

## **Snowy Hydro Limited**

### **Water Storages Q&A Update**

**10 October 2006**

#### **Q) Why is Lake Eucumbene water level so low?**

A) Unfortunately, the entire country is experiencing a major drought. It is this prolonged drought sequence that is impacting Lake Eucumbene water levels which were at their lowest September level since the Snowy Scheme was completed in 1973.

In addition, inflows this winter have only been around 26% of average. The only Lake Eucumbene level trough more severe than this occasion occurred in 1968.

Overall, below average inflows have occurred since 1997 with the exception of 2000 when inflows were only 200 gegalitres (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 19% of active capacity.

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

A) Snowy Hydro is assisting Snowy River Shire Council in maintaining a boat ramp in the Old Adaminaby area that can be used to access the Lake. As heavy frosts can create very slippery conditions at some of the traditional boat launch sites, Snowy Hydro advises Lake Users 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, Lake Eucumbene water levels normally start to rise from Spring snow melt inflows at this time of year, after being at their lowest annual levels in the middle of the year. As the snow season has been one of the worst on record, it is not expected that the rise in lake level will be as good as usual unless there is a marked improvement in rainfall over Spring.

Up to date information on water levels can be found on the Snowy Hydro web page at [www.snowyhydro.com.au](http://www.snowyhydro.com.au)