

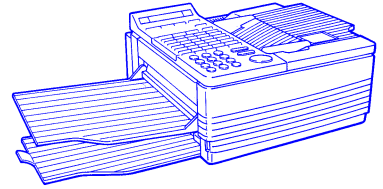


SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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SOI MESSAGE - 1 MARCH 1996

SOI AVERAGES / PHASE

December 95 - 7.8

January 96 + 8.4

February 96 - 0.1

Last 30 days + 0.4

Last 90 days + 0.4

SOI trend during January - February was
Phase 3 (i.e. rapidly falling ↘) *

All values subject to revision by Bureau of Meteorology

* See AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN for effects of SOI phases on rainfall at your location.

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

Established climate forecast systems show the probability of receiving median rainfall for the March to May period is about 50% in most of southern and central Queensland, except for coastal districts north of Rockhampton, Brisbane, the Sunshine Coast, and much of a strip running from the Taroom-Moura region to the western border where the probability is about 35%. In much of north Queensland the probability is about 35%, while in parts of the Dalrymple and Etheridge Shires is about 25%. In most of NSW and Victoria, the probabilities are about 50%.

The next passage of 30- to 50-day Oscillation is due around mid March.

Sea-surface temperatures are warmer-than-normal in the western Pacific Ocean and the Coral Sea, although this region appears to be contracting in size.

Sea-surface temperatures are cooler-than-normal in equatorial regions near the International Dateline, and in some sections of the Indian Ocean.

Some experimental General Circulation Models (including that of the Bureau of Meteorology) are suggesting possible redevelopment of an El Niño in the autumn/winter of 1996. Please note these models are experimental and should be used with caution. Alternatively established statistical forecast systems will not provide reliable indications for winter/spring 1996 until late autumn.

While the current seasonal climate outlook is reasonable, there is no certainty at this stage that this outlook will persist beyond autumn.

The average SOI over the last 30 days was +0.4 . The probability of receiving median rainfall is now about 50% for most of Queensland for the March to May period, falling to about 35% in parts of central Queensland and much of north Queensland. Rainfall prospects beyond autumn are uncertain.

THE BOTTOM LINE

To obtain more information for your location, we recommend combined use of the AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN package and the Bureau of Meteorology's Seasonal Climate Outlook. Also a lot of additional information is available on our Internet World Wide Web service, 'The Long Paddock', at URL - <http://www.dpi.qld.gov.au/longpdk/>.

The next SOI HOTLINE update will be on the 6th of March (usually by 5pm).

Climate Impacts and Spatial Systems - Department of Primary Industries

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If you would like any further information, please contact Col Paull on (07) 389 69587, or one of the Risk Management Co-Ordinators located at Cloncurry (077) 421 311, Charters Towers (077) 872 155, Emerald (079) 828 801, Kingaroy (071) 621 355 and Roma (076) 229 999

Some information courtesy Bureau of Meteorology,

CSIRO and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, USA