

UPPER HUNTER WATER BALANCE 2019



Upper Hunter
Mining Dialogue

Summary of Key Findings

The Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue assessed water use by the mining industry in the Upper Hunter in 2019. Using a common accounting framework, mining companies have reported their water inflows and outflows from operations. This has helped them to manage their water use and embark on water saving and reuse opportunities.

Below is a summary of key findings on water use in the Upper Hunter for 2019:

-  2019 was a drier than average year. That year 214 billion litres entered the river system in the Upper Hunter.
-  33% of that water stayed in the river.
-  The amount of water extracted and used by farmers, residents and businesses was 58%.
-  Mining used less than 8% of the water in the system.
-  Almost 2 times as much water evaporated from the Hunter River System storage dams as was extracted from the Hunter River System by mining companies.
-  Only 32% of mine water came from rivers and alluvial aquifers.
-  26% of mine water was sourced from onsite rainfall and runoff.
-  37% of water was sourced from deep aquifers that are of limited use to other water users due to their high salinity.
-  The mining industry reused 55% of its water onsite.
-  No mine water was discharged into the Hunter River.
-  The rainfall in Scone during 2019 was 281mm, which is below the long-term average of 592mm. The continued dry conditions meant that companies did not have opportunities to discharge excess water into the Hunter River System and were in fact keenly conserving their stored water.

To find out more, visit miningdialogue.com.au

The NSW Minerals Council has compiled the data in this infographic using the best available information. Since water accounting is a complex task that relies on estimates and computer models, there are corresponding limits to the accuracy of the information. Sources: Bureau of Meteorology; DPI Water; NSW Minerals Council data.