

# South Australia's River Murray Water Allocation Statement

Issued 15 April 2021



## Key messages

- The projected minimum opening allocation for SA River Murray irrigators for the 2021-22 water year is 82 percent.
- This is based on a worst-case water availability assessment provided by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority showing the projected minimum amount of water that will be delivered to South Australia as part of its Entitlement in the 2021-22 water year is 1,380 gigalitres (GL).
- Projections show that in every scenario other than the worst-case and extreme dry, the opening allocation on 1 July 2021 is likely to be 100 percent.
- Carryover will not be available in 2021-22. With the projected minimum opening allocation being greater than 50 percent, the carryover trigger for 2021-22 has not been met. This means that any water volumes rolled over from a previous year will no longer be available.
- Late last year, an independent review was commissioned into SA's River Murray allocation announcement process. The review found that the current allocation announcement process was working well. However, additional practical actions were identified to further improve the products the Department for Environment and Water (DEW) produces for water users.
- The report can be found on the department's [website](#), along with an explanation of the steps being taken to address the recommendations.
- To help irrigators manage their water, DEW has launched the [SA River Murray Water Calculator](#). This Calculator has two main features:
  - Personal Water Calculator - to help you better understand how much water you could have under different circumstances to plan for the season ahead.
  - State Water Calculator - to help irrigators better understand how the water available to South Australia is shared.



## Water availability projections

Projections show that in every scenario other than the worst-case and extreme dry, the opening allocation on 1 July 2021 is likely to be 100 percent (Table 1).

Table 1 - Projected 1 July 2021 opening allocation under a range of water availability conditions for Class 3 (High Security)

	Worst case	Extreme dry	Very Dry	Average	Wet
<b>Projected Class 3 (High Security) allocation on 1 July 2021</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Water availability projections help water users better understand the likelihood of future water allocations and provide a guide about future allocation increases based on 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 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. 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 2).

