

15 July 2026

NSW Murray and Lower Darling Regulated Rivers

NSW Murray general security increment of 5%

General security	2026–27 allocation	Account balance
NSW Murray	5%	30% (496 GL)
Lower Darling	-	32% (25 GL)

Key information

- NSW Murray conveyance entitlements have also received an allocation increment commensurate to the general security (GS) allocation increase.
- There is no change to Lower Darling allocations this assessment. Lower Darling GS users received 30% allocation on 1 July 2026, and opportunities for further allocation will be monitored as the water year progresses.
- All higher-priority licences in both water sources received their full opening allocation on 1 July 2026. Supplementary access licences received their maximum (100%) allocation.
- The Barmah–Millewa Environmental Water Allowance (EWA) carried over 172 GL on 1 July 2026, which remains fully borrowed to support GS allocations, as per the water sharing plan rules.
- The improvement in resources comes mostly from the significant rainfall event in late June and early July.
- This assessment is based on NSW's share of storage volumes as of the end of June and observed inflows up to 8 July 2026. It also includes a conservative projection of inflows for the rest of July, tapering from observed rates towards minimum inflows. It then assumes minimum inflows for August to May. For Menindee, 1 GL of inflows are assumed for June, and no inflows are considered for the rest of the 2026–27 water year.

Next statement

The next water allocation statement for these water sources will be published on
Monday 3 August 2026 at 2:30 pm.

Summary of the last water year (2025–26)

At the start of the 2025–26 water year, all higher-priority licences including local water utility, domestic and stock, and high security entitlements, received their full opening allocations. For most, this represented their maximum (100%) allocation. NSW Murray high security entitlements without a subcategory received their full opening (97%) allocation. For the first time since 2021–22, available resources were insufficient to increase allocations to these entitlements to 100% by year end.

Supplementary licence holders also received their maximum (100%) opening allocation on 1 July 2025. However, no supplementary access announcements were made during the year, and no supplementary water was used.

General security (GS) licence holders in the NSW Murray began the water year with an average account balance of 32% of entitlement, comprising 31% carryover and a 1% opening allocation. Seven allocation increases during the year lifted allocations to 22% by 15 April 2026. By year end, the average GS account balance had declined to 25% of entitlement (412 GL), reflecting water use of around 34% of entitlement.

The Murray system received below-average inflows across the water year. Combined NSW storage in Dartmouth and Hume dams, began the year at 54% capacity, peaked at 65% in October, declined to around 45% at the end of the irrigation season, then recovered following late season rainfall in June to finish the water year at 53%.

Lower Darling GS licence holders began the water year with maximum (100%) opening allocation. By year end, average account balances had fallen to just 2%, reflecting high water use of about 98% of entitlement. The Barwon–Darling (Baawan–Baaka) River flowed for a strong portion of 2025–26, with high inflows to the Menindee Lakes system early in the year, with the combined capacity peaking at nearly 90% in October 2025. Inflows then declined, leaving the lakes at around 30% capacity by year end. A Section 324 Order was implemented to protect inflows and ensure critical human water needs and environmental requirements could be met in the upper Menindee Lakes system following an extended dry period.

Regarding planned environmental water, the Lower Darling EWA received maximum (30 GL) credit on 1 July 2025. The Murray Additional Allowance received a 6 GL credit on 1 July 2025 which was fully used over the water year. River Murray Increased Flows (RMIF) of 40.5 GL were delivered during the water year. The Barmah-Millewa Allowance increased from 132 GL to 172 GL during the year but remained fully borrowed as NSW Murray GS allocations stayed below 30%.

