

KEY: Increased risk of fire

Figure 1 Seasonal Bushfire Outlook Autumn 2025. Areas are based on the interim biogeographic regionalisation for Australia and other geographical features.

 **Increased risk of fire is the likelihood of an increased number of significant bushfires occurring in the outlook period compared to average.**

Overview

The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for autumn 2025 identifies a heightened risk of fire for patchy areas between Perth and Carnarvon in WA, and stretching across most of the Australian mainland’s southern coastline to southwest Gippsland in Victoria.

From August 2024 to January 2025, very much below average rainfall fell across much of the southern coastline of Australia. Rainfall patterns were average to above average across much of the remaining parts of WA and coastal Queensland.

In that same August to January period, mean temperatures for Australia were generally well above average with large areas recorded their warmest period on record. The area-averaged temperature for Australia was the highest on record since records began in 1910.

Looking ahead, an increased chance of above average rainfall has been forecast for parts of northwest Australia over autumn, while there is an increased chance of below average rainfall being forecast for parts of the northeast.

Temperatures are very likely to be above average across most areas, with an increased chance of unusually high maximum temperatures for most of Australia south of the tropics. There is an increased chance of unusually high minimum temperatures nationwide.

Communities are encouraged to be vigilant and stay alert this autumn, even in areas of Australia that show a normal risk of fire this season. Under the right fuel and weather conditions destructive fires can occur during normal bushfire seasons across Australia.

The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook combines expert analysis of bushfire fuels, past rainfall and temperature, and climate outlooks prepared by the Bureau of Meteorology.

About the Outlook

Fire management is a year-round process. The Seasonal Bushfire Outlook reflects the priorities in each state and territory for the coming months given the expected climate conditions. It identifies areas of increased risk of fire so communities are aware and primed to take appropriate action. It is not intended as a prediction of where and when bushfires will occur.

Fire risk can vary greatly, even at the smaller scale, between bordering states and territories. Each state and territory’s assessment takes into account different land use types and vegetation types. This is influenced by different forecasts for temperature and rainfall over these regions. It should be noted that forecasting for longer time periods can be less accurate as the atmospheric system is dynamic; the more time passes, the less certain forecasters can be of its state.

A significant bushfire is defined as being of such size, complexity, duration or other impact that requires resources (from both a pre-emptive management and suppression capability) beyond the region in which fires originate. Increased bushfire risk depends on many factors including weather and climate, fuel amount and availability, recent fire and disturbance history, natural and human barriers, and how quickly and effectively firefighting resources are able to suppress fires in an area.

AFAC is the National Council for fire and emergency services, supporting the sector to create safer, more resilient communities. AFAC drives national consistency through collaboration, innovation and partnerships. It delivers enhanced capability by developing doctrine and supporting operations.

New South Wales



Increased Risk of Fire

Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in New South Wales

Summary

- The rainfall forecast for early autumn is expected to maintain generally normal fire potential across most of NSW.
- Parts of northern and western NSW have high grass fuel loads and are currently drier than usual. These areas will remain at risk of difficult-to-control fires until they receive significant rainfall.

For further information see: rfs.nsw.gov.au

NSW experienced varied rainfall throughout spring, leading to increased grass and crop growth in some areas. Summer also saw mixed rainfall, with the northeast receiving high totals. However, a drier period in early summer led to several fires in eastern and northern NSW over the Christmas and New Year period.

Meanwhile, parts of the northwest slopes and far western NSW continue to receive below-average rainfall, leaving them drier than usual for this time of year.

Above-average rainfall is forecast for early to mid-autumn, which should generally maintain normal fire potential across most of NSW but may hinder prescribed burning efforts.

Autumn temperatures are expected to be higher than normal, increasing the risk that areas receiving little rainfall may remain dry or become drier. The northwest slopes (around Tamworth) and far western NSW currently have above-average grass fuel loads and are drier than usual. If these areas continue to miss out on rainfall, they could face challenging fire conditions.

Additionally, grasses west of the Great Dividing Range are dry (cured). Until these areas receive sufficient rainfall to support new grass growth, they could remain at risk for fast-moving, intense grass fires. ■

Australian Capital Territory



Increased Risk of Fire

Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Australian Capital Territory

Summary

- There is a normal risk of bushfire expected for the ACT this autumn.
- The long-range outlook for autumn forecasts warmer than usual conditions with above average rainfall somewhat likely.
- Fire agencies and land managers will continue to implement mitigation activities during autumn where conditions allow.