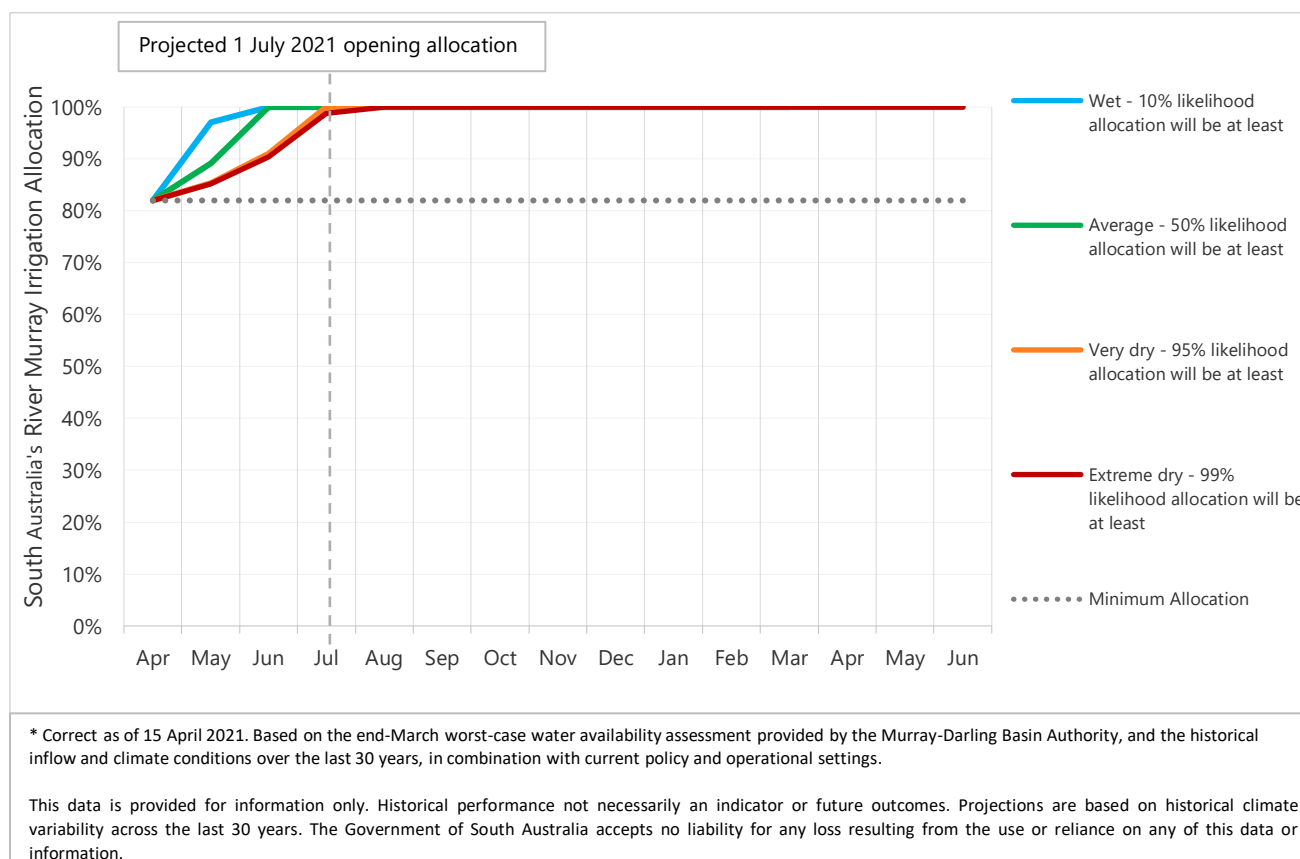


Figure 1 - Projected water allocation scenarios for SA River Murray entitlements Class 3 (High Security) | 15 April 2021

Table 2 - Projected water allocation scenarios for SA River Murray entitlements Class 3 (High Security) | 15 April 2021.

SA River Murray Irrigation Allocation Scenarios  Class 3 (High Security)   April 2021	1 Jul 2021  Opening Allocation	1 Sep 2021	1 Nov 2021	1 Jan 2022	1 Apr 2022
	Projected Allocation as a Percentage				
Extreme dry conditions - 99% likelihood allocation will be at least	98	100	100	100	100
Very dry conditions - 95% likelihood allocation will be at least	100	100	100	100	100
Average conditions - 50% likelihood allocation will be at least	100	100	100	100	100
Wet conditions - 10% likelihood allocation will be at least	100	100	100	100	100
Correct as of 15 April 2021. Based on the end-March 2021 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.					

### Interstate Allocations and Outlooks

Information on current River Murray allocations and projected allocations for 2021-22, in both New South Wales and Victoria, can be found at the website links below:

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



### 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 percent or less. As the worst case projected minimum opening allocation for 2021-22 is 82 percent **private carryover will NOT be available in the 2021-22 water year.**

South Australia's River Murray private carryover policy was updated in April 2020 to allow carryover volumes to 'rollover' into a future dry year. The policy states that water in a rollover account will only be available if the minimum opening allocation for following water year is 50 percent or less. As the worst case projected minimum opening allocation for 2021-22 is 82 percent, **any water in a rollover account will no longer be available.**

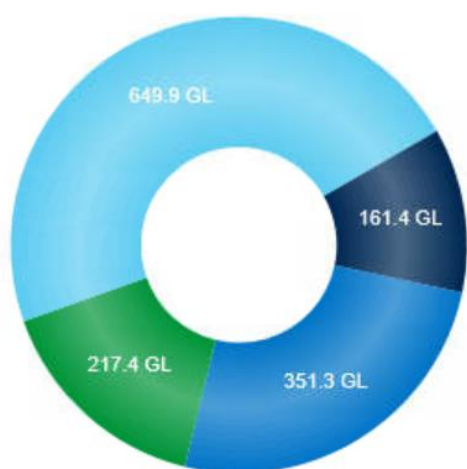
Further information on the carryover policy is available [here](#).



