



# Water Reporting Summary – NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

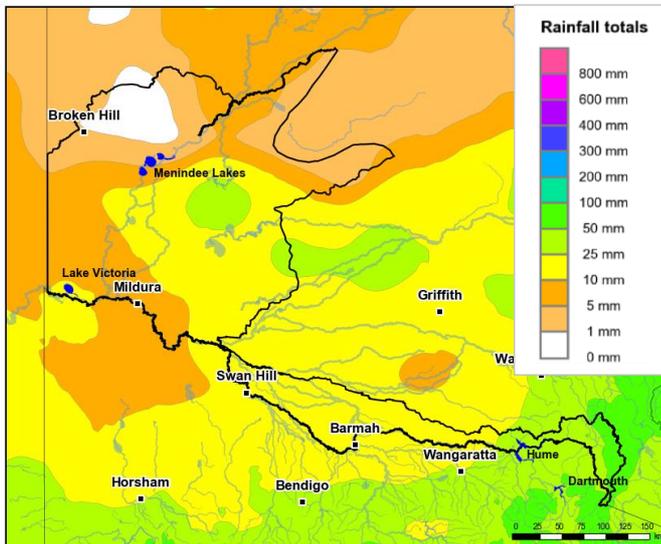
1 December 2020



## Overview

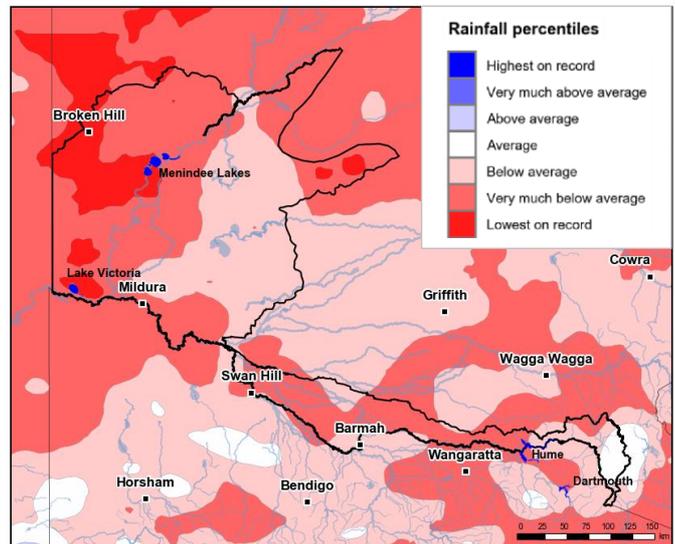
- In the past month, central areas of the NSW Murray catchment received 10 to 25 mm of rain while areas near Hume Dam received 25 to 50 mm of rain. Upstream areas of the catchment received up to 100 mm of rain. Central areas of the Lower Darling catchment and areas near Lake Victoria received 10 to 25 mm of rainfall. In contrast, the remainder of the Lower Darling received less than 10 mm of rainfall, with some areas north-east of Broken Hill receiving no rain (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).
- Root zone soil moisture was above to very much 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 to above average. Rainfall in the last month has translated into 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 40% and 30% respectively. Announced allocations for the NSW Murray are the highest since 2016–17, for this time of year. Allocation prices are currently \$148-\$229 per ML (Table 1), which are higher than early November prices but well below prices paid at the same time last year (\$600 per ML) .

## Recent conditions



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Figure 1: Rainfall totals for the last 30 days  
(2 Nov to 1 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\*): 2 909 GL (as at end of Oct 2020)**

