



Water Reporting Summary – NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

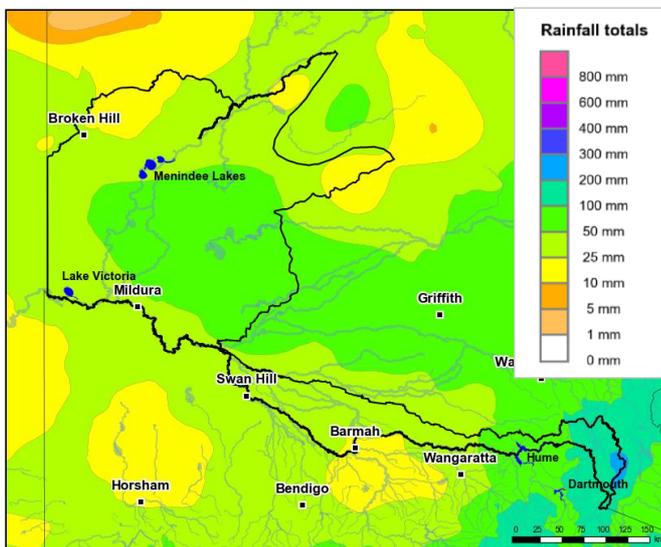
16 November 2020



Overview

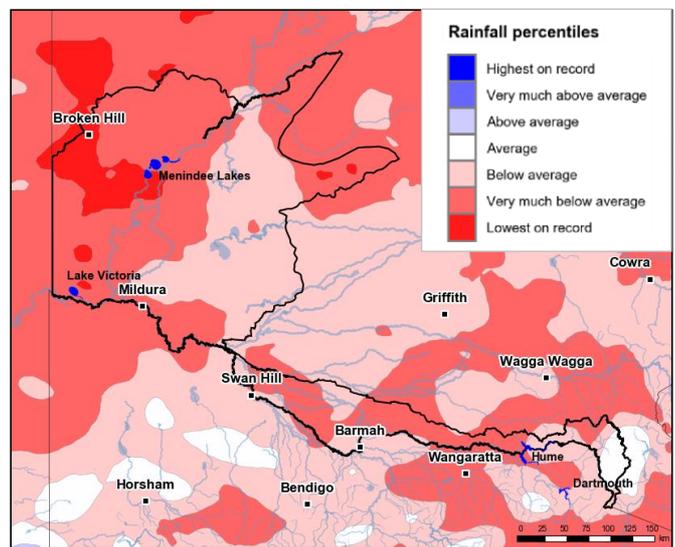
- In the past month, central areas of the NSW Murray catchment received 25 to 50 mm of rain while areas near Hume Dam received 50 to 100 mm of rain. Upstream areas of the catchment received up to 300 mm of rain. Central areas of the Lower Darling catchment received 50 to 100 mm of rainfall, with areas north of Menindee Lakes and near Lake Victoria receiving 25 to 50 mm. In contrast, areas north-east of Broken Hill received 10 to 25 mm (Figure 1). The total area-average rainfall across both catchments was 50 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 being mainly very much below average or lowest on record (Figure 2).
- Root zone soil moisture was above to very much above average across most of the Lower Darling and average to above average 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 39% and 30% respectively. Announced allocations for the NSW Murray are the highest since 2016–17, for this time of year. Allocation prices are currently \$128-\$176 per ML (Table 1), which are lower than October prices and well below the peak of over \$800 per ML in January 2020.

Recent conditions



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Figure 1: Rainfall totals for the last 30 days (18 Oct to 16 Nov 2020)



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Figure 2: Rainfall percentiles since January 2017 (compared to 1900–2019 long-term average) (Jan 2017 to Oct 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*): 2 909 GL (as at end of Oct 2020)

