



Outlook for NSW Southern Basin Irrigators

NSW Water Commissioner, David Harriss said that despite a promising autumn break and some minor flooding during recent months, follow up rainfall has not eventuated and water availability for the coming year remains low.

Mr Harriss said that much of the rainfall throughout inland NSW since January had fallen downstream of the catchment areas and the volumes of water stored in the State's major dams remains low.

"This is true of the dams in the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys where Hume is at 17 per cent, Dartmouth is at 30 per cent, Blowering is at 35 per cent and Burrinjuck is at 36 per cent of capacity,

"While these levels are higher than at the same time last year, they are still well below average."

Mr Harriss said that the flood flows in the Barwon-Darling River system are now starting to recede and that the Office did not expect the Menindee Lakes system to reach much past 80 per cent of capacity, at 1380 gigalitres.

"Without further rainfall over the next 6 weeks, commencing allocations for general security license holders in both the Murray and Murrumbidgee Valleys will be zero per cent of entitlement," said Mr Harriss.

It is expected that general security allocation in the Lower Darling will be 100 per cent of entitlement in 2010/11.

Mr Harriss said that under the current carryover rules, Murrumbidgee high and general security users could carryover up to 30 per cent of entitlement, while NSW Murray Valley high security and general security users could carryover 100 per cent of entitlement.

This equates to approximately 550 gigalitres in the Murrumbidgee and approximately 520 gigalitres in the NSW Murray.

"Licence holders will have access to their carryover from 1 July, but are reminded that they cannot use more than 100 per cent of their entitlement including allocation and carryover in any year."

Mr Harriss reminded all water users that the 2009/10 water trading year closes on Monday, 31 May 2010. Water trading will recommence on 1 July 2010.

Media contact: Bunty Driver 0407 40 3234

The NSW Office of Water is a separate office within the
Department of Environment Climate Change and Water

Our news releases are on the web:
www.water.nsw.gov.au

Mr Harriss said that the NSW Office of Water had calculated approximate probabilities for high and general security allocations for 1 September and 1 October 2010.

These have been provided the table below. License holders should note that these probabilities are approximate only.

MURRAY	by 1 September	by 1 October
9 chances in 10	97 % high security	2% general security
3 chances in 4	2% general security	8% general security
1 chances in 2	5% general security	25% general security
MURRUMBIDGEE		
9 chances in 10	20 % high security	60 % high security
3 chances in 4	60 % high security	95 % high security 2% general security
1 chances in 2	95 % high security 2% general security	20% general security

“Further details of water management in the Murrumbidgee, Murray and Lower Darling River Valleys will be available in Critical Water Planning communiqués that will be published in June, 2010,” said Mr Harriss.

Ends