



Water Reporting Summary - NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

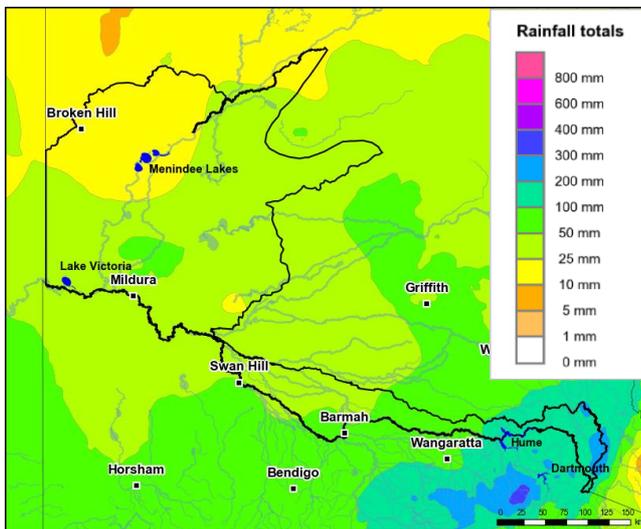
15 May 2020



Overview

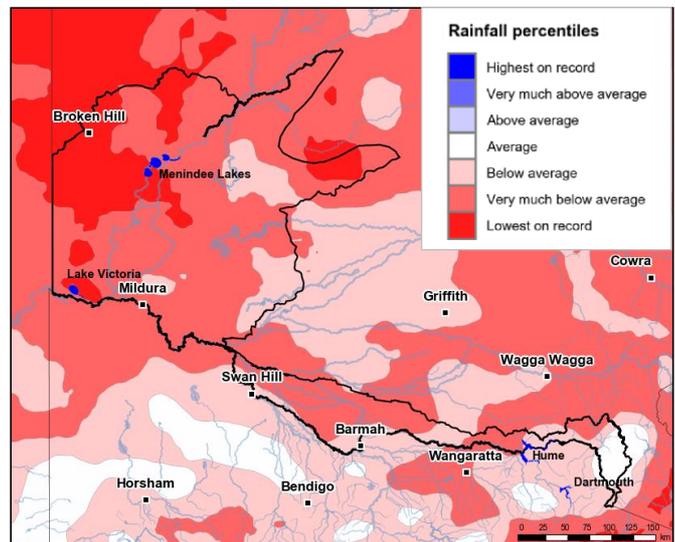
- In the past month, most of the NSW Murray and Lower Darling catchments received 25 to 100 mm of rainfall. Parts of the upper NSW Murray catchment received significant rainfall (up to 300 mm), although areas near Broken Hill received less than 25mm falling (Figure 1). The total area-average rainfall across both catchments was 40 mm. This recent patchy rainfall is in the context of the extended dry period since January 2017, particularly for the central parts 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 improved soil moisture translating into runoff and inflows into storages (Figure 3). However, Drought Stage 2 conditions remain in the NSW and Lower Darling catchments. In Drought Stage 2 (Emerging drought or drought recovery), there has been limited water resources and multiple years of low flows (NSW DPIE). As a consequence, allocations for some entitlement holders remain low (Figure 4 and Table 1).
- The recent improvement in water resources has resulted in the first allocations (3%) for general security entitlement holders in the NSW Murray since March 2018. General security entitlements in the Lower Darling received a 30% allocation in April as a result of inflows into the Menindee Lakes. Allocation prices remain relatively high for this time of year (\$260-\$345 per ML) due to low water availability but have declined significantly from their peak of over \$800 per ML in January 2020 (Table 1).
- For information on 1 July 2020 allocation outlooks, please refer to the [NSW Murray and Lower Darling Water Allocation Statement \(15 May 2020\)](#).

Recent conditions



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



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Figure 2: Rainfall percentiles since January 2017 (Compared to 1900-2019 long-term average) (Jan 2017 to Apr 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*): 1,340 GL (as at end April 2020)

