



3 September 2015

Lachlan Valley: Water availability and allocation update

Allocations

Lachlan Regulated River general security water users have received an increase in their available water determination of 0.16ML per unit share equivalent to 16 per cent of entitlement.

This available water determination follows a 0.4 ML per unit share or four per cent increase for general security water users received in August.

Wyangala Dam received 186,000 megalitres of inflow during the month of August, boosting total inflows so far this water year to more than 300,000 megalitres.

Overall water availability, which includes water carried over from previous years, has increased to 50 per cent of general security entitlement on average.

This assessment reserves sufficient water in storage to deliver local water utility, domestic and stock and high security needs through a repeat of the lowest inflows on record prior to water sharing plan commencement in 2004.

Wyangala Dam currently holds approximately 738,000 megalitres, or 61 per cent of capacity, having risen from 46 per cent since the start of August.

Outlook

Flow recessions from this current event mean that only minor additional inflows are required to make further Available Water Determinations (AWDs) in October.

DPI Water has updated the outlook and probabilities for the Lachlan regulated river valley for the 2015/16 water year.

Key facts

- The sum of general security available water determinations is now **20 per cent** of entitlement for 2015/16.
- Delivery of **full allocations to high priority requirements** in 2015/16 is assured.
- Domestic & stock replenishment flows to effluent creeks for 2015 will be completed by early September, with final deliveries currently in transit. Delivery in 2016 will largely rely on the timing of rainfall and tributary flows but will be released from storage if required.
- The **annual use limit** for general security licence holders in the 2015/16 water year is **100 per cent of entitlement**.
- **Translucent flows** were triggered by recent inflows, however dam releases were only required **after** the peak had passed.

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Dam levels

- Wyangala Dam is currently at 61 percent of storage capacity, holding 738,000 megalitres.
- The storage volume has increased from a low in late-May of 36 per cent or 440,000 megalitres.

Outlook

- Additional general security allocations rely on future inflows, however forecast recessions from the current event mean that only minor additional inflows are required to make a new allocation in October.
- The Bureau of Meteorology has **forecast 55 per cent** chance of median rainfall being exceeded in the region during the September to November period.
- The influence of a firming El Niño event in the tropical Pacific in the current outlook is moderated by record warm sea surface temperatures in the Indian Ocean.

Scenarios

The expected water availability under different climatic conditions is outlined below:

| Conditions | 2015/16 General security AWD |
|----------------------|--|
| Extremely dry | AWD (20% plus 2015/16 opening account balance) |
| Dry | AWD (20% plus 2015/16 opening account balance) |
| Median | AWD (24% plus 2015/16 opening account balance by 31 October rising to 27% plus 2015/16 opening account balance by 31 January 2016) |
| Wet | AWD (46% plus 2015/16 opening account balance by 31 October rising to 57% plus 2015/16 opening account balance by 31 January 2016) |

DPI Water will provide the next water outlook update by December 2015.

Further information

DPI Water will continue to closely monitor the situation and may make subsequent available water determinations as further water becomes available.

Information on Available Water Determinations and water sharing plans is available on the DPI Water website - www.water.nsw.gov.au