



SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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SOI MESSAGE - 27 MARCH 1996

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE	
December 95	* - 7.8
January 96	** + 7.7
February 96	* - 0.1

Last 30 days	+ 7.2
Last 90 days (b)	+ 4.8

SOI trend (b) during January - February was Phase 5 (i.e. near zero ○) (c).	

NOTE : (a) SOI values calculated using mean barometric pressures from 1880 to 1992 - subject to revision by Bureau of Meteorology.

* Preliminary value ** Revised value

(b) See AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN for effects of SOI on rainfall at your location.

(c) Plotted SOI Phase point is close to boundary with Phase 3 (i.e. rapidly falling ▲)

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

Established climate forecast systems show the probability of receiving median rainfall for the total March to May period is about 50% in most of Queensland, except for small scattered areas in the central west and inland north Queensland where the probability is about 35%. In most of NSW and Victoria, the probabilities are about 50%. Please note that the correlation between rainfall and SOI is poorest during autumn.

The next passage of the 30- to 50-day Oscillation is due about the third week of April.

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 to the east of the International Dateline.

Some experimental General Circulation Models (including that of the Bureau of Meteorology) are suggesting possible redevelopment of an El Niño in the autumn/winter period. 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 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 +7.2 . 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 and northern 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. The WHEATMAN computer package is recommended for use in Queensland and northern New South Wales. 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 3rd of April (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