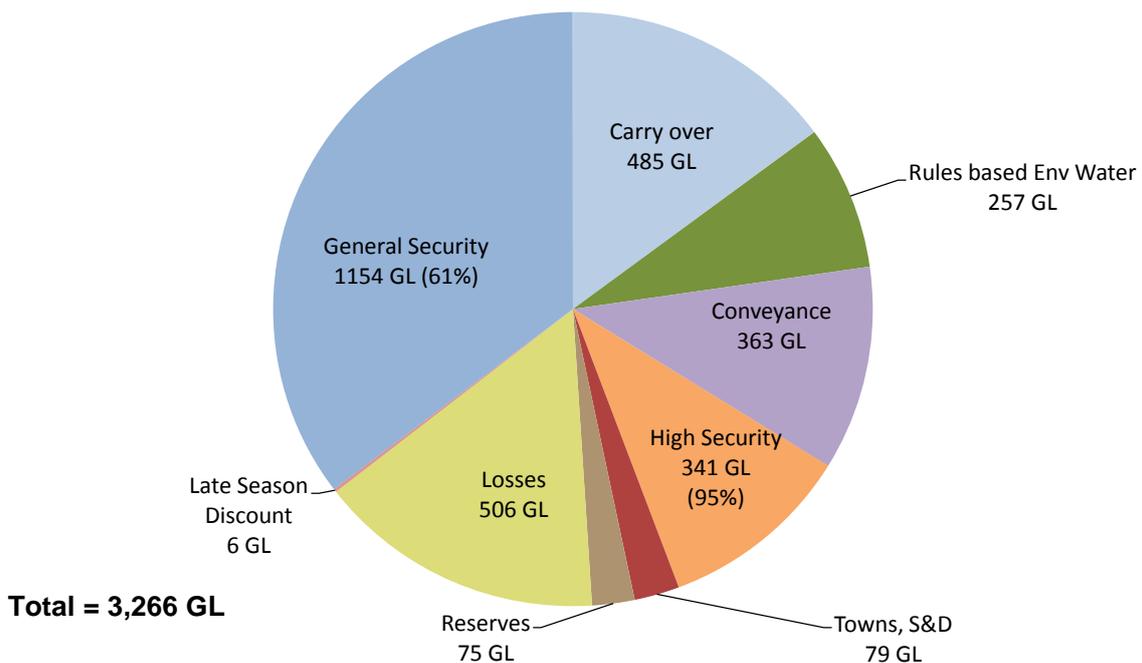
The next resource assessment and allocation update for the Murrumbidgee regulated valley will be on **Tuesday 4 October 2016**. The additional detailed information including an update of the attached rocket diagram will be issued on Monday 17 October 2016.

Murrumbidgee Resource Assessment Data Sheet

Resource Distribution (as at 15 September) for 2016-17	
	Volume (GL)
Total Available Resource ⁽¹⁾	3,266
less	
Carryover (incl. Murrumbidgee IVT carryover)	485
Rules based Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	257
Towns, Stock, Domestic	79 (100%)
Reserves ⁽³⁾	75
Conveyance ⁽⁴⁾	363
Announced High Security	341 (95%)
Announced General Security	1,154 (61%)
Losses (transmission, evaporation, operational) ⁽⁵⁾	506
Late Season Discount ⁽⁶⁾	6

**See notes below.*

**Resource Distribution 2016-17
Murrumbidgee Valley - 15 September 2016**



Notes

- (1) Total available resource – total active storage volume (Blowering & Burrinjuck Dams) at the time of assessment plus any usable flows in transit plus assumed drought inflows for rest of the year plus Snowy Hydro’s assured Required Annual Release (RAR) plus usage to date.
- (2) Rules-based environmental water – water required to be set aside under the water sharing plan to provide for riverine environments. Includes end-of-system flow requirements (currently 138 GL) and environmental water allowances (EWA1, EWA2 & EWA3). Excludes ‘licence-based’ environmental water. Water in EWA1 account (50 GL) carried over from the previous year has been reduced by 50% to 25 GL due to spills from the Burrinjuck dam in accordance with the water sharing plan. Total environmental water allowances (EWA1 & EWA2) currently hold 118 GL. As water availability grows beyond 80 percent, crediting the EWA3 and the Provisional Storage Volume (PSV1) account is required.
- (3) Reserves – required under water sharing plans, and mainly used for emergency purposes and critical needs. Includes 25 GL per dam plus Provisional Storage Volumes (PSV1 & PSV2) balances. As general security allocations plus carryover water from the previous year have reached 60% and a provision has been made for the EWA1 (50 GL), 25 GL has also been credited to provisional storage volume (PSV1).
- (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 plan 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 year. This includes storage evaporation, transmission losses and operational loss. This estimate is regularly updated as the year unfolds.
- (6) Late Season Discount – is the estimated inflow volume that will arrive into storage after the peak irrigation demand season (usually post-February). This Late Season Discount cannot be sustainably allocated to water users at the start of the water year otherwise there could be an expectation that the water is available for use before it has arrived in storage.

