

Northern Territory Pastoral Feed Outlook

June 2018

The purpose of this quarterly outlook is to summarise information relevant to the pastoral industry such as current feed supplies, seasonal conditions, the development of drought conditions in central Australia and fire risk.

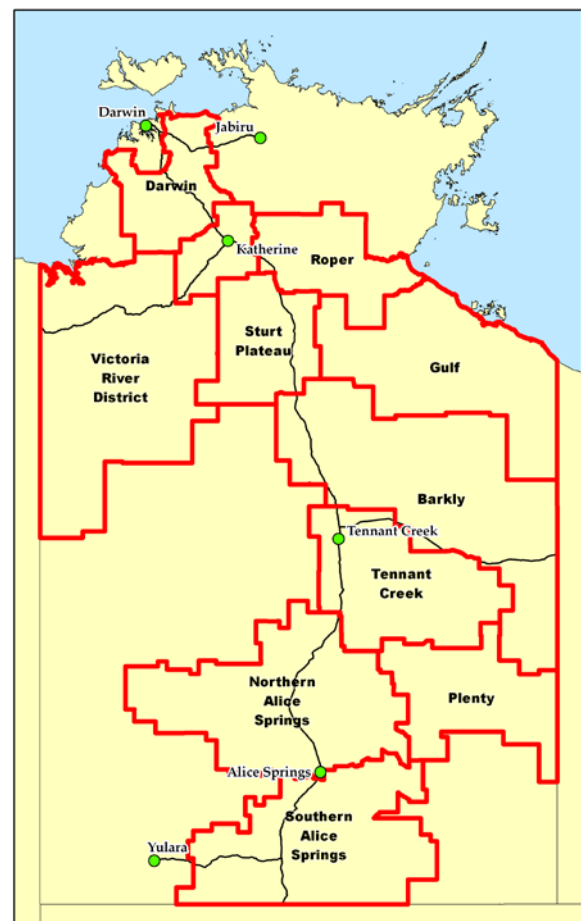
You can see the entire document and all districts by continuing to scroll through this file. If you are interested in selected sections, you can click on the links below.

[Summary of current situation & trends - all districts](#)

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Summary of current situation & trends - all districts – June 2018

After a fair start to the 2017/18 season, especially across the Top End, pasture growth is now close to the long-term median across the majority of the NT. Compared to the 2016/17 season however, pasture growth is considerably lower in the VRD, Barkly, Tennant Creek and Alice Springs regions. In regions where stock numbers have increased with the generally better-than-average seasons in the last couple of decades (VRD and Barkly), there is the potential for forage shortages if stock numbers are not adjusted to reflect these more typical growth conditions.

KEY

Green = low risk

Orange = watch

Red = high risk

KEY

↑ = increasing trend

↓ = decreasing trend

↔ = steady

	Northern Territory Pastoral Districts											
Indicator	Darwin	Katherine	VRD	Sturt Plateau	Roper	Gulf	Barkly	Tennant Creek	Northern Alice Springs	Plenty	Southern Alice Springs	Comments
2017/2018 total pasture growth	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	Arrows indicate trend compared to the long-term mean.
Current estimated standing biomass	↓	↓	↓	↓	↑	↑	↑	↔	↓	↔	↔	Arrows indicate trend since previous quarter.
Current fire risk	↓	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↓	↔	↔	↔	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter.
Current seasonal outlook	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	↔	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter and taking into account the forecasted model predictions.

For further information about this Outlook, please contact Chris Materne on 08 8951 8135 or Dionne Walsh on 08 8999 2178

Northern Territory Seasonal Outlook

as at June 2018

Sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology

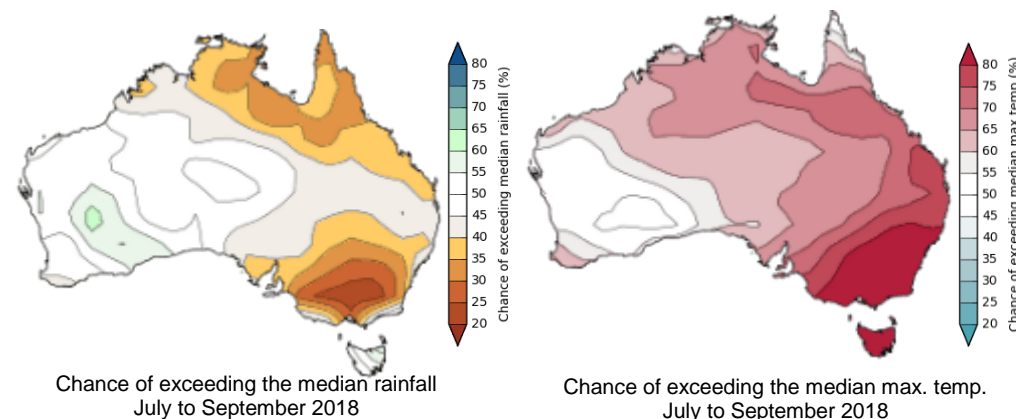
<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/>

The national outlook for July to September 2018 indicates that:

- **Drier** than average conditions are more likely across the northern half of the NT.
- In July, **drier** than average conditions are more likely across the majority of the NT.
- **Warmer** than average days are more likely across the entire NT.
- **Warmer** than average nights are more likely across the southern two thirds of the NT.

The El Niño–Southern Oscillation and the Indian Ocean Dipole are forecast to remain neutral during winter and thus have less influence on Australia's climate.

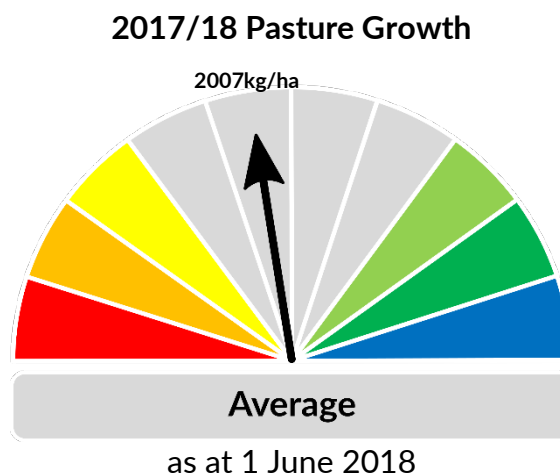
Higher than average pressures to the south of Australia persist right through the season, resulting in weaker westerlies and fewer cold fronts from the Southern Ocean, and may effect rainfall over central Australia's winter period.



