



Water Reporting Summary – NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

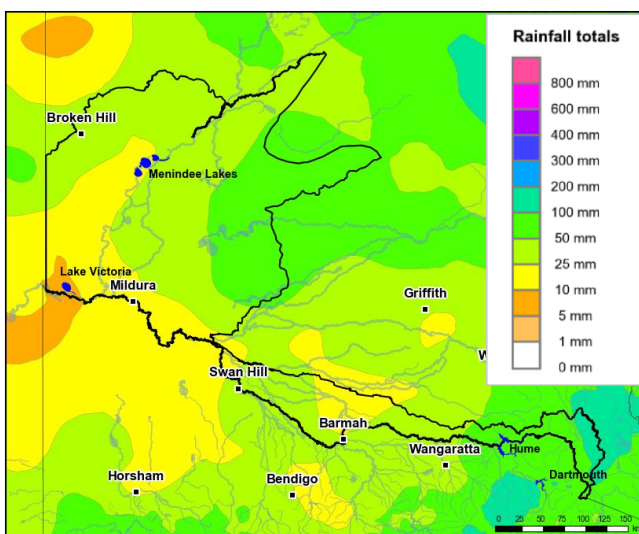
04 January 2021



Overview

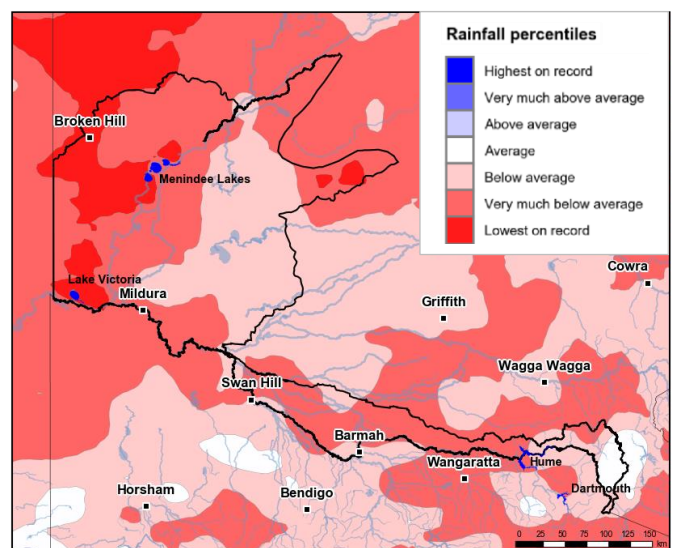
- In the past month, eastern areas of the NSW Murray catchment received 100 to 200 mm of rainfall which gradually decreased westward to between 50 to 100mm, except for the areas to the north of Barmah and Swan Hill which received between 10 to 25 mm of rainfall. Similarly, the majority of the areas in the south and southwest of the Lower Darling catchment received between 10 to 25 mm of rainfall, and areas around Lake Victoria received between 5 to 10 mm of rainfall. The remainder of the Lower Darling received between 25 to 50 mm in the centre and between 50 to 100 in the east (Figure 1). The total area-average rainfall across both catchments was 40 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 catchment and the western areas of the Lower Darling catchment, (Figure 2).
- In the last month, root zone soil moisture was mainly average across the catchments. It was above average in eastern areas of the Lower Darling but was below average in small areas of the central NSW Murray. 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 \$152 per ML (Table 1), which are lower than prices paid in December (\$190 per ML) and well below prices paid at the same time last year (\$669 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 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*): 2 661 GL (as at end of Nov 2020)

