



SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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SOI MESSAGE - 15 MAY 1996

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE	
February 96	* - 0.1
March 96	* + 5.3
April 96	* + 5.3

Last 30 days	+ 7.9
Last 90 days (b)	+ 4.6

SOI trend ^(b) during March - April was Phase 2 (i.e. positive ▲).	

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.

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

In spite of the unusually good recent rains in central and southern Queensland, and northern NSW, the future rainfall probabilities remain basically the same. While forecast systems have the least accuracy in autumn, the situation at the end of May will give a reasonable indication of prospects for winter and spring.

Most climate forecast systems are suggesting "near average" rainfall for the May - July period for Queensland and NSW. Thus the probability of exceeding median rainfall for the next three months is about 50%. Exceptions in Queensland are parts of the Shires of Banana, Duaranga, Livingstone, and Broadsound where probabilities are about 35%, and an area in the south-western corner where probabilities are about 65%.

Some recently developed Bureau of Meteorology Experimental forecast products are suggesting

slightly higher chances of exceeding median rainfall through southern Qld and Northern NSW.

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

Sea-surface temperatures have warmed a little in the Coral Sea, but also in sections of the central equatorial Pacific Ocean. Parts of the extreme eastern equatorial Pacific are still cooler-than-normal. Stronger-than-normal easterly winds are still present in equatorial parts of the Pacific Ocean.

Initial estimates suggest a reasonable probability of a late finish to the frost period this year.

The average SOI over the last 30 days remains positive at +7.9 .A summary of climate forecast systems for the May to July period suggests "average" rainfall for this time of year.

THE BOTTOM LINE

Chances of an El Niño redeveloping in the short term are not strong, although some experimental General Circulation Models are still suggesting that an El Niño weather pattern may reform late in the year.

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 22nd of May (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,

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