Seasonal Indicators	Comments (sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology)
<p>El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO)</p> <p>http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/</p> <p>Current outlook:</p> <p>Neutral</p> <p>ENSO status:</p>	<p>El Niño–Southern Oscillation neutral, but tropical Pacific Ocean warming</p> <p>ENSO remains neutral—neither El Niño nor La Niña. Climate model consensus indicates that ENSO will continue in a neutral phase for at least the southern hemisphere winter.</p> <p>However, sea surface temperatures in the eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean are now warmer than average, but remain well within the neutral range. Most climate models indicate some further warming of the tropical Pacific Ocean is likely in the coming months. Some models are predicting close to average, but three of the eight models reach El Niño levels during spring.</p> <p>During El Niño, rainfall in eastern Australian is typically below average during winter and spring. A neutral ENSO phase has little effect on Australian climate.</p>
<p>Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD)</p> <p>http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/#tabs=Indian-Ocean</p> <p>Current outlook:</p> <p>Neutral</p>	<p>IOD currently neutral</p> <p>IOD remains neutral. All six international climate models suggest it is likely to remain neutral until at least the southern hemisphere spring.</p> <p>When IOD is neutral, there is little change to Australia's climate. If negative, the warmer than average sea surface temperatures can provide more moisture for frontal systems and lows crossing Australia.</p>

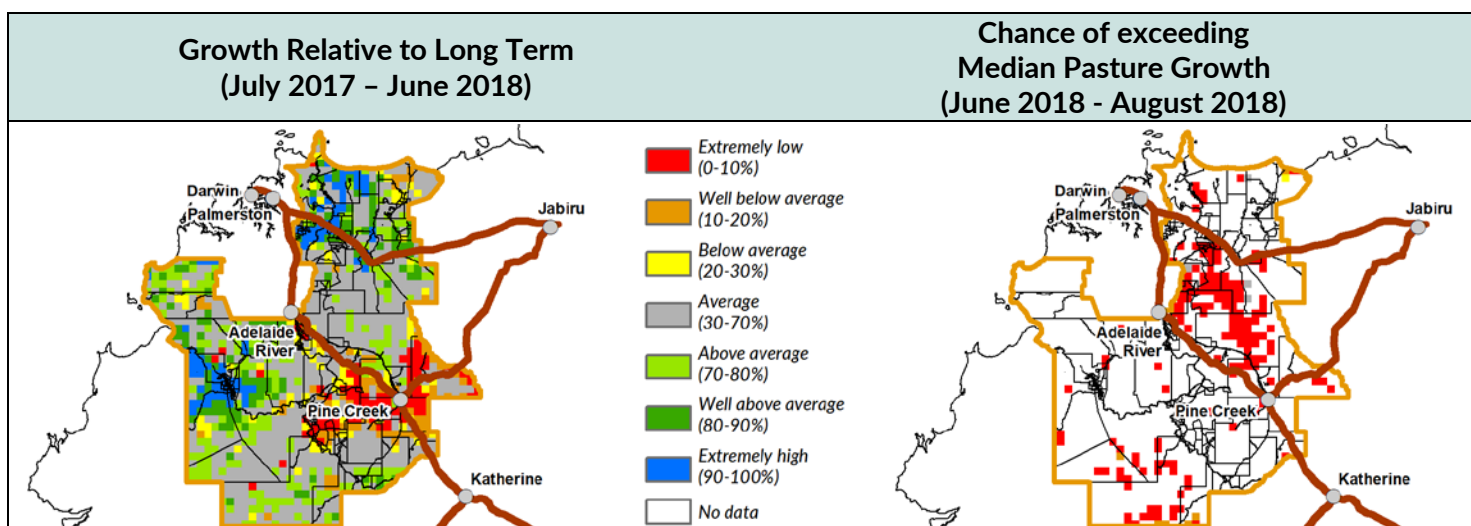
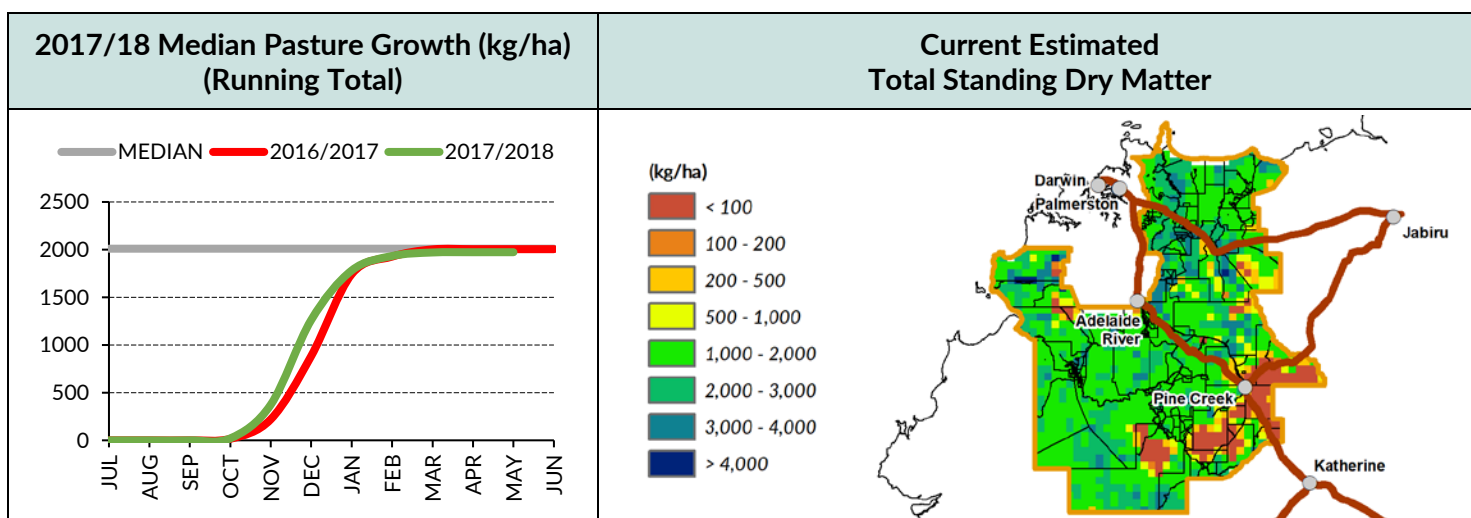
Darwin District

- After a good start to the 2017/18 wet season, pasture growth is now similar to last season and to the long-term median
- 50% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (33% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 77% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018



