



Flood Watch

A new service for the Queensland community

What is a Flood Watch?

Flood Watch is a service that will be provided by the Bureau of Meteorology to notify the Queensland community when there is an increased risk of riverine flooding. It joins the best of our rainfall and flood forecasting capabilities into a single product.

Flood Watches will be available from 15 October 2014, allowing Queenslanders to make the best decisions this summer and make the most of our great climate. Flood Watch replaces and improves upon the previously-issued Preliminary and Coastal Rivers Flood Warnings.

What information is in a Flood Watch?

We will issue Flood Watches for specific catchments (e.g. Fitzroy or Burnett). They will contain short, general statements about the developing weather situation, including forecast rainfall totals. We will indicate which catchments are at risk from flooding, how to find rain and stream level observations, and how to access updated Watches and Warnings.

For example a Flood Watch could read as follows:

'Very heavy rainfall associated with severe tropical cyclone *Ita* is expected to develop over the watch area from late Thursday. Widespread daily totals of 100–200mm are expected on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, with locally higher totals likely. The rainfall is expected to move south over the weekend.

River level rises above the minor flood level are likely across the watch area from Friday onwards. Catchments at risk include the Daintree, Mossman, Barron, Mulgrave, Russell, Johnstone, Tully, Murray, Herbert, Black, Burdekin, Bohle and Ross Rivers, and Bluewater Creek.'

How will Flood Watch work?

We aim to issue a Flood Watch up to 96 hours before any flood-producing rainfall. If at any time during this period the likelihood of flooding increases, or there is an imminent threat of floods occurring, a Flood Warning will be issued. It is important to note that a Flood Watch may not always precede a Flood Warning.

Flood Warnings are firm predictions of flooding, based on a combination of flood forecasting models and other techniques.

Flood Watches are based on forecasts from weather models and the current state of the catchment. If the weather situation doesn't develop as anticipated, and it becomes clear there is no further danger of floods occurring, the Flood Watch will be cancelled.

What does Flood Watch mean for me?

It is important to remember that a Flood Watch is **not** a warning of **imminent** flooding. The aim is to provide an early advice of a developing situation that could lead to flooding. There is some uncertainty attached to a Flood Watch, but it can help you to prepare. Even the smallest of actions, taken early, can reduce the impacts of flooding if it occurs.

A Flood Watch notifies people living or working along rivers and streams to monitor the latest forecasts and rain and stream level observations. You should also prepare to move livestock, yourself and your possessions to higher ground if flooding develops.

How will I get Flood Watches?

Flood Watches will be provided through emergency services, local government and the media.

Flood Watches will also be available directly from the Bureau of Meteorology through:

- its website at: www.bom.gov.au/qld/warnings; and
- the Bureau's Telephone Weather Service. All of Queensland's Flood Watches and Warnings are available for the cost of a local call on: **1300 659 219**

Contacts

For general information about the Bureau of Meteorology's flood warning services please contact:

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Queensland Regional Office
Bureau of Meteorology**

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