



Media Release

September 1, 2009

RECENT RAINFALL IMPROVES HIGH SECURITY ALLOCATION FOR MURRAY AND MURRUMBIDGEE WATER USERS

NSW Water Commissioner, David Harriss, today announced an increase in water allocations for high security water users in both the Murrumbidgee and Murray Valleys.

“Rainfall across the Murray and Murrumbidgee catchments, together with inflows from Snowy Hydro Limited over the past month has enabled these increases,” said Mr Harriss.

Mr Harriss said that the Murrumbidgee high security allocation would increase to 45 per cent of entitlement while improved water availability in the Murray Valley would allow NSW to increase its high security allocation from 8 per cent to 20 per cent of entitlement.

“Under the interstate water sharing arrangements for 2009/10 agreed by the three Governments, NSW has repaid the water advanced by Victoria that allowed all carry-over from last season to be available in 2009/10.”

Any future improvement in water availability for NSW in the Murray Valley will be committed entirely to meet domestic and stock needs in the Wakool system, conveyance requirements in channels systems and to increase allocations for consumptive users.”

Mr Harriss said that the increase in high security allocations in both valleys means that Councils and Town Water Supply Authorities can ease town water restrictions in line with the Murray and Murrumbidgee Water restrictions policy.

Under the policy, water restrictions in the Murrumbidgee Valley can be relaxed to level 3 that allows for a maximum of 8 hours of outside watering per week. In the Murray valley restrictions can be relaxed to Level 3a that allows for a maximum of 4 hours of outside watering per week.

Mr Harriss also reminded all water users in both the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys that their Shire water restrictions apply to water taken under basic landholder rights or from bores for private domestic use.

“People who draw water directly from a river or creek or from a bore are subject to the same water restrictions as those applied in the Shire for town water,” he said.

Mr Harriss said that the temporary embargo on trades out of the Murrumbidgee Valley had been lifted and that State Water Corporation was conducting a ballot from 24 August 2009.

“The ballot is open to all water users who wish to trade water out of the Murrumbidgee Valley, however there is only 70 gigalitres of water available at this time,” he said.

Mr Harriss said that the maximum that can be traded from any one licence is limited to 15 per cent of that licence's entitlement. In the case of landholders in an irrigation corporation, the restriction applies only to the total corporation entitlement, not the individual's shareholding.

Mr Harriss reminded all prospective traders that they must complete the required application forms insuring that they have nominated a buyer and a seller and that the application must be lodged at State Water Corporation's Deniliquin office before 3:45 pm on 4 September.

Further details about water availability in the MSW Southern Basin and the Murrumbidgee trade ballot are available from the Department's website: www.dwe.nsw.gov.au.

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