



THOMSON RIVER FLOOD

February 2000

This report is based on rainfall and river height observations received by the Bureau during the flood.

Rainfall

- Over the 7day period to 9am Thursday 24 February, the catchment of the Thomson River to Longreach recorded rainfall ranging from just under 500 mm in the middle reaches to just over 70mm in the lower reaches.

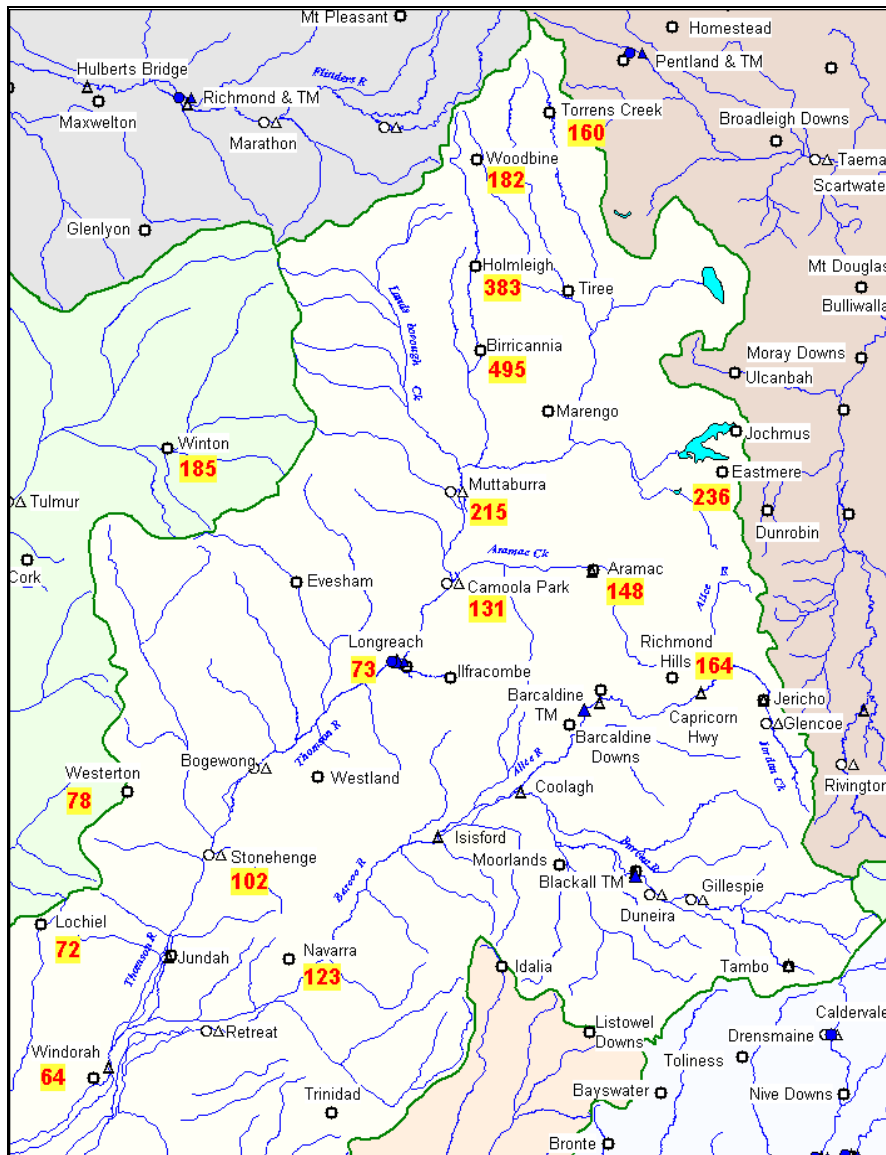
CBM	Station	February							Total
		Fri 18	Sat 19	Sun 20	Mon 21	Tue 22	Wed 23	Thu 24	
30051	Torrens Ck	22	0	71	0	7	31	29	160
30127	Woodbine	18	5	35	6	10	101	7	182
36003	Birricannia	78	55	112	139	19	0	92	495
36023	Holmleigh	85	59	75	48	15	79	22	383
36076	Eastmere	15	28	48	128	13	3	1	236
36004	Aramac	12	26	64	29	10	6	1	148
37051	Winton	29	92	31	27	4	2	0	185
36037	Muttaburra	10	30	102	35	18	20	0	215
36101	Richmond Hills	0	35	96	3	0	0	30	164
36013	Camoola Park			131					131
36031	Longreach	2	34	9	13	8	7	0	73
37040	Stonehenge		8	5	32	47	6	4	102
38004	Navarra			24	58	36	5	11	134
38043	Lochiel	3	6		34	14	5	10	72
38024	Windorah	0	0	0	50	5	0	9	64

- The highest 24 hour total of 139mm was recorded at Birricannia on Monday 21 February.
- Intensity- Frequency- Duration analysis of the rainfall at Birricannia indicates that the Average Recurrence Interval (ARI) was between 50 and 100 years for the longer durations.

