



Day 8- Fact Sheet 23

Tales of the Todd- Read all about it!

Weather Terms

Source: Australian Bureau of Meteorology

Kinds of weather:

Precipitation

When water vapour condenses and falls to earth, its called precipitation. It can be divided into:

Rain- in the form of liquid water drops of different sizes that have a uniform direction of fall

Drizzle- Very small liquid droplets that at times may be thin, at other times quite thick. Unlike rain, the droplets may fall in different directions, some floating rather than falling. Because the droplets are so small, their impact on water surfaces cannot be seen.

Snow- in the form of ice crystals, often joined together to form flakes.

Hail- Small balls or pieces of hard ice that fall separately, or frozen together to form irregular lumps. These lumps of ice may rebound or burst on striking a hard surface.

Showers- Associated with Cumulus and cumulonimbus clouds only, they occur in the form of rain, snow or hail. They begin and end abruptly, and may change in intensity rapidly. They are usually brief 15-30 min but may last longer.

Some other weather terms

Dew- a deposit of water droplets on objects near or close to the ground. Produced by the condensation of water vapour from the surrounding clear air.

Frost- two kinds fall under this general term:

Hoarfrost- a deposit of soft, white ice crystals when the temperature of the surface is below freezing point. Produced by water vapour from the surrounding clear air.

White dew- a deposit of fine white frozen dew drops. Produced by a deposit of dew being frozen when the temperature drops below freezing point.

Fog- a suspension of very fine water droplets in the air that reduces visibility to less than 1000m.

Shallow fog- fog lying on the surface of the ground or sea that doesn't obstruct visibility above a height of 2m over land or 10m over sea.


Mist- a suspension in the air of microscopic water droplets that reduces the horizontal visibility. Mist usually has a greyish tinge. Visibility limits are 1-10km.

Thunder- the sound caused by the atmospheric disturbance created by a lightning flash : may be heard up to 16 km from the source. It is always associated with cumulonimbus clouds.

Lightning- Brilliant quick discharge between two electrical clouds, or between such clouds and the ground or inside a cloud.

Thunderstorm- a combination of thunder and lightning with or without rain. When thunder is heard the occurrence should be listed as a thunderstorm even if no lightning is seen. A thunderstorm is considered over if there is no more sound for 15 min.

Willy Willy (or dust devil)- a whirling narrow collum of dust or sand, usually less than 30m high, although it may extend up to 300 m or more. Moving with the wind , willy willys whirl dust and light objects into the air but usually stop after travelling short distances.



Haze- a state of gloom caused by very small particles invisible to the eye. Haze is like looking at the landscape through a veil making the colours lighter. When viewed against a dark background eg a mountain it has a bluish tinge when viewed against a bright background it has a dirty yellow-orange tinge. To distinguish haze from mist you must look at the relative humidity . If the relative humidity is less than 90% it is called a haze.

Widespread dust haze- a suspension in the air of dust or small sand particles that have been raised from the ground by a dust storm or a sand storm before the time of observation.

Dust/Sand storm- caused by turbulent winds raising large quantities of dust or sand and reducing visibility to less than 1000m . A severe dust storm reduces visibility to less than 200m. The difference between a dust storm and a sand storm are the size of the particles. A dust storm is made up of fine particles, often raised to great heights and carried great distances from the source. A sand storm consists of coarse particles and are not usually raised or carried to great heights or distances.

Smoke haze- Fine ash particles suspended in the air. When smoke is present the disc of the sun at sunrise or sunset appears very red , and during the daytime it has a reddish tinge. Smoke at a distance from bush fires has a light greyish or bluish colour and is evenly distributed in the air.

Drawing of
"Todd River"
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Age: 8