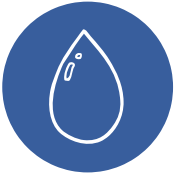




## WATER LICENCES IN NSW

Like a driver licence that entitles you to share the road in a car, a water licence is an entitlement to a **SHARE** of the water available in an aquifer or river. However, for irrigation farmers it isn't a guarantee of a specific amount of water each year.



The **amount of water** a licence can access each year depends on the **rules in the WATER SHARING PLAN** (see below), how much flows into Burrendong dam (inflows) when there's rain in the upper catchment, & whether higher priority water users already have their water.



The purchase of a water licence is a **BIG investment**. It does NOT guarantee specific amount of water each year. Irrigation farmers pay **fixed annual fees for their water license**, regardless of whether they get any water.



To take water, the licence must be **linked to a water supply works & use approval**, authorising the use of a pump or bore, the permitted use & location. Water **must be ordered up to 10-14 days in advance** depending on where it's extracted from the river. From December 2019, there will be mandatory monitoring of extractions.



As per the Water Sharing Plan, **Towns, Livestock and Domestic users, & High Security users** i.e. industries like mining and meat processors, & permanent plantings, get their water **FIRST**. Second priority is **the Environment**. Finally, **General Security** water users, like cotton growers, get their water if there's any available. General Security access is more variable than other types of licences.



## WATER SHARING PLANS

To share equitably, you need **RULES**. Water Sharing Plans establish the rules for sharing water between users, including the environment, **HOW** water access licences can be **USED**, & the rules for **ALLOCATION** of water to licences.

### Objectives of Macquarie/ Cudgong Water Sharing Plan

- (a) to maintain or enhance the ecological functions and values of riverine environments,
- (b) to support a sustainable regional economy,
- (c) to protect the social values and benefits provided by the river system, and
- (d) to recognise and respect Aboriginal cultural responsibilities and obligations to the landscape.



Defines **priority of water use**, namely **critical, human need & the environment** over General Security users.



Mandates **2 years reserves for 100% allocation to Towns, Stock & Domestic, & High Security users** before any General Security allocations.



**Caps water use at 1999/2000 levels** of development & processes to measure & manage on-going usage.



160,000ML Macquarie Environmental Water Allowance to **improve environmental outcomes** in the Macquarie Marshes & the Macquarie River.



Replenishment flows of over 50,000ML to **maintain effluent creek, weir pools, & waterholes**.