## Water allocation framework

The [Water Allocation Plan for the South Australian River Murray Prescribed Watercourse](#) (Water Allocation Plan) details how water is allocated. The Water Allocation Plan is a 220 page document, so to help you more easily understand how water is allocated, including during dry times, a 5 page [factsheet](#) is 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 (Figure 2).



Volume available 1380 GL

Figure 2 – Output from the SA River Murray Water Calculator illustrating how water is shared in South Australia when 1,380 GL is available.

### Irrigation

This water is used to support productive irrigation businesses and communities in South Australia.

**All Purpose – Class 3**

High Security 82%

**All Purpose – Class 8**

Environmental Land Management 82%

### Critical human water needs and town water supply

This water is used to support critical human water needs in both urban and rural areas across South Australia. This water underpins the water security of the majority of South Australians, including those in metropolitan Adelaide.

**All Purpose – Class 1 & 5**

Stock, Domestic, Industrial 100%

**Metropolitan Adelaide – Class 6**

Urban Water Supply 77%

**All Purpose – Class 2**

Country Towns 82%

### Environment

This water is held by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Office and the South Australian Government for environmental purposes. Water for the environment benefits wetlands and floodplains along the length of the River Murray and supports the health of the Lower Lakes and Coorong.

**All Purpose – Class 1**

Stock, Domestic, Industrial 100%

**All Purpose – Class 3**

High Security 82%

**Class 9**

Wetland / Environment 100%

### Running the river

This includes water set aside to meet the conveyance requirements to "run the river", as well as water that "remains in the river" to contribute to environmental outcomes. Conveyance water is required to deliver Critical Human Water Needs and water for all River Murray water users.



## Water held in storage

As at 14 April 2021 there was 4,348 GL (47 percent of capacity) held in the major Murray-Darling Basin storages. This is 18 percent more than the same time last year (2,724 GL), and slightly less than the long-term average held in storage at the end of March of 5,505 GL (59 percent of total capacity). 100.7 GL of water is currently held in storage for potential South Australian private carryover demand in future years.

Table 3 - Water held in Murray-Darling Basin storages at 14 April 2021

Storage	Full Supply Volume	Current Volume		SA Private Carryover Volume
	GL	GL	%	GL
Dartmouth Dam	3,856	2,454	64	100.7
Hume Dam	3,005	1,369	46	0
Lake Victoria	677	203	30	0
Menindee Lakes*	1,731	322	19	-
Total	9,269	4,348	47	100.7

For more information on Murray-Darling Basin storages visit this [MDBA webpage](#).

\*The MDBA can only use the water in the Menindee lakes when volumes are high (above 640 GL) until they fall to 480 GL. Once the water level is low (below the 480 GL trigger point), New South Wales manages the water to best meet local demands. For more information on Menindee lakes visit this [MDBA webpage](#).

Significant rainfall and flooding occurred across the catchments of Northern New South Wales and Southern Queensland during late March 2021 and is continuing to provide substantial inflows into the Barwon-Darling system. This event will provide significant inflows to the Menindee Lakes system. For more information visit this [WaterNSW webpage](#).



## Climate outlook

The Bureau of Meteorology's mid-range rainfall outlook across the Murray-Darling Basin shows a slightly greater chance that much of southern and inland eastern Australia will be drier than average for the three months from May to July (Figure 3). May to July days are likely to be warmer than average across much of the Murray-Darling Basin (Figure 4). Recent rainfall over parts of eastern Australia has eased the dry conditions experienced over the last several years. This has eased rainfall deficiencies in most regions (Figure 5).

The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) has recently returned to a neutral state. Model outlooks indicate neutral ENSO conditions for the months ahead. A neutral ENSO state has little influence on Australian climate and means other climate drivers or more local effects may affect Australia's weather and climate. The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is currently neutral. IOD events are typically unable to form during December to April. Outlooks indicate the IOD is most likely to remain neutral for the remainder of autumn and early winter. However, it should be noted that model accuracy is generally low at this time of the year, so the current outlooks should be viewed with caution. For more detailed information on the climate outlook visit this [BoM webpage](#).

