Australian Government
Bureau of Meteorology

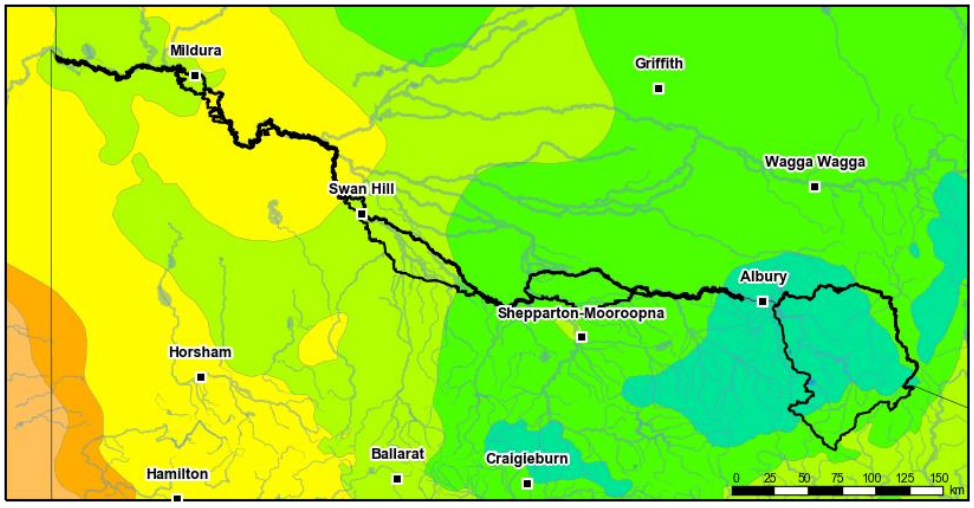
Water Reporting Summary - Victorian Murray Catchment

1 April 2020

Overview

- Although the last two weeks have been fairly dry, most of the Victorian Murray received between 25 to 100 mm of rainfall during the first half of March. Exceptions included upstream parts of the catchment, which received up to 200 mm of rainfall, and areas between Mildura and Swan Hill, which received less than 25 mm (Figure 1). The area-average rainfall for the catchment was 96 mm. This recent patchy rainfall is in the context of the extended dry period since January 2017 with rainfall across the Victorian Murray catchment mostly being very much below average (Figure 2).
- Recent rainfall has improved soil moisture but has not translated into significantly higher runoff and inflows into most storages. Low storage volumes and inflows have led to low current allocation volumes (Figure 3). Looking forward to the 2020-21 summer, if storages receive similar inflows to those received during 2019-20, announced allocations (known as seasonal determinations) would only be expected to reach about 45% for high-reliability water shares (Northern Victoria Resource Manager).
- Announced allocations for high-reliability water shares are currently 66%, which is the lowest level for this time of year since 2008-09 (Table 1).

