

South Australia's River Murray Water Allocation Statement

Issued 15 April 2026



Key messages

- The projected minimum amount of water that will be delivered to South Australia as part of its Entitlement in the 2026-27 water year is 1,246 gigalitres (GL). This is derived from a 'worst-case'¹ water resource assessment report from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority (MDBA).
- The projected minimum, or worst case, opening Class 3 (High Security) allocation for South Australian River Murray irrigators for the 2026-27 water year is 62 per cent.
- Allocation decisions are made based on South Australia's water allocation framework detailed in the Water Allocation Plan for the South Australian River Murray Prescribed Watercourse.
- Current projections indicate that, in the wet and average scenarios, allocations are likely to reach 100 per cent by the end of 2026-27, while in the moderate, dry, very dry, and extreme dry scenarios, there is a lower likelihood of allocations reaching 100 per cent. The probability forecasts for each climate scenario are conservative and are represented as the likelihood an allocation will be at least a given percentage but could be higher (Table 1).
- As the projected minimum opening allocation is greater than 50 per cent, the carryover trigger for 2026-27 was not met and private carryover **will not** be available in 2026-27.
- During 2024-25 and 2025-26, daily and monthly inflows into the major storages in the River Murray System have been generally below the long-term average across most months. Storage volumes have declined over the past two years and are currently sitting below the long-term average for this time of year.
- The [SA River Murray Water Calculator](#) is available to help irrigators manage their water. The Calculator has two main features:
 - Personal Water Calculator – to help you better understand how much water you could have under different water availability circumstances to help you plan for the season ahead.
 - State Water Calculator – to help you better understand how the water available to South Australia is shared.
- Allocation improvements are most likely to occur between July to November 2026, following the main rainfall and inflow season and when water resource availability generally improves.

¹ Worst case refers to the most conservative scenario used for planning, based on a Year 1 (2025-26) inflow at the 99% exceedance level (Extreme Dry Scenario) followed by a Year 2 (2026-27) inflow at the 100% exceedance level (Worst Case Scenario).



Water availability projections

Water availability projections are a tool to help water users better understand the likelihood of future water allocations. The water availability projections provide a guide about future water allocation increases based on the MDBA’s River Murray system modelling and South Australia’s River Murray Water Allocation Framework. By comparing allocation forecasts to the climate outlook, water users can make informed choices for business planning purposes, depending on the level of risk they are comfortable with.

The reliability of the outlook will generally improve as the forecast period reduces. Forecast conditions are best estimates only and not guaranteed water availability. They should be used with caution, particularly when projecting many months ahead. The projections are created using the ‘worst-case’ water availability assessment from the MDBA as the starting point. Historical inflow and climate conditions over the last 30 years, in combination with current policy and operational settings, are then used to create unique inflow sequences (Figure 1 and Table 1).

The below projections indicate that in the wet and average scenarios, allocations are likely to reach 100% in 2026-27. In the moderate, dry, very dry, and extreme dry scenarios, there is a lower likelihood of allocations reaching 100%.

