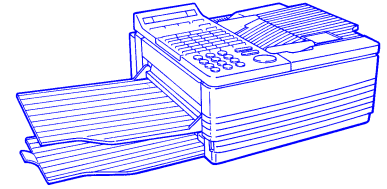




SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE
SOI FAX HOTLINE S
 (Southern Oscillation Index)
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SOI MESSAGE - 21 AUGUST 1996

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE		
May 96	*	+ 1.7
June 96	*	+ 10.5
July 96	*	+ 6.7

Last 30 days		- 0.7
Last 90 days (b)		+ 6.3

SOI trend (b) during June - July was Phase 2 (i.e. positive S).		

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.

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

The Bureau of Meteorology indicates that easterly winds have restrengthened in some parts of the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean.

Sea-surface temperatures are mostly neutral in the central and eastern Pacific, except for a cooler-than-normal area in the extreme east. The western Pacific Ocean remains mostly warmer-than-normal.

The trend in the SOI over April/May suggests little variation from the median date of last frost for most of Queensland and northern New South Wales, except for the Biloela, Emerald and Tamworth areas where it is about one week later than normal.

The average SOI over the last 30 days was -0.7. However, the climate outlook remains unchanged, with the probabilities of receiving average rainfall for this time of year ranging from 50% to 80%.

THE BOTTOM LINE

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

Most climate forecast systems are still suggesting 'average to above average' rainfall in eastern Australia during the next three months. Probabilities of receiving median rainfall are mainly about 65% in the eastern half of Australia. Exceptions are coastal districts from Bundaberg to north-eastern Victoria and the southern half of the Western Darling Downs where probabilities are about 55%; in parts of north-eastern Queensland, southern NSW, inland Victoria and the south-east corner of South Australia the probabilities are about 75%.

That is, when we have experienced a similar SOI pattern to the current one, over the last 130 years, we have received at least median rainfall in about 5-in-10 years to 8-in-10 years, with some variation from one location to another.

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 28th of August (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 Climate Risk Co-Ordinators located at Cloncurry (077) 421 311, Charters Towers (077) 872 155, Emerald (079) 828 801, Kingaroy (071) 600 717 and Roma (076) 229 999
 Some information courtesy Bureau of Meteorology,
 CSIRO and National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, USA