



SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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SOI MESSAGE - 20 NOVEMBER 1996

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE		
August 96	*	+ 5.3
September 96	*	+ 6.2
October 96	*	+ 6.2

Last 30 days		- 3.9
Last 90 days (b)		+ 5.0

SOI trend (b) during September - October 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.

The next passage of the 30- to 50-day Oscillation is due in the second week of December.

Sea-surface temperatures are mostly neutral in the central and eastern tropical Pacific, except for a cooler-than-normal area in the extreme east. Seas in the tropical western Pacific Ocean and the eastern Indian Ocean are warmer-than-normal. Sea-surface temperatures are near-normal in a large area of the central Pacific, and in the Coral Sea.

Research at the Bureau of Meteorology into sea-surface temperature and SOI patterns suggests a high probability of an early start to the northern Australian wet season this year.

The average SOI over the previous 30 days continues to be very slightly negative at - 3.9 . The recent drop in the SOI is probably only temporary. There is no change in the official outlook which suggests average to slightly-above-average rainfall over the next three months.

THE BOTTOM LINE

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

Most climate forecast systems are now suggesting average to slightly-above-average rainfall in Queensland and NSW, and mostly average rainfall in Victoria, over the total November to January period.

Probabilities of receiving median rainfall are mostly about 65% in Queensland and NSW. Exceptions are the north-west and far central-west of Qld, south-western NSW, and most of Victoria where the probabilities are about 55%; in parts of north-eastern Queensland and central Western Darling Downs 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 2-in-3 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 MESSAGE update will be on the 27th of November (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 Longreach (076) 584 400, 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