



Critical water planning for the Murrumbidgee Valley

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Current water availability

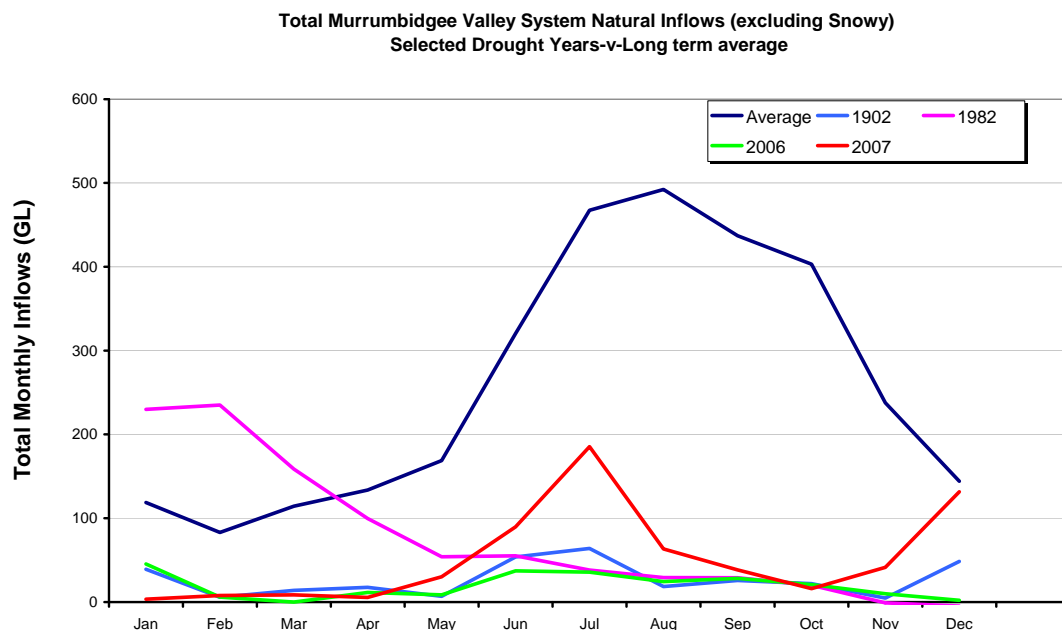
Since 12 December 2007, Wagga Wagga has received 66 millimetres (mm) of rain, Griffith received 54 mm and Yass received 61.4 mm.

Inflows into Snowy Mountains Scheme storages have continued to be above those recorded for the same period in 2006. The inflows into Blowering Dam are largely due to the releases from Snowy Hydro so far this year.

Murrumbidgee Valley storage levels as at 11 January 2008.

Storage @ 11 January 2008	Volume GL	Percent of capacity	Change in Volume 15 December to 11 January GL
Burrinjuck Dam	429	41.5	+27
Blowering Dam	460	27	-49

This graph shows the long-term average system inflows comparing 2007/2008 to recent drought years.



What this means

Inflows to the Murrumbidgee Valley in December 2007 have been well above those in 2006, and are very close to the long-term average, as shown in the graph above. Much of the inflow has been into the major storages of Burrinjuck and Blowering . There have also been significant inflows to the storages in the Snowy Scheme, which has further improved resources available to Murrumbidgee water users for this year.

The combined result is that General Security allocations can be **increased by 6 per cent to 9 per cent** for this year. Further improvements in water availability will continue to be allocated to general security users until a 20 per cent allocation is reached. From this point onwards, inflows to the major storages will be shared between general security and the environment, to repay water borrowed from environmental water accounts in 2006 .

Water trading in 2007/2008

All water in accounts may be traded. This includes all inter-valley and inter-state trades.

Water can be traded back into the Murrumbidgee Valley, as long as there is nett trade into the Murray Valley.

An important exception to these arrangements is for those users who participated in the 2002/2003 Snowy Hydro borrowing arrangements. Water re-credited in 2007/2008 from that which was suspended in 2006, may not be traded until the water borrowed from Snowy Hydro has been repaid.

All trade in the Murrumbidgee Valley **must be finalised** by close of business (COB) on 30 April 2008.

Carry over

Licence holders may carry over 15 per cent of entitlement into 2008/2009.

This means that licence holders can carryover all unused water that is in the licence holder's account as of 30 June 2008, up to a limit of 15 per cent of their total entitlement.

However, if the drought continues, water may not be delivered when requested.

For example: If your account balance on the 30 of June is 100ML and your licensed entitlement is 300ML, you can carry over 45 ML.

Note:

That High Security carryover is 15 per cent of full (i.e. 100 per cent) entitlement - **not** 15 per cent of the full allocation of 95 per cent.

That the 5 per cent water suspended in 2006 is separate to the calculation for this year's allocation (i.e. if High Security reaches 95 per cent, the 5 per cent suspended water will be in addition to this).

