

INTRODUCTION

In May heavy rains occurred in parts of eastern Queensland and northern New South Wales. A complex weather system persisted over the east coastal area during the first ten days of the month and caused flooding on rivers from the Logan to the Hastings. The Northern Tablelands (East) and the Upper North Coast districts of New South Wales received the highest ever May rainfall and, in adjacent districts, totals were near record. Some stations registered record May totals over 500 mm. May rainfall was also very much above average in the Central Western Plains district of NSW and the East Central Coast district of Queensland.

In Western Australia widespread rains fell during the month over the Murchison and Southeast districts and surrounding areas when low pressure systems moved across the State. Local flooding occurred in many areas due to the intensity of the rain.

Elsewhere May rainfall was mostly average, although the lower southwest of Western Australia and the Midlands district of Tasmania were much below average.

Rainfall for Autumn (March-May) was about average over extensive areas of the continent. Notable areas above average included the northeast of South Australia, southwest New South Wales and northwestern Victoria, and also a large area from the west coast of Western Australia towards the interior of the continent. Well below average areas included the agricultural parts of Western Australia, southwest Queensland, the Southern Tablelands of New South Wales and East Gippsland in Victoria.

Western Australia

A large area of well above average rainfall extended from the West Gascoyne district through the Murchison to the southeast district. Most of the rain in the first two districts fell in the last week of the month. Elsewhere rainfall was about average, apart from below average totals in the lower southwest.

Autumn rainfall was above average in the Gascoyne, Murchison and Northeast districts. In the remaining districts Autumn totals were mostly average except for much below average totals in the North and South Central districts.

Northern Territory

Some moderate rains occurred in the Alice Springs district about the 21st to the 22nd of the month, but elsewhere falls were mainly scattered and light.

Autumn rainfall has been mostly average except in the Victoria and Barkly districts where totals were below average.

South Australia

May rainfall was average in all districts except the Lower Southeast, which was below average. OK

A dry March, a wet April and an average May resulted in average autumn rainfall in the south and west and above average autumn rainfall in the northern districts. Totals in the Far North and Lower North were much above average.

Queensland

May rainfall varied generally from average in the west of the state to well above average towards the east. Heavy rain in the Moreton and East Darling Downes districts in the first ten days of the month and in the East Central Coast about the 23rd, led to very much above average totals in these districts. The Brisbane area had the highest May rainfall on record. OK

Autumn rainfall showed a similar pattern being below average in the west and mostly average in the east. A notable exception was the much below average total in the Port Curtis district.

New South Wales

Q Much of the area that had been very dry at the end of April received substantial rain in May. In the first ten days of the month heavy rain fell in the northeast of the State, while good rain fell on the western slopes of the ranges about the 28th and 29th of the month.

Record totals for May fell in the Northern Tablelands (East) and the Upper North Coast districts, and rainfall in the Central Western Plains (North), the Northern Tablelands (West) and Lower North Coast was very much above average. Elsewhere in the State May rainfall was average or above.

Although May rainfall in the Hunter and Central Tablelands (North) and Southern Tablelands was average, totals for autumn were well below average in these districts. Autumn rain was below average in the Metropolitan, South Coast, Central Tablelands (South) and Northwestern Plains. Elsewhere autumn rainfall was average or above, with well above average totals in the Northern Tablelands (East) and Lower Darling districts.

Victoria

May rainfall was average apart from below average amounts in the Upper Northeast and the West Central districts.

Autumn rain graded from above average in the Mallee and Wimmera to much below average in the East Central and East Gippsland districts.

