

1 July 2024

Opening Water Allocations 2024 – NSW Regulated Rivers

Water availability and allocation update

The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water today announced opening water allocations for regulated river water users for the 2024/25 water year.

Opening Allocation 2024/25

All critical environmental and human needs are secure for the 2024/25 water year. All town supplies, domestic and stock water users have received their maximum (100%) allocation.

Opening allocations (1 July) are mostly about ensuring license categories that cannot carryover water in accounts from one water year to the next are provided with a new annual allocation. Resource assessments and allocations for others including general security water users will continue as usual with end-of-month (June) resource assessments undertaken and allocation statements provide in the first weeks of July.

All regulated river high security license holders have received their usual full opening allocation, including 97% in the NSW Murray, 95% in the Murrumbidgee, and 100% elsewhere.

General security water users on all regulated coastal rivers, except the Bega-Brogo system, have received their maximum 100% allocation. Inland, all water users on Upper Namoi and Lower Darling water sources also received their maximum 100% allocation. General security water users have full access to allowable carryover water in accordance with respective water sharing plan rules.

All floodplain harvesting licenses have received their maximum opening allocation and full allocation is provided to supplementary access license holders in all applicable river systems, except for those in the Lower Namoi water source. They receive a reduced allocation of 0.42 ML/unit share due to exceedance of long-term extraction limits and the need to reduce take. Use of water in supplementary access accounts is only available during periods of announced supplementary flow.

Water allocation statements for major inland regulated river systems are published at least monthly and placed on the department's website for public viewing. The statements explain the latest information on the sharing of available resources. Valley-specific opening allocations are detailed in the Table 1 below. Also, all allocations can be found on the department's Allocations dashboard at:

<https://water.dpie.nsw.gov.au/our-work/allocations-availability/allocations/allocations-dashboard>

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Recap on Last Water Year (2023/24)

Over the past 12 months, the southern part of the state has received average rainfall, while the northern part has largely been below-average rainfall. These conditions have contributed to the maintenance of healthy dam levels. The year began with major irrigation dams holding more than 90% of their full storage capacity on average but have decreased now to average about 75% full.

Last year started with all town water supplies, and domestic and stock water users, and high security licence holders receiving full allocation. General security water users in all water sources received good access to water with many having full or near full account balances.

By the end of 2023/24, water users on all coastal rivers (except Bega-Brogo) had received their maximum allocation. Similarly, water users on inland rivers enjoyed exceptional water availability with many receiving their maximum allocation or reaching their maximum account balance.

Supplementary access licence holders received full allocations in all applicable river systems in 2023/24, except for those in the Lower Namoi water source which received a reduced allocation of 0.36 ML/unit share in response to exceedance of long-term extraction limits.

All floodplain harvesting licence holders, where licences exist (Border Rivers, Gwydir, Macquarie, Barwon-Darling), received their maximum allocation for 2023/24.

A new planned environmental water rule came into effect from 1 July 2023 called the Cudgegong Environmental Water Allowance with an opening balance of 18.6 GL. In the Lachlan Regulated River, relevant general security account balances were reduced for the first time for estimated evaporation losses.

Allocations in 2024/25 for Regulated River Valleys

NSW Border Rivers regulated river

- All higher priority license holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security (A class) license holders have received an allocation of 10% of their entitlement.
- General security (B class) license holders can receive allocation once A Class is full (100%).
- In the meantime, water remaining in general security (A class and B class) accounts has been carried forward in full. The maximum volume that may be held at any time is 1.0 ML/share.
- Supplementary and floodplain harvesting licenses received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Inflows up to 200 ML/day into Pindari Dam will be passed through during winter months in accordance with environmental flow rules in the water sharing plan.
- Allocations to general security accounts will be assessed and announced in routine water allocation statements during the 2024/25 water year.

Gwydir regulated river

- All license holders, except general security, have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Water held in general security accounts accrues on a continuous basis and has been carried forward in full. The maximum volume allowed at any time is 1.5 ML/share.
- The estimated opening general security account balance totals 458 giganlitres (GL) or 91% of total share components. Of this, held environmental water comprises about 152 GL.
- Supplementary and floodplain harvesting licenses received the maximum (100%) allocation.
- Allocation to general security accounts will be assessed and announced at the next routine water allocation statement scheduled for publication on Friday 5 July 2024.

Upper and Lower Namoi regulated rivers

- All higher priority license holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security license holders in the Upper Namoi water source have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Water held in Lower Namoi general security accounts accrues on a continuous basis and have been carried forward in full. The maximum volume that may be held in Lower Namoi general security accounts at any time is 2 ML/share.
- The estimated opening Lower Namoi general security account balance totals 308 GL which is 126% of total share components.
- Supplementary access license holders have received a reduced allocation of 0.42 ML/unit share as result of implementation of growth-in-use measures.
- Allocation to Lower Namoi general security accounts will be assessed and announced at the next routine water allocation statement scheduled for publication on Friday 5 July 2024.

