



# Water Reporting Summary – NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

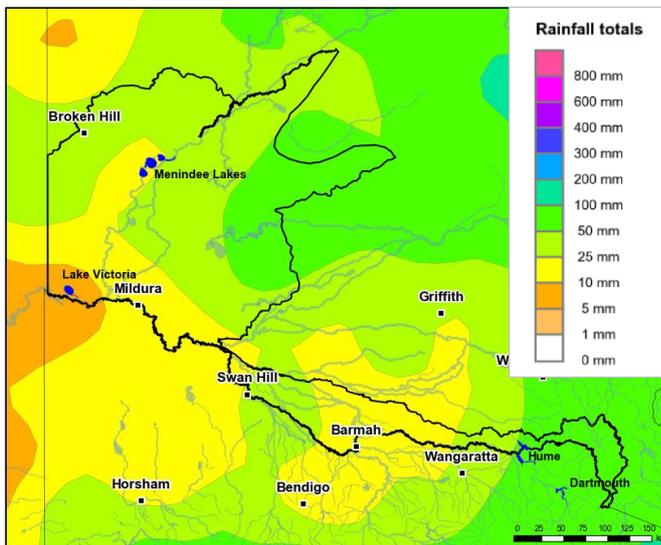
15 January 2021



## Overview

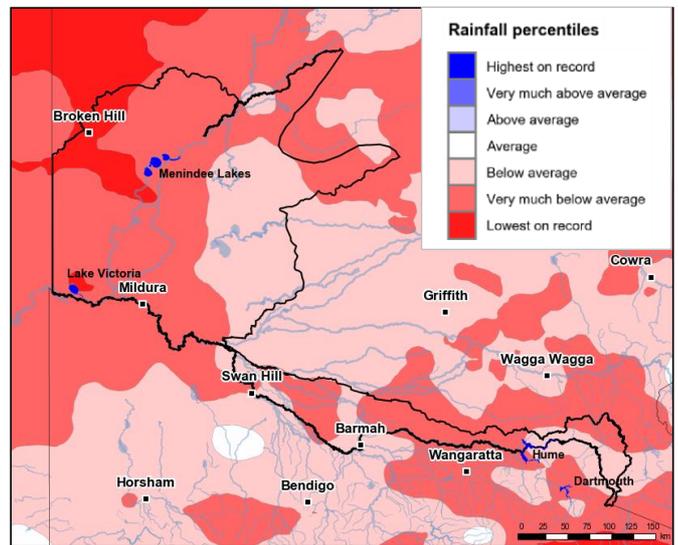
- In the past month, eastern areas of the NSW Murray catchment received 50 to 100 mm of rainfall, with central and downstream areas receiving between 10 and 50 mm. Similarly, eastern areas of the Lower Darling catchment received 50 to 100 mm of rainfall, with most central areas of the catchment receiving 25 to 50 mm. Downstream areas of the Lower Darling catchment received less than 25 mm of rainfall with areas around Lake Victoria receiving between 5 to 10 mm (Figure 1). The total area-average rainfall across both catchments was 36 mm. This recent rainfall is in the context of the extended dry period since January 2017, with rainfall mainly very much below average for most areas of the NSW Murray and Lower Darling catchments. For the western areas of the Lower Darling catchment, rainfall has been lowest on record (Figure 2).
- In the last month, root zone soil moisture was mainly average across the catchments, except for eastern areas of the Lower Darling which had above average soil moisture. 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 46% 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 \$160 per ML (Table 1), which are higher than prices paid in December (\$150 per ML) but well below prices paid at the same time last year (\$830 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 (17 Dec to 15 Jan 2021)



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Figure 2: Rainfall percentiles since January 2017 (compared to 1900–2019 long-term average) (Jan 2017 to Dec 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\*): 2 448 GL (as at end of Dec 2020)

