



Water Reporting Summary – NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

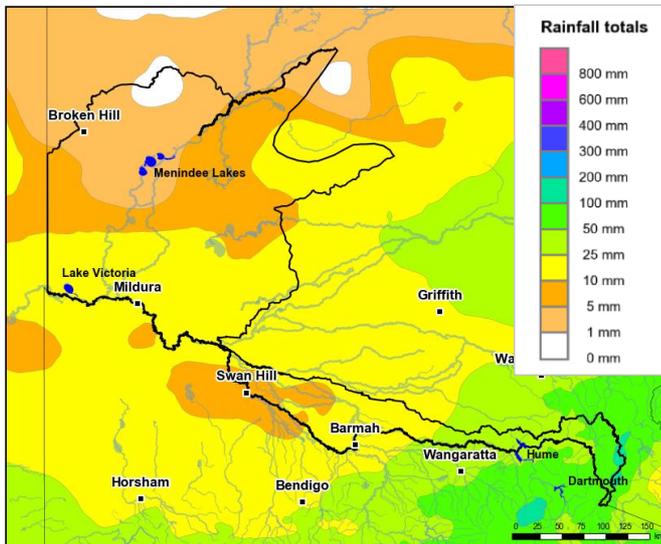
15 December 2020



Overview

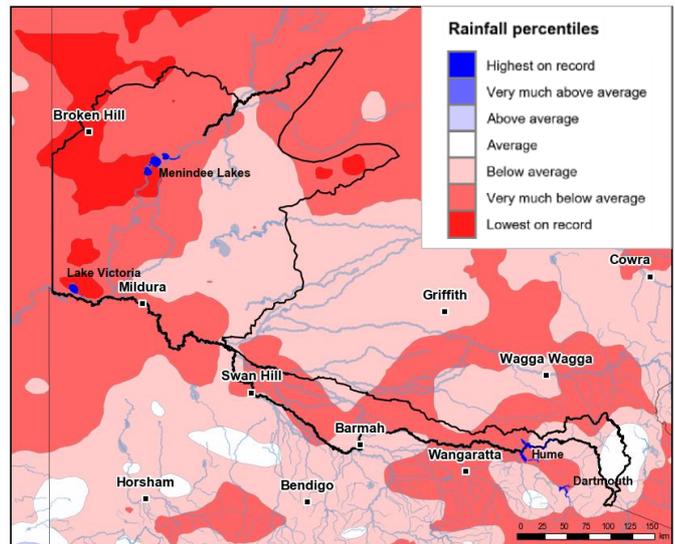
- In the past month, central areas of the NSW Murray catchment received 10 to 25 mm of rainfall while areas near Hume Dam received 25 to 50 mm. Upstream areas of the catchment received up to 100 mm of rainfall. In contrast, areas near Swan Hill received 5 to 10 mm. Southern areas of the Lower Darling catchment near Lake Victoria received 10 to 25 mm of rainfall, while the remainder of the catchment received less than 10 mm (Figure 1). The total area-average rainfall across both catchments was 12 mm. This recent rainfall is in the context of the extended dry period since January 2017, particularly for the central and lower areas of the NSW Murray catchment and the Lower Darling catchment, with rainfall mainly very much below average or lowest on record (Figure 2).
- In the last month, root zone soil moisture was below average in areas near Broken Hill, average to above average in areas north-east of Mildura and average elsewhere in the Lower Darling catchment. In the NSW Murray, root zone soil moisture was average across most of the catchment. Recent rainfall in the last month has translated into some runoff and inflows into storages (Figure 3) however, Drought Stage 2 conditions remain in the Lower Darling catchment. In Drought Stage 2 (emerging drought or drought recovery), there has been limited water resources and multiple years of low flows (NSW DPIE). As there has been only limited improvement in water resources, allocations for some entitlement holders remain low (Figure 4 and Table 1).
- General security allocations in the NSW Murray and Lower Darling catchments are currently 43% and 30% respectively. Announced allocations for the NSW Murray are the highest since 2017–18, for this time of year. Allocation prices in the NSW Murray are currently \$210 per ML (Table 1), which are higher than prices paid in November (\$150 per ML) but well below prices paid at the same time last year (\$630 per ML). Trading has been limited in the Lower Darling.

Recent conditions



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Figure 1: Rainfall totals for the last 30 days
(16 Nov to 15 Dec 2020)



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Figure 2: Rainfall percentiles since January 2017 (compared to 1900–2019 long-term average) (Jan 2017 to Nov 2020)

Note: Rainfall percentiles for the period from January 2017 are shown as the Bureau of Meteorology considers January 2017 to be the start of the current dry period for eastern Australia.

How much water is in the storages?