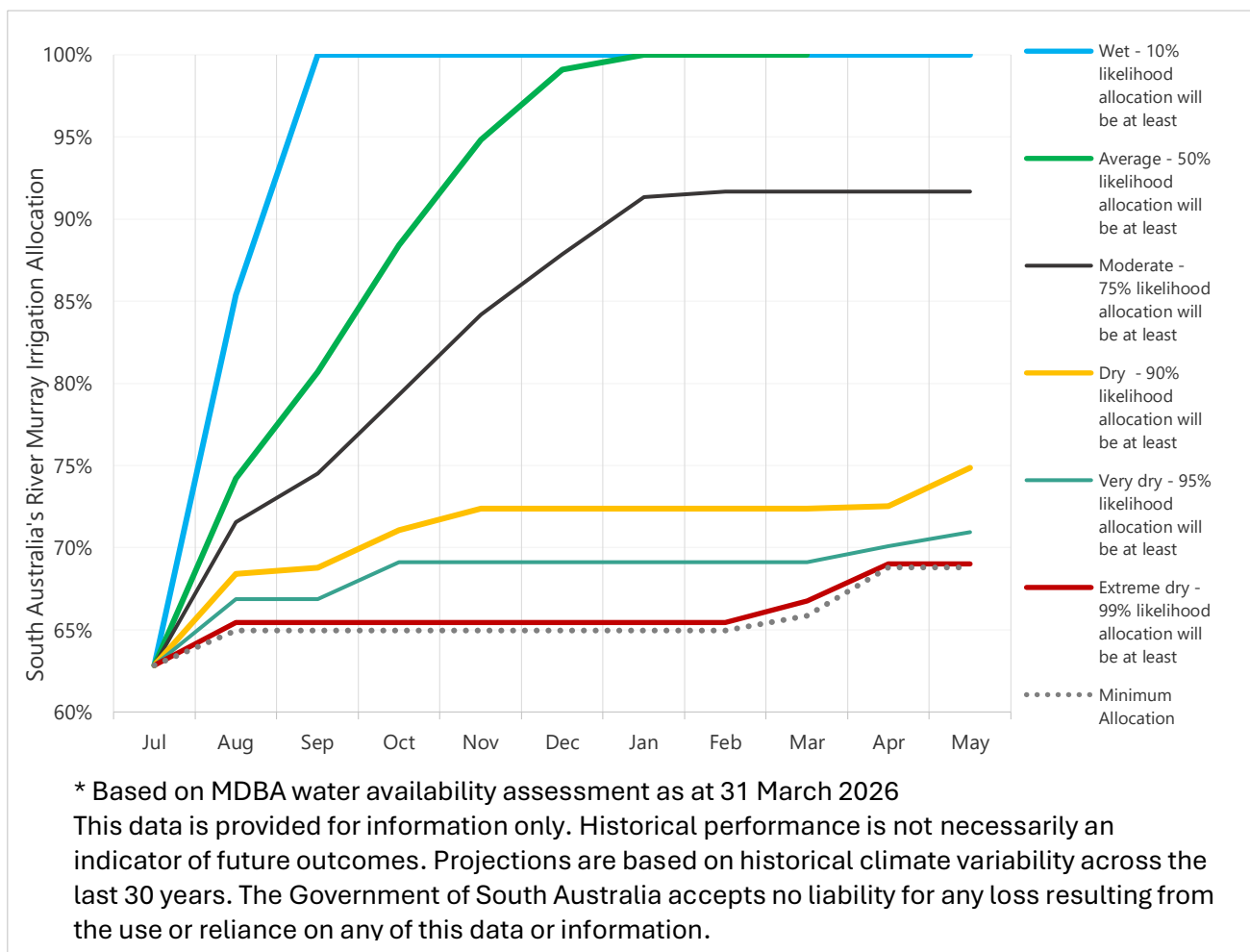


Figure 1 - Projected water allocation scenarios for SA River Murray Class 3 (High Security) entitlements

Table 1 - Projected water allocation scenarios for SA River Murray Class 3 (High Security) entitlements
15 April 2026

| SA River Murray Irrigation Allocation Scenarios Class 3 (High Security) April 2026 | 1 Jul 2026 Opening Allocation | 1 Sep 2026 | 1 Nov 2026 | 1 Jan 2027 | 1 Apr 2027 |
|---|---|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Projected Allocation as a Percentage | | | | |
| Minimum Allocation | 62 | 64 | 64 | 64 | 68 |
| Extreme dry conditions - 99% likelihood allocation will be at least | 62 | 65 | 65 | 65 | 69 |
| Very dry conditions - 95% likelihood allocation will be at least | 62 | 66 | 69 | 69 | 70 |
| Dry conditions - 90% likelihood allocation will be at least | 62 | 68 | 72 | 72 | 72 |
| Moderate conditions - 75% likelihood allocation will be at least | 62 | 74 | 84 | 91 | 91 |
| Average conditions - 50% likelihood allocation will be at least | 62 | 80 | 94 | 100 | 100 |
| Wet conditions - 10% likelihood allocation will be at least | 62 | 100 | 100 | 100 | 100 |

Correct as of 15 April 2026. Based on the end-March 2026 worst case water availability assessment provided by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority and the historical inflow and climate conditions over the last 30 years.