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

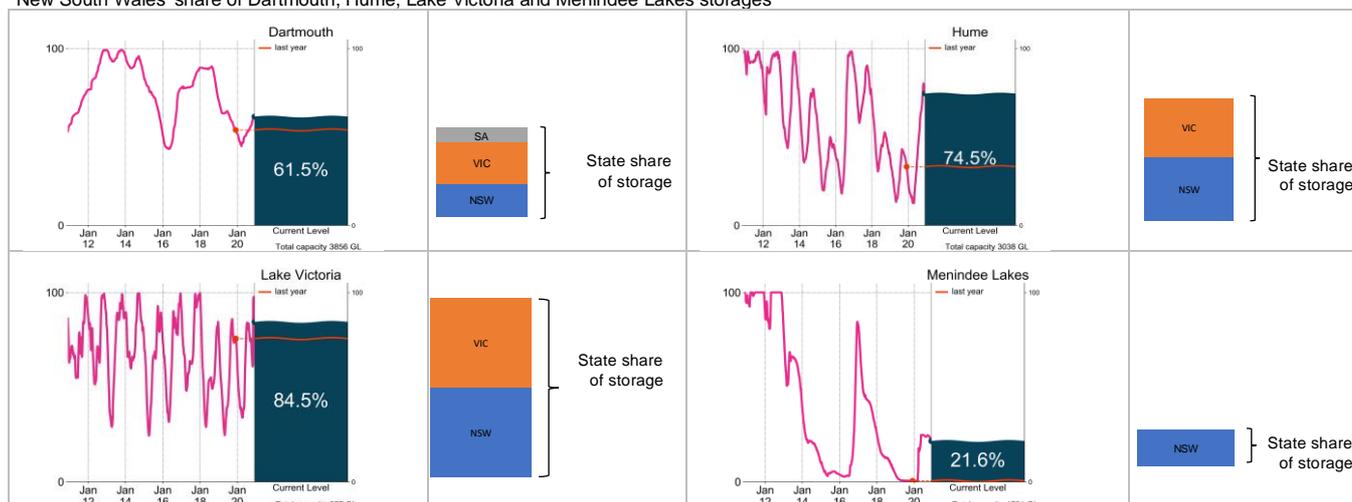


Figure 3: Current total storage (% of total capacity) as at 1 December 2020 compared to the last ten years (State shares updated end Oct 2020)

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

## Who is the water for?

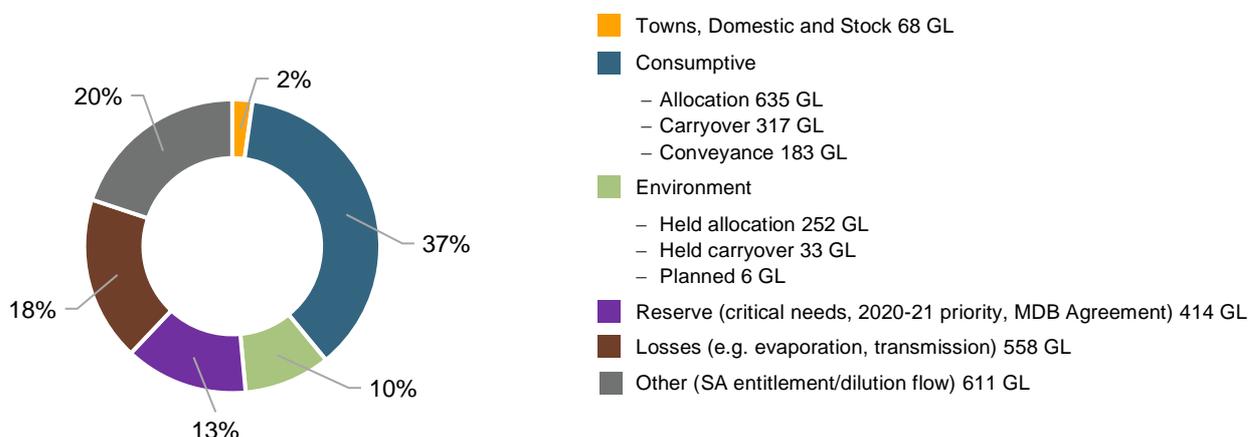


Figure 4: Volumes of water allocated (% of total) for the 2020-21 water year (as at 1 December 2020)

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

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 1 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 1 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	\$148/ML* (NSW Murray-above Barmah Choke)
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years	\$8 200/ML*	
Lower Darling High Security	100%	Same as most years	n/a	
NSW Murray General Security	40%	Highest allocation for this time of year since 2016–17	\$1 620/ML*	\$229/ML* (NSW Murray-below Barmah Choke)
Lower Darling General Security	30%	Highest allocation in since 2017–18	n/a	\$50/ML* (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](mailto:water@bom.gov.au)



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