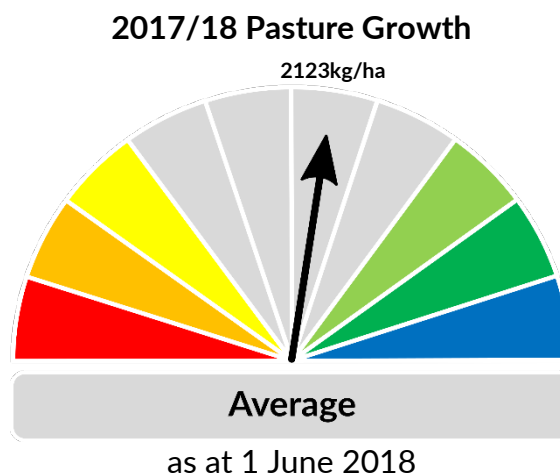
In a typical wet season, pasture growth in the Darwin region tends to be limited by available soil nitrogen rather than soil moisture. Therefore a poor wet season may not generally affect the total quantity of pasture grown on upland country.

As at 1 June 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	0%	52%	44%	4%
Total Standing Dry Matter	18%	53%	22%	7%



Katherine District

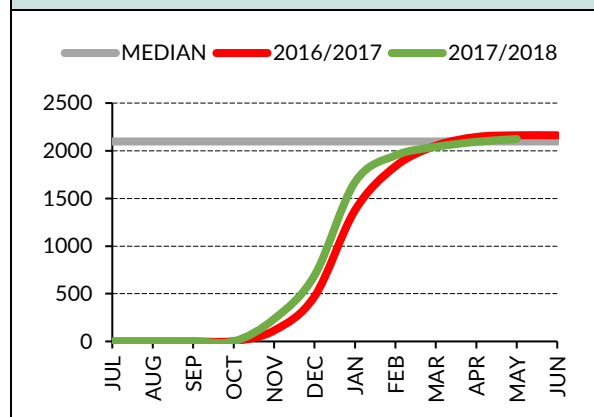
- After a good start to the 2017/18 wet season, pasture growth is now similar to last season and to the long-term median
- 33% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (19% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 85% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018



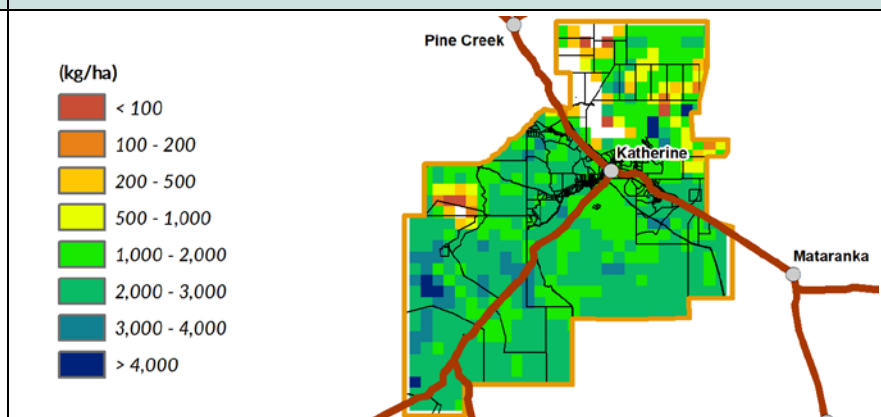
As at 1 June 2018

(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	0%	38%	62%	0%
Total Standing Dry Matter	14%	32%	47%	7%

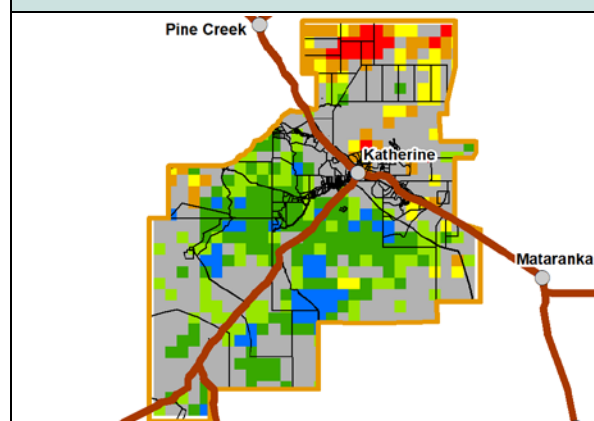
2017/18 Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



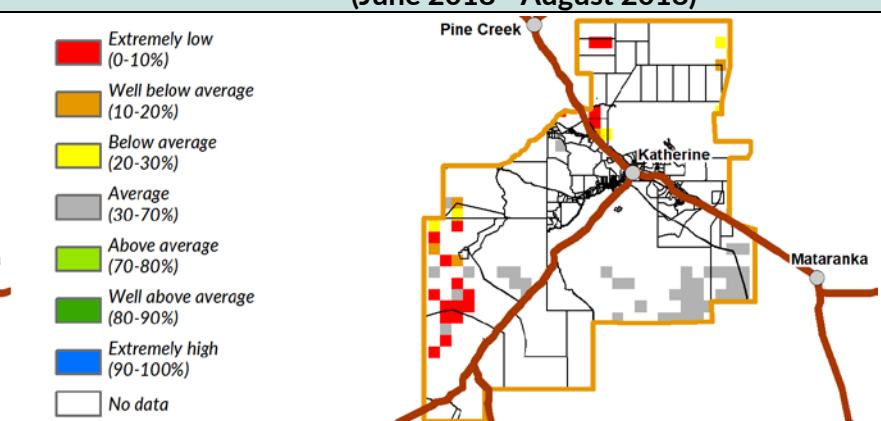
Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Growth Relative to Long Term (July 2017 – June 2018)

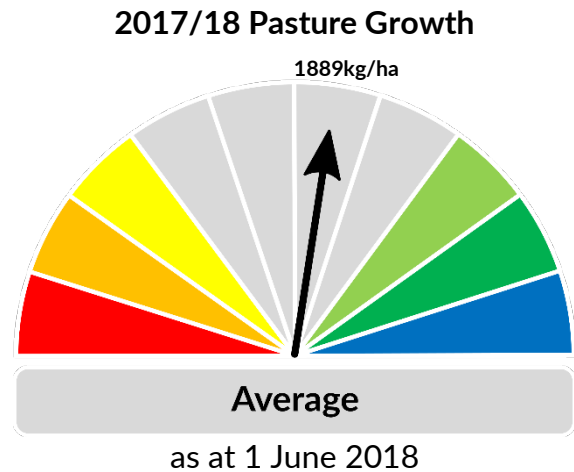


Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (June 2018 – August 2018)

