



Lachlan Valley Water e-News

PO Box 819, Forbes 2871

April 2024

River Operations

Wyangala Dam – 94.5% releasing 0.50GL as per the recent EWN message which seems to be targeting around 800 ML/day downstream of Jemalong Weir – but that could well be wound back in steps pending mid Lachlan creeks requirements.

Lake Brewster – 65% and only 100 ML/day or so from the actual storage via Bensons Drop or the outlet channel. This is being mixed with around 550 ML/day from Lachlan River upstream via the Brewster Weir conduit. The latest BGA report doesn't have algal sample results from after 19 April when Lake Brewster outlet restarted. Hence, won't be increasing the 20% Brewster storage 80% river water ratio until algal results for after 19 April for Lachlan River upstream of Willandra Weir and Lake Brewster outlet channel come back.

Lake Cargelligo – 94.5% and was held at 90% for about 5 days recently to test embankment works and hasn't been reduced, so assuming WaterNSE will now work up towards full supply level in a day or two (100%). Lake Cargelligo inlet reading 800 ML/day or so and only 55 ML/day from outlet so that seems to support that assumption as well.

Carcoar Dam – 99.5%, with nil inflow or release.



Carcoar Dam Camping Area

Current Environmental Watering Actions in the Lachlan:

Action 1. Maintain refuge conditions in Lachlan River coinciding with Lake Brewster 'restart'

- The environment ordered an additional 200 ML/day of upstream water to increase mixing

ratio for when restarting Lake Brewster outlet on 19 April (precautionary measure to ensure sufficient flow velocity and refugia for aquatic biota).

- This has recently finished at Lachlan River U/S Willandra Weir, having run for 10 days from 18 to 28 April 2024. The 200 ML/day will continue down the river, and you should expect it will be in the 120 to 150 ML/day range once gets to Booligal.

Action 2. Targeting repeat watering for floodplain vegetation in the lower Merrowie Creek

- The Commonwealth and NSW environmental water managers have committed up to 10 GL to running Merrowie Creek through the nationally significant Merrowie Creek (Cuba Dam to Chillichil) section of Merrowie Creek and maintain refuge for olive perchlet. Environmental water will be delivered in conjunction with the stock and domestic replenishment. Started around 9 April and may continue to at least early July (or longer pending how flow progresses for additional targets). Targeting 180 to 200 ML/day at Merrowie Creek offtake regulator.

Noting that when Action 1 finished on 28 April:

- Lachlan River US Willandra Weir gauge started to fall 27/28 April from around 850 ML/day to 550 ML/day. Similarly Hillston Weir then started falling from 550 ML/day 28/29 April and Merrowie Creek offtake falling in line with Hillston from 230 ML/day to now around 200 ML/day.
- The Muggabah and Merrimajeel replenishment will start in next few days with Torrigan Weir boarded up yesterday (combination of 130 ML target for both creeks) .

Expect the demand at Lachlan River US Willandra Weir to stabilise at around that 500 ML/day and Merrowie Creek at around 180 ML/day for the foreseeable future.

2024-25 Draft Bulk Water Pricing Decision

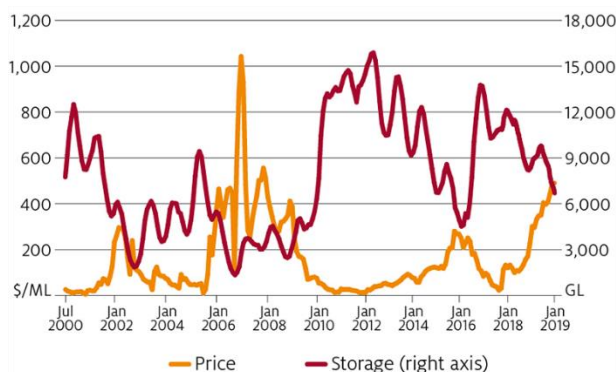
IPART has released its [draft decision](#) on the maximum prices that WaterNSW can charge for rural bulk water services in the Murray-Darling Basin and Fish River Water Supply Scheme in 2024-25.

It is proposing to maintain the charges set under the 2021 Determination. This means that increases in charges will be limited to inflation of about 3.7% from 1 July 2024. You can have your say on this draft decision by making a submission [HERE](#) by 15 May 2024.

New Obligations for Trades and Transfers

From 1 July 2024, the Water Amendment (Restoring our Rivers) Act 2023 establishes new obligations for people who apply for the trade or transfer of eligible tradeable water rights. These new obligations will increase the accuracy and completeness of trade and transfer data, including price, for all eligible tradeable water rights.

The Commonwealth believes this will help to improve the transparency, efficiency and integrity of water markets.



The commencement of these obligations is the first among a broader suite of water markets reform measures, that will commence in stages from 2024-2026. An overview of all water markets reforms in the *Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Act 2023* can be found [here](#).

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water will be holding a webinar on the consultation process for the various water markets reforms on Tuesday 21 May 2024. You can register for the webinar here [Public webinar: Water market reforms](#).

Water Market Reforms

I had the opportunity this month to attend a discussion on the water market reforms passed in Federal

Parliament last year, with representatives of all agencies involved in their design and implementation over the next two years (DCCEEW-federal, ACCC, BoM and IGWC).

The discussion was instructive, particularly the following clarifications:

- IIOs are expected to adapt or build databases suitable to provide the required trade data to the BoM at their own expense.
- The ACCC said monitoring the market impacts of the Government's water buybacks towards the 450 GL is not its role, at least until the relevant market manipulation rules come into effect in mid-2026. In the meantime, the Government will write and release its own impact statements.
- Government agencies will be collecting and holding a lot more private and personal information about water holdings.
- Some market reform implementation costs will be transferred to water users, but the agencies are hoping to keep that to a minimum as much as possible (yes, this additional cost pressure to be added to our pricing report).
- The BoM is developing a new hub to hold all the information about water holdings and trades; it is still working out whether and how, for example, water users with multiple water licences they hold under multiple entities such as companies and trusts, can be consolidated under a single Unique Identifier Number, to eliminate the need to fill in forms for every zero value internal trade.

LLS/LVW Water Workshops - Save The Date

LVW in conjunction with LLS will be hosting water workshops in late July. Content and venue details will be provided at a later stage, however the workshops will be held in the following locations:

- 24 Jul 24 – Gooloogong
- 25 Jul 24 – Condobolin
- 26 Jul 24 – Hillston

If you have any suggestions for inclusion in future newsletters, please send them to me.

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