16 November 2026

NSW Murray and Lower Darling Regulated Rivers

No change to general security allocations

General security	2026–27 allocation	Account balance*
NSW Murray	30%	51% (859 GL)
Lower Darling	30%	-

* The account balance as of 31 October 2026 plus available water determinations to 16 November 2026.

Key information

- No surplus resources were identified this assessment. Inflows since the last assessment have been much lower than earlier trends and are insufficient to provide further allocation.
- The four-year average November water availability (including carryover and allocation) was 75%, exceeding the 50% threshold for exceptional circumstances under the Barmah-Millewa Operating Rules. Accordingly, normal payback arrangements apply for 2026–27. All outstanding Barmah-Millewa Allowance commitments have been met by the 2 November 2026 assessment.
- This assessment is based on NSW's share of storage volumes as of 31 October and observed inflows to 11 November, then tapering towards minimum inflows to 30 November. The assessment then budgets for minimum inflows arriving at headwater storages from December 2026 to May 2027.
- There is no change to Lower Darling GS allocations. The Lower Darling Regulated River remains in **Drought Stage 2** (emerging drought).
- The Menindee Lakes System (MLS) fell below 480 GL on 4 October 2026. This means the remaining water stored in the Lower Darling is no longer available to support Murray River system operations.
- From next assessment, we will begin building reserves to secure opening allocations for higher-priority water needs on 1 July 2027.

Next statement

The next water allocation statement for these water sources will be published on

Tuesday 1 December 2026 at 2:30 pm.

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NSW Murray resource assessment data sheet

Resource distribution (as of 15 November 2026)	Volume (GL)
Available resource for allocation	1,528
Storage volumes NSW share [1]	2,565
Future resources [2]	697
less overheads and commitments [3]	(1,734)
less	
Planned environmental water [4]	230
Domestic and stock, local water utility balance [5]	49
High security balance [5]	174
Conveyance balance [5]	105
General security balance [6]	859
Wakool allowance [7]	50
Critical human water needs [8]	61
Higher-priority reserve (2027–28) [9]	0
equals	
Surplus (or deficit) [10]	0

Notes:

(1) The NSW share of active storage volume in Hume, Dartmouth, Menindee and Lake Victoria as of 31/10/2026.

(2) Budgeted minimum inflows (12/1997 to 05/1998); plus inflow to date (1 to 11/11/2026); plus conservative estimates of inflow recessions (12 to 30/11/2026); minus any unregulated flows, 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 MDB agreement reserves; plus Menindee commitments (0 GL); plus NS Active Environmental Water (0 GL, as of 31/10/2026).

(4) The volume includes 6 GL of Murray Additional Allowance (MAA), 213 GL of Barmah-Millewa Allowance (B-MA), 11 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.

(5) Account balance remaining in higher-priorities and conveyance licence categories as of 31/10/2026.

(6) General security accounts balance. This includes carried over volume from last water year, plus any new allocation to date, plus any trade adjustments, minus usage until 31/10/2026. For information, about 383 GL (23%) was carried over on 1/7/2026.

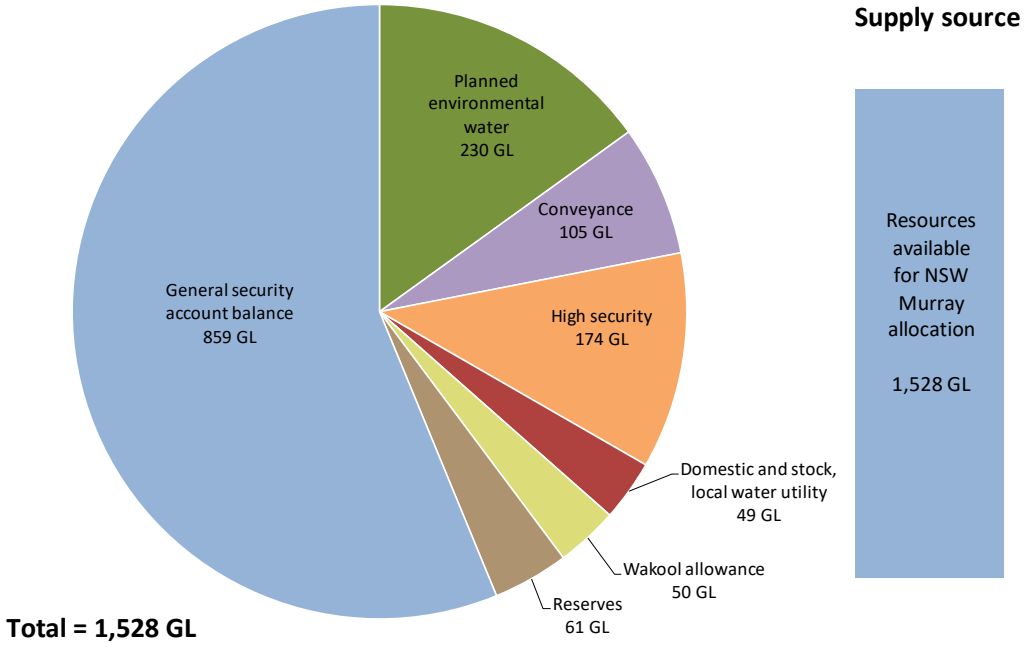
(7) Wakool allowance – a conveyance volume necessary for NSW to deliver to the users on the Edward-Wakool system. The annual budget to deliver the potential maximum allocation to the water users in the system is 70 GL.