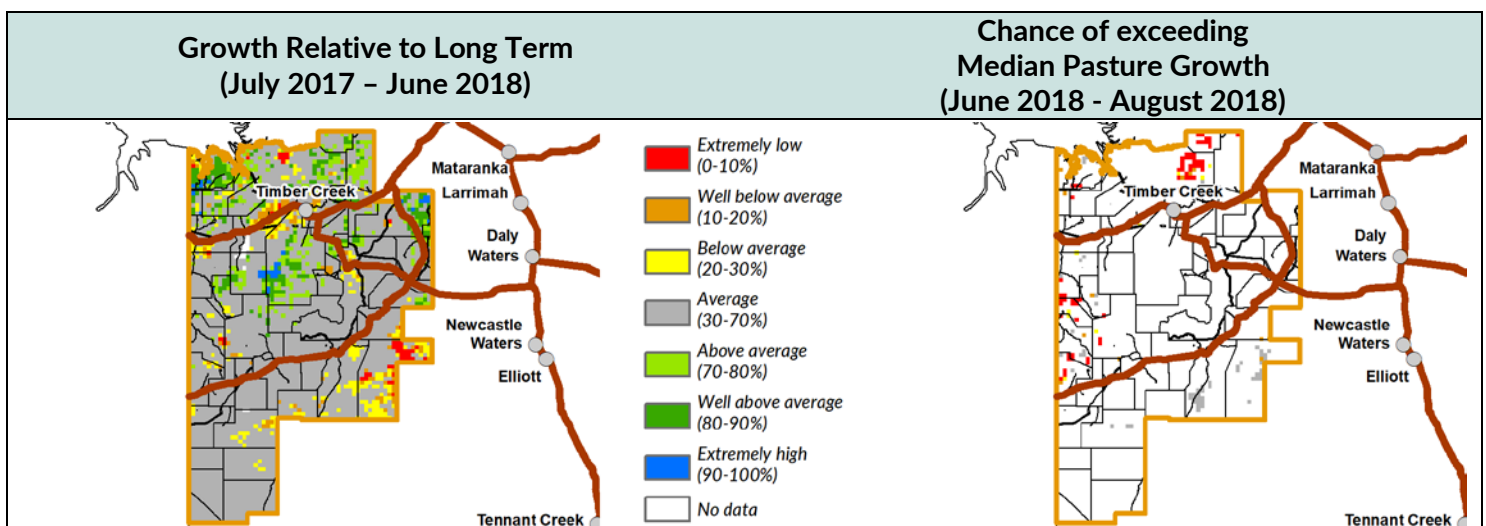
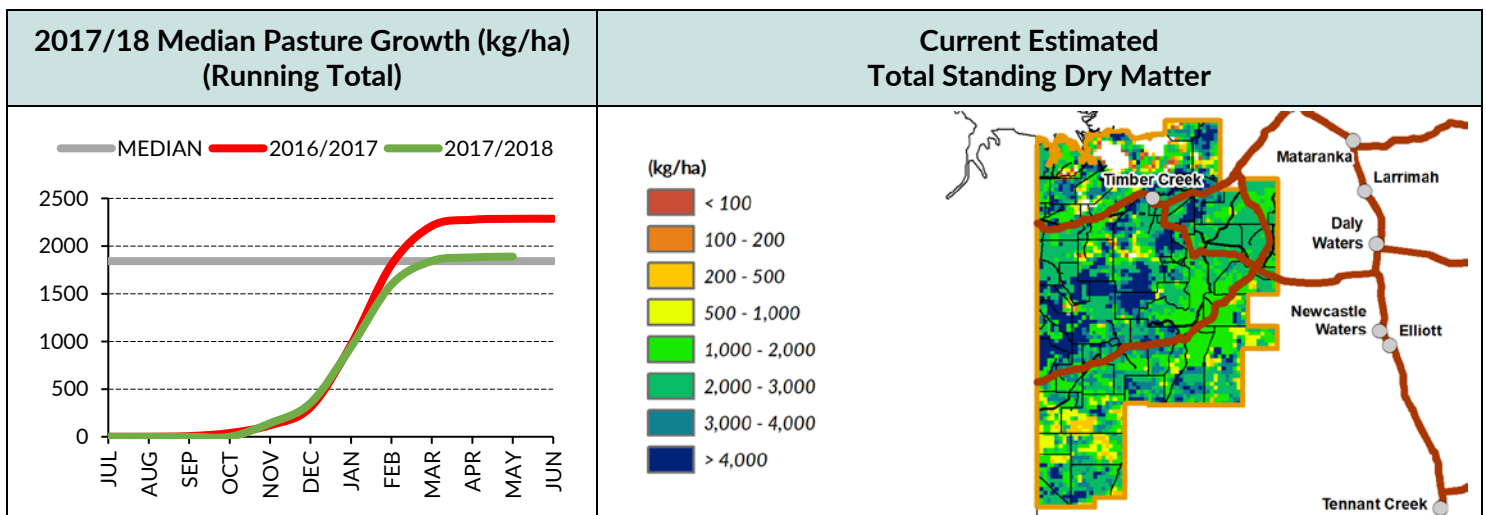


Victoria River District

- 2017/18 pasture growth was lower than last season but is similar to the long-term median
- 36% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (15% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 95% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018



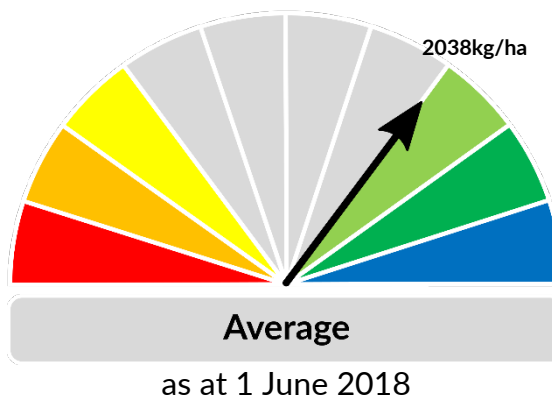
As at 1 June 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	16%	38%	40%	6%
Total Standing Dry Matter	12%	28%	34%	26%



Sturt Plateau District

- 2017/18 pasture growth is similar to last year and to the long-term median
- 26% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (2% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 99% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018

