



Water Reporting Summary – NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

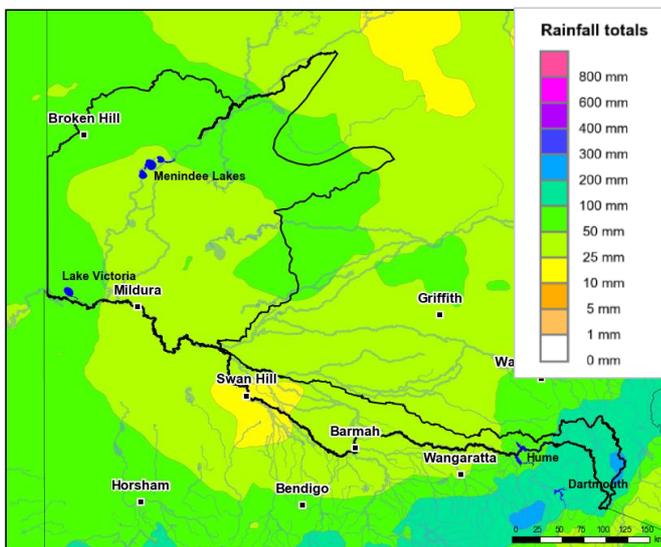
15 October 2020



Overview

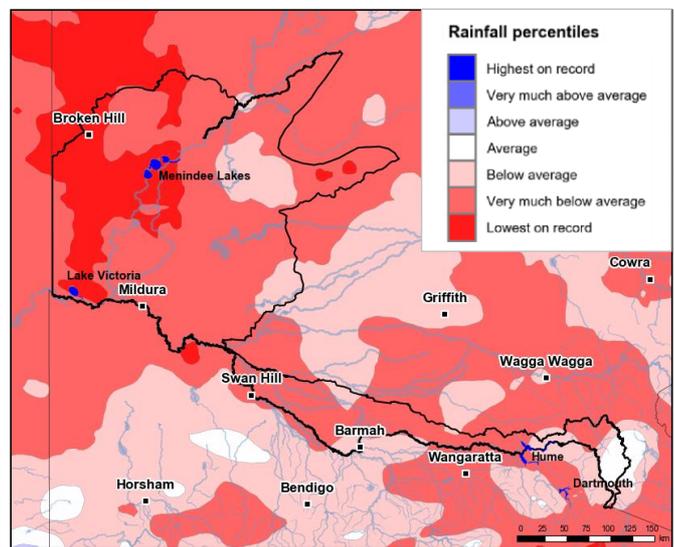
- In the past month, there was widespread rainfall across the NSW Murray and Lower Darling catchments. Central areas of the NSW Murray catchment received 25 to 50 mm of rain while areas upstream of Hume Dam received up to 300 mm of rain. In contrast, areas near Swan Hill received 10 to 25 mm. Most of the Lower Darling catchment received 25 to 50 mm of rainfall, with areas around Lake Victoria, Broken Hill and north-east of Menindee Lakes receiving up to 100 mm, resulting in some flooding (Figure 1). The total area-average rainfall across both catchments was 52 mm, with almost half of this rain received on one day (20 September). 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 being mainly very much below average or lowest on record (Figure 2).
- Recent rainfall has maintained average to above average soil moisture in the Lower Darling and mostly average soil moisture in the NSW Murray. 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 26% and 30% respectively. These announced allocations are the highest in the last three years, for this time of year. Allocation prices are currently \$278 per ML (Table 1), well below their peak of over \$800 per ML in January 2020.

Recent conditions



<http://www.bom.gov.au>
© Commonwealth of Australia 2020, Bureau of Meteorology

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



<http://www.bom.gov.au>
© Commonwealth of Australia 2020, Bureau of Meteorology

Figure 2: Rainfall percentiles since January 2017 (compared to 1900–2019 long-term average) (Jan 2017 to Sept 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*): 2 686 GL (as at end Sept 2020)