For further information see: esa.act.gov.au

The ACT experienced above average rainfall in summer after dry conditions in winter and spring 2024. The rainfall has allowed continued grassland fuel growth. Despite increased fuel loads, the ACT can expect a normal risk of bushfires during autumn.

The long range outlook for autumn in the ACT forecasts above average, even unusually warm, day- and night-time temperatures. Above average rainfall is somewhat likely, but unusually wet weather is not likely.

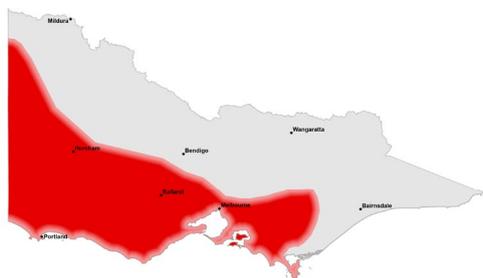
If below average rainfall is received in the first part of autumn, with the increased fuel loads and warm conditions, there could be more risk of bush and grass fires.

To manage bushfire risk, fire agencies and land managers will continue to implement mitigation activities, including prescribed burns, physical removal, and grass slashing or grazing, throughout the season. ACT residents can keep track of planned and ongoing prescribed burns through the ACT Emergency Services Agency and ACT Parks and Conservation Service websites or the Hazards Near Me NSW app.

It is important for community members to continue to be emergency ready by maintaining the preparedness of their properties and creating or updating their survival plans. For information on how to prepare for bushfires, visit esa.act.gov.au.

By staying informed and prepared we can collectively work towards minimising the impact of potential bushfires. Let's prioritise safety and ensure a proactive approach to safeguarding our community and environment. ■

Victoria



Increased Risk of Fire

Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Victoria

Summary

- An increased risk of fire is indicated for the western and central parts of Victoria as well as south and west Gippsland during early autumn.
- Fire authorities will continue to monitor conditions for any changes in fire risk.

For further information see: [emergency.vic.gov.au](https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au)

Severe rainfall deficits over the last 12-to-24-month period have affected much of western and central parts of Victoria, where increased fuel availability in forests and heathlands has resulted in significant fires across the Grampians and the Little Desert. Central parts of Victoria and southeast Gippsland have shown a strong drying signal over the past year, resulting in increased vegetation drying.

Recent rainfall patterns have continued to follow the long-term drying trend, with January rainfall totals ranging from 50-100mm in the far east and less than 10mm in the far west. Most of southwest Victoria has experienced well below-average precipitation, while the remainder of Victoria has received average rainfall for January

While the outlook has a higher chance of warmer maximum temperatures, the rainfall outlook does not indicate a wetter or drier signal in the forecast. As a result, an extended drying pattern may translate to continued increases in fuel availability in the west and central parts of the state. Without significant rainfall, the flammability of fuels in forests, woodlands and heathlands will remain high with elevated potential for fires to start and spread into early autumn. As a result, most of western and central parts of Victoria, along with south and west Gippsland, are identified as areas of increased risk during the early autumn outlook period.

Elsewhere across the state, the fire risk potential is assessed to be normal, noting that, at any time, areas dominated by dry or cured vegetation can support fast running fires under the onset of hot, dry and windy weather conditions. Landscape conditions will be monitored to identify any significant changes to fire risk.

The autumn break is likely to start slightly later than usual, which may delay the emergence of planned burning in some parts of the state while raising opportunities elsewhere to target areas that are not usually available for burning under autumn conditions. ■

Tasmania



Increased Risk of Fire

Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Tasmania

Summary

- Normal bushfire risk is expected for autumn.
- Grassland curing is well advanced across the state. Dry forests are available to burn in the east and parts of the west.
- An early commencement for planned burning is expected in the east and north of the state.

For further information see: [fire.tas.gov.au](https://www.fire.tas.gov.au)

Tasmania experienced relatively quiet fire conditions during December and January as mild temperatures and moderate rainfalls generally slowed landscape drying and grassland curing across the island. There was not sufficient rain to recharge the underlying deep soil dryness in western Tasmania which has persisted for several years.