Peel regulated river

- All higher priority license holders have received their maximum (100%) allocations.
- General security license holders have received 60% allocation, with commensurate volume allocated to environmental water allowance (EWA). Further resource assessments and allocation announcements will be made in 2024/25 for these less-than-full general security allocations.
- All categories of licenses in this water source are accounted on an annual basis. The remaining account balances from 2023/24 were forfeited at 30 June 2024.
- The next water allocation statement will be published in August 2024, or earlier if storage levels or stream flow conditions change significantly.

Macquarie and Cudgegong regulated rivers

- All higher priority license holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Supplementary and floodplain harvesting licenses received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- The opening balances of Cudgegong and Macquarie EWAs are estimated to be 16 GL and 102 GL.
- The water carried over into 2024/25 by general security water users on the Macquarie River is estimated to be about 85% of entitlement, and on the Cudgegong River about 107%.
- Allocation to general security accounts will be assessed and announced at the next routine water allocation statement scheduled for publication on Wednesday 10 July 2024.

Lachlan regulated river

- All higher priority licenses including towns, domestic, stock, and high security entitlements have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Conveyance license holders have received their full (100%) allocation.
- Wyangala and Brewster Environmental Water Allowances are allocated 10 GL each. The water quality allowance (WQA) is allocated 20 GL in accordance with the water sharing plan.
- Carryover evaporation reductions will occur in accordance with the water sharing plan.
- The water carried into 2024/25 by general security water users is estimated to total 646 GL or about 109% of total share components and is fully deliverable.
- Allocation to general security accounts will be assessed and announced at the next routine water allocation statement scheduled for publication on Monday, 8 July 2024.
- The trigger is set for the reset of accounts on spillage from a full system as it is now more than 6 months since the last reset occurred.

Belubula regulated river

- All higher priority license holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Water held in general security accounts has been carried forward subject to the rules of the water sharing plan.

- Water carried into 2024/25 by general security license holders is estimated to total 23.48 GL or 105% of total shares. Note that the maximum account limit is 110% of entitlement.
- Beyond carryover, there is currently insufficient resource in the regulated system for an opening allocation to general security licenses.
- Supplementary access license holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- The next water allocation statement will be published in August 2024, or earlier if storage levels or stream flow conditions change significantly.

Murrumbidgee regulated river

- All higher priority license holders, including domestic and stock, local water utilities, and sub-category high security water access licenses, have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- High security license holders have received their full (95%) opening allocation.
- Supplementary access licenses (including Lowbidgee) receive their maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security and conveyance carryover is anticipated to be near maximum, some 650 GL in total (or 30% of total shares, except Snowy Savings entitlements), and is fully deliverable.
- General security licenses are commencing the 2024/25 water year with a 28% allocation.
- Conveyance license holders have received an allocation in accordance with the water sharing plan and commensurate with the announced general security allocation.
- The Murrumbidgee inter valley trade (IVT) account balance on 30 June 2024 has been carried forward to 2024/25. The balance in early 2024/25 is likely to be about 80 – 90 GL.
- Regular fortnightly water allocation statements will commence on Monday 15 July 2024.

NSW Murray regulated river

- All higher priority license holders, including domestic and stock, local water utilities, and sub-category high security water access licenses, have received their maximum (100%) allocations.
- High security license holders have received their full (97%) opening allocation.
- General security carryover into the 2024/25 water year is anticipated to total nearly 837 GL, approaching the maximum 50% of total general security share components.
- General security licenses received a 35% opening allocation for the 2024/25 water year.
- Conveyance licenses received an allocation commensurate with the general security allocation.
- Supplementary access license holders have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- With general security opening with an allocation higher than 30%, no borrow from the Barmah-Millewa EWA will be necessary in 2024/25. The current account balance of BMEWA is 93.5 GL and is fully available. An additional 56 GL of new credit is expected on 1 July and is set aside in the resource assessment. Volumes will be confirmed early in the new water year.
- The Barmah Choke trade balance will be re-set on 1 July to reflect the volume of annual Snowy Savings below the choke that will not need to be delivered downstream.

- The Murrumbidgee inter valley trade (IVT) account balance on 30 June 2024 has been carried forward to 2024/25. The balance in early 2024/25 is likely to be about 80 – 90 GL and is callable resource for the NSW Murray.
- Regular fortnightly water allocation statements will commence on Monday 15 July 2024.