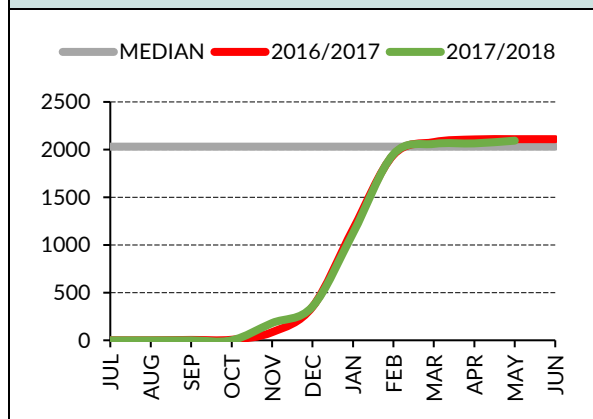
2017/18 Pasture Growth



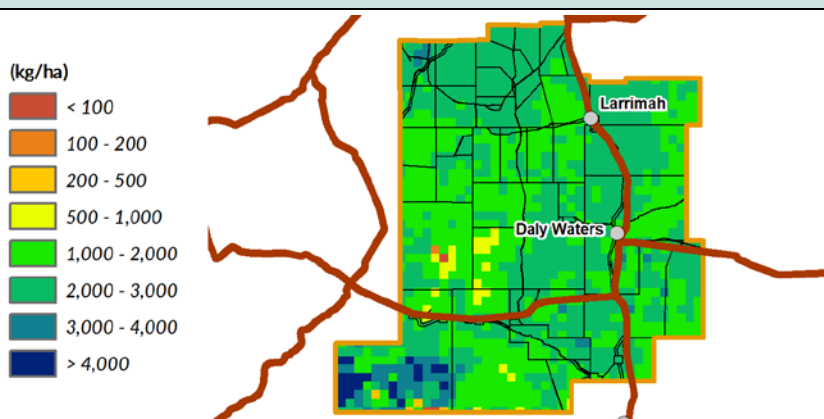
As at 1 June 2018

(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	2%	35%	63%	<1%
Total Standing Dry Matter	2%	42%	51%	5%

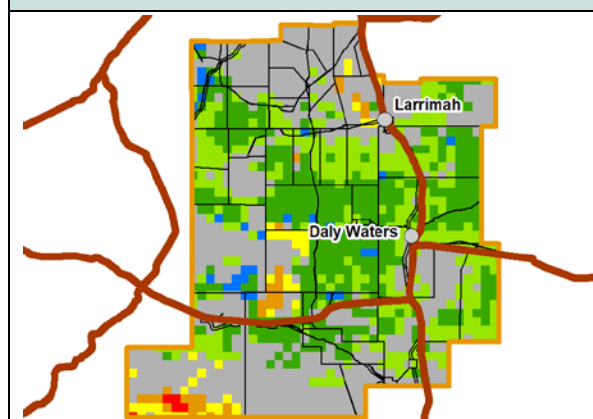
2017/18 Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



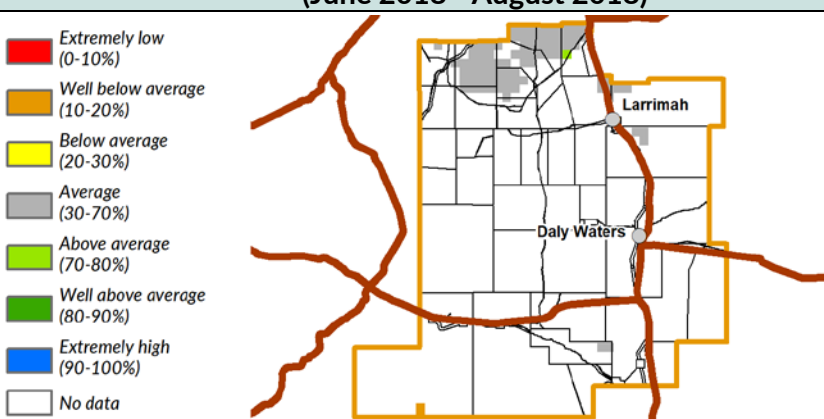
Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Growth Relative to Long Term (July 2017 – June 2018)

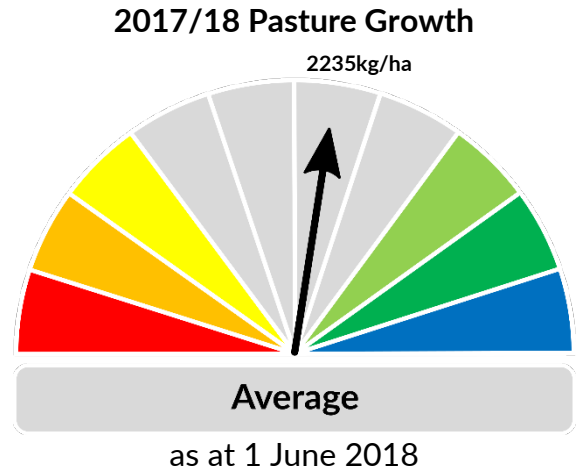


Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (June 2018 – August 2018)



Roper District

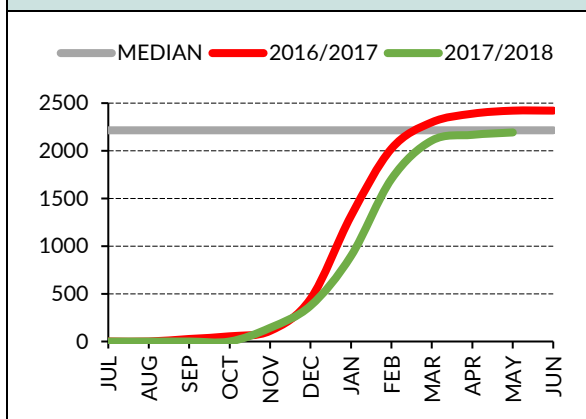
- 2017/18 pasture growth was slightly lower than last season but similar to the long-term median
- 32% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (16% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 93% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018



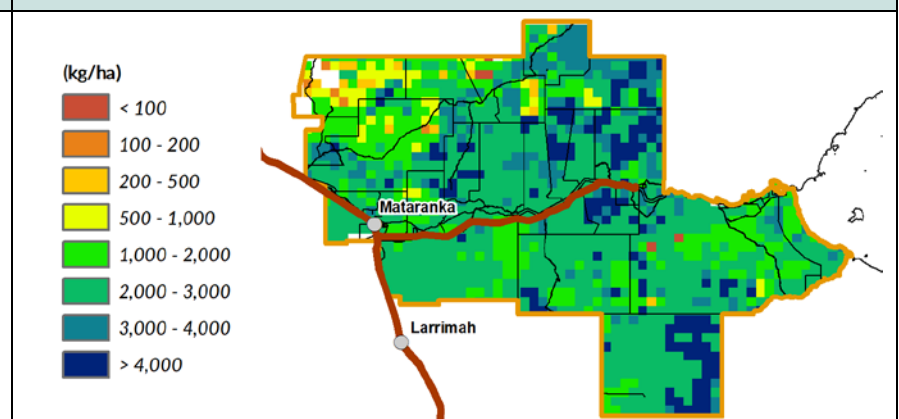
As at 1 June 2018

(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	0%	27%	69%	4%
Total Standing Dry Matter	5%	20%	53%	22%