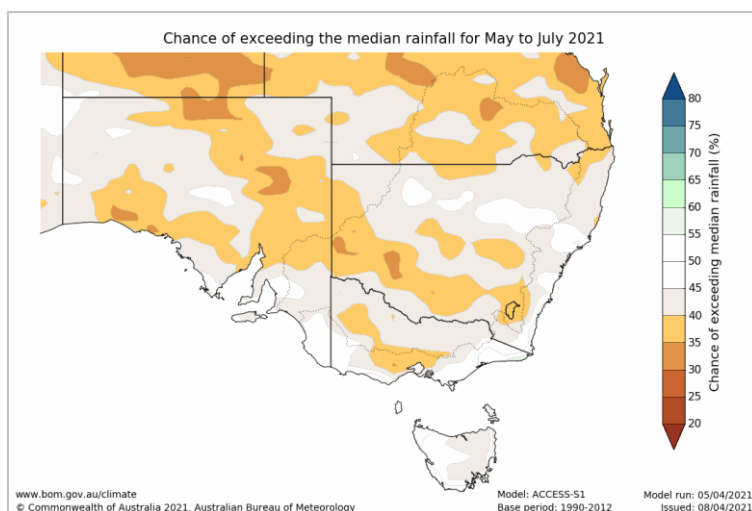


Figure 3 - Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook. Rainfall, May-July 2021