Lower Darling regulated river

- All water access license holders, including domestic and stock, local water utility, high security, general security and supplementary have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Following the full allocation provided to general security entitlements, carryover in accounts can be viewed as spilled and replaced by new allocations by virtue of the 100% account limit.
- The Menindee Lakes System is expected to fall slowly in coming months, from its current position holding just over 1,000 GL or around 60% full.
- The Menindee resource remains shared with other states, under the Murray Darling Basin Agreement, while it holds more than 640 GL. It will remain a shared resource until total storage next falls below 480 GL.
- Water trade to and from the regulated Lower Darling water source is open. Trade within the Lower Darling water source is also permitted.
- Regular fortnightly water allocation statements will commence on Monday 15 July 2024.

Bega Brogo regulated river

- All higher priority licenses including town, domestic, stock, and high security have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- General security licenses have received a 40% allocation, plus these license holders can access uncontrolled flows when available to augment their allocation, up to a maximum 100% of entitlement. Note that the small storage capacity of Brogo Dam cannot support a high general security allocation at the start of the water year even when the storage is full.
- There is no carry over allowed for general security entitlements in this water source.
- Supplementary access licenses have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- The next resource assessment and water allocation statement will be published in August 2024 or earlier if conditions or forecasts change significantly.

Hunter regulated river

- All higher priority license holders including major utility, local water utility, domestic, stock, and high security, have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- Environmental water allowance (EWA) has been credited with its maximum 20 GL volume.
- General security license holders have also received their maximum (100%) allocation.

- Unused water in applicable license categories has been carried forward into the 2024/25 water year, subject to allowable limits and maximum account balance rules in the water sharing plan.
- Supplementary access licenses have received full opening allocation of 100%. This may increase to a maximum 200% during the water year based on river flows (and the High Flow Tally).
- As all license categories have received their maximum allocation, water allocation statements will be published quarterly, as information updates only, during the 2024/25 water year or more frequently if the resource situation or outlook changes significantly.

Paterson regulated river

- All water access license categories, including for towns, domestic, stock, high security, general security, and supplementary access purposes, have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- As all license categories have received their maximum allocation, water allocation statements will be published quarterly, as information updates only, during the 2024/25 water year or more frequently if the resource situation or outlook changes significantly.

Richmond regulated river

- All water access license categories, including for domestic, stock, high security and general security purposes, have received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- All license categories in this water source are accounted on an annual basis and have no carry provisions. It means that remaining account balances on 30 June 2024 have been forfeited and replaced with new (full) allocations.
- As all license categories have received their maximum allocation, water allocation statements will be published quarterly, as information updates only, during the 2024/25 water year or more frequently if the resource situation or outlook changes significantly.

Tabulation of 1 July 2024 Regulated River Water Allocations

Water Sources	Categories	Amount
BEGA AND BROGO REGULATED RIVERS WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.4 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100 %
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
BELUBULA REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
NSW BORDER RIVERS REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100 %
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100 %
	FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING (REGULATED RIVER)	1 ML/share
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100 %
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY A)	0.1 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY B)	0 ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1 ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1 ML/share
	GWYDIR REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK
DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]		100 %

	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING (REGULATED RIVER)	1	ML/share
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100	%
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1	ML/share
HUNTER REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	MAJOR UTILITY [POWER GENERATION]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1	ML/share
LACHLAN REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (CONVEYANCE)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
LOWER NAMOI REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share

	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100	%
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	0.42	ML/share
LOWER DARLING REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1	ML/share
MACQUARIE AND CUDGEGONG REGULATED RIVERS WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	FLOODPLAIN HARVESTING (REGULATED RIVER)	1	ML/share
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100	%
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1	ML/share
MURRUMBIDGEE REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	COLEAMBALLY IRRIGATION (CONVEYANCE)	0.8585	ML/share
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	MURRUMBIDGEE IRRIGATION (CONVEYANCE)	0.7179	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (CONVEYANCE)	0.28	ML/share

	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.28	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	0.95	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [ABORIGINAL CULTURAL]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [ENVIRONMENTAL]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100	%
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1	ML/share
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER (LOWBIDGEE)	1	ML/share
NEW SOUTH WALES MURRAY REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY [DOMESTIC AND COMMERCIAL]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (CONVEYANCE)	0.6359	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.35	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	0.97	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [COMMUNITY AND EDUCATION]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100	%
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1	ML/share
PATERSON REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%

	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [TOWN WATER SUPPLY]	100	%
	SUPPLEMENTARY WATER	1	ML/share
PEEL REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	0.6	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY) [RESEARCH]	100	%
RICHMOND REGULATED WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share
UPPER NAMOI REGULATED RIVER WATER SOURCE	DOMESTIC AND STOCK	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [DOMESTIC]	100	%
	DOMESTIC AND STOCK [STOCK]	100	%
	LOCAL WATER UTILITY	100	%
	REGULATED RIVER (GENERAL SECURITY)	1	ML/share
	REGULATED RIVER (HIGH SECURITY)	1	ML/share

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