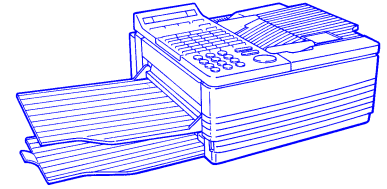




SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE
SOI FAX HOTLINES
 (Southern Oscillation Index)
 menu page = 019 725 300
 this page = 019 725 301



SOI MESSAGE - 11 DECEMBER 1996

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE		
September 96	*	+ 6.2
October 96	*	+ 6.2
November	*	- 0.8

Last 30 days		+ 3.7
Last 90 days (b)		+ 4.5

SOI trend ^(b) during October - November was Phase 5 (i.e. near zero ○) .		

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.

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, including to the north of Australia.

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

The average SOI over the previous 30 days has increased to +3.7 . Climate forecasts indicate that there is a high probability of near-average rainfall during the summer months.

THE BOTTOM LINE

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

Most climate forecast systems are now suggesting near-average rainfall in Queensland, NSW and Victoria over the total December to February period.

In strict statistical terms, the probability of receiving the climatological median rainfall over the next three months is mostly about 50%.

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 half of the years, with some variation from one location to another.

The next passage of the 30- to 50-day Oscillation is due within a few days, and again in the third week of January.

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 18th of December (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