Queensland’s extended wet and dry periods
Australian Rainfall Periods (April to March) Relative to Historical Records 1889–2017

1896 – 1903

rainfall

1903 – 1911

1911 – 1916

1916 – 1922

1922 – 1933

Graph

Seasonal composite rainfall anomaly as a percentile of the historical rainfall record 1889-2017. Graph displays rainfall for April to March, with same period for each calendar year. These years include the following:

- 1896-1899
- 1903-1906
- 1911-1914
- 1916-1919
- 1922-1925
- 1933-1936

Rainfall for this period was below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 10% and 20% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 20% and 30% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 30% and 50% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 50% and 70% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 70% and 80% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 80% and 90% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 90% and 100% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was 100% below the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was above the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 10% and 20% above the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was between 20% and 30% above the previous year.
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Rainfall for this period was between 90% and 100% above the previous year.
Rainfall for this period was 100% above the previous year.

Legend

Rainfall for the dry period was below the previous year.
Rainfall for the wet period was above the previous year.

Rural production increased due to the outbreak of World War II.

Livestock numbers in Queensland exceeded 20M head.

Soldier settler blocks (>23,000; 9.3Mha) were provided Australia-wide to this wet period, along with world-wide food shortages and a wool supply.

Prolonged drought affected livestock and land degradation, with high property losses in Queensland and New South Wales.

Rainfall for this wet period was 42% above the previous dry period.

The Queensland-British Food Corporation - Peak Downs farming scheme (Central Highlands, Queensland) was harvested on the coast (e.g. 1916); wheat crop failed between Rockhampton and Longreach.

Livestock statistics indicated that in June 2001 numbers were reduced in order to decrease local grazing pressure.

Statewide assessment in November 2002 found that there was a surface and stock water drought, followed by increased fire activity in 2003.

High macropod numbers (i.e. kangaroos) became a management problem.

Federation drought: heatwaves, bushfires and dust storms associated with >40% rainfall below the previous dry period.

Rainfall for this dry period was 15% below the previous year.

War-time droughts were significant in Northern Territory and Queensland, with 40% rainfall below the previous period.

Post World War I – expectations of success were over-optimistic due to low rainfall.

Soil erosion and loss of pasture grass and the loss of seed reserves over a prolonged period of dry conditions.

Soldier settler blocks (>23,000; 9.3Mha) were provided Australia-wide to this wet period.

Assessments followed to define land capacity, sustainability and degradation levels for vegetation and wildlife habitats.

Government support payments for farm families, interest rate subsidies and tax incentives through the Farm Innovation (DSITI).

In January 1994, a tropical cyclone Sarah delivered up to 500mm in 12-18 hours, which killed over 400 people – the largest death toll of any natural disaster in Australian history.

Widespread floods and damage were associated with heavy rainfall and extensive flooding,