Station: Birricannia

CBM No: 036003

Rainfall (mm)	Period Ending	ARI (yrs)
139	24 hours 9:00am 21/02/00	10-20
251	48 hours 9:00am 21/02/00	50-100
306	72 hours 9:00am 21/02/00	50-100



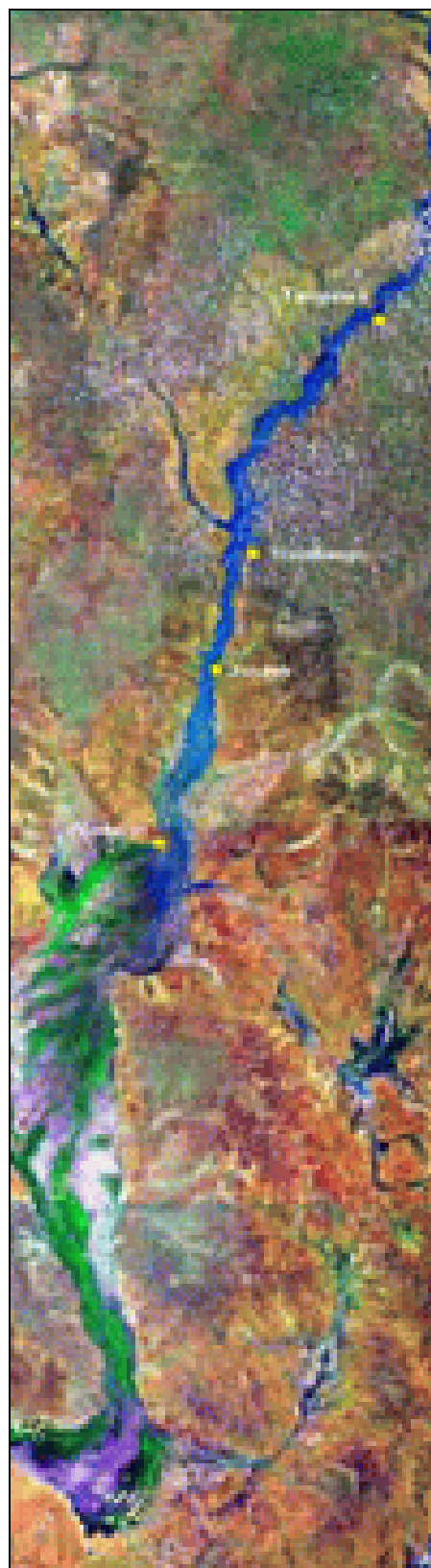
Rainfall (mm) 7 Days to 9am 24 Feb 2000

River Heights

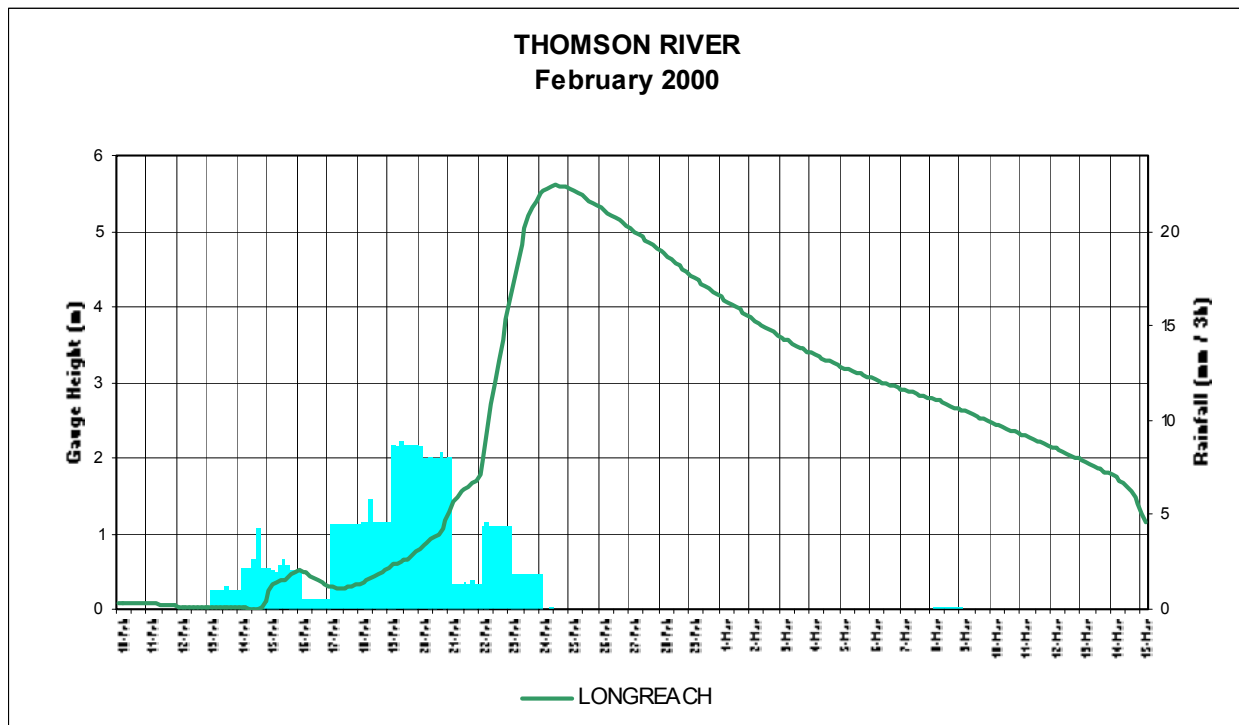
- The river commenced to rise on Sunday 20th February.
- The Landsborough River at Muttaborra rose from 4.25 metres at 9am Sunday to a peak of 8.09 metres at 3pm Monday 21st February, an average rate of rise of 0.13 metres per hour
- The property owner at Camoola Park returned to the property on the morning of Tuesday 22nd February, just in time to observe the peak of 7.42 metres at 3pm that afternoon.
- The relationship between the rainfall over the catchment and the flood heights at Longreach is shown in the figure on the next page.
- At the time of the satellite image at right (29 February 2000), the main flood waters were between Stonehenge and Jundah.
- The peak height recorded along the Thomson River and on Cooper Creek at Windorah are shown in the table below.

Station	Date/Time	Peak Height (m)
Muttaborra	22/02/2000 0900	8.10
Aramac	21/02/2000 1200	2.90
Camoola Park	23/02/2000 1700	7.42
Longreach	24/02/2000 1800	5.62
Bogewong	27/02/2000 0600	8.40
Stonehenge	28/02/2000 1800	6.42
Jundah	01/03/2000 0600	7.85
Windorah	03/03/2000 0600	7.45
Durham Downs	17/03/2000 0900	3.65

- The flood waters peaked at Durham Downs at 3.65 metres on the 17th March. The peak at Nappa Merrie on the Queensland-South Australian border was 5.10 metres on the 6th April.