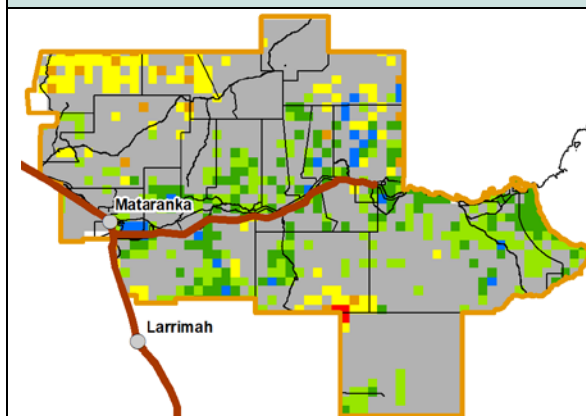
2017/18 Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



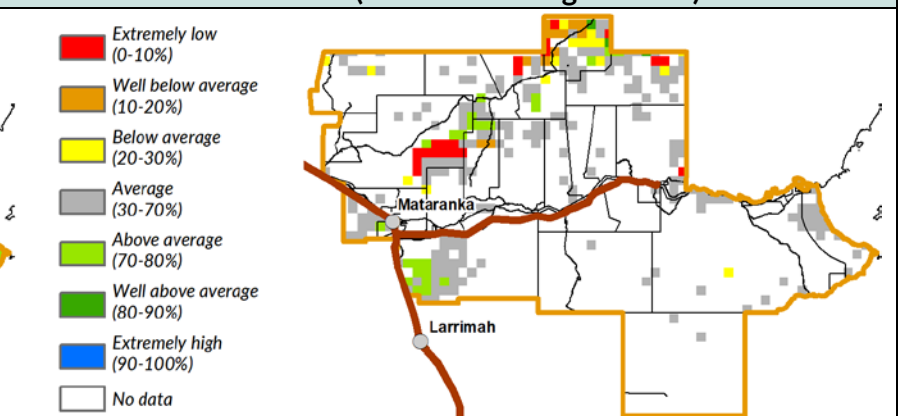
Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Growth Relative to Long Term (July 2017 – June 2018)

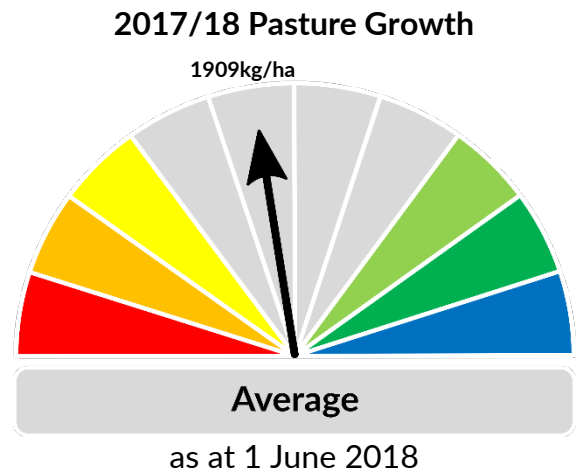


Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (June 2018 – August 2018)

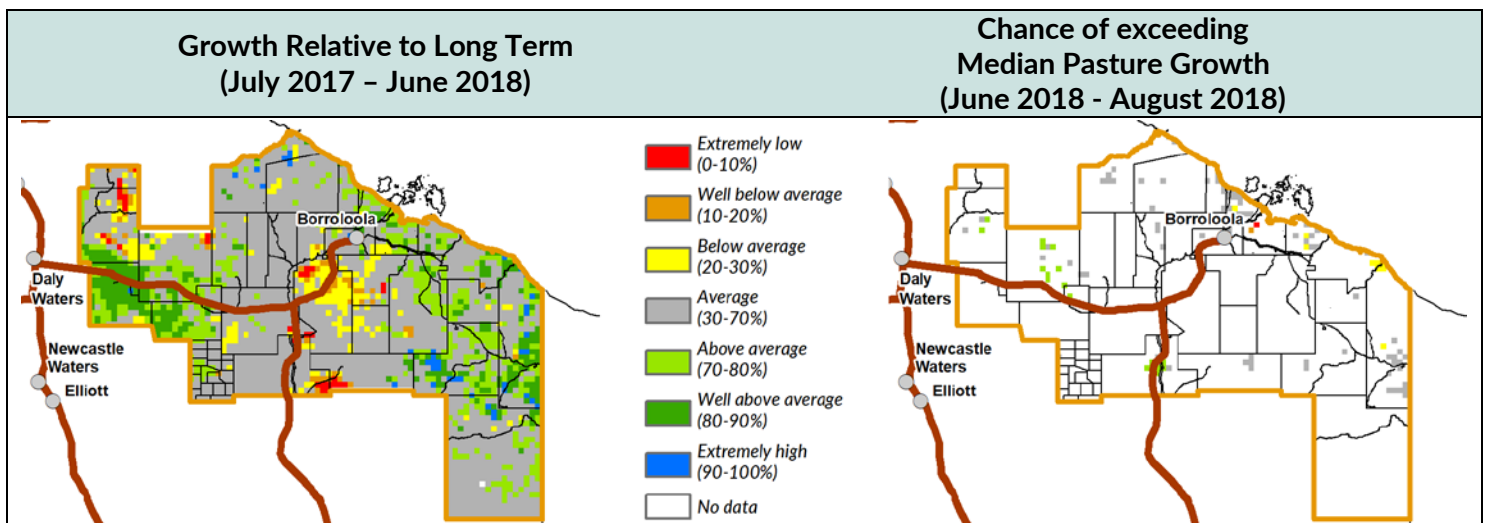
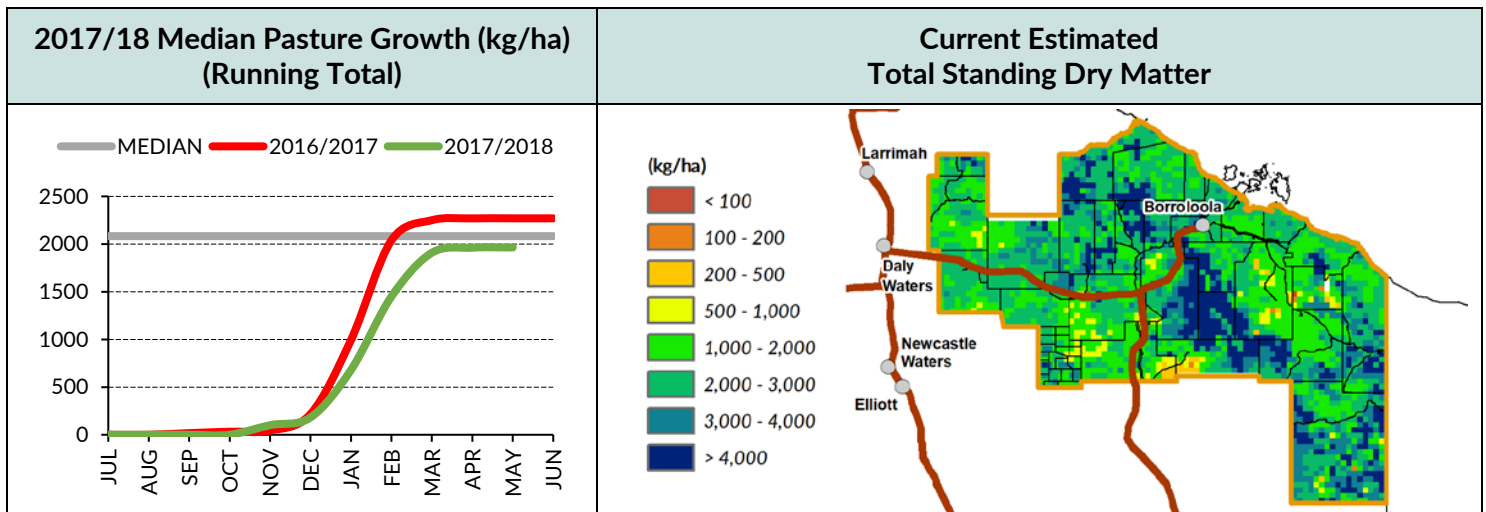


