



SOI FAX HOTLINES

(Southern Oscillation Index)

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this page is updated each Wednesday, usually by 5pm



SOI MESSAGE - 24 September 1997

SOI (a) AVERAGES / PHASE		
June 97	*	- 24.3
July 97	*	- 8.9
August 97	*	-18.7

Last 30 days		-15.7
Last 90 days (b)		-14.0

SOI trend (b) during July - August was Phase 3 (i.e. falling ▲).		
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.		

REVIEW OF CLIMATIC FORECASTS AND INFORMATION

"EL NIÑO ALERT"

While the probability of getting median rainfall for the next three months has improved a little in some areas, it should be noted that the longer-term outlook is for generally reduced chances of getting "normal" rainfall.

The probability of getting median rainfall for the September-November period ranges between 20% and 50% for most areas of Queensland and NSW. Exceptions include some areas in far western Queensland where probabilities are about 65%.

Systems of the Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre show parts of the Warrego and far West to be likely to be less affected by the current El Niño pattern than regions in the east of Queensland.

To obtain more detailed 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 SOI Fax Hotlines, and on our Internet World Wide Web service,

'The Long Paddock', at - <http://www.dnr.qld.gov.au/longpdk/>. More detailed information is also available on BoM's fax and Internet information services, particularly the BMRC climate site on the World Wide Web.

BMRC advises that although westerly wind anomalies in equatorial regions weakened during July, they have restrengthened during August, reinforcing the likelihood of the El Niño pattern persisting until at least the autumn of 1998.

BMRC 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.

There is a very high probability of a late start to the wet season in North Queensland this year.

The average SOI over the last 30 days was -15.7. The probabilities of obtaining 'average' rainfall during the September - November period range from about 20% to 50% over most of Queensland and NSW.

THE BOTTOM LINE

The return period of the 30- to 50-day oscillation has become unreliable over recent weeks. However, the most likely time for its next passage is about the third week of October.

The consistently negative SOI Phase during April-May indicates a higher probability than normal of late-season frost in some areas. The chances of severe late frosts are greater in southern inland regions of Qld and northern inland districts of NSW.

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

NEXT UPDATE of the SOI MESSAGE: 1 October

Climate Impacts and Grazing Systems - Department of Natural Resources

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