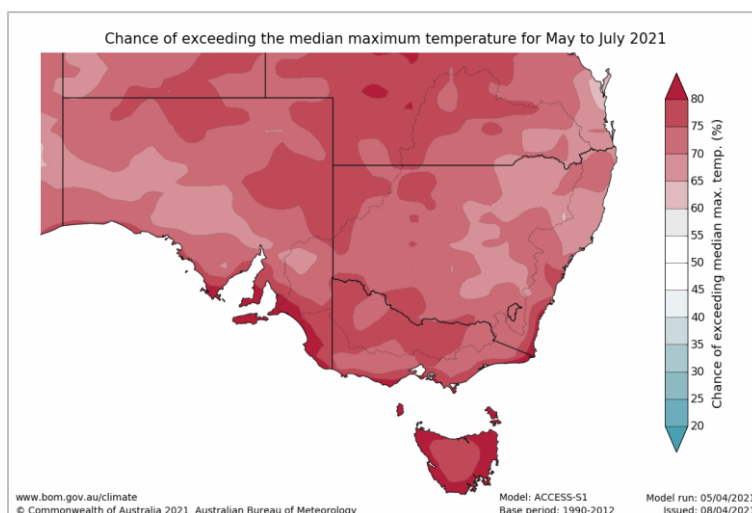


Figure 4 - Bureau of Meteorology seasonal outlook. Temperature, May-July 2021

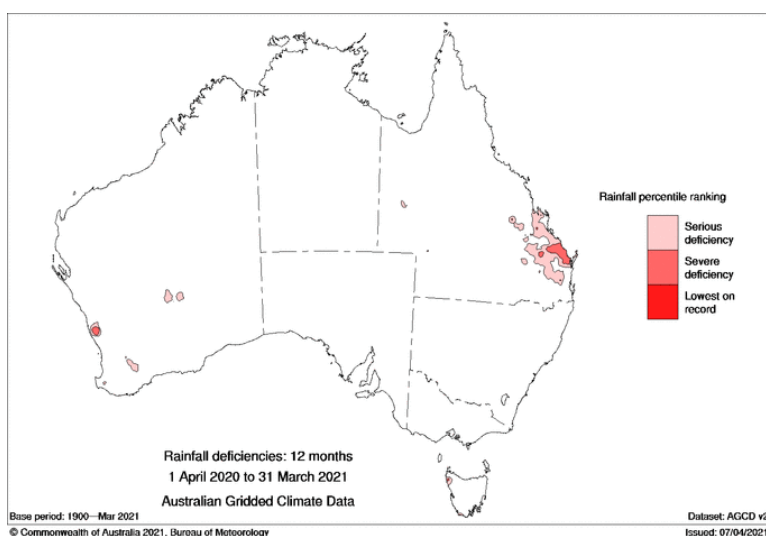


Figure 5 - Bureau of Meteorology rainfall deficiency April 2020 to March 2021

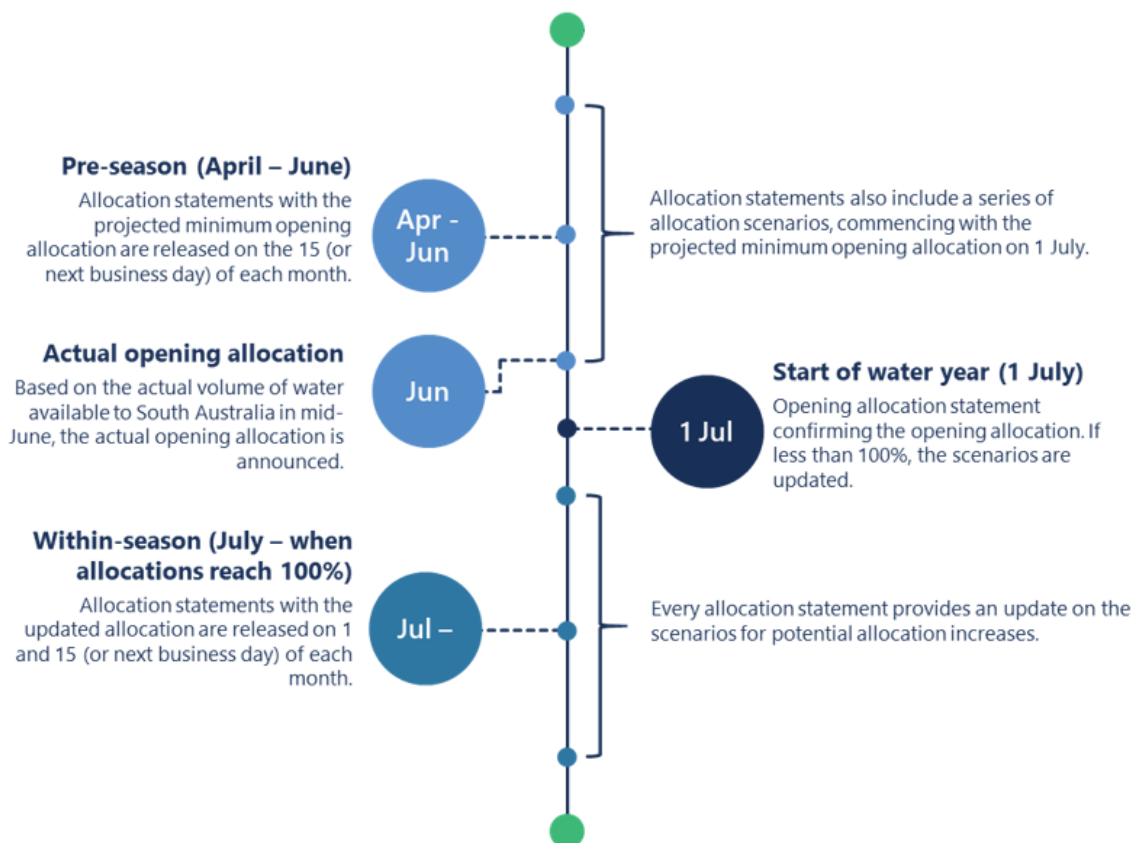




### Next announcement

The next announcement will be provided on **Monday 17 May 2021**.

Up until 1 July 2021, 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 percent.



### Further information

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

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 28 Vaughan Terrace, Berri SA.
- Call the water licensing office on (08) 8595 2053.
- Email water licensing on [DEW.WaterLicensingBerri@sa.gov.au](mailto:DEW.WaterLicensingBerri@sa.gov.au).