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

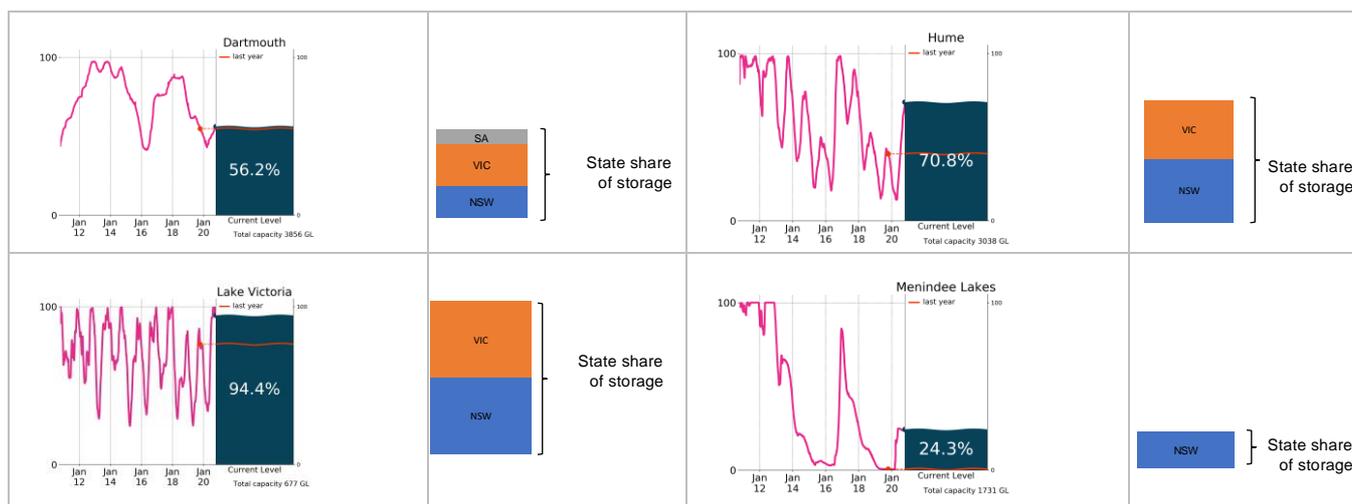


Figure 3: Current total storage (% of total capacity) as at 15 October 2020 compared to the last ten years (State shares updated end Sept 2020)

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

Who is the water for?

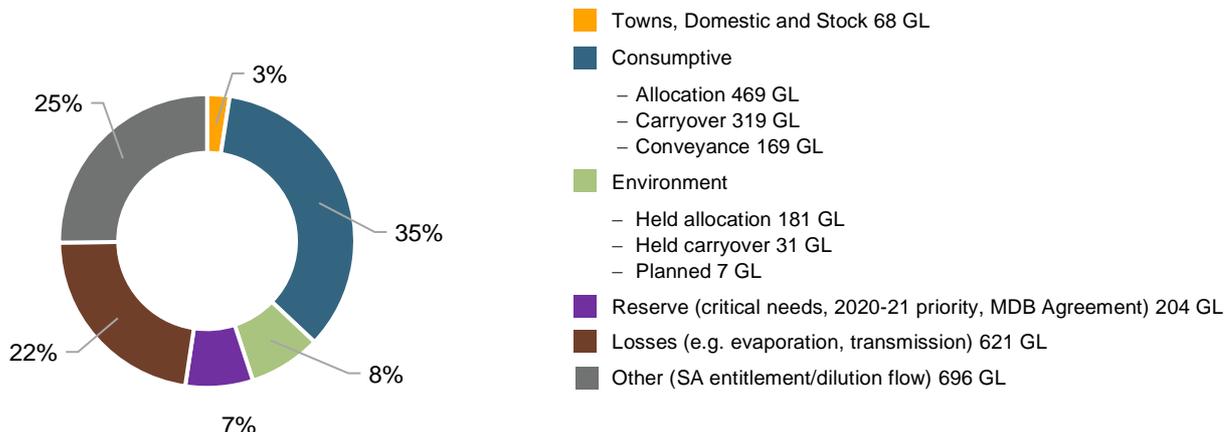


Figure 4: Volumes of water allocated (% of total) for the 2020-21 water year (as at 15 October 2020)

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

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 15 October 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 October 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	n/a (NSW Murray- above Barmah Choke)
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years	n/a	
Lower Darling High Security	100%	Same as most years	n/a	\$278/ML (NSW Murray- below Barmah Choke)
NSW Murray General Security	26%	Highest allocation for this time of year since 2017–18	n/a	
Lower Darling General Security	30%	Highest allocation in since 2017–18	n/a	n/a (Lower Darling)
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



With the exception of logos, photography and data referenced as being from other organisations, this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia Licence. The terms and conditions of the licence are available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au>. Attribution for this publication should be: © Commonwealth of Australia (Bureau of Meteorology) 2020.