Gulf District

- 2017/18 pasture growth was slightly lower than last season and slightly below the long-term median
- 33% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (7% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 100% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018



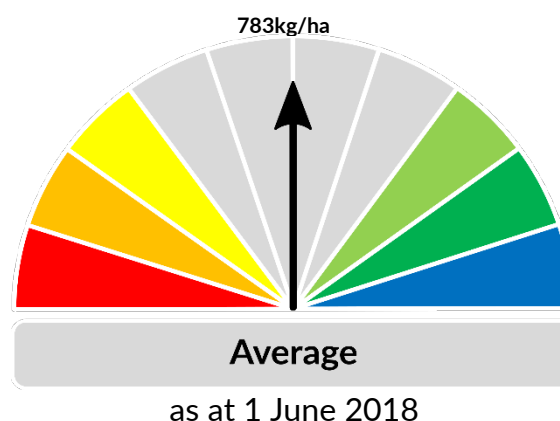
As at 1 June 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	6%	46%	47%	1%
Total Standing Dry Matter	4%	30%	39%	27%



Barkly District

- After a fair start to the 2017/18 season, pasture growth is now well behind last year but similar to the long-term median
- The far southern part of the region has had below average growth (lowest 30% of years) and some areas now have very low standing dry matter levels
- 9% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (less than 1% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 87% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018

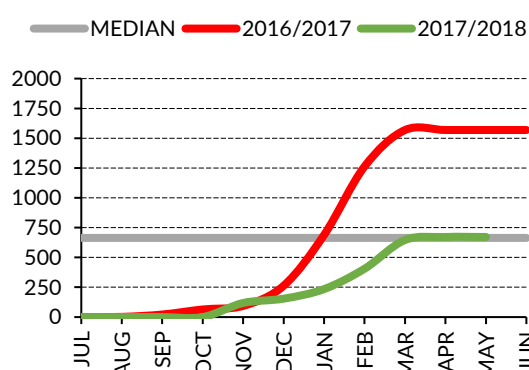
2017/18 Pasture Growth



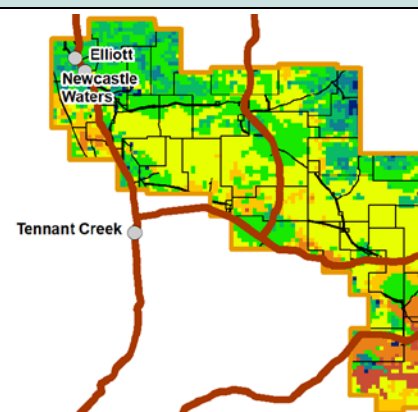
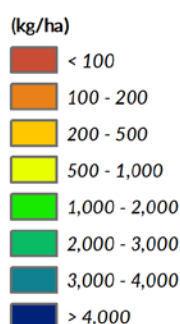
As at 1 June 2018

(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	9%	22%	50%	19%
Total Standing Dry Matter	8%	7%	38%	47%

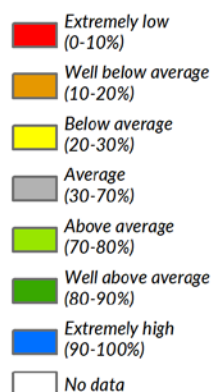
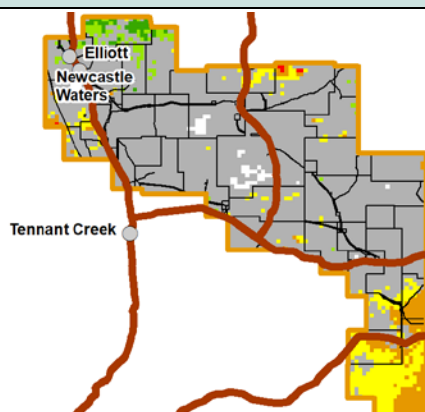
2017/18 Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



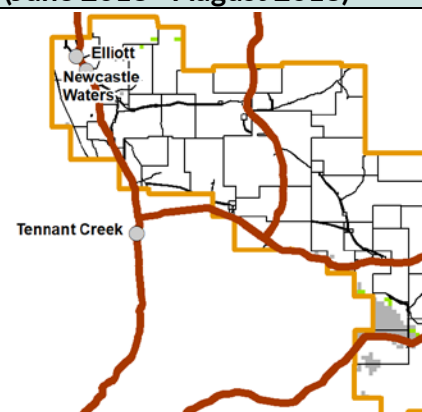
Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Growth Relative to Long Term (July 2017 – June 2018)

