

5 May 2023

Lachlan Regulated River Water Source

Water availability and allocation update

Lachlan storages have filled and effectively spilled (pre-release). Being six months since the last account reset, Clause 45(3) of the Water Sharing Plan has again been triggered, resulting in the following adjustment to accounts:

- All balances remaining in general security accounts, conveyance accounts and spillable high security sub-accounts are **withdrawn**.
- After the withdrawal of existing balances, all general security accounts have been **equalised** with a **new allocation of 118% of entitlement**.
- After the withdrawal of existing balances, conveyance accounts have been **equalised** with a **new allocation of 100% of entitlement**.

This assessment ensures full higher priority needs to May 2025, contingent on assumed minimum inflows occurring.

The reset is less than the maximum 136%, due to the time of year and therefore the assumed future inflow sequence, and temporarily reduced downstream storage capacity. Nevertheless, resource assessments will continue monthly, the next one in June and any future available resource for regulated use greater will be announced.

Water users are advised to note the following:

- That those orders for which releases were made from storages prior to the reset date will be debited from the account balances prior to the reset being applied, even though the water may not be extracted prior to reset. However, any water released after the reset will be treated as post account reset.
- There will be **no further reset** in the next 6 months, that is before 5 November 2023.
- The annual use limit of 100% of entitlement for general security licence holders will **not be reset** and applies for the 2022/23 water year, plus any adjustments for trade.

Current allocation

2022/23	High Security	General Security
Lachlan Regulated River	100%	118%*

* Reset value

Storage levels (as of 5 May 2023)

- Wyangala Dam is about 100% full - holding around 1,221 gigalitres (GL).
- Lake Cargelligo is about 55%* full - holding around 23 GL.
- Lake Brewster is about 76%* full - holding about 110 GL. (27 March 2023).

* based on their original maximum capacities.

Key information

- Lake Cargelligo storage drawdown commenced in April under the dam safety embankment project. The project is expected to be complete by the end of September. Hence, the revised Lake Cargelligo maximum storage capacity remains 50% until the project is complete.
- The department has deemed Lake Brewster full when it reaches its (reduced) maximum safe level of 116 GL, until repair work enables it to safely hold more water.
- About 2,800 ML of Water Quality Allowance (WQA) was released from Wyangala Dam in April for water quality at Cowra.

Resource outlook for 2023/24

This outlook for the likely 1 July 2023 water availability is based on several assumptions. Water users are advised that these forecast allocations are not certain, may change and should be used with caution.

- Water for all critical consumptive and non-consumptive needs including local water utility licences, are secure to May 2025.
- Higher priority water access licence holders including **local water utility, stock and domestic**, and **high security** can expect their maximum (100%) allocations on 1 July 2023.
- Water held in general security accounts accrues on a continuous basis and is carried forward into new water year. The maximum volume that may be held in account at any time is 2.0 megalitres (ML)/unit share.
- **General security** users can expect full access to their carried over account water, but no new allocation will be announced on 1 July. Instead, the usual monthly resource assessment will continue, commencing in early July, and any new allocation will be announced in the routine allocation statements throughout 2023/24.
- General security carryover is expected to be over 50% of entitlement, therefore both the Wyangala and Brewster **Environmental Water Allowances** will be allocated 10 GL each. The water quality allowance (WQA) will be allocated 20 GL in accordance with the water sharing plan.

Indicative general security allocation after an account reset

This statement is including an estimate of the likely general security allocation after accounts are reset at different months of the year as requested by stakeholders.

The department has produced a table showing the likely post-reset allocation range at four given months, reflecting the uncertainty. Precise general security allocation post-reset at a given month cannot be determined for the following reasons.

- Total available resource may be lower than the summation of the full capacities of three storages. A storage may be deemed full at a reduced level for safety or other reasons.
- The higher priority accounts and planned environmental water are not withdrawn prior to reset. Their balance may vary between years for the same month. This in turn varies the surplus water available for allocation to general security users.