A short drying spell in late January increased the availability of wet and moist forest fuels as well as organic soils. A significant fire in the Snug Tiers in late January was followed by over 20 lighting ignitions on the West Coast in early February. The Western Complex of fires became a significant interagency campaign and is likely to require management for many weeks.

As summer ends, grassland curing is well advanced across the state and on the Bass Strait islands. Dry forests are fully available to burn in the eastern half of the state and to a lesser extent in the west. As a result, landscape connectivity is high in the east and along the northern coastal strip.

Autumn is unlikely to provide significant recharge of the underlying deep layer soil moisture and the peat in western Tasmania but there may be sufficient rainfall to moisten the upper soil layer which will assist fire suppression of any remaining going fires. An early commencement for planned burning is expected in the east and north of the state. ■

South Australia



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in South Australia

Summary

- SA enters autumn with below average rainfall across a majority of the state
- The forecast warm dry conditions create potential for a prolonged period of higher fire risk, extending well into autumn.
- There is a slightly elevated fire risk across the southern coastal parts of the state and the far northwest.

For further information see: cfs.sa.gov.au

After a very dry start to January, SA enters autumn with below average rainfall across a majority of the state, particularly western parts of Kangaroo Island, Mid North and Eastern Eyre Peninsula. Rain deficiencies are expected to abate as autumn progresses.

There is a very high likelihood of well above average temperatures continuing, especially in the southeast of the state.

Autumn rain is forecast to exceed averages in central and northern areas of the state, while the Upper Eyre, Mount Lofty Ranges and Yorke Peninsula are expected to receive below average rainfall.

The forecast warm dry conditions create potential for a prolonged period of higher fire risk, extending well into autumn, with a slightly elevated fire risk across the southern coastal parts of the state and the far northwest.

With the forecasted dry period extending into autumn, South Australians will need to remain vigilant, continue to maintain their properties, monitor the fire risks throughout their district and be prepared to enact their bushfire survival plan well into autumn. ■

Western Australia



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Western Australia

Summary

- Severe moisture deficits have increased fire risk in the Mallee, Esperance Plains, and Mardabilla Bioregions.
- Significant grass fuels and forecast warmer conditions have increased fire risk in the Nullarbor Bioregion.
- Moisture stress has increased fire risk in the southeastern part of Southwest Land Division, Lesueur Sandplains, and northern Swan Coastal Plain Bioregions.

For further information see: dfes.wa.gov.au

An average fire risk is expected for the Pilbara, Central Interior, and northern Kimberley due to broadly above-average root-zone soil moisture and forecast above-average rainfall for autumn. Moist conditions may limit early prescribed burning opportunities in northern parts of the Kimberley. However, in southern parts of the Kimberley with below-average root-zone soil moisture, fire risk may increase in woody fuels and spinifex due to higher flammability, while grazing and reduced growth are expected to mitigate fire risk for tussock grass fuels.

Increased fire risk is unlikely across inland areas of Midwest-Gascoyne due to recent and forecasted average to above-average rainfall and broadly average soil moisture. However, in the Geraldton Sandplains, Yalgoo, and southern Carnarvon bioregions, higher fuel availability and forecasted high temperatures may elevate fire risk in grassy woodlands. Moisture deficits in the Lesueur Sandplains and the northern Swan Coastal Plain contribute to increased fire risk.

The Nullarbor Bioregion faces an increased fire risk due to the persistence of significant grass fuel loads following the previous March floods. In addition, average to below-average rainfall and soil moisture deficits over the past six months, along with forecast warmer conditions, and a low probability of exceeding average rainfall contribute to the increased fire risk.

In the Mallee, Esperance Plains and Mardabilla (East Coolgardie) Bioregions, severe root-zone moisture deficits, combined with forecasted warmer conditions and a low likelihood of exceeding average rainfall, are expected to increase fire risk. Moisture deficits extend into the southeastern part of the Southwest Land Division, where increased flammability of moisture stressed woody vegetation has increased fire risk. ■

Queensland



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Queensland

Summary

- Normal levels of bushfire risk across Queensland for Autumn.
- Significant rainfalls in northern Queensland will produce grass growth across large areas.
- Current weather conditions provide clear opportunity for early season hazard reduction burning.