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

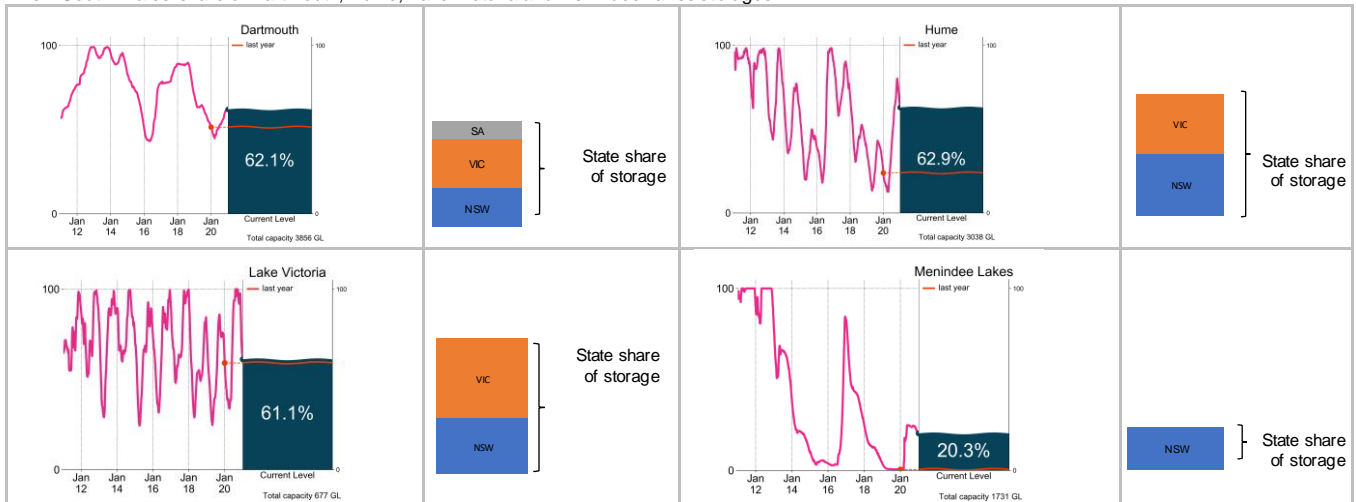


Figure 3: Current total storage (% of total capacity) as at 04 January 2021 compared to the last ten years (State shares updated end Nov 2020)

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

Who is the water for?

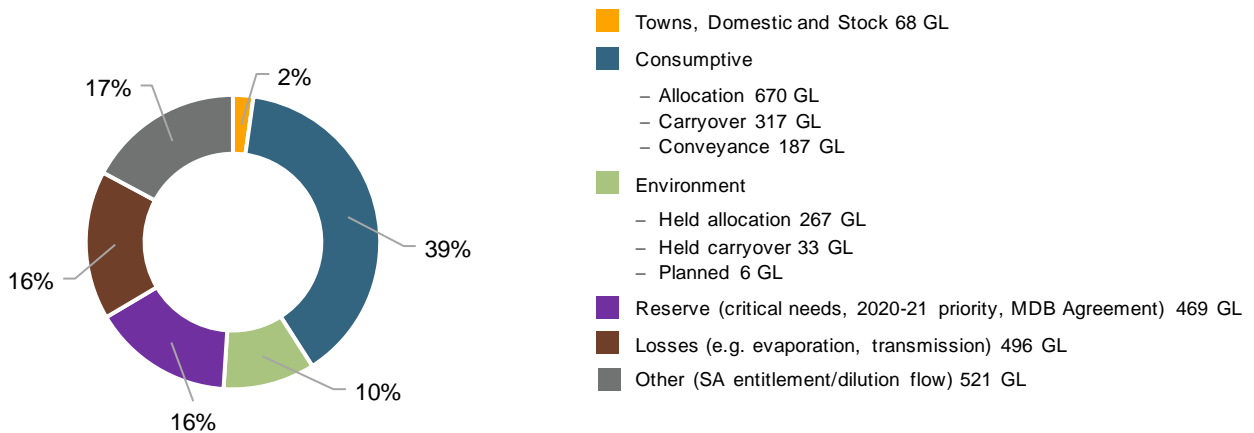


Figure 4: Volumes of water allocated (% of total) for the 2020-21 water year (as at 04 January 2021)

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

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 04 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 04 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	\$152/ML (NSW Murray)
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years	\$8 100/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	\$1 700/ML*	\$50/ML* (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](#)

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For more information email water@bom.gov.au



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