



## Concern for Murray Farmers on Water Allocation Statement – More Work Needs To Be Done

Today's Water Allocation Statement announcement of 44% for Murray General security is concerning for growers across the Murray Valley", said Murray Irrigation Chairman Phil Snowden.

Mr Snowden went on to say there is still more work to be done, "on one hand we are relieved that the biggest rule hurdle, the payback of around 350GL of water for the Barmah-Millewa account has now happened; and we are still seeing inflows coming from all directions into our storages. This gives us confidence that future allocations should improve quickly".

"On the other hand, we are disappointed that the water allocation remains low at 44%. This is a critical time for our farmers across the Murray valley who are watering winter crops and ordering seed for summer plantings. It is very clear that our farmers are being impacted by operational rules and poor government policy that needs to change".

"Most of the dams are full," said Phil, "The calculated probabilities for future allocation improvements this month are far more realistic than there were in August, however, still appear to be very conservative. This delay in allocations that I think should be coming is holding back the productivity of our region. We saw this happen in the last season as well and that is why there is so much carry over in the dams that are now overflowing".

"With high volumes of water still flowing into the catchments I would have thought the chances of 100% allocation in the not-too-distant future is something the NSW Government and Murray Darling Basin Authority should be communicating" said Phil.

"When I compare today's storage volumes back to 2016, The Murray Valley was on 110% total available water, but today we are on 87% and there is 500GL more in storage and approximately 500 GL less allocated. This gap needs explaining" said Phil. "We are grateful NSW agencies are listening – more work needs to be done".

Murray Irrigation is calling on the NSW Government and Murray Darling Basin Authority to work with the farmers, looking at greater flexibility and rules that are more equitable, giving those that produce the food and fibre better early allocations, particularly in wet years when there is so much water around. These wet years are a chance for farmers to recover from the dry years along with our regional communities and industries that rely on irrigated agriculture."

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