For further information see: fire.qld.gov.au

There are significant tracts of grasslands across Queensland, some of which have received record rains in late summer. This will contribute to above average grass growth and fuel accumulation in areas where there may have been limited fuel previously. In areas of the South East Coast, Wide Bay, Burnett, Darling Downs and Granite Belt regions, this rainfall was predominately been in early summer. Due to fast growth rates fuelled by above average temperatures, the grass remains green but has developed a large thatch layer of dry material which may help to fuel grass fires as conditions continue to dry out in these districts. This means it is important to closely monitor local conditions.

Recent record rain in northern Queensland means most fuel is unavailable for burning this autumn. However, these conditions may present opportunities to conduct hazard reduction burning in country that may have not been possible due to the risk, particularly in large scale landscapes away from major metropolitan centres.

In southern Queensland, conditions are favorable for mitigation to be undertaken during autumn. Rainfall seen across much of the state in summer may present opportunities for hazard reduction burning which may not have been possible in previous years.

Forested areas of the state remain wet and the risk of fire in these locations is significantly reduced during the outlook period, however there may be some opportunities for hazard mitigation burning for the forest areas of the state. Fire agencies will continue to work with landholders and Indigenous land management groups to ensure planning is coordinated during this critical mitigation period across the state. A more in-depth understanding of future risk areas for the 2025 fire season will be possible once the full extent of the late summer rainfall events is known. ■

Northern Territory



Seasonal Bushfire Outlook for Autumn 2025 in Northern Territory

Summary

- The NT has a normal risk of bushfire for the outlook period.
- If a dry spell occurs, there is a risk of fires spreading in all areas with available fuel in central Australia.
- Higher fuel loads are concentrated southwest of Alice Springs, including the southern Tanami and Macdonnell regions.
- Landholders across the Territory are strongly encouraged to prepare their properties for ongoing fire risk.

For further information see pfes.nt.gov.au or [Bushfires NT](#)

Minimum temperatures across the Territory are expected to remain above median, with rainfall in the Barkly and Alice Springs Fire Management Zones ranging from average to slightly above average.

Soil moisture is forecast to be above average in the Savanna, southern Arnhem, Vernon Arafura, the western Tanami and eastern Barkly districts. Fuel curing in central Australia is between 75-90%, with fire dangers easing to moderate. Available fuels are mainly found in areas with low grazing pressure that have remained unburned for more than 12 months, due to cumulative rainfall and rapid regrowth of surface fuels, including buffel grass. Higher fuel loads are concentrated southwest of Alice Springs, in the Macdonnell and southern Tanami regions.

If a dry spell occurs in the forecast period, there is a risk of wildfires spreading across all areas with available fuel in Alice Springs and Barkly regions. However, the frequency and scale of these events are unlikely to lead to back-to-back campaign fires throughout the forecast period.

Conditions in April and May may be more favourable for bushfire mitigation burning across all regions in the NT. The monsoon's late arrival this year may disrupt burn programs in the Top End.

Landholders across NT are strongly encouraged to prepare their properties for ongoing fire risk, ensuring that fire management plans are up-to-date and all firefighting equipment is in working condition. In central Australia, fire activity is recurring, even in areas previously affected by last year's fires, so it's essential to monitor grass regrowth and perform regular maintenance. ■

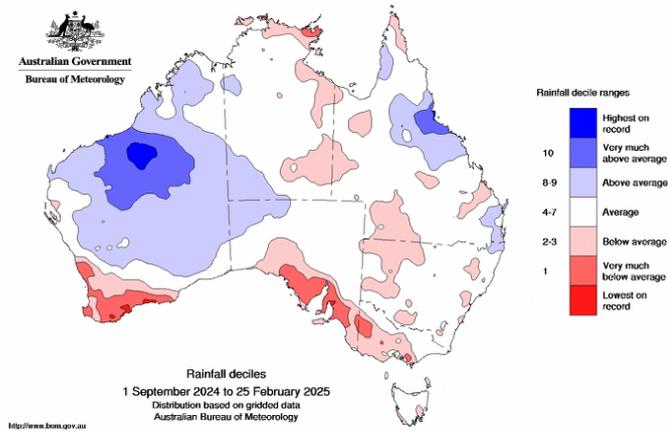


Figure 2a Spring–summer to date (1 September 2024 to 25 February 2025) rainfall deciles relative to all years since 1900.