- The Cooper Creek water did not reach Lake Eyre. Lake Eyre received floodwaters from the Diamantina, Georgina, Eyre Creek system in addition to local waters and runoff from the Northern Territory and filled to about 85% surface coverage in May 2000.



Landsat 7 satellite image acquired and processed by ACRES.



Warning Services

- The initial flood warning for the Thomson River was issued on Monday morning 21 February. This warning indicated that the Thomson River at Longreach would reach 4 metres (the major flood level) by Thursday 24 February.
- The warning issued on Tuesday 23 February advised that the main flood waters were expected to reach about 5.5 metres on Friday 25 February. The warning also advised of similar levels to the flood of January 1974.
- The warning issued on Wednesday afternoon 24 February indicated that a peak of about 6 metres(*) was expected on Saturday 26 February. (* This was based, in part, on the then incorrect value of 5.99 metres for the January 1974 flood peak)
- The warning of Thursday 24 February issued at 1613 indicated that the Thomson River at Longreach was 5.61 metres and approaching its peak.
- Through out the period leading up to the peak at Longreach, the Flood Warning Centre was in regular telephone contact with Longreach Shire Council.
- Flood warnings were renewed twice daily from this time to 26 February after the Thomson River peaked at Longreach. Thereafter, warnings were renewed on daily basis until March when the final warning for Cooper Creek was issued on 19 March 2000.
- During the period under warning, 35 flood warnings were issued and contained 26 height predictions for Longreach, Bogewong, Stonehenge, Jundah and Windorah.

Further Information

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