DISCLAIMER: This data is provided for information only. Historical performance is not necessarily an indicator of future outcomes. Projections are based on historical climate variability across the last 30 years. The Government of South Australia accepts no liability for any loss resulting from the use of or reliance on any of this data or information.

Past allocations and actual improvements

Further information on previous allocation announcements, including a section showing how and when allocations improved in previous years when opening allocations were less than 100%, is available on the Department’s website at www.environment.sa.gov.au/river-murray-allocations



Private carryover

In accordance with the [Water Allocation Plan for the South Australian River Murray Prescribed Watercourse](#), access to private carryover is only available to eligible users when the projected minimum

opening irrigation allocation is 50 per cent or less. As the worst case projected minimum opening allocation for 2026-27 is 62 per cent, **private carryover will not be made available in the 2026-27 water year.**



Water allocation framework

The [Water Allocation Plan for the South Australian River Murray Prescribed Watercourse](#) (River Murray WAP) details how water is allocated. A 5 page [factsheet](#) is also available.

The [SA River Murray Water Calculator](#) also helps you better understand how the water available to South Australia is shared. It improves transparency of water sharing arrangements within South Australia by showing how much water is allocated for different purposes.



Water held in storage

Regularly updated information regarding the current volumes held in Murray-Darling Basin storages is available via the MDBA's River Data website: [The River Murray – System view | River Murray data by MDBA](#)

Under clause 91 and Schedule G of the **Murray-Darling Basin Agreement 2008** (the Agreement), South Australia can defer and store part of its annual Entitlement in River Murray storages to meet critical human water needs and/or private carryover in dry years. To check real-time storage levels please visit:

1. [Dartmouth Dam](#)
2. [Hume Dam](#)
3. [Lake Victoria](#)
4. [Menindee Lakes*](#)

** The MDBA can access and manage water in the Menindee Lakes once the volume rises above 640 GL and until it falls below 480 GL. Once the water level falls below the 480 GL trigger point, New South Wales manages the water in accordance with its priorities, including to best meet local demands. For more information on Menindee Lakes visit this [MDBA webpage](#).*

For more information on water storages visit:

- The Bureau of Meteorology's [Water Storage Dashboard](#)
- The Bureau of Meteorology's [Murray–Darling Basin Water information portal](#)



Climate outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology provides [climate outlooks](#) that offer insights into future weather patterns. These outlooks include three-monthly forecasts for [rainfall](#), [maximum and minimum temperatures](#) and updates on key [climate influences](#) affecting Australia.

