

UPPER HUNTER WATER BALANCE 2018













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 2018. 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 2018:

-  2018 was a drier than average year, with 188 billion litres entering the river system in the Upper Hunter (down from 204 billion litres in 2017).
-  28% of that water stayed in the river (down from 42% in 2017).
-  The amount of water extracted and used by farmers, residents and businesses was 65%, at 122 GL (up from 55% in 2017).
-  Mining used less than 8% of the water in the system, at 14.6 GL (up from 3% in 2017).
-  More than 2 times as much water evaporated from the Hunter River System storage dams as was extracted from the Hunter River System by mining companies (this figure was up to 6 times as much in 2017).
-  27% of mine water was sourced from onsite rainfall and runoff (down from 38% in 2017).
-  33% of water was sourced from deep aquifers that are of limited use to other water users due to their high salinity (down from 41% in 2017).
-  The mining industry reused 46% of its water onsite (down from 55% in 2017).
-  Zero mine water was discharged into the Hunter River (down from 0.45% in 2017).
-  The rainfall in Scone during 2018 was 363 mm, which is well below the long-term average of 636 mm. The dry conditions meant that companies did not have any 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.