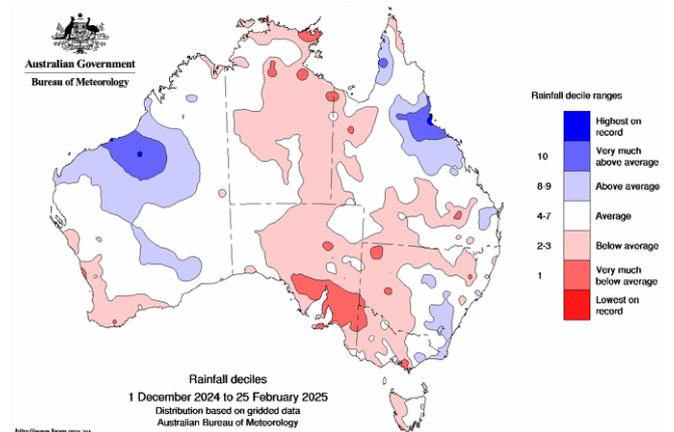


Figure 2b Summer to date (1 December 2024 to 25 February 2025) rainfall deciles relative to all years since 1900.

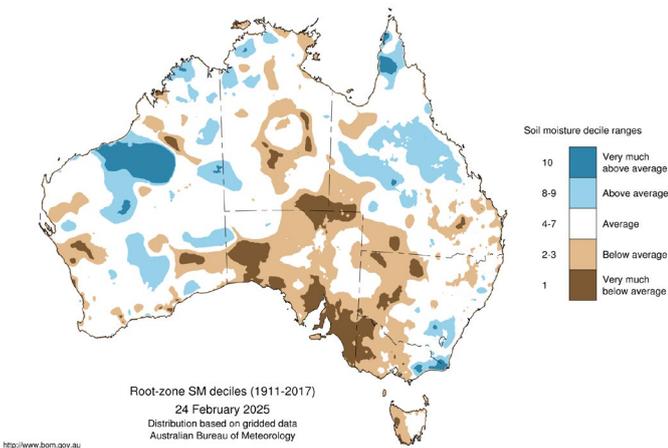


Figure 3 Latest root zone soil moisture (top 100 cm) deciles, at 24 February, relative to average soil moisture on this date for all years between 1911 and 2017.

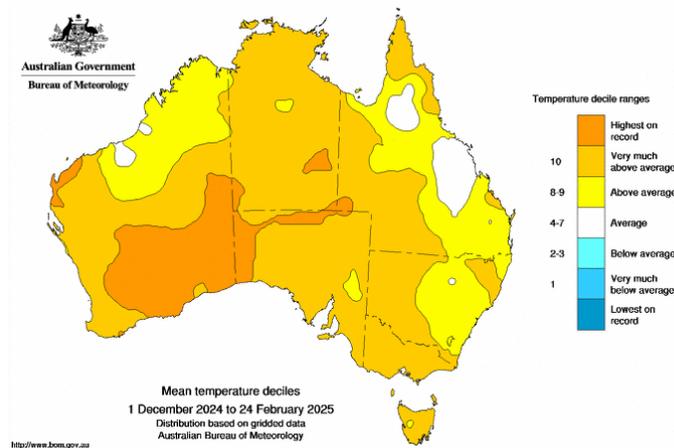


Figure 4 Summer to date (1 December 2024 to 24 February) mean temperature deciles relative to all years since 1910.

The risk of grass fires and bushfires in Australia is dependent on many factors, including the amount and type of fuel (vegetation), and the dryness of the fuel. Fuel conditions are influenced by recent rainfall, temperatures, and soil moisture.

Rainfall for the six-month period from September 2024 to February 2025 was below to very much below average¹ over the southern mainland, from the southwest of WA to southern SA and the west and south of Victoria (Figure 2a) with serious or severe rainfall deficiencies (rainfall totals in the lowest 5% or 10% of periods, respectively, since 1900) persisting in these regions. Below average rainfall was also seen over some inland parts of the mainland's east and north.

Rainfall was above to very much above average for most of northern and central WA, extending into central Australia. Above average rainfall was also observed over the central Queensland coast and the far northern NSW coast to the southeastern Queensland coast.