NSW Murray resource assessment data sheet

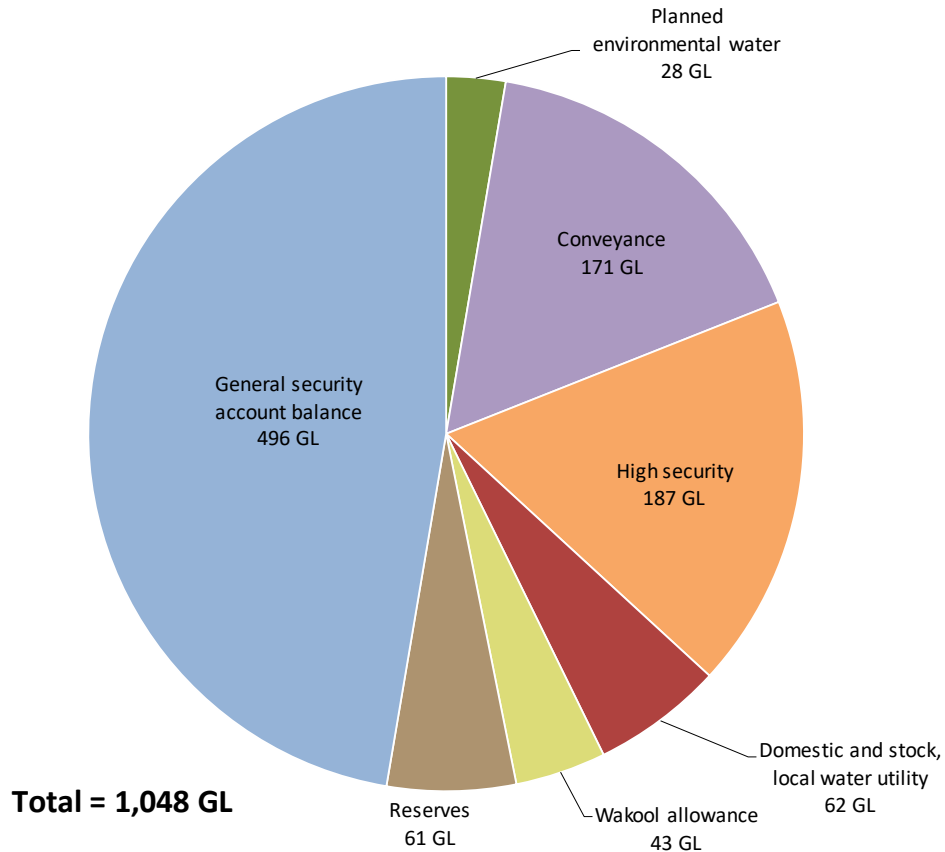
Resource distribution (as of 15 July 2026)	Volume (GL)
Available resource for allocation	1,063
Storage volumes NSW share ⁽¹⁾	1,625
Future resources ⁽²⁾	1,085
less overheads and SA commitments ⁽³⁾	(1,647)
<i>less</i>	
Planned environmental water ⁽⁴⁾	28
Domestic and stock, local water utility balance ⁽⁵⁾	62
High security balance ⁽⁵⁾	187
Conveyance balance ⁽⁵⁾	171
General security balance ⁽⁶⁾	496
Wakool allowance ⁽⁷⁾	43
Critical human water needs ⁽⁸⁾	61
Higher-priority reserve (2027–28) ⁽⁹⁾	0
<i>equals</i>	
Surplus (or deficit) ⁽¹⁰⁾	15

Notes:

