DNR/DPI SEASONAL CLIMATE INFORMATION SERVICE

SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

this page = 019 725 301 (int. = +61-3-9273 8301)

this page is updated each Wednesday, usually by 5pm

SOI MESSAGE - 28 May 1997

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE

February 97	*	+12.4
March 97	*	-7.0
April 97	*	-14.4
Last 30 days		- 15.3
Last 90 days (b)		- 11.9

SOI trend (b) during April - May was Phase 1 (i.e. negative ▼) .

NOTE : (a) SOI values calculated using mean baro-metric pressures from 1880 to 1992 - subject to revision by Bureau of Meteorology.
*** Preliminary value ** Revised value**

(b) See **AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN** for

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

"EL NIÑO ALERT"

The rapid fall in the SOI over the past ten weeks, and the continued deterioration in the sea-surface temperature patterns in the Pacific Ocean, indicate a high probability of below average rainfall in many districts of eastern Australia for the remainder of 1997.

Use of the 'SOI Phase Analysis' system within AUSTRALIAN RAINMAN shows that much of eastern Australia has a 50% chance of receiving median rainfall during the June - August period. This means that for those areas, climate forecast systems cannot do any better than describing the long-term climatic averages for this time of year.

However, there are considerable areas where rainfall probabilities are much lower. In the cropping areas of southern Queensland and south-eastern central Queensland the probabilities are about 20%. Probabilities are about 35% in other districts of southern Queensland, central Queensland east of Emerald, and in the Dysart to Charters Towers region.

In inland areas of northern NSW, and parts of Victoria, the rainfall probabilities are also about 35%.

The Bureau of Meteorology research section advises that sea-surface temperatures are continuing to warm in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean. They have cooled in the Coral Sea and over the western Pacific. Generally, these conditions are not conducive to worthwhile rainfall for eastern Australia in the longer-term.

The next passage of the 30- to 50-day oscillation is expected during the fourth week of June.

Updated information using recent SOI data indicates a higher probability than normal of late season frosts in many areas.

In the current situation we recommend implementation of plans for dry conditions, and caution when making property management decisions. We also advise regular monitoring of the SOI, sea-surface temperature patterns and published seasonal climate outlooks. We also advise caution when making property management decisions.

The average SOI over the previous 30 days was -15.3 . The probabilities of obtaining 'average' rainfall during the June - August period range from about 20% to 35% over most of southern and central Queensland.

THE BOTTOM LINE

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/, and on BoM's fax and Internet information services.

NEXT UPDATE of the SOI MESSAGE: 4 June

Climate Impacts and Spatial Systems - Department of Primary Industries

Compiled by Col Paull and Dr Roger Stone , 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) 584 418 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