



NSW Government

Department of Water & Energy

## More water allocations and restrictions eased for Western NSW

---

Thursday 3 January 2008

The New Year has brought further increases in water availability for irrigators, graziers and industry in Western NSW.

Water Utilities Minister, Nathan Rees, today announced a number of increases in allocations as well as easing of some restrictions for licence holders and stock and domestic water users in the State's Central and Far West.

### **The Macquarie and Cudgegong valleys**

Burrendong Dam is now at 20.4 per cent capacity providing enough water to allow:

- increasing the water allocation for town water utilities, high security licence holders, and domestic and stock users to 100 per cent of entitlement;
- general security licence holders to access 100 per cent of the water suspended in their 2007/08 accounts;
- approximately 13,000 megalitres of water suspended from the environmental water account to now be accessed; and
- water trading between Cudgegong and Macquarie licensees to re-commence.

During the drought the Department of Water and Energy (the Department) was forced to suspend the Macquarie Cudgegong Water Sharing Plan, however this extra water means we can now allow irrigators within the valleys to start trading water again.

This will provide much needed additional water for production or funds to help ease the financial pressure many of the region's irrigators are feeling.

The Department will review the water sharing plan suspension in light of current and future water availability.

### **The Lachlan Valley**

Water levels in Wyangala Dam have steadily increased over recent weeks to approximately 193 gigalitres resulting in enough water to allow general security licence holders access to 40 per cent of the water suspended in their 2007/08 accounts.

This is a 20 per cent increase on the amount of water they could previously access, which is welcome news for the Valley's permanent planting and mining industries who can access this water via the market.

Any water credited to a water allocation account after 1 July 2007 by an assignment dealing from an access licence in this water source is not included in the restriction.

## **The Barwon-Darling River**

High flows from the flooding in the Castlereagh River has made it possible to increase the water allocation for B and C class licence holders to 20 per cent and to remove restrictions on stock and domestic water extraction under Basic Landholder Rights.

This water allocation applies to water users with a B or C class licence for commercial, industrial or irrigation use along the Barwon-Darling River upstream of the Menindee Lakes.

These licence holders may now access a total of 20 per cent of the volume of water that was in their accounts under the conditions of their licences as at December 24 last year, when Minister Rees announced an initial 10 per cent water allocation.

This region has been struck particularly hard by the drought and that was the first time these licensees were able to access water from the Barwon-Darling since 2006.

Extraction by B and C class licence holders may only occur when flows are sufficient to meet their normal licence conditions and must be metered.

The increased flows also allow an easing on the restrictions that had applied to water for stock and domestic supplies along the Barwon-Darling.

The Department has revoked the Order which restricted access to Basic Landholder Rights water for stock and domestic supplies to a pumping rate of 19 litres per second. Stock and domestic water users along this stretch of the river may now pump in accordance with their normal Basic Landholder Rights arrangements.

The Department will continue to monitor water availability across NSW and revise water allocations and restrictions as appropriate. More information is available on this website.