

Snowy Hydro Limited

Water Storages Q & A

24 July 2006

Q) Why is Lake Eucumbene water level so low?

A) Normally Lake Eucumbene is at its lowest level at this time of year. The Lake level will not start to rise again until water inflows increase either from rainfall or snow melt following winter. Unfortunately, as you would be aware, the country is experiencing a major drought sequence. It is the drought that is impacting Lake Eucumbene water levels which are at their lowest July level since 1972.

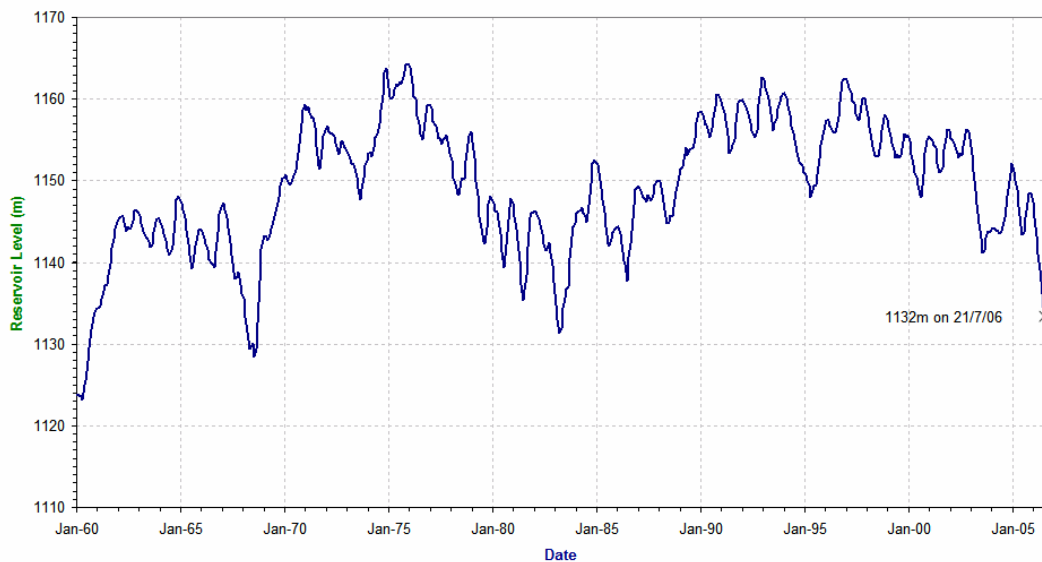
In addition, inflows this water year have only been 20% of average. Previous prolonged drought sequences saw lower lake levels in 1968 and 1983 respectively.

Overall, below average inflows have occurred since 1997 with the exception of 2000 when inflows were only 200 GL above average. However, the minimum annual releases from the Snowy Scheme as determined by the Snowy Water licence has remained fixed at 2088 GL with additional water being released for irrigation and electricity generation as required.

Because of the extremely low inflows and steady demand, water levels in Snowy Scheme storages have been steadily decreasing since 1997 and are currently around 21% of active capacity.

This can be noted by the graph of Eucumbene Reservoir level below.

Eucumbene Reservoir Level



Q) What is Snowy Hydro doing to facilitate access to the Lake?

A) Snowy Hydro is assisting Snowy River Shire Council in preparing a boat ramp in the Old Adaminaby area that can be used to access the Lake. As current heavy frosts are creating very slippery conditions at some of the traditional boat launch sites, Snowy Hydro is also making a series of Community Service Announcements regarding the low lake levels and the need to take care when launching boats.

Q) What are the expected levels into the future?

A) It is difficult to predict the extent or length of the current drought sequence that is affecting the entire country and Lake Eucumbene water levels. However, in the short to medium term, it is likely that the Lake levels will drop through until the end of August and then hopefully increase in September and October with the snow melt. After that, the levels will again gradually decrease over summer. Up to date information on water levels can be found on the Snowy Hydro web page at www.snowyhydro.com.au