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31 January 2011

**Suspended Water Sharing Plans will recommence  
1 July 2011**

NSW Water Commissioner, David Harriss said that the statutory water sharing plans that had been suspended during the severe water shortages in NSW as a result of the recent drought, would be recommenced at the beginning of the 2011/12 water year in July.

Mr Harriss said that water availability had improved significantly throughout all of inland New South Wales where high security allocations are at 100 per cent of entitlement in all regulated river systems.

“General security water users have access to at least 100 per cent of entitlement in all inland regulated river systems other than the Gwydir at 67 per cent of entitlement and the Belubula which is at 69 per cent of entitlement,” said Mr Harriss.

“The improvement over the past seven months has meant there is now more water available for licensed water users across the State than there has been for the past ten years.”

“The outlook is that starting allocations for the 2011/12 water year will also be higher than in recent years.”

Mr Harriss said that water sharing plans may be suspended in a severe water shortage, which is typically when town water supply cannot be guaranteed for up to two years.

“This allows the NSW Office of Water to make sure that the limited water available is shared to meet critical human, environmental and socio-economic needs,” he said.

“During the recent drought, water sharing plans for the Macquarie-Cudgegong, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee and Murray-Lower Darling Rivers in inland NSW were suspended, and some extraordinary water sharing arrangements were introduced to keep regional industries functioning while meeting critical environmental needs.”

“All of these plans will recommence on 1 July 2011, which will mean that the carryover and trade rules in each of the respective plans will apply from this date,” Mr Harriss said.

Water sharing plans currently apply to over 90 per cent of water use in NSW. They ensure that water is shared fairly between the environment and consumptive users and provide security for water use businesses.

Ends

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

**Major storages and capacities at 31 January 2011#**

Valley	Dam	Current %	Last full Pre 2010/11	Drought Low % ( year)
<b>Inland NSW</b>				
Border Rivers	Pindari	100	2001	19.2 (2007)
Gwydir	Copeton	54	2001	9 (2007,2010)
Namoi	Keepit	98	1998	2 (2007)
(Peel)	Chaffey	100	Dec 2010	13 (2007)
	Split Rock	21	2001	2 ( 2001,2010)
Macquarie	Burrendong	98	2001	1.2 (2003)
	Windermere	46	1990	17.9 (2010)
Lachlan	Wyangala	93	2000	3 (2001,2009)
	Lake Cargelligo	100	2005	0 (2010)
Murrumbidgee	Burrinjuck	90	1996	4.6 (1997-98)
	Blowering	96	1996	0 (2003)
Murray	Hume	87	2000	2.1 (2009)
	Dartmouth (Vic)	57	1996	11 (2007)
<b>Coastal</b>				
Richmond	Toonumbar	100	2008	10 (2003)
Bega	Brogo	100	2008	10 (2010)

# NOW real time data