



Lachlan Valley Water e-News

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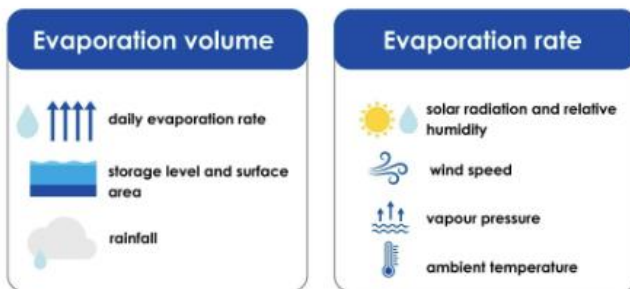
January 2024

Welcome Back

Welcome back to everyone who had some time off over Christmas and New Year. After a relatively mild December/January with some nice rainfalls, February is shaping up to be warm and relatively dry. Expect to see some surveys in your inboxes over the next few weeks as we revisit our strategic plan and will be seeking input from our members.

Evaporation Rule

Very shortly water users will be receiving an account statement, and a letter of explanation from WaterNSW regarding the application of the Evaporation Rule. WaterNSW has needed some time to update their systems and create a webpage discussing evaporation, and hence did not allocate any evaporation usage at the end of the last quarter. Once the system has been deployed the Quarter 1 calculation (July to September 2023) will be recalculated using the new methodology along with the Quarter 2 calculation (October to December 2023). WaterNSW will write to all impacted customers in early February 2024 to explain the changes and provide copies of customer water account statements to show the original and corrected calculations. To visit the evaporation web page for the Lachlan River [Click Here](#)



Factors that determine evaporation volume and rate.
Source: WaterNSW

River Operations

Wyangala Dam – 95.8%, with inflows of 0.26GL and release of 1.3GL. Indications are that more water is being ordered after a brief “dry spell” over the last few weeks, with releases targeting around 1000ML per day at Jemalong.

Lake Brewster – was around 72.9% this week and maximum storage capacity for dam safety is 79.5% with inlet capacity around 700 to 800 ML/day. Expect it to stay in that mid 75% range for the next week or so.

At the moment the 100 ML/day Water Quality Allowance (WQA) is being ‘delivered’ from Lake Brewster and with about 200 to 300 ML/day coming out of Lake Brewster storage and around 700-800 ML coming from upstream – the ratio is about 30% Lake Brewster storage to 70% upstream sources. Pelican management has ended at Lake Brewster, however the storage has remained at optimal levels for the birds due to rainfall events.

Lake Cargelligo – 71.1% bearing in mind, for dam safety reasons, Lake Cargelligo capped at that 75% capacity. As demand picks up and the surplus from last rainfall event goes, likely Lake Cargelligo will be used to meet demand and the storage capacity brought down as soon as possible

Carcoar Dam – 98.2%, inflows of 0.02GL.

There are red alerts for blue-green algae for Lake Brewster inflow wetland upstream of the eastern spillway as well as at regulator C and the Lachlan River at Corrong. Amber alerts are current for Lake Cargelligo at the town water supply, boatshed and outlet at lake creek, Lake Brewster at the inflow and outlet channel as well as the Lachlan River at Willandra Weir, Hillston and Booligal. Wyangala Dam, Carcoar Dam at the Dam Wall, Lake Cargelligo Weir as well as the Lachlan River downstream of Cargelligo Weir are on Green alert for blue-green algae

Draft 450 Recovery Framework

The Federal Government released its draft 450 GL recovery framework this week, and called for submissions by **4 March 24**.

The three framework elements are:

- **Resilient Rivers Program** - infrastructure projects, rules changes, land and water partnerships, and other ways to recover water
- **Voluntary Water Purchase Program** - purchase of water entitlements from willing sellers
- **Sustainable Communities Program** - adjustment assistance for Basin communities impacted by voluntary water purchase

To read the frame work and make a submission please [Click Here](#). To read the Federal Water Ministers press release, please [Click Here](#).

Metering Review

DCCEEWSW will release a What We Heard Report during February from consultation on the review of the non-urban metering policy, with a Metering Review Report to follow in the first quarter of 2024.

NSW's metering standards for agricultural water users are globally recognised as the gold-standard. But barriers outside their control make it next to impossible for many water users to comply with the metering policy and must be addressed by the Government.

The [Addressing Metering Compliance Barriers report](#) details the ongoing hurdles to compliance beyond the control of water users themselves. Inconsistent policy tools, cost burden for low volume water users, a lack of duly qualified persons (DQPs), and impractical telemetry and floodplain harvesting requirements are just a few.

The Natural Resources Access Regulator (NRAR) acknowledges there are barriers to complying with new metering rules that are outside of the water users' control. NRAR's quarterly reports also show almost every water user in NSW is operating under the rules.

WaterNSW Operating Licence Review

IPART have released their discussion paper for the WaterNSW Operating Licence Review 2023/24. To view the discussion paper and the link to make a submission, please [Click Here](#). Lachlan Valley Water will be making a submission on behalf of our members; however all members are welcome and encouraged to make a submission of their own. Submissions are due by Friday 8 Mar 24.

IPART will be holding an online Public Hearing regarding WaterNSW Operating Licence on 24 Feb 24. To register your interest in attending [Click Here](#).

National Water Review

The Productivity Commission called for submissions on 5 January for its statutory three-year review of progress towards achieving the objectives and outcomes of the 2004 Intergovernmental Agreement on a National Water Initiative (NWI). The deadline is 2 February.

The inquiry specifically focusses on issues related to water security. As in previous NSWIC submissions on the NWI, our submission highlights that:

- Sustainable Diversion Limits are now in place and being met across the Murray-Darling Basin through significant water recovery;

- There needs to be a shift in language of the National Water Initiative and by governments to place equal emphasis on complementary measures to improve environmental outcomes, not just water recovery;
- The NWI should broaden the definition of third-party impacts to include, for example, socio-economic impacts on non-entitlement holders, regional and industry development, the environment, and the integrity of water access entitlements;
- The NWI should require consistently high standards for metering and measurement across jurisdictions; and,
- Cost-share ratios in NSW should be reviewed with a view to better apportion costs for public interest items in future pricing determinations for rural bulk water, consistent with the NWI user-pays principle.

WaterNSW Pricing Proposal

WaterNSW and the Water Administration Ministerial Corporation (WAMC) are seeking feedback about what customers want from water planning and management services throughout 2025-2030. You can provide feedback through a short online survey by [Clicking Here](#).

80/20 Pricing Survey

We are still collecting data regarding our pricing survey to gauge interest in switching a pricing model from the current 60% of costs fixed/upfront, and 40% usage/variable to an 80% fixed, and 20% usage – the original email was sent out on Tuesday the 24th of October. If you'd like the email containing the background information again, please let me know by emailing me at eo@lvw.com.au. The survey remains open until the end of this month - you can access the survey by [Clicking Here](#).

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