Tasmania

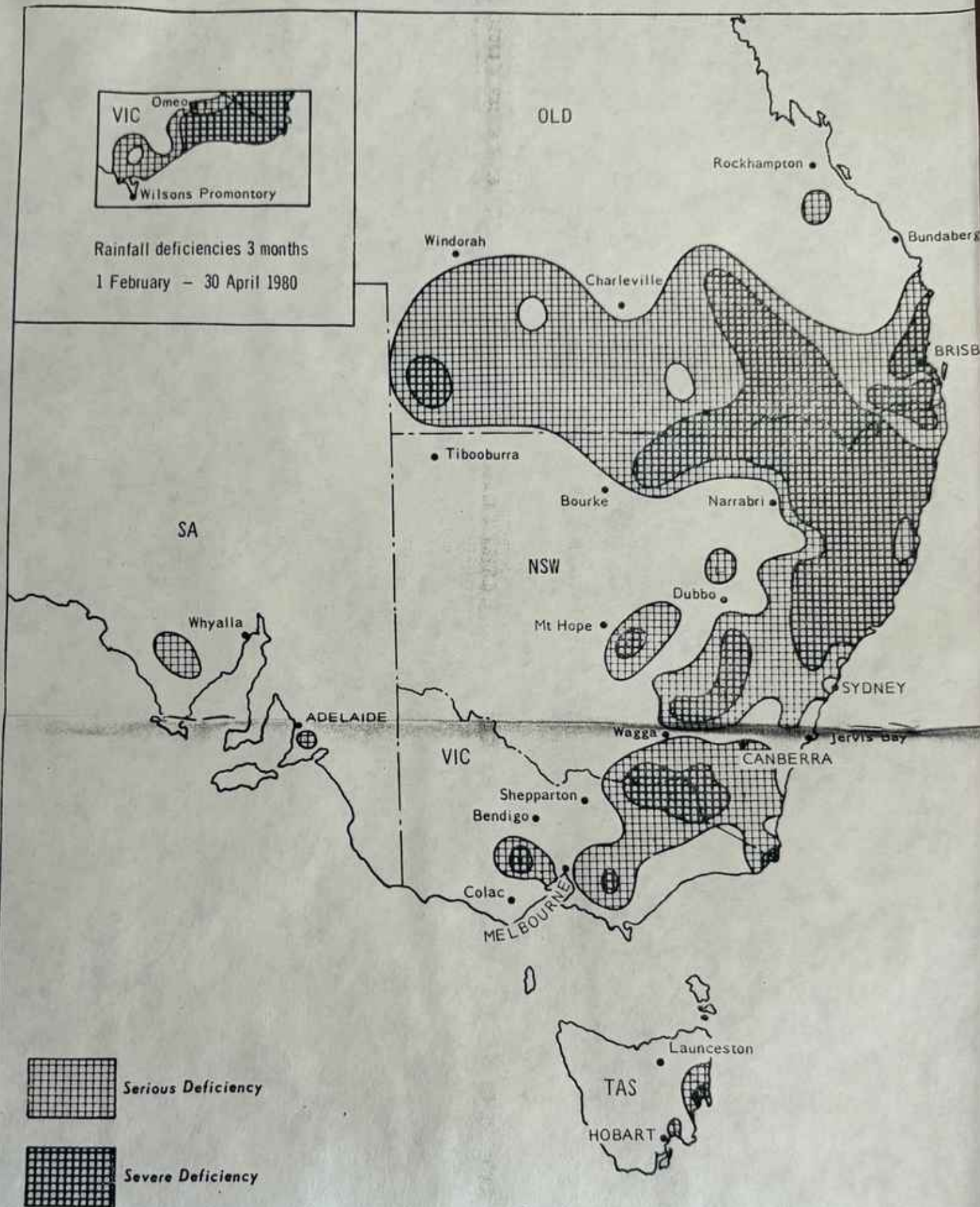
May rainfall was generally average or above, but a notable departure was the Midlands district, which was much below average. Very heavy rain fell on parts of the east coast on the 29th and 30th, resulting in flooding of some rivers.

The autumn rainfall was mostly average except for below average amounts in the Midlands district and on King Island, and a much above average total in the Derwent Valley.

OK



Rainfall deficiencies 3 months
1 February - 30 April 1980



Serious Deficiency



Severe Deficiency

Rainfall deficiencies based on a selected network of telegraphic reporting stations.

Rainfall deficiencies 5 months
1 December 1979 - 30 April 1980

Rainfall deficiencies



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