Town water supply

The water allocation for town water supply is at 100 per cent of entitlement. However, suppliers are advised to continue to remain conservative with **all** water use and continue to implement a water restriction that limits the use of outside watering.

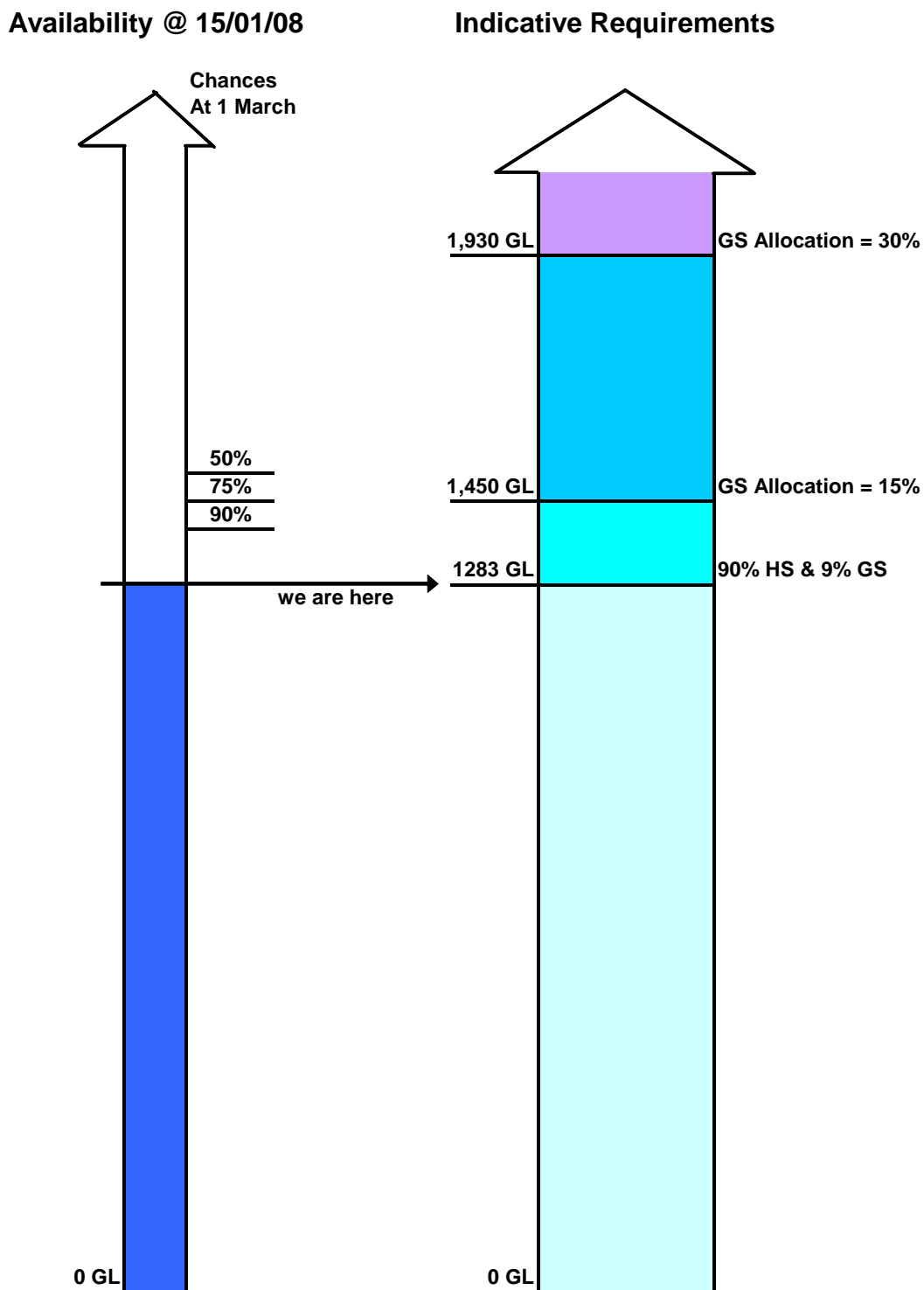
Compliance

The drought contingency planning will only work if everyone adheres to the restrictions and is careful with **all** water use. To ensure that the system is run fairly, the community should report any suspected breaches to the Department of Water and Energy's Compliance Unit on 1800 633 362 or by email to watercompliance@dwe.nsw.gov.au.

Water availability outlook

Currently, the Southern Oscillation Index is well into the positive range, and the outlook for continued rainfall and La Nina conditions is very good. The following diagram shows the **approximate probabilities** of improvements in water availability occurring by 1 March 2008. This diagram will continue to change throughout the season as conditions change and other issues, such as reserving water for next year, need to be included.

Murrumbidgee Valley Indicative Outlook



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