(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 the next assessment.

(10) Surplus (or deficit) of water available after accounting for all commitments.

Resource distribution as of 15 November 2026
NSW Murray Regulated River Water Source

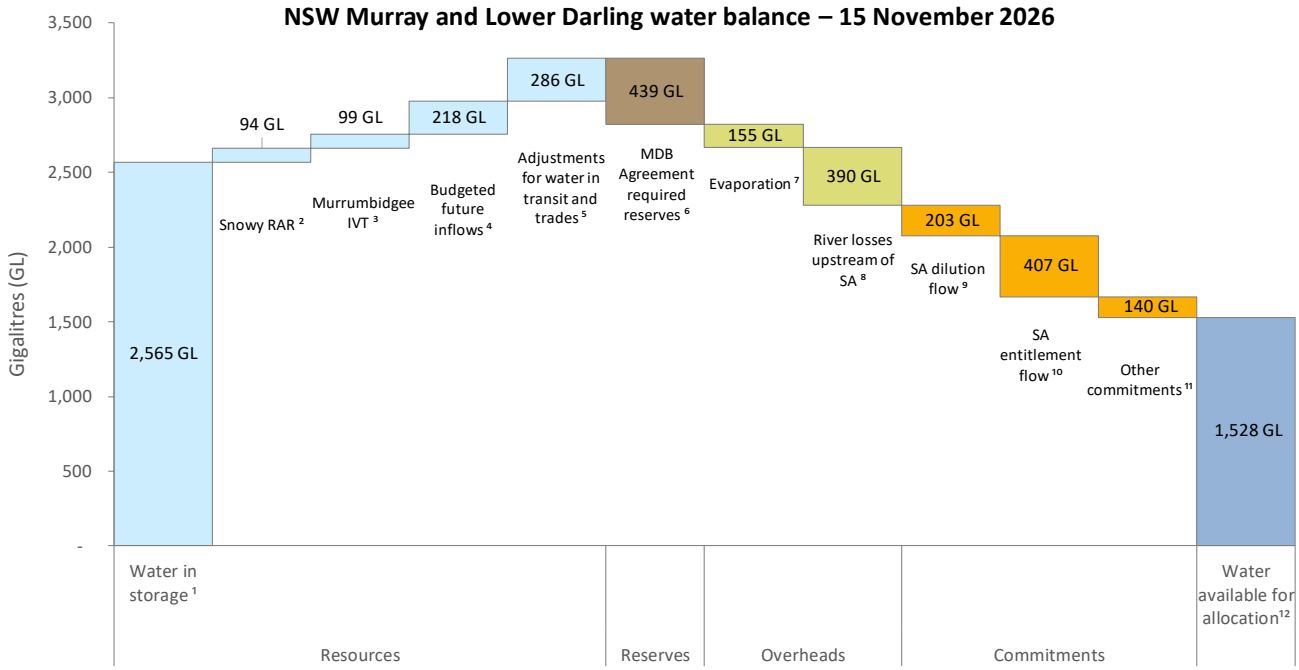


Total = 1,528 GL

Storage volumes

31 October 2026	Full supply level (GL)	Dead storage (GL)	Total volume in storage^ (GL)	NSW share* (GL)	NSW share* (as %)
Dartmouth Dam	3,856	71	3,045	1,135	30%
Hume Dam	2,982	23	2,563	1,153	39%
Lake Victoria	677	100	666	277	48%
Menindee Lakes	1,731	480#	450	0	0%
Total				**2,565 GL**	

^ Total volume in storage for all basin states. Includes South Australia deferred water.
* 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 lakes fall below 480 GL.



Notes:

(1) Water in storage: Active volumes of NSW share in Hume, Dartmouth, Menindee and Lake Victoria as of 31/10/2026.

(2) Snowy Hydro's required release for the remaining water year, assuming minimum inflows.

(3) Murrumbidgee Inter-Valley Trade (IVT) balance is 99 GL as of 31/10/2026.

(4) Budgeted inflows: NSW's budget of future inflows is based on minimum inflow observed pre-2004. The future inflow also includes Murrumbidgee end of system flows, plus any inflow recession known to date.

(5) Reserve held behind Snowy, water in transit and trades: Includes snowy environmental program contributions, drought reserve held in snowy, water in transit, Lower Darling and interstate trades.