Combined total storage (NSW share*): 2 661 GL (as at end of Nov 2020)

*New South Wales' share of Dartmouth, Hume, Lake Victoria and Menindee Lakes storages

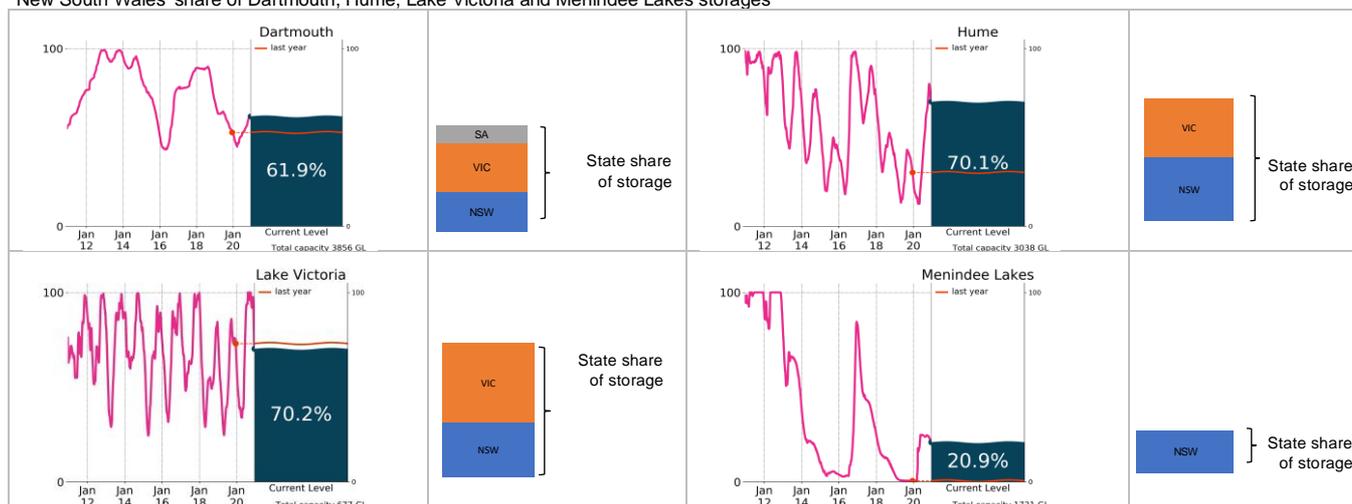


Figure 3: Current total storage (% of total capacity) as at 15 December 2020 compared to the last ten years (State shares updated end Nov 2020)

Source: [BoM water storages dashboard](#) and [MDBA](#)

Who is the water for?

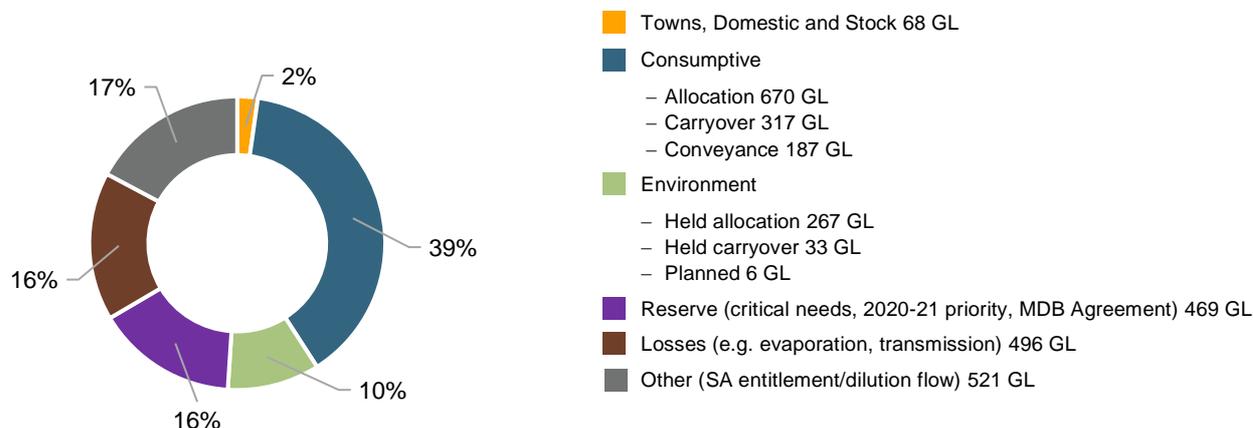


Figure 4: Volumes of water allocated (% of total) for the 2020-21 water year (as at 15 December 2020)

Source: [NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment](#)

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 15 December 2020. It does not represent remaining available allocated water as it does not allow for water used, traded or new storage inflows (in excess of minimum assumptions).

Table 1: Allocation announcements (%) and market prices – selected licence categories as at 15 December 2020

Licence category	Announced allocation	Historic comparison (same time of year)	Entitlement prices (monthly median)	Allocation price (median – last 7 days)
Stock and Domestic	100%	Same as most years	n/a	\$210/ML (NSW Murray) \$50/ML* (Lower Darling)
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years	\$7 520/ML*	
Lower Darling High Security	100%	Same as most years	n/a	
NSW Murray General Security	43%	Highest allocation for this time of year since 2017–18	\$1 688/ML*	
Lower Darling General Security	30%	Highest allocation in since 2017–18	n/a	
Average Carryover (General Security)	21% (NSW Murray) 48% (Lower Darling)	19% last year (NSW Murray) 19% last year (Lower Darling)	n/a	

*Indicative - limited trade data

Source: [NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment](#) and [BoM water markets dashboard](#)

FIND OUT MORE

For more information email water@bom.gov.au



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