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

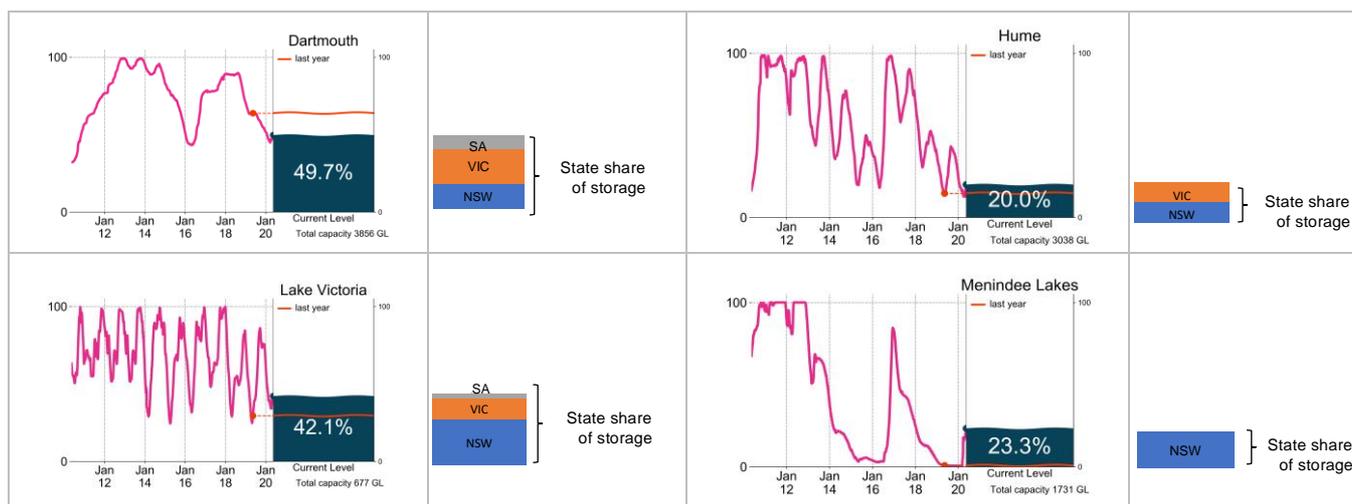


Figure 3: Current total storage (% of total capacity) as at 15 May 2020 compared to the last ten years (State shares updated end April 2020)

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

Who is the water for?

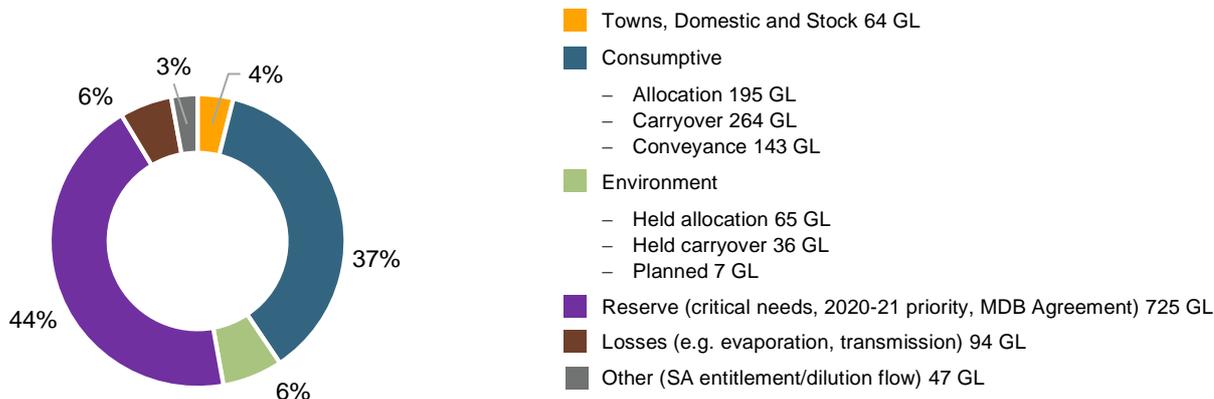


Figure 4: Volumes of water allocated (% of total) for the 2019-20 water year (as at 15 May 2020)

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

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 15 May 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). Water allocation figures shown here differ to those on WaterNSW's [Water Insights](#), which shows estimated water available over a two-year planning period (2019 to 2021).

Table 1: Allocation announcements (%) and market prices – Selected licence categories as at 15 May 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	\$260/ML (NSW Murray-above Barmah Choke)
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years	\$8,500/ML	
Lower Darling High Security	100%	Same as most years	\$8,500/ML*	
NSW Murray General Security	3%	With carryover, lowest available water since 2009	\$1,635/ML	\$345/ML (NSW Murray-below Barmah Choke)
Lower Darling General Security	30%	Third lowest allocation in the last ten years	\$450/ML*	n/a (Lower Darling)
Average Carryover (General Security)	18% (NSW Murray) 19% (Lower Darling)	32% last year (NSW Murray) 15% 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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