



SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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SOI MESSAGE - 5 FEBRUARY 1997

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE		
November 96	*	- 0.8
December 1996	*	+7.3
January 97	*	+3.5

Last 30 days		+ 5.4
Last 90 days (b)		+ 4.5

SOI trend (b) during December - January 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.		

eastern Pacific Ocean, including the region adjacent to the Chilean coast. However, tropical regions still reflect a La Niña system with cool anomalies in the eastern Pacific and warm anomalies in the west. An interesting feature, identified by Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre, is a region of warmer-than-normal water (at 150m depth) that appears to be slowly progressing eastwards into the central and eastern Pacific Ocean. It will be important to carefully monitor this sub-surface pattern over the next three months, for any further signs of deleterious effects on our climate patterns.

The next passage of the important 30-to-50-day oscillation will be approximately within the period of 1 - 10 March.

Pasture growth forecasts indicate that although average summer rainfall is the most likely outcome this year, this may not produce median pasture growth where grasses have been weakened by several years of drought; however, pasture quality and animal performance should be excellent.

The average SOI over the previous 30 days was +5.4. Climate forecasts continue to suggest a high probability of near average rainfall for most of Queensland during the February to April period.

THE BOTTOM LINE

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

"PATCHY RAINFALL PROSPECTS"

While the updated climate forecasts identify some scattered areas in Queensland / New South Wales with a 60% to 80% probability of getting median rainfall, a careful appraisal of the latest Bureau of Meteorology & DPI / DNR climate forecast systems suggests a climate outlook near average for the next three months.

This means there is about a 50% chance of getting 'Average' or median rainfall for most of eastern Australia.

Sea-surface temperatures (SST) in the Coral Sea during January were cooler-than-normal, this probably reduced rainfall along the eastern seaboard. SST's are warmer-than-normal in a large band across the southern-central and southern-

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 12th of February (usually by 5pm).

Climate Impacts and Spatial Systems - Department of Primary Industries Compiled by Dr Roger Stone and Col Paull, QDPI.

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