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

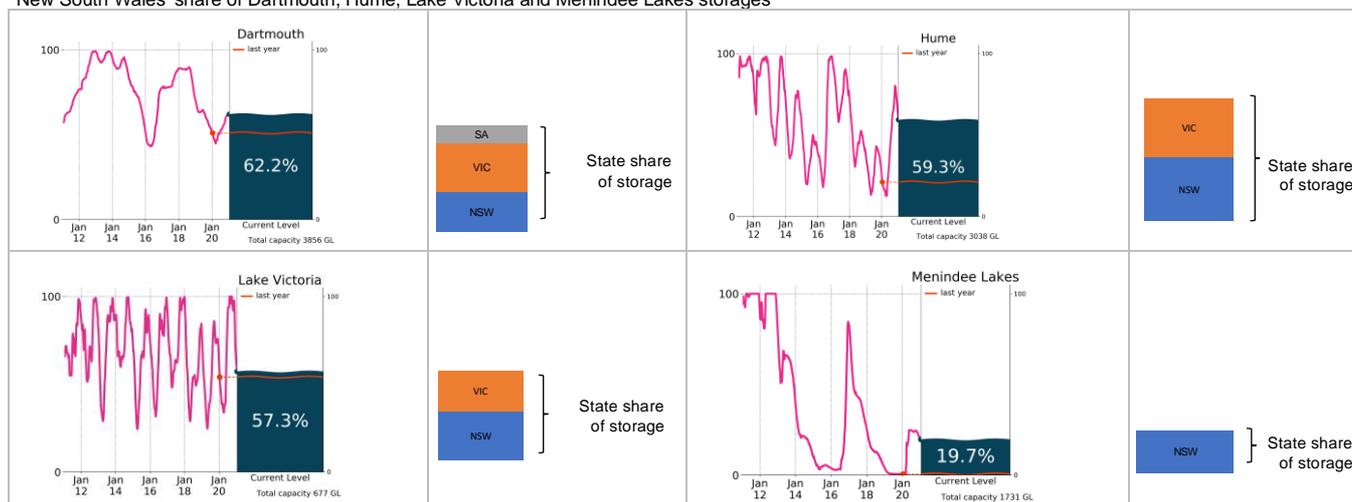


Figure 3: Current total storage (% of total capacity) as at 15 January 2021 compared to the last ten years (State shares updated end Dec 2020)

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

## Who is the water for?

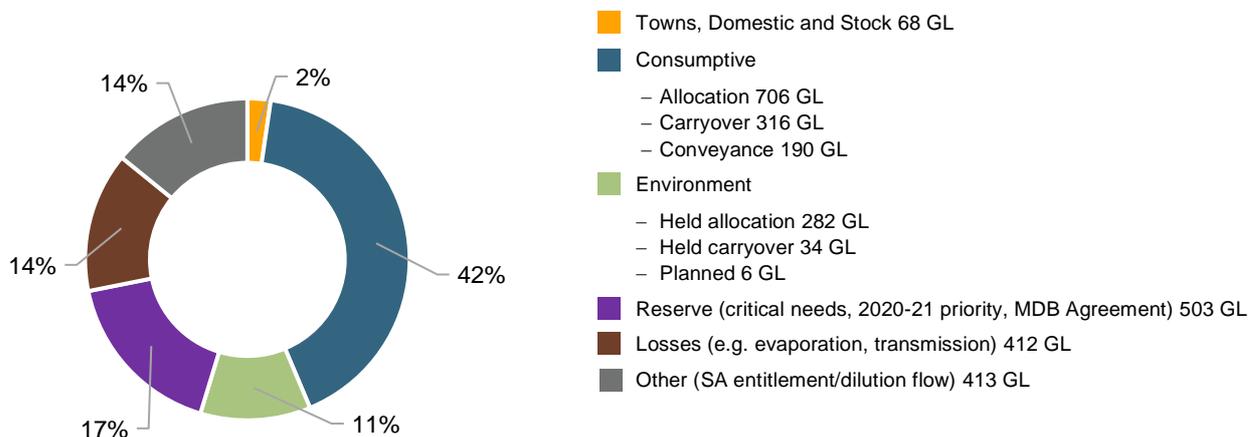


Figure 4: Volumes of water allocated (% of total) for the 2020-21 water year (as at 15 January 2021)

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

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 15 January 2021. 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 January 2021

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	\$160/ML (NSW Murray)
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years	\$8 230/ML*	
Lower Darling High Security	100%	Same as most years	n/a	
NSW Murray General Security	46%	Highest allocation for this time of year since 2017–18	\$1 970/ML*	n/a (Lower Darling)
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](mailto:water@bom.gov.au)



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