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

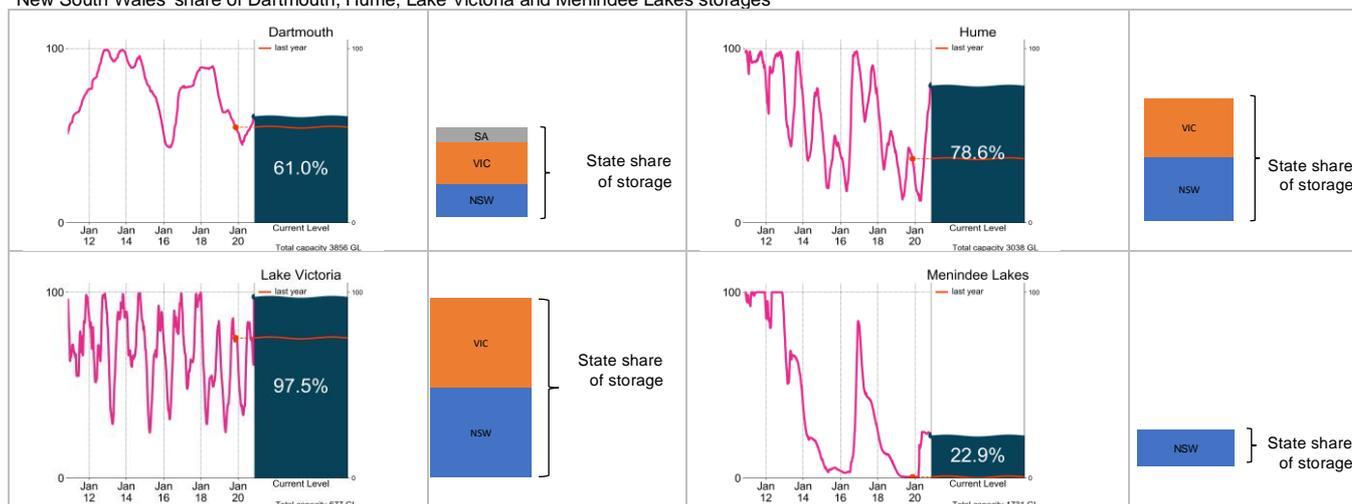


Figure 3: Current total storage (% of total capacity) as at 16 November 2020 compared to the last ten years (State shares updated end Oct 2020)

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

Who is the water for?

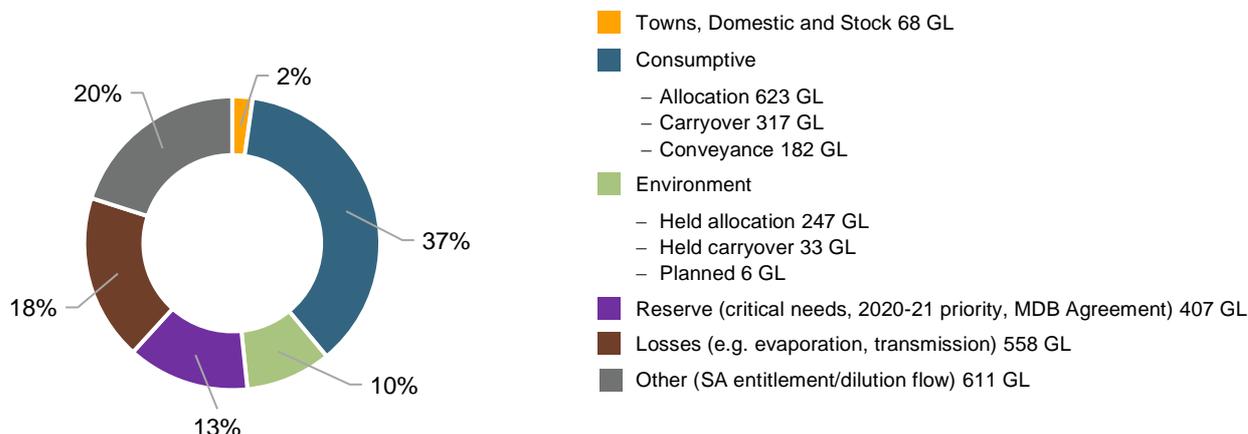


Figure 4: Volumes of water allocated (% of total) for the 2020-21 water year (as at 16 November 2020)

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

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 16 November 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 16 November 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	\$128/ML* (NSW Murray-above Barmah Choke)
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years	\$8 300/ML	
Lower Darling High Security	100%	Same as most years	n/a	
NSW Murray General Security	39%	Highest allocation for this time of year since 2016–17	\$1,675/ML	\$176/ML* (NSW Murray-below Barmah Choke)
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](#)

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For more information email water@bom.gov.au



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