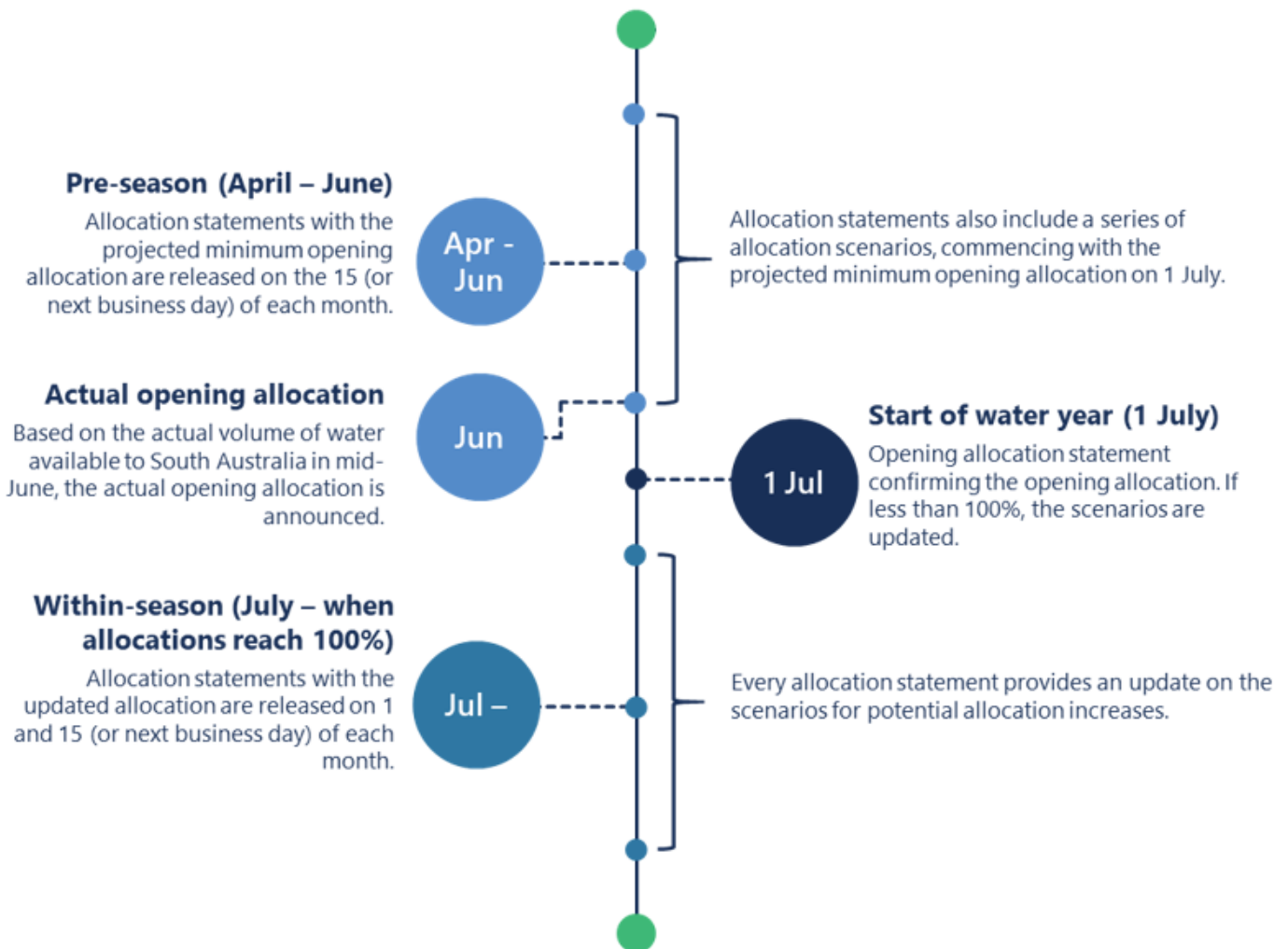
More detailed information can be found via the Bureau of Meteorology's [Climate Data](#) website.



Next announcement

The next announcement and updated projected minimum opening allocation for the 2026-27 water year will be provided on **Friday, 15 May 2026**.

Up until 1 July 2026, the Department for Environment and Water will provide updated water availability projections monthly. Thereafter, updated water allocation information will be provided every two weeks while water allocations are **less than 100%**.





Further information

For more information on South Australia's water allocations visit the [DEW website](#).

The Department for Environment and Water issues a weekly River Murray Flow Report that contains information about water levels, flow rates and barrage operations, as well as any navigation issues and construction activities. To view earlier reports, click [here](#). To sign up to receive the weekly River Murray Flow Report click [here](#).

To speak with someone about your water allocation or account:

- Drop into the water licensing office at 2 Wade Street, Berri, South Australia.
- Call the water licensing office on (08) 8595 2053.
- Email water licensing on DEW.WaterLicensingBerri@sa.gov.au

Interstate Allocations and Outlooks

Information on current River Murray allocations and projected allocations for 2026-27 in both New South Wales and Victoria can be found at the website links below:

- [NSW allocation information](#)
- [Victorian allocation information](#)