



Water Reporting Summary - NSW Murray and Lower Darling Catchments

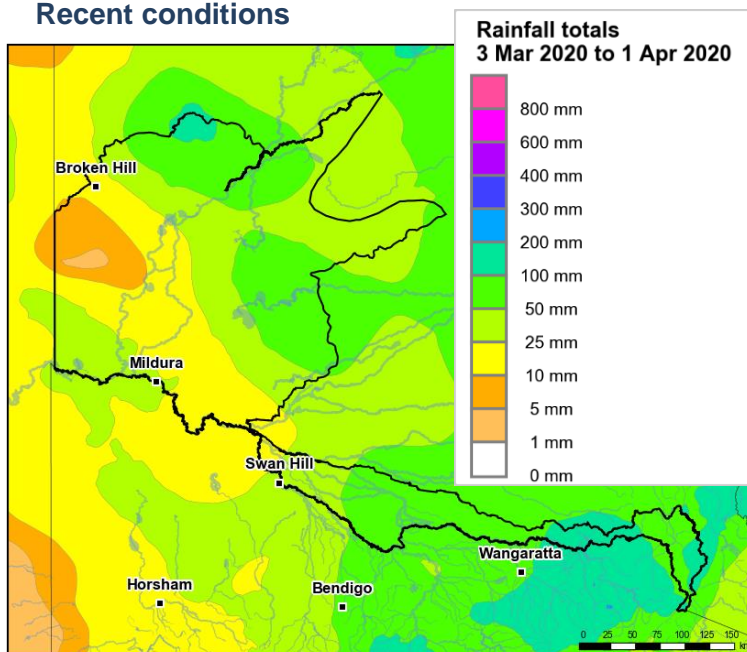
1 April 2020



Overview

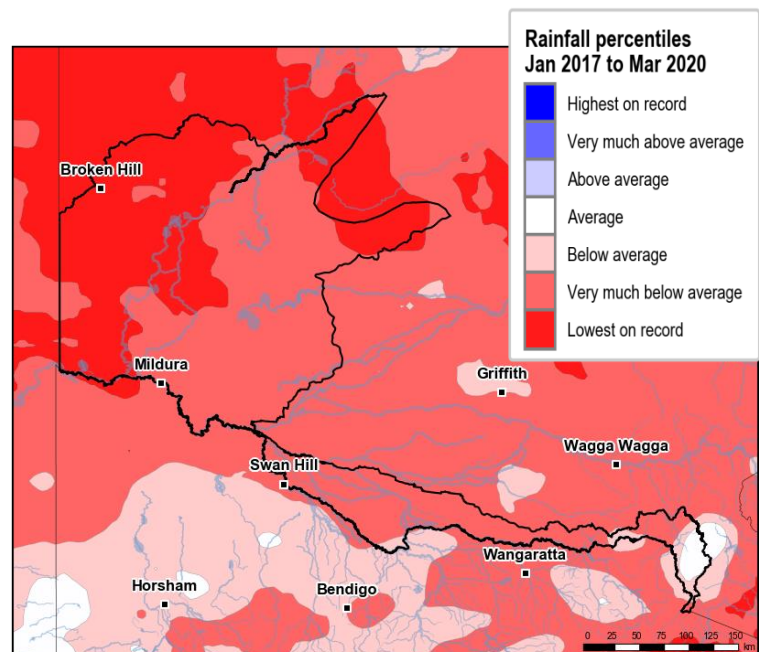
- In the last 30 days, most of the NSW Murray and Lower Darling catchments received 25 to 100 mm of rainfall with up to 200 mm falling in parts of the upper Murray catchment. Most of this rain fell in the first half of March. In contrast, lower parts of the Darling River near Broken Hill received less than 10 mm in the last month (1 to 10 mm) (Figure 1). The total area-average rainfall across both catchments was 44 mm. This recent patchy rainfall is in the context of the extended dry period since January 2017 with rainfall across the NSW Murray and Lower Darling catchments being mainly very much below average or lowest on record (Figure 2).
- Recent rainfall has improved soil moisture but has not translated into significantly higher runoff and inflows into most storages, with a continuation of Drought Stage 2 in the NSW Murray. Flows into the Menindee Lakes have allowed Drought Stage 4 to be eased to Stage 3 for the Lower Darling catchment. In Drought Stage 2 (Emerging drought), there has been limited water resources and multiple years of low flows. For Stage 3, there has been severe water shortages, with water delivery restricted to high priority demands (NSW DPIE). Consequently, there have been low or no allocations for some entitlement holders (Figure 3 and Table 1).
- Announced allocations for general security entitlement holders remain at 0% which, for this time of year, has occurred twice in the last ten years for the NSW Murray, and three times in the last ten years for the Lower Darling.
- For information on 1 July 2020 allocation outlooks, please refer to the [NSW Murray and Lower Darling Water Allocation Statement \(16 March 2020\)](#).