- (1) The NSW share of active storage volume in Hume, Dartmouth, Menindee and Lake Victoria as of 30/6/2026.
- (2) Budgeted minimum inflows (07/1914 to 05/1915); plus inflow to date (1 to 8/7/2026); plus conservative estimates of inflow recessions (9 to 30/7/2026); plus any usable flows in transit; plus water from inter valley trade; plus expected regulated inflow from Snowy Hydro till 30/4/2027; plus drought reserve held in Snowy.
- (3) Budgeted evaporation and transmission loss; plus SA's entitlements & dilution flow; plus conveyance reserve; plus Menindee commitments; plus NS Active Environmental Water (9.2 GL).
- (4) The volume includes 6 GL of Murray Additional Allowance (MAA), 0 GL of Barmah-Millewa Allowance (B-MA), 22 GL of River Murray Increased Flows (RMIF). The total commitments to MAA, B-MA and RMIF will decrease over the water year as they are released from Hume. The balance of B-MA is 172 GL as of 30/6/2026 which has been fully borrowed and will be paid back from future inflows after GS allocations reach 30%.
- (5) Account balance remaining in higher-priorities and conveyance licence categories.
- (6) General security accounts balance as of 1/7/2026. This includes carried over volume from last water year, plus any new allocation, plus any trade adjustments, minus usage to date. For information, about 412 GL (25%) was carried over on 1/7/2026. This figure is provisional and will be revised following account reconciliation.
- (7) Wakool allowance – a conveyance volume necessary for NSW to operate the Edward-Wakool system. The annual budget to deliver the potential maximum allocation to the water users in the system is 70 GL.
- (8) The volume to be stored by NSW for critical human water needs as per Clause 11.03 of the Basin Plan.
- (9) Volume set aside for opening allocation to higher-priority needs on 1/7/2027. The reserve will be built from 12/2026 onward.
- (10) Surplus (or deficit) of water available after accounting for all commitments. There is a small surplus which will be rolled over to next month's assessment.

