



THREE-MONTH SEASONAL CLIMATE OUTLOOK STATEMENT

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Rainfall probabilities for May to July 2003, issued 15th April 2003

Drier outlook for most of Victoria

The latest seasonal rainfall outlook from the Bureau's National Climate Centre shows a contrasting pattern of odds, particularly in the east and southeast of the country.

The chances of ABOVE median rainfall for the **May to July** period are between 40 and 45% over central and western parts of Victoria (*see map*). So with climate patterns like the current, about 4 seasons out of 10 are expected to be wetter than average in these areas, whilst about 6 out of 10 are drier. The chances of above median rainfall are slightly higher in eastern parts of the state, where they are closer to the long-term 50%.

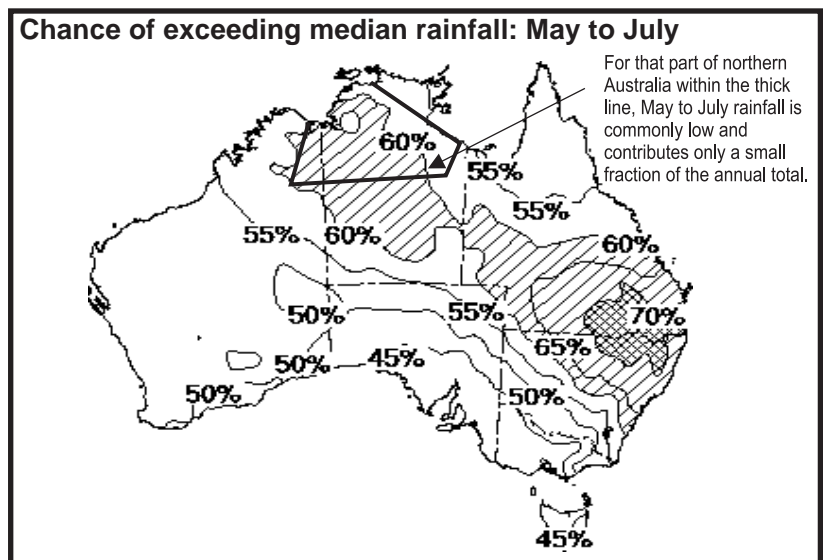
These probabilities should be treated with some caution however, as the objective statistical outlook scheme has fairly low reliability across Victoria at this time of year (*see background*).

The overall pattern of probabilities is almost entirely a result of warmer than average temperatures in the Indian Ocean, with little contribution from the Pacific Ocean. As far as the El Niño is concerned, most of the main indicators show the event is nearly over. Whilst a regeneration of El Niño cannot be ruled out entirely, this is **much less likely** than neutral conditions. For more detail see www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso.

Background Information:

- The Outlook probabilities are based on recent Indian and Pacific Ocean temperatures. Both oceans were warmer than average in March.
- Model Reliability: Strong reliability means that tests of the model on historical data show a high correlation between the most likely outlook category (above/below median) and the verifying observation (above/below median). Low reliability means the historical relationship is weak.
- The Australian impacts of 23 El Niño events since 1900 are summarized on the Bureau's web site at http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/australia_detail.shtml.
- March's value of the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) was -7, the same as February's value. The approximate SOI for the 30 days ending 12th April was -13.
- This outlook represents a summary. Answers to Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) are shown on page 3.

*The national text and a colour map are on the WEB at http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/rain_ahead.shtml.
An online Seasonal Climate Outlook subscription service is available at <http://www.bom.gov.au/silo>.*



More information on this outlook is available from 9:00am to 5:00pm (EST) Monday to Friday by contacting the Climate and Consultancy section in the Bureau's Melbourne Office: (03) 9669 4949.