



FIJI METEOROLOGICAL SERVICE

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MEDIA RELEASE

3.30 pm Friday 10 September 2004

WEATHER SUMMARY FOR AUGUST RAINFALL OUTLOOK TILL NOVEMBER 2004

Highlights: *August rainfall well above average across most of Fiji; Six records broken. Last three months (June to August) Rainfall above average across Fiji; Seven records broken. A weak El Niño is in place and likely to affect Fiji's weather in the coming months*

August was exceptionally wet for a dry season month. The abnormally wet weather pattern over Fiji was associated with a prolonged enhanced convective activity that affected the North-western Pacific and near Equatorial Pacific for much of August. As a result, low-pressure systems and fronts had a dominant effect on the country's weather.

Most parts of Fiji recorded well above average rainfall with Western Division sites reporting rainfall ranging from 269 to 582% of average. The wettest region was around Ba and Tavua which experienced nearly six times its average for August. In the interior of Viti Levu, Monasavu received 181% of average rainfall. Rainfall in Suva and Nausori was more than twice average. Labasa and Nabouwalu in the Northern Division and Matuku, Lakeba and Ono-I-Lau in the Lau Group also received between two to three times their average rainfall.

A number of rainfall records were broken in August and in the last three months. These include the highest one-day rainfall ever recorded in August at Vatukoula and Lautoka Mill, the wettest August since records began in Vatukoula, Viwa Island, Rarawai and Penang Mills and the wettest June to August period on record at Monasavu, Rarawai Mill, Vatukoula, Viwa Island, Nacocolevu, Savusavu Airport, and Ono-I-Lau. Of particular interest is the wettest in the case of Rarawai Mill and second wettest June to August at the Penang and Lautoka Mills in 94 years.

Air Temperatures varied considerably in August depending on the weather pattern at the time. When the subtropical ridge affected Fiji, the country experienced warm dry days and cool nights. Temperatures were warmer at night when there was persistent cloud cover. A number of temperature records were broken during the month – refer attached Table. Monthly average night-time temperatures were the warmest on record at Vatukoula and Rarawai Mill and daytime temperatures were the warmest on record at Rotuma. Ono-I-Lau experienced its lowest average night-time temperature on record.

Fiji's weather has not been affected to date by the weak El Niño that is in place. However, changes especially in rainfall patterns would occur in the coming months should the El Niño continue to develop. Some El Niño events in the past, for example the 1987, 1997, 2002 episodes, have caused significant suppression in rainfall. The effect on Fiji's rainfall is also not simultaneous with the development of an El Niño as there is a lag period due to Fiji's geographic location in the South Pacific. Air Temperatures are also likely to be affected, as are Tropical Cyclone patterns. The Fiji Meteorological Service will continue to monitor ocean and atmospheric patterns in the coming months. In the meantime rainfall is expected to be average or below average for most of the country in the next three months.

**RAINFALL & AIR TEMPERATURE EXTREMES FOR AUGUST AND
THREE CONSECUTIVE MONTH RAINFALL EXTREMES FOR JUNE-AUGUST 2004**

<u>Element</u>	<u>Station</u>	<u>Observed (record)</u>	<u>On</u>	<u>Rank</u>	<u>Previous (record)</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Records Began</u>
Rainfall (mm)	Lautoka Mill	92.7	1st	New 1-Day High	91.3	1983	1910
	Vatukoula	163.3	1st	New 1-Day High	87	1990	1936
	Rarawai Mill	378.1	-	New Monthly High	301	1974	1910
	Penang Mill	264.2	-	New Monthly High	234	1927	1910
	Viwa	270.0	-	New Monthly High	174	1999	1978
	Vatukoula	387.9	-	New Monthly High	191	1990	1936
	Monasavu	1251.8	-	New 3-month High	1123.2	1982	1980
	Rarawai Mill	605.3	-	New 3-month High	470.7	1990	1910
	Vatukoula	637.9	-	New 3-month High	582.4	1973	1936
	Viwa	661.3	-	New 3-month High	525.4	1982	1978
	Nacocolevu	520.3	-	New 3-month High	492.0	1927	1926
	Savusavu Air	694.5	-	New 3-month High	615.8	2001	1956
	Ono-I-Lau	562.4	-	New 3-month High	514.4	1979	1943
Maximum Temperature (°C)	Rotuma	32.1	31st	New 1-Day High	32.0	2001	1933
	Rotuma	30.7	-	New Monthly High	30.5	1999	1933
Minimum Temperature (°C)	Vatukoula	23.7	21st	New 1-Day High	23.0	1991	1984
	Rarawai Mill	19.9	-	New Monthly High	19.7	1999	1925
	Vatukoula	20.4	-	New Monthly High	20.0	2000	1984
	Ono-I-Lau	18.3	-	New Monthly low	18.7	1982	1943
Sunshine (hrs)	Nadi Airport	144.2hrs	-	New Monthly Low	154.0hrs	1993	1947