Recent conditions



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Figure 1: Rainfall totals for the last 30 days



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Figure 2: Rainfall percentiles since January 2017
(Compared to 1900-2019 long-term average)

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*): 1,055 GL (as at end Feb 2020)

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

Source: [MDBA](#)

Storage	% Full (total storage capacity as at 1/4/2020)	% Full (same time last year)
Dartmouth	47%	63%
Hume	13%	19%
Lake Victoria	35%	33%
Menindee Lakes	12%	1%

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

Who is the water for?

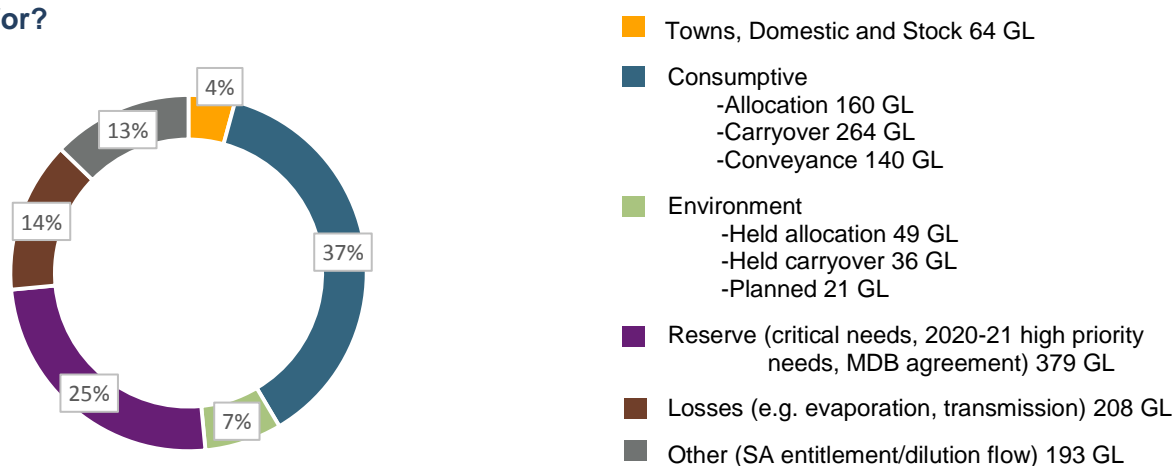


Figure 3: Volumes of water allocated for the 2019-20 water year (as at 16 March 2020)

Source: [Water Allocation Statement- NSW Department of Planning, Industry and Environment](#)

NB: Allocation information shown here is water allocated for various purposes as at 16 March 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 (%) - Selected licence categories as at 1 April 2020

Licence category	Current announced allocation	Historic comparison (same time of year)
Stock and Domestic	100%	Same as most years
NSW Murray High Security	97%	Same as most years
Lower Darling High Security	100%	Same as most years
NSW Murray General Security	0%	With carryover, lowest available water since 2009
Lower Darling General Security	0%	Has occurred in three out of the last ten years
Average Carryover (General Security)	18% (NSW Murray) 19% (Lower Darling)	32% last year (NSW Murray) 15% last year (Lower Darling)

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

FIND OUT MORE

For more information email water@bom.gov.au



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