

News Release **Minister Ian Hunter**

Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation
Minister for Water and the River Murray
Minister for Aboriginal Affairs and Reconciliation

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Murray irrigators to receive full allocation

For the fourth consecutive year, South Australia's River Murray irrigators will receive a full water allocation.

Water and River Murray Minister Ian Hunter said the Murray-Darling Basin Authority has confirmed South Australia will receive its full River Murray Entitlement Flow for the next financial year.

"Our River Murray irrigators are already the most efficient in the country – they recognise how precious this resource is, and how they need to make every drop count," he said.

"The decision to continue irrigators' 100 per cent allocation for 2014-15 is recognition of their excellent work to date, and their sustainable, efficient use of this resource.

"Through this latest allocation, South Australia will receive the full 1850 gigalitres of Entitlement Flow – an excellent outcome for our irrigators."

Minister Hunter said the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources had deferred some of the 2013-14 Entitlement Flow for private carryover purposes.

"Under the River Murray Private Carryover Policy, entitlement holders may be able to hold a percentage of underused water allocation which can then be allocated for use in the following year," he said.

"The decision about how this deferred water will be allocated and whether a percentage will be able to be carried over will be deferred until we can consider the current climate outlooks provided by the Bureau of Meteorology.

"These outlooks indicate an increased chance of moving into dryer weather patterns this year."

Minister Hunter said the annual allocation was part of national agreements to ensure fair and sustainable levels of water are extracted from the River.

"We have fought hard to secure more environmental water to South Australia as part of the Basin Plan negotiations and will continue to lobby for our fair share in any future negotiations about the health of the River," he said.

"We care about the health of the River and want to ensure the priorities for our state's environment, producers and regional communities are well-understood.

“Finding an equitable balance between environmental, social and economic needs, includes getting a fair deal for our irrigators, and I’m pleased we have seen this realised through this latest decision from the Murray-Darling Basin Authority.”

People seeking more information about irrigation entitlements or water trading can visit www.environment.sa.gov.au/licences-and-permits/water-licence-and-permit-forms/sa-murray-darling-basin