Summer to date rainfall has been average to below average for much of the country with the main exceptions being WA's northern Pilbara and Queensland's central coast where Tropical Cyclone Zelia and a deep tropical low, respectively, brought heavy falls in late January and early February (Figure 2b).

Areas northeast of Port Hedland and around Townsville have exceeded their highest monthly totals on record for the month of February. Drier than average conditions have persisted in the south, while a delayed onset to the monsoon has contributed to drier than average conditions over the NT.

Soil moisture as at 24 February 2025 is below average for this time of year across much of SA, extending into central Australia, western NSW, and western and central Victoria (Figure 3). Soil moisture is above to very much above average for eastern Victoria, southeastern NSW, much of northern and central Queensland, and parts of northern and central WA.

The mean temperature for 2024–25 summer to date has been very much above average for most of Australia with some western and central areas in Australia on track to see their warmest summer on record. Maximum and minimum temperatures have also been above to very much above average for most of Australia, although maximum temperatures were close to average over WA's northern Pilbara and Queensland's central coast, where heavy rainfall events occurred (see earlier section on rainfall).

The Bureau of Meteorology's long-range forecasts are based on global dynamical modelling of the oceans, atmosphere, land surfaces and sea ice. The model simulates the evolution in the state of the atmosphere and oceans for coming months. It implicitly captures climate indicators including the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) and the Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD), as well as long-term trends due to climate change.

For March to May 2025 (Figure 5) there is an increased chance of above average¹ rainfall for the northern Kimberley and parts of the Top End of the NT. There is an increased chance of below average rainfall for most of central and northern Queensland, extending into central Australia. For most other parts of Australia, there is no strong signal suggesting above or below average rainfall over the forecast period.

For central and northern Queensland, the likelihood of below average rainfall is greater in March than in April or May, with rainfall in April and May more likely to be within the typical range for those months.

Both maximum (Figure 6) and minimum temperatures during March to May are very likely (greater than 80% chance) to be above average across most states and territories. There is an increased chance of unusually high maximum temperatures across much of Australia, with the highest chances in Tasmania, southern Victoria, west of the Pilbara, and the southern half of Queensland extending into northern NSW and central Australia, where the likelihood is at least 3.5–4 times the usual chance. The chance of unusually high minimum temperatures is 3–4 times the usual chance for most of Australia, and greater than 4 times the usual chance for parts of WA, the far tropical north, and eastern Australia.

For March, below average soil moisture is forecast for much of Australia (Figure 7). Above average soil moisture is forecast for interior parts of the mainland's west. In May, average soil moisture is likely for most of the country, except for parts of the Top End of the NT, where soil moisture is likely to be above average, and southern and interior parts Australia, where soil moisture is likely to be below average.

The Bureau's long-range forecasts are updated regularly and are prepared for seasonal, monthly, fortnightly and weekly periods. In addition to forecasts on rainfall and temperature, they include forecasts on the Indian Ocean Dipole and El Niño–Southern Oscillation. The Bureau's long-range forecasts are published at www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead and <https://awo.bom.gov.au/>

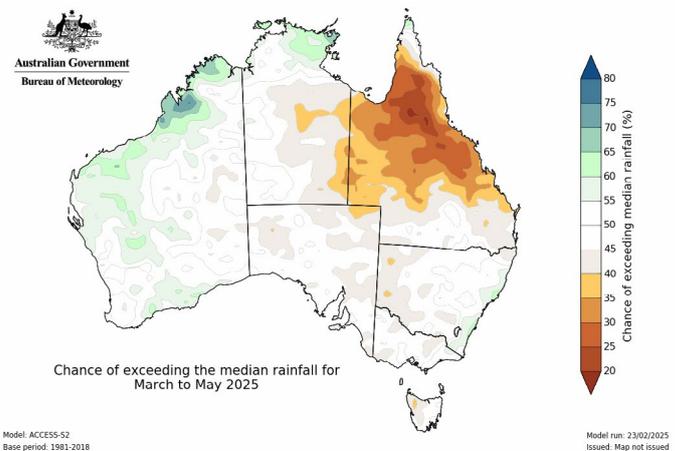


Figure 5 March to May 2025 chance of above median rainfall.