Resource distribution as of 15 July 2026

NSW Murray Regulated River Water Source



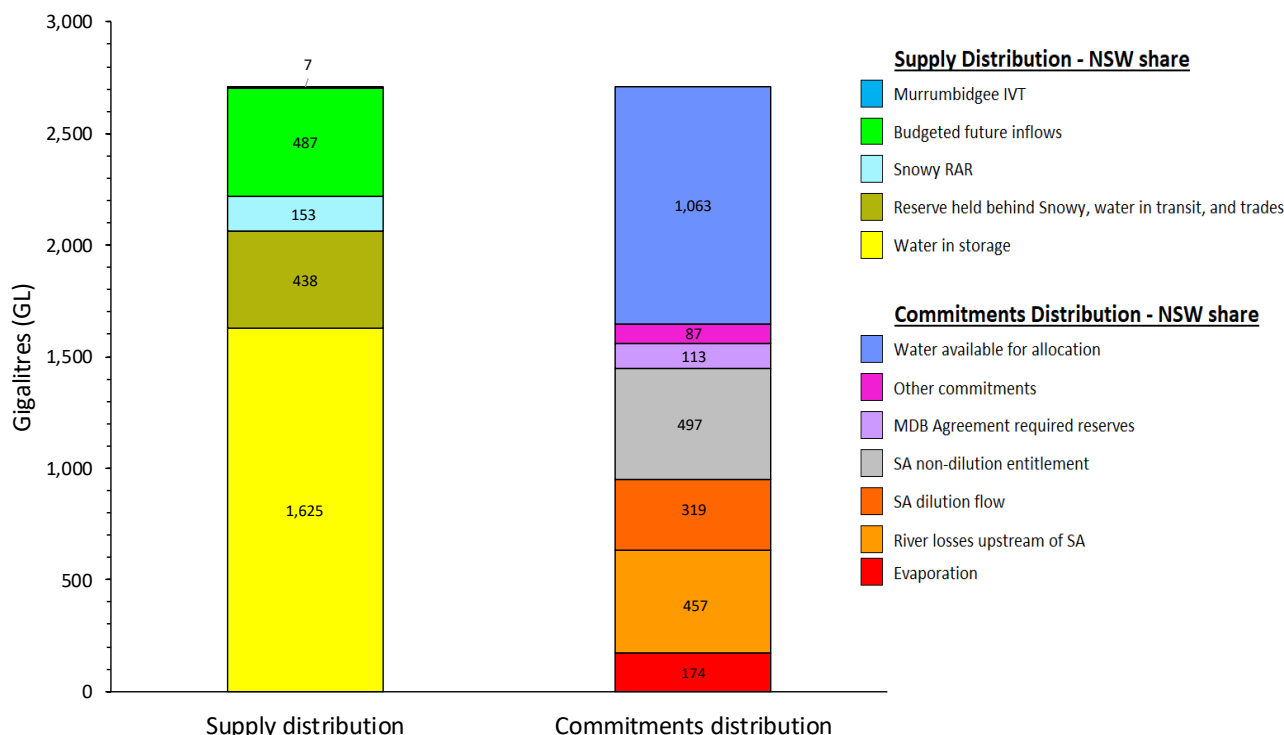
Storage volumes

30 June 2026	Full supply level (GL)	Dead storage (GL)	Total volume in storage (GL)	NSW share* (GL)	NSW share* (as %)
Dartmouth Dam	3,856	71	2,319	885	23%
Hume Dam	2,982	23	1,015	504	17%
Lake Victoria	677	100	483	172	30%
Menindee Lakes [#]	1,731	480 [#]	554	64	5%
Total				1,625 GL	

* Active volume of NSW share and % of the NSW share of the total storage's active capacity; maximum share is 50%.

[#] NSW has sole access to water when the storage falls below 480 GL.

NSW Murray and Lower Darling water balance - 15 July 2026



Notes:

- Water in storage:** Active volumes of NSW share in Hume, Dartmouth, Menindee and Lake Victoria as of 30/6/2026.
- Reserve held behind Snowy, water in transit and trades:** Includes snowy scheme contributions, drought reserve held in snowy, water in transit, and interstate trades.
- Budgeted inflows:** NSW's budget of future inflows is based on minimum inflow observed pre-2004. The future inflow also includes Snowy Hydro's guaranteed inflows for the remaining water year, plus Murrumbidgee end of system flows, plus any inflow recession known to date.
- Inter-valley trade (IVT):** Total tributary system water bought by Murray system users that is yet to be delivered. Murrumbidgee IVT balance is 7 GL as of 30/6/2026.
- Evaporation:** Water set aside for evaporation for the remainder of the year. Generally, this reduces as the year progresses. Of the total evaporation, approximately 18 GL is attributed to Menindee Lakes.
- River losses upstream of SA:** Water budgeted for transmission losses from the River Murray system upstream of the South Australian border for the remainder of the year. Generally, reduces as the water year progresses.
- SA non-dilution entitlement:** Water to supply South Australia's entitlement flow, as required under the Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) Agreement in clause 88. Generally, reduces as water year progresses.
- SA dilution flow:** Water to provide South Australia's dilution and conveyance component of flow, as required under the MDB Agreement in clause 88A. Reduces as the year progresses. Note, may include the Additional Dilution Flow (ADF) when triggered.
- MDB Agreement required reserves:** Includes conveyance reserve and minimum reserve to be set aside for use in the next water year, as required by the MDB Agreement in clause 102D and 103, respectively.
- Other commitments:** Includes Menindee commitments, any north-south active environmental water, and other trade adjustments.
- Water available for allocation:** NSW's bulk share of the resource that can be assigned to NSW Murray entitlement holders based on the Water Sharing Plan. Allocation of this volume is provided in the above table and pie chart.

Chances of improvement

The chances of NSW Murray general security allocations, against repeat of historical inflows, are provided in the table below. The simulation is based on a design water use pattern with no consideration of current weather conditions. Accordingly, the results are indicative only, not guaranteed, and should be used with caution.

Simulated general security allocations (%)

Repeat of historical inflow conditions	1 September 2026	1 November 2026
Pre 2004 minimum	5%	5%
Very dry (90% exceedance)	7%	15%
Dry (75% exceedance)	10%	20%
Median (50% exceedance)	15%	30%

Note 1: Forecast incorporates Murrumbidgee regulated end of system flows.