(6) 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 Murray-Darling Basin (MDB) Agreement in clause 102D and 103, respectively.

(7) Evaporation: Water set aside for evaporation for the remainder of the year. Generally, this reduces as the year progresses. Evaporation from Menindee Lakes is no longer a consideration for shared resources.

(8) 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.

(9) 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.

(10) SA non-dilution entitlement: Water to supply South Australia's entitlement flow, as required under the MDB Agreement in clause 88. Generally, reduces as water year progresses.

(11) Other commitments: Includes Menindee commitments, any north-south active environmental water, and other trade adjustments.

(12) 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 earlier table and pie chart.

Lower Darling resource sharing

Under the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement, the Menindee Lakes System (MLS) is operated as a shared resource with the Murray River (including NSW, Victoria and South Australia) when the total storage is above 640 GL. These resource sharing arrangements continue to apply until the MLS falls below 480 GL.

The MLS is operated solely to meet the demands from users on the Lower Darling River when the total storage is below 480 GL. The total storage volume must then rise to 640 GL before Lower Darling resources are again shared with users on the Murray River, which includes all three states.

The MLS total storage is 430 GL as of 12 November 2026, which remains below the 480 GL threshold. As such, the water resources of MLS continue to be used only to meet the demands from users on the Lower Darling River.

Restrictions now apply to water allocation dealings in the Lower Darling. Until the MLS recovers to above 640 GL, allocation assignments from local water utility licences to other licence categories are not permitted. This restriction helps protect water availability during periods of low storage and supports essential water needs within the Lower Darling system.

Lower Darling – Drought Stage 2

The Lower Darling Regulated River Water Source is currently in Drought Stage 2 (emerging drought), which is triggered when active storage in the upper Menindee Lakes falls below 250 GL. The active storage in the upper Menindee Lakes is 212 GL as of 12 November 2026.

Further information on drought stages and associated policies is available at:
Drought, floods and extreme events | Water

Chances of improvement

The chances of NSW Murray general security allocations, against repeat of historical inflows, are provided in the table below. The simulations do not consider likely variation in losses and water user behaviour in response to inflows. The simulations are based on inflow percentiles and 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 February 2027
Pre 2004 minimum	30%
Very dry (90% exceedance)	30%
Dry (75% exceedance)	30%
Median (50% exceedance)	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%.

The simulation is showing no visible improvement in allocation. Summer inflows are historically low, and we are accumulating higher priority needs for next year.

The next simulated allocation outlook will be published in the mid-March 2027 statement.

NSW Murray 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 HEW entitlements shown below table are for the Murray Regulated Water Source. The figures in the 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	42	39	36
Conveyance	50	21	24
General security	578	280	275

* Water allocated in 2026–27 plus water carried over on 1/7/2026.

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

Subscribe here to receive water allocation statements and email updates from Water Group of the department.

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 water	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%
3-Aug	General security	0.07 ML/share	0.12 ML/share	35%
3-Aug	Conveyance	0.027181 ML/share	0.546596 ML/share	55%
17-Aug	General security	0.03 ML/share	0.15 ML/share	38%
17-Aug	Conveyance	0.011649 ML/share	0.558245 ML/share	54%
1-Sep	General security	0.03 ML/share	0.18 ML/share	41%
1-Sep	Conveyance	0.011649 ML/share	0.569894 ML/share	55%
15-Sep	General security	0.10 ML/share	0.28 ML/share	53%
15-Sep	Conveyance	0.038830 ML/share	0.608724 ML/share	58%
15-Sep	Supplementary water	0.20 ML/share	1.20 ML/share^	103%
1-Oct	General security	0.02 ML/share	0.30 ML/share	55%
1-Oct	Conveyance	0.007766 ML/share	0.616490 ML/share	59%

* Maximum allowable.

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

^ One-off under ministerial discretion.

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	Supplementary water	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

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.

NSW Murray Regulated River Water Source

- 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. Allocations to each account cannot exceed 110% of entitlement less the volume carried over from the previous year.
- 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.

Lower Darling Regulated River Water Source

- Domestic and stock, local water utility, and high security 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.
- General security access licences are to receive allocations after all higher-priority categories and associated losses have been fully allocated. GS accounts can carry over up to 50% of entitlement into the next water year. Allocations cannot exceed 100% of entitlement less the allocation carried over from the previous year.
- The Lower Darling Environmental Water Allowance (EWA) is credited with 30 GL at the start of the water year when the MLS is a shared resource. The account is set to zero when the MLS is below 480 GL or has not risen above 640 GL since last falling below 480 GL.
- When MLS falls below 480 GL, the operator is to maintain a River Flow Restart Allowance to manage the re-commencement of flows following a period of no flow. The restart allowance is credited with the first 60 GL of inflows received following cease to flow conditions at Weir 32.
- 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.