Murrumbidgee Resource Assessment – Comparison with this time last year

Item		15 Sep 2015 (GL)	15 Sep 2016 (GL)	Comments
Storage Volume (GL)	Burrinjuck	750	1,013	Substantial Inflows this year
	Blowering	800	1,383	High natural inflows this year
	Total	1,550	2,396	Higher storage levels this year
Transmission Losses**		549	506	Reduced losses for 2016
1 July IVT carryover balance		11	100	Current IVT balance 100 GL
Late Season Inflows		126	6	No storage imbalance forecast
GS Available		27%	61%	Above average rainfall
Average GS Carry Over		23%	19%	Similar

*SHL = Snowy Hydro Limited ** Includes assumed loss from downstream of storages along the entire river length

Chances of improvement

The chances of improved inflows conditions and increased allocations are as follows:

Forecast General Security allocation (per cent)

MURRUMBIDGEE Potential Inflow Conditions #	Forecast 1 November General Security Allocations *	Forecast 1 February General Security Allocations *
Current allocation (99% inflows)	61	61
9 chances in 10 (very dry) (90%)	61	61
3 chances in 4 (dry) (75%)	62	66
1 chance in 2 (average) (50%)	63	76
1 chance in 4 (wet) (25%)	64	100

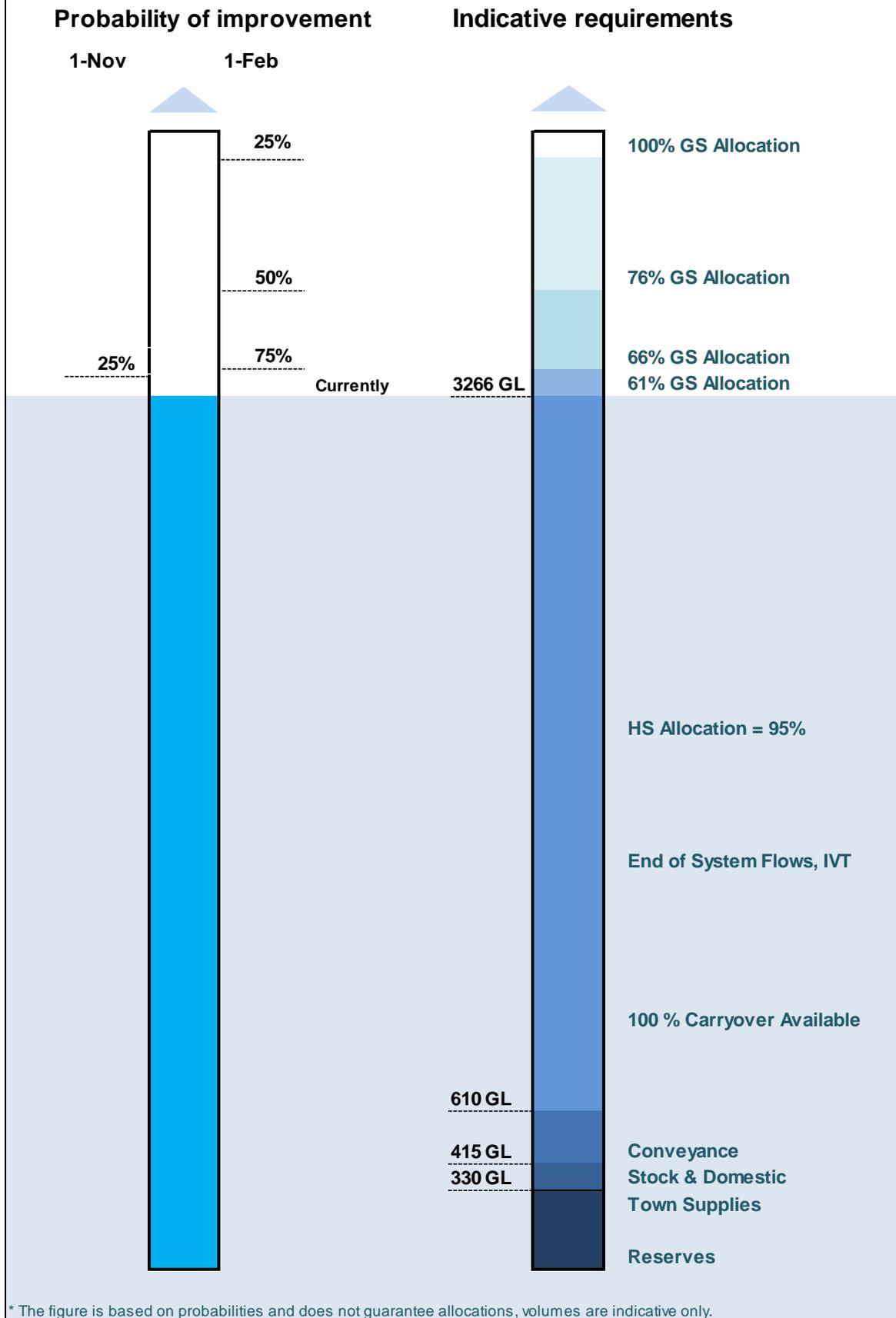
Using all years of inflow records.

* Licence holders can add individual carryover to the relevant percentage.

** Under wetter conditions when allocation plus carryover reaches 80%, the water sharing plan requires crediting of bulk water accounts (EWAs and PSVs), which slows the continued rise in general security allocation.

NSW Murrumbidgee Valley Outlook

As at 15 September 2016



* The figure is based on probabilities and does not guarantee allocations, volumes are indicative only.