Note 2: Any water carried into 2026–27 water year is to be added to these indicative allocations with individual accounts not exceeding 110%.

Held environmental water (HEW)

Held environmental water entitlements are held and/or managed either singly or jointly by various environmental holder groups, including the NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, The Living Murray and the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder. The figures in the below table are approximate. For detailed information, please refer to the individual agency websites.

Licence category	Share component (GL)	2026–27 volume (GL)*	Account balance (GL)
High security	41	39	39
Conveyance	50	20	20
General security	532	134	134

* Water allocated in 2026–27 plus water carried over on 1/7/2026. General security figures subject to carryover reconciliation.

Useful links



Allocation statements for all water sources are available at: [Water allocation statements | Water](#)



A series of guides that describe the water allocation methods for most NSW regulated river systems are available at: [Resource assessment process | Water](#)



The dashboard on water availability and allocations for all water sources is available at: [Allocations dashboard | Water](#)



Water sharing plan for these water sources is available at: [NSW Murray and Lower Darling Regulated Rivers Water Sources 2016](#)



Updates on operations and river conditions are available at: [River Murray weekly reports | Murray–Darling Basin Authority](#)

Contact



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You can also follow the department on X: [@NSWDCCEEW_Water](#)



Contact information for water enquiries and other water-related matters can be found on the department's website: [Contact us - DCCEEW | Water](#)

Annexure

Allocations in 2026–27

Table 1: Water allocation history in 2026–27: NSW Murray Regulated River Water Source

Date	Licence category	Increment	Total 2026–27	Account balance
1-Jul	Domestic and stock	100%*	100%*	100%*
1-Jul	Local water utility	100%*	100%*	100%*
1-Jul	High security [#]	0.97 ML/share	0.97 ML/share	97%
1-Jul	Conveyance	0.50 ML/share	0.50 ML/share	50%
1-Jul	Supplementary	1.00 ML/share*	1.00 ML/share*	100%*
15-Jul	General security	0.05 ML/share	0.05 ML/share	30%
15-Jul	Conveyance	0.019415 ML/share	0.519415 ML/share	52%

* Maximum allowable.

[#] Excluding high security entitlements with subcategories which received their maximum 100% on 1 July.

Table 2: Water allocation history in 2026–27: Lower Darling Regulated River Water Source

Date	Licence category	Increment	Total 2026–27	Account balance
1-Jul	Domestic and stock	100%*	100%*	100%*
1-Jul	Local water utility	100%*	100%*	100%*
1-Jul	High security	1.00 ML/share*	1.00 ML/share*	100%*
1-Jul	General security	0.30 ML/share	0.30 ML/share	32%

* Maximum allowable.

Water sharing plan rules (NSW Murray)

This statement includes plain language information on the plan rules relevant to water allocation below. This is based on our knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. Water users should verify the information as required before making any water management decision.

- Domestic and stock, local water utility, and high security sub-category access licences are to receive an allocation of 100% of their share component at the start of the water year. These licences cannot carry over unused balances into the next water year.
- High security access licences are to receive full allocation of 97% at the start of the water year and cannot carry over any unused balances into the next water year. If general security licences are allocated 97% or more, high security must be increased to 100% of their entitlement.
- Conveyance access licences receive an allocation of 50% after all higher-priority categories have been fully allocated and cannot carry over any unused balances into the next water year. These licences are allocated incrementally based on GS allocations.
- General security access licences are to receive allocations after all higher-priority categories have been fully allocated, and the conveyance licences have received their 50% allocation. GS accounts can carry over up to 50% of entitlement into the next water year and have a limit of 110% of entitlement.
- Planned environmental water allowances include the Barmah-Millewa Allowance, the Murray Additional Allowance, the River Murray Increased Flows.
- Supplementary water access licences are to receive an allocation of 100% of entitlement at the start of the water year, unless a growth-in-use measure is required. The closing balance cannot be carried over into the next water year.