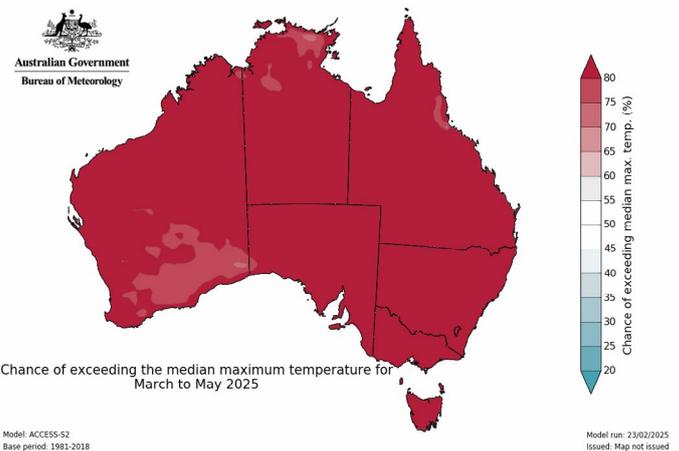


Figure 6 March to May 2025 chance of above median maximum temperatures.

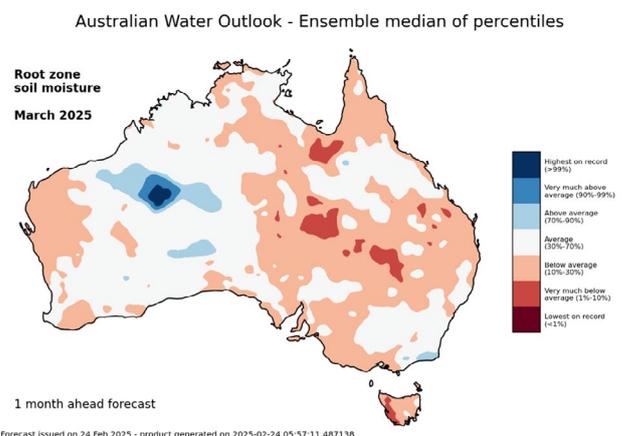


Figure 7 March 2025 soil moisture outlook.

1. The term 'average' is used throughout the text to denote either mean or median. The method used for a particular variable is stated in the relevant figure.

Waters around most of the Australian coastline are warmer than average, particularly along the western and southern coasts, contributing to increased atmospheric moisture and energy that may influence the intensity and frequency of weather systems. Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) in the Australian region during January 2025 were the warmest on record for all Januarys since records began in 1900. Additionally, the January SST anomaly was the equal highest positive anomaly on record for any month.

The Madden-Julian Oscillation contributed to enhanced tropical activity in the Australian region in early to mid-December and again in late January and early February. This season's monsoon onset was the latest since records began in 1957–58, and it coincided with an active MJO over the Australian region.

The El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) is neutral, despite changes in sea surface temperature patterns during 2024 that were consistent with a developing La Niña. Since late December, the tropical Pacific has become more La Niña-like, with signs of interactions between oceanic and atmospheric indices. However, these interactions have not been consistently sustained and do not meet the Bureau's La Niña criteria. Model forecasts indicate ENSO is likely to return to a more neutral ENSO state by the end of autumn and persist at neutral levels through to at least the middle of 2025.

The Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) is neutral. The IOD typically has little association with Australian climate from December to April.

Australia's climate has warmed by 1.55 ± 0.23 °C between 1910 and 2024. This warming is consistent with global trends, with the degree of warming similar to the global average for land areas.

The background global warming trend means Australia will experience ongoing changes to its weather and climate, including:

- more heat extremes, and fewer cold extremes
- reduced average cool season (April to October) rainfall over the southern half of the continent
- more intense heavy rainfall events, even in regions where average rainfall has decreased
- a longer fire season, with more dangerous fire weather days.

Further information

For further information about climate forecasts and conditions, please visit the following pages

- bom.gov.au/climate/ahead
- bom.gov.au/weather-services/fire-weather-centre/fire-weather-services
- www.bom.gov.au/climate/about/australian-climate-influences.shtml

This Seasonal Outlook was developed by AFAC, the Bureau of Meteorology, Queensland Fire Department, NSW Rural Fire Service, ACT Emergency Services Agency, ACT Parks and Conservation Service, Country Fire Authority, Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action VIC, Tasmania Fire Service, SA Country Fire Service, Department of Fire and Emergency Services, Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions WA, and Bushfires NT.