Recent conditions



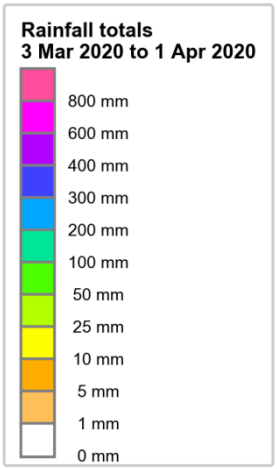


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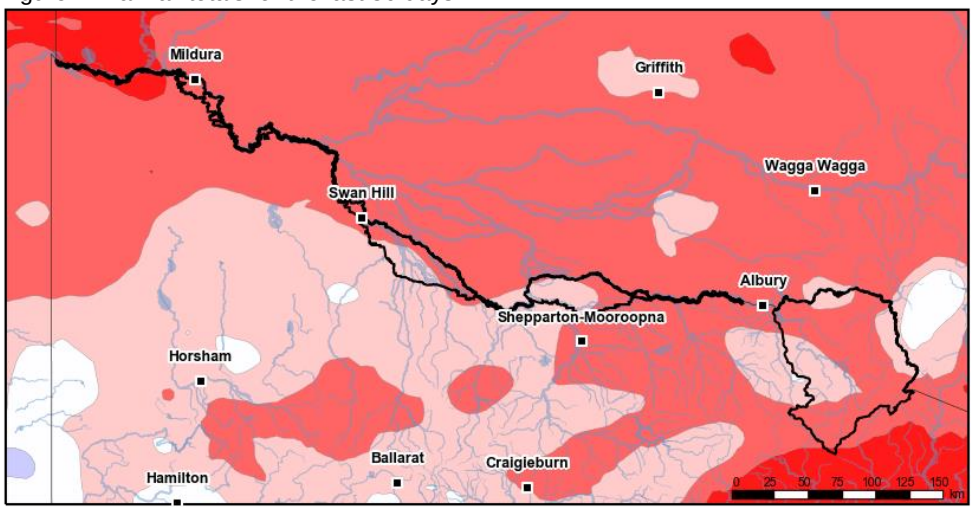
Figure 1: Rainfall totals for the last 30 days



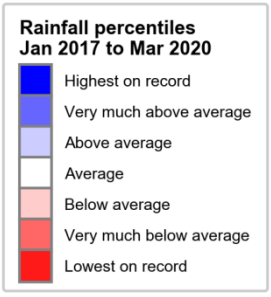


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Figure 2: Rainfall percentiles since January 2017 (Compared to 1900-2019 long-term average). Note: Rainfall percentiles for the period from January 2017 are shown as the Bureau of Meteorology considers January 2017 to be the start of the current dry period for eastern Australia.

How much water is in the storages?

Combined total storage (VIC share*): 1,170 GL (as at end Feb 2020)

*Victoria's 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?

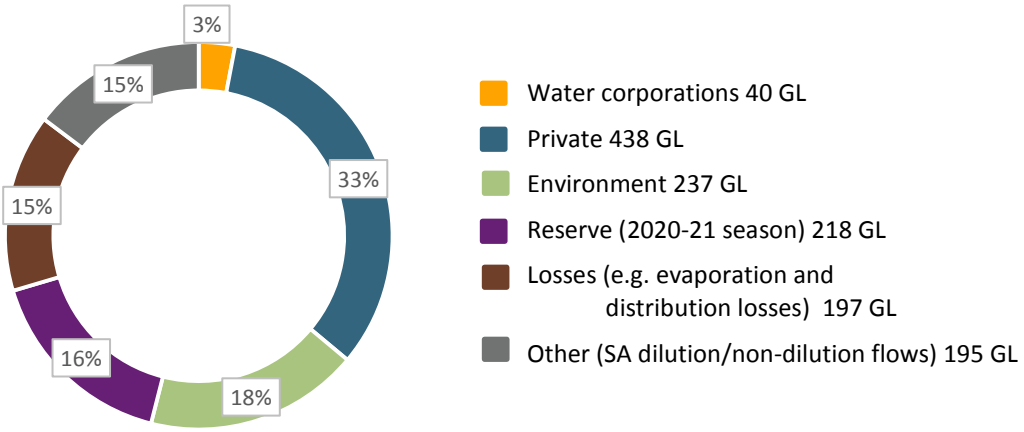

Figure 3: Volumes of water allocations currently available or remaining (% of total remaining) (as at 1 April 2020)

Source: Northern Victoria Resource Manager

NB: Allocation information shows water currently available in allocation accounts and remaining commitments. Information published by the Northern Victoria Resource Manager differs from information published on the Victorian Water Register as the former includes preliminary environmental water holder use and volumes for operational use by Goulburn-Murray Water private water shareholders.

Table 1: Allocation announcements (seasonal determinations) (%) - Selected licence categories as at 1 April 2020

Licence category	Current announced allocation	Historic comparison (same time of year)
VIC Murray High-Reliability Water Share	66%	Lowest since 2008-09
VIC Murray Low-Reliability Water Share	0%	Same as most years

Source: Victorian Water Register

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For more information email water@bom.gov.au