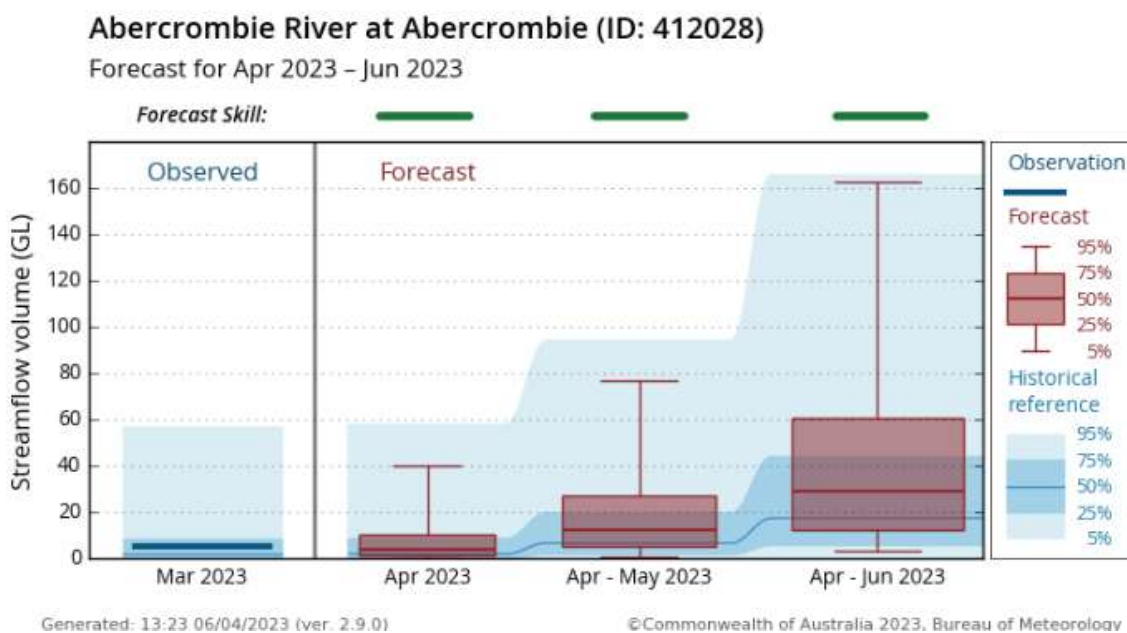
Re-set announcement month	Upper limit	Lower limit
1 st Mar	120%	115%
1 st June	130%	125%
1 st Sep	125%	115%
1 st Dec	115%	105%

Seasonal climate and streamflow outlooks

The Bureau of Meteorology’s seasonal outlook for May to July indicates that rainfall will likely be below median across the catchment. Daytime temperatures are likely to be warmer than the median. Overnight temperatures show no clear indication of either cooler than median or warmer than median conditions over the next three months for the catchment.

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

The Bureau of Meteorology also issues a seasonal flow forecast for the Abercrombie River that drains into Wyangala Dam (see the figure below). This provides a forecast of potential storage inflows. All except one, forecast quantiles of total flow volumes from April to June are higher than the historical flows, indicating flows to June are likely to be higher than historical over this period. The graph to June 2023 is shown below, and updates can be found at: www.bom.gov.au/water/ssf/#id=412028.



