

# MAJOR EVENTS 1998-99

## July

- The observing phase of the South China Sea Monsoon Experiment was completed.
- Dr N T Tuong, Director of the Marine Meteorological Center, and Dr L T Dao of the Hydrometeorological Service (HMS) of Vietnam visited the Bureau Head Office for discussions on marine and oceanography activities relating to the proposed Memorandum of Understanding between the Bureau and the HMS.
- The Parliamentary Secretary, Senator the Hon. Ian Macdonald, launched the Bureau's Service Charter for the Community at the Alice Springs Meteorological Office and commissioned the new Northern Territory Regional Office in Darwin.
- The Origins of Australian Meteorology by former Director of Meteorology, Dr W J (Bill) Gibbs OBE, was republished

## August

- The National Meteorological Operations Centre took over responsibility for the centralised provision of significant weather prognoses for high level (above 18,500 feet) clear air turbulence.
- The sixth Australian Severe Storms Conference was held in Brisbane.
- Aerosonde Laima flew into the record books by making the first crossing of the North Atlantic by a robotic aircraft (from Newfoundland, Canada to the Outer Hebrides in 26 hours, 45 minutes on 5.7 litres of fuel) and becoming the smallest aircraft to make the crossing.

## September

- A new weather watch radar was installed at the New South Wales Agriculture Research and Advisory Station in Grafton.
- The twelfth session of the WMO Regional Association for the South-West Pacific was held in Denpasar (Indonesia).
- Weather service support was provided to a pre-Olympics regatta, as a trial of the Bureau's service provision for the 2000 Sydney Olympics.

## October

- The National Meteorological Operations Centre produced the first output from its mid-level aviation product system.
- The Bureau's Cyclone Siren was formally relaunched in Queensland in its extended role as the Standard Emergency Warning Signal.
- The Annual BMRC Modelling Workshop *Coupled Climate Modelling* was held on 12-13 October.
- The National Climate Centre introduced the new Seasonal Climate Outlook which uses Indian and Pacific Ocean sea surface temperatures as a basis for predicting Australian rainfall for the subsequent three-month period.

## November

- The Australian Integrated Forecast System was implemented in Queensland and the Northern Territory.
- The BMRC-CSIRO Marine Research Joint Australian Facility for Ocean Observing Systems (JAFOOS) com-

menced operation.

- The Bureau's Forward Planning Conference was held on 6 November to progress development of the integrated modernisation plan, *Bureau of Meteorology Operations Beyond 2000*.

## December

- A significantly upgraded Global Assimilation and Prediction system was implemented operationally.
- A Lightning Alert Service for Ansett and Qantas at Adelaide Airport was implemented.
- A three member delegation from the Thai Meteorological Department led by its Director-General, Lt JG Wit Worakupt, visited the Bureau for familiarisation and to discuss bilateral interests.
- A two member delegation from the Indonesian Meteorological and Geophysical Agency led by Mr Sri Diharto, Director-General and Vice-President of the WMO Regional Association for the South-West Pacific, visited for bilateral and regional discussions.
- The Bureau's first Certified Workplace Agreement was ratified by the Industrial Relations Commission.
- The worst storm in the history of the Sydney-Hobart Yacht Race devastated the fleet, causing the abandonment of several yachts and the loss of six lives.

## January

- The first session of the China-Australia Joint Satellite Technical Conference for the Feng-Yun Satellite Series was held in Beijing.
- The second Southern Ocean Atmospheric Photochemistry Experiment (SOAPEX2), based at Cape Grim Baseline Air Pollution Station, commenced its six week intensive observational phase.

## February

- The new Sydney Doppler weather radar at Kurnell was installed.
- The intermediate coupled ocean-atmosphere model for the tropical Pacific Ocean, developed in BMRC, became operational in the National Meteorological Operations Centre.
- The second phase of the Japan-Australia Tropical Mesoscale Experiment took place with an intense data-gathering period
- A new service for Ansett's Integrated Operations Centre at Melbourne Airport commenced.
- The fifth joint WMO/UNESCO International Conference on Hydrology was held in Geneva.
- The Regional Directors' Conference was held on 23-24 February.
- Hits on the Bureau Web site peaked at more than 3.5 million per week during tropical cyclone *Rona*.

## March

- The eleventh session of the WMO Commission for Aeronautical Meteorology was held in Geneva.
- A significantly upgraded CD-ROM version of *RainMan*, a farm management package developed in conjunction with the Bureau, was launched by the Queensland Department of Natural Resources.
- Dr Tony Adams AM, Professor of Public Health at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health at the Australian National University, delivered the World Meteorological Day address on *Weather, Climate and Health*.

## April

- The Bureau's Budget and Program Workshop, to discuss the Program strategies for the 1999-2000 financial year, was held on 23 April.

- A WF100 wind finding radar was installed at the Melbourne Airport Meteorological Office.
- The Defence Meteorological Support Unit (DMSU) was established in the Northern Territory Regional Office in Darwin and commenced a limited operational phase.
- A 'supercell' thunderstorm caused more than \$1.5 billion damage to the Sydney metropolitan area.
- A Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in Hydrometeorology between the Bureau and the Hydrometeorological Service of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam was signed in Geneva.
- The Director of Meteorology, Dr John Zillman AO FTSE, was re-elected President of WMO for a second four-year term by the thirteenth World Meteorological Congress in Geneva.

## May

- China successfully launched its third polar orbiting meteorological satellite, FY-1c.
- The *Report by the Director of Meteorology on the Bureau of Meteorology's Forecasting and Warning Performance for the Sydney Hailstorm of 14 April 1999* was tabled in Parliament by Senator the Hon. Robert Hill.
- An extended-range public weather forecasting service was introduced in Perth, Adelaide, Sydney, Canberra, Melbourne and Hobart, consisting of a four-day weather forecast and a further three-day trend.
- The Bureau's *Preliminary Report on the Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race* was tabled in the Parliament.

## June

- A new radiation measurement station was established at Melbourne Airport.
- The Special Services Unit installed equipment for the Bangladesh Meteorological Department as part of the major Project for Improvement of Weather Warning Services Related to Natural Disasters in the People's Republic of Bangladesh.
- An agreement with the Sydney Organising Committee for the Olympic Games was signed for the provision of weather services for the 2000 Olympic Games.
- The international project office for the Global Ocean Data Assimilation Experiment was established in BMRC.