



**Australian Government**  
**Bureau of Meteorology**

**Severe Tropical Cyclone *Victor***  
2 – 9 March 1986

Perth Tropical Cyclone Warning Centre  
Bureau of Meteorology

**A. Summary**

A tropical low formed north of the Kimberley on 2 March and reached cyclone intensity as it moved on a general southwest track. Tropical cyclone *Victor* intensified into a category four cyclone peaking on 5 March well north of Karratha. The cyclone did not cross the coast, but followed a track parallel to it at a distance approximately 240 to 450 km offshore. *Victor* eventually weakened below cyclone intensity on 9 March west of Geraldton.

Although gale-force winds were registered at Barrow Island there was no direct damage caused by *Victor*. However, offshore industry operations were disrupted.

**B. Meteorological Description**

Tropical cyclone *Victor* was the most severe cyclone of the season. Its central pressure fell to 930 hPa and was maintained for three hours commencing 0600 UTC 5 March 1986. Gales were experienced briefly at Barrow Island at 0700 UTC 6 March, however, no damage was reported in coastal areas.

The developing low drifted westward from the Northern region and reached cyclonic strength near 13S°S, 123.9°E at 1800 UTC 2 March.

The cyclone adopted a basically southwesterly track and deepened steadily. Steering was maintained by an upper-level high located over the Pilbara area. *Victor* followed a southwesterly or south southwesterly track during the whole of the period from 0000 UTC 5 March to 1200 UTC 8 March despite upper-level winds across the regions which were mostly north-westerly. The structure of the cyclone began to show signs of decay after 0000 UTC 7 March and by 1200 UTC 8 March the upper-level cloud had been completely sheared from the low-level circulation. The decaying cyclone followed a south southeasterly track still parallel to the coast and by 0000 UTC 9 March at 27.6°S, 109.7°E the central pressure had risen to 998 hPa.

Wind strengths at the centre were estimated to be 180 km/h gusting to 255 km/h when the cyclone was at its peak intensity, however, the strongest reported wind was 74 km/h at Browse Island at 0900 UTC 3 March when the cyclone was 100 km to the west southwest of the island. A further report of

the same wind strength was received from a ship 180 km southwest of the cyclone's centre at 0600 UTC 8 March.

### **C. Impact**

Whilst no significant damage was caused by cyclone *Victor* the passage down the coast resulted in all major towns being placed on various stages of alert and industrial activities being curtailed to varying degrees. Two hundred and fifty personnel were evacuated from oil and gas platforms and drilling rigs in the Northwest

Shelf area and oil wells on Barrow Island were shut down.

**Table 1 Best track summary for Tropical Cyclone *Victor*, 2 – 9 March 1986**

Note: Add 8 hours to convert to WST. Refer to best track database for complete track details.

Year	Month	Day	Hour (UTC)	Position Latitude S	Position Longitude E	Max wind 10min knots	Central Pressure hPa	Rad. of Gales nm
1986	03	2	0900	13.2	124.2	35	999	
1986	03	2	1200	13.3	124.4	35	998	
1986	03	2	1600	13.4	124.2	35	998	
1986	03	2	1800	13.5	123.9	35	996	
1986	03	2	2100	13.6	123.6	40	994	
1986	03	3	0000	13.7	123.4	40	994	20
1986	03	3	0300	13.9	123.2	45	992	
1986	03	3	0600	14.1	122.8	45	990	
1986	03	3	0900	14.3	122.5	45	990	
1986	03	3	1200	14.4	122.2	50	986	
1986	03	3	1600	14.5	121.6	50	986	
1986	03	3	1800	14.6	121.3	55	984	
1986	03	3	2100	14.7	120.7	60	980	
1986	03	4	0000	14.8	120.3	65	976	
1986	03	4	0600	15.4	119.4	80	965	
1986	03	4	1200	16.2	118.3	90	955	
1986	03	4	1800	16.5	117.5	95	950	
1986	03	5	0000	17.1	116.8	105	940	
1986	03	5	0600	17.5	116.3	110	930	115
1986	03	5	1200	18.2	115.5	110	935	
1986	03	5	1800	18.4	114.9	100	945	
1986	03	5	2100	18.5	114.6	100	945	
1986	03	6	0000	18.6	114.5	100	945	145
1986	03	6	0300	18.8	114.4	100	945	115
1986	03	6	0600	19.0	114.3	100	945	105
1986	03	6	0900	19.2	114.1	95	950	115
1986	03	6	1200	19.4	114.0	95	950	
1986	03	6	1600	19.6	113.7	95	950	120
1986	03	6	1800	19.8	113.5	90	955	
1986	03	6	2100	20.2	113.0	90	955	
1986	03	7	0000	20.4	112.6	90	955	135
1986	03	7	0300	20.6	112.4	85	960	170
1986	03	7	0600	21.0	112.1	85	960	180
1986	03	7	0900	21.5	111.7	80	965	
1986	03	7	1200	22.0	111.4	80	965	
1986	03	7	1600	22.6	111.2	75	970	
1986	03	7	1800	22.9	111.0	70	974	
1986	03	7	2100	23.3	110.8	65	978	
1986	03	8	0000	23.6	110.6	60	982	
1986	03	8	0600	24.7	110.0	50	986	
1986	03	8	1200	25.6	109.4	45	990	
1986	03	8	1800	26.5	109.3	40	994	
1986	03	9	0000	27.6	109.7	35	998	
1986	03	9	0600	28.7	109.8	25	1002	

Note: Radius of gales field incomplete.

Figure 1. Track of Tropical Cyclone Victor, 2 – 9 March 1986  
All times in WST.