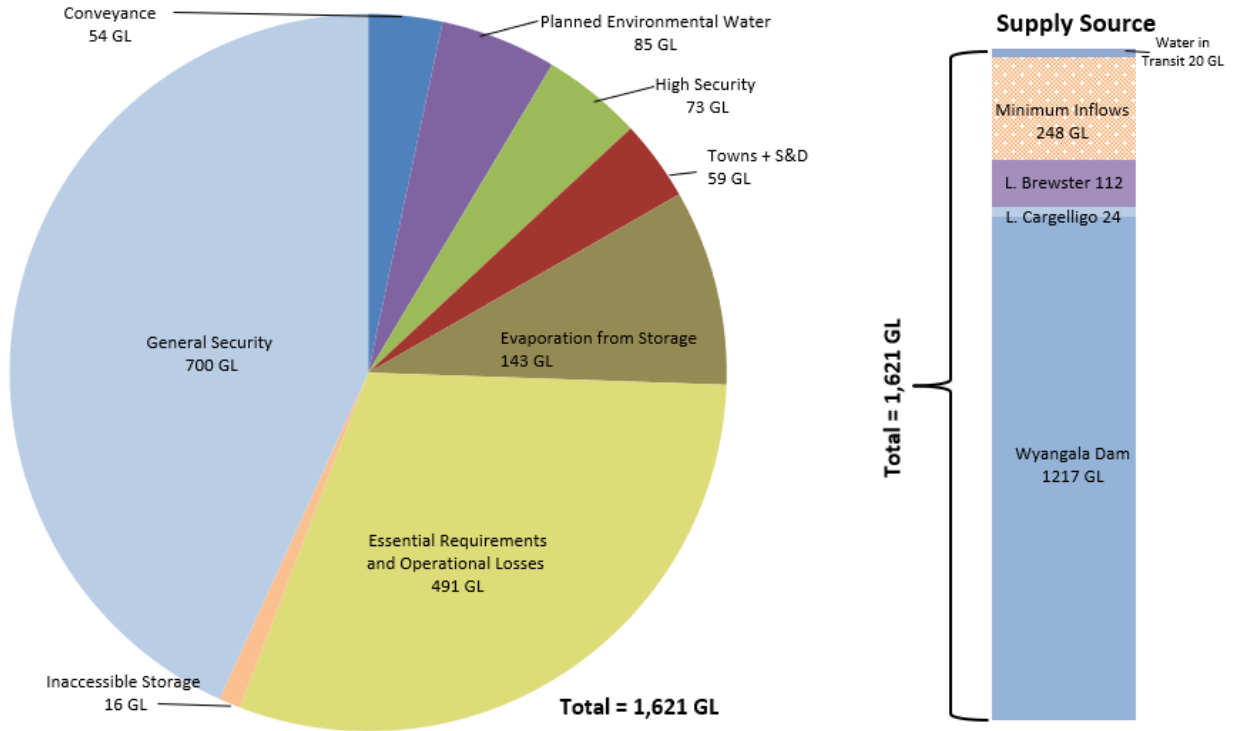
Lachlan resource assessment data sheet

Resource Distribution (May 2023 to May 2025)	Volume (GL)
Current and Future Resources ⁽¹⁾	1,621
<i>less</i>	
General Security account balance ⁽⁶⁾	700
Conveyance	54
Planned Environmental Water ⁽²⁾	85
High Security ^{(3) (6)}	73
Towns, Stock, Domestic ⁽³⁾	59
Evaporation from storage ⁽⁴⁾	143
Essential Requirements and Losses ⁽⁵⁾	491
Inaccessible storage	16
<i>equals</i>	
Surplus (or deficit) ⁽⁷⁾	0

Notes:

- (1) End of April 2023 storage volume in Wyangala Dam, Lake Cargelligo, and Lake Brewster, and the planned minimum storage inflows and tributary flows from May 2023 to May 2025 and flows in transit.
- (2) Water allocated to the Water Quality Allowance (WQA) and the Environmental Water Allowances (EWA). The volume is composed of 15 GL remaining balance for the 2022/23 water year, 40 GL reserve for the 2023/24 water year and 30 GL reserve for the 2024/25 water year.
- (3) Towns, Stock, Domestic and High Security reserves, these are set aside to deliver current year balances and to meet full allocation for these licences in the 2023/24 water year and the 2024/25 water year. Balances in high security accounts also include any water traded from general security licences.
- (4) Evaporation loss from the three storages is based on forecast storage levels over the assessment period.
- (5) Essential requirements include basic rights, end of system flows, losses and any replenishment deliveries required. The loss budget (transmission and operational) is based on the best estimate of the volume required to run the river under dry conditions through to May 2025. This mostly consists of natural transmission losses as water soaks into riverbed sands. The loss allowance is updated regularly.
- (6) The reporting of HEW is indicative only, prior to reconciliation of usage and net trade, and is estimated to be about 146 GL of GS. These reported entitlements are managed by agencies holding environmental water accounts. They include the NSW Department of Planning and Environment - Environment and Heritage (EHG) and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder (CEWH).
- (7) All available water resources have been fully allocated, and there is no deficit. All commitments are considered deliverable, and the system is secure to May 2025 and beyond.

Resource Distribution as at 30 April 2023
Lachlan Regulated River Water Source



Allocations in 2022/23 for the Lachlan River regulated system

Date	License Category	Increment	Total 2022/23	Average Account Balance
1-Jul	Domestic & Stock	100%	100%*	100%*
1-Jul	Local Water Utility	100%	100%*	100%*
1-Jul	High Security	1.00 ML/unit share*	1.00 ML/unit share*	100%*
1-Jul	Conveyance	1.00 ML/unit share*	1.00 ML/unit share*	100%*
1-Jul	General Security	0.00 ML/unit share	0.00 ML/unit share	124%
28-Sep	Conveyance	1.00 ML/unit share*#	1.00 ML/unit share*#	100%*#
28-Sep	General Security	1.15 ML/unit share#	1.15 ML/unit share#	115%#
05-May	Conveyance	1.00 ML/unit share*#	1.00 ML/unit share*#	100%*#
05-May	General Security	1.18 ML/unit share#	1.18 ML/unit share#	118%#

*Maximum allowable

#Following an account equalisation and reset due to dam spill

Water allocation guide

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment – Water has published a series of guides to describe the water allocation methods for most NSW regulated river systems. The guide for the Lachlan regulated river water source is available at:

www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water/allocations-availability/allocations/how-water-is-allocated/resource-assessment-process

Further information

The next routine water allocation announcement for the Lachlan Regulated River Water Source will be issued on **Thursday 8 June 2023**. This 5 May 2023 ‘reset’ statement replaces the statement that was scheduled for Monday 8 May 2023.

Information on available water determinations and water sharing plans is available on the department’s website: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/water

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