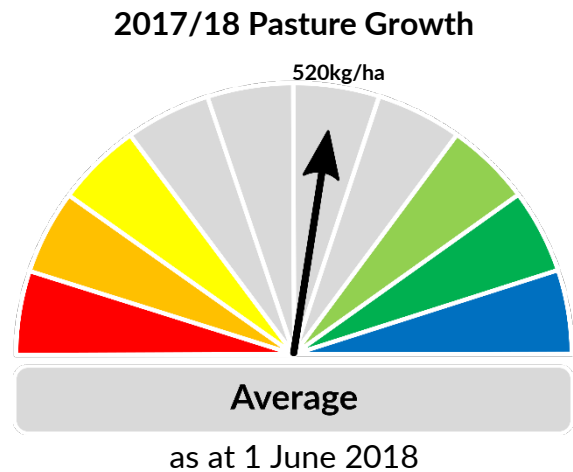


Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (June 2018 – August 2018)

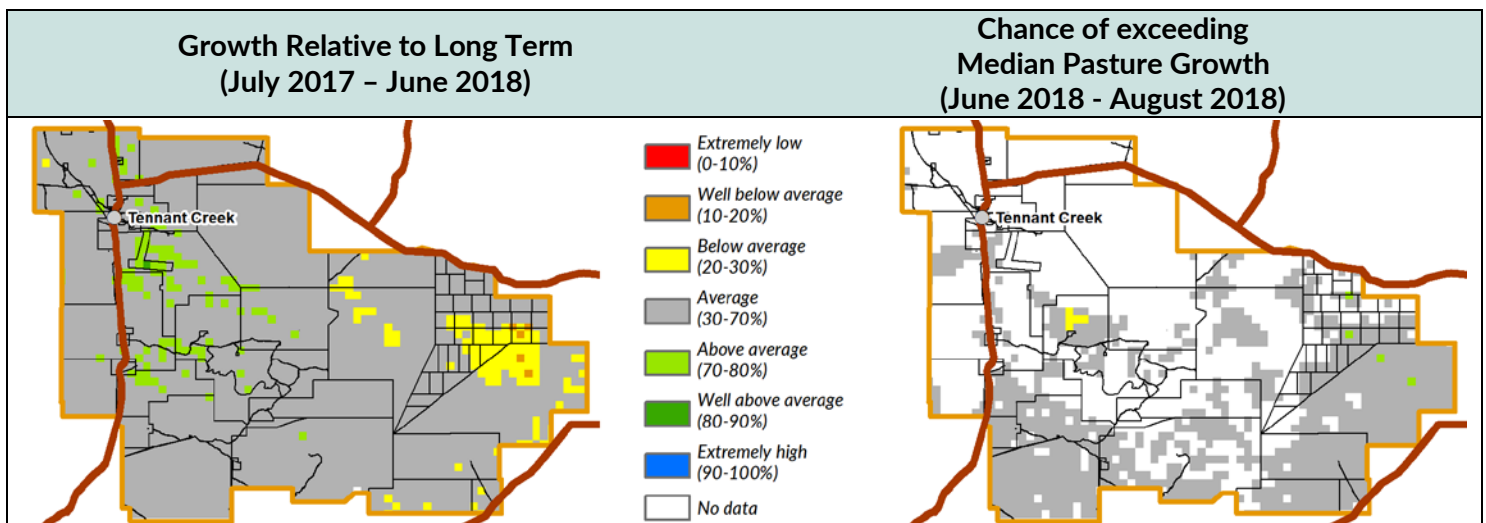
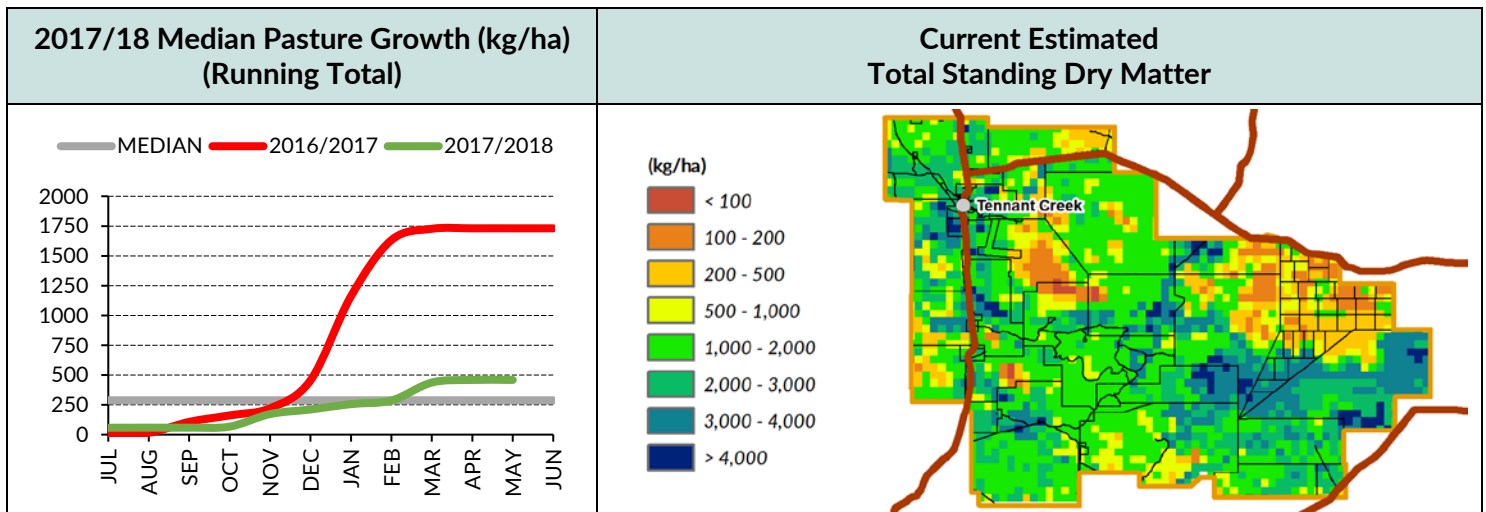


Tennant Creek District

- 2017/18 pasture growth is well behind last year but higher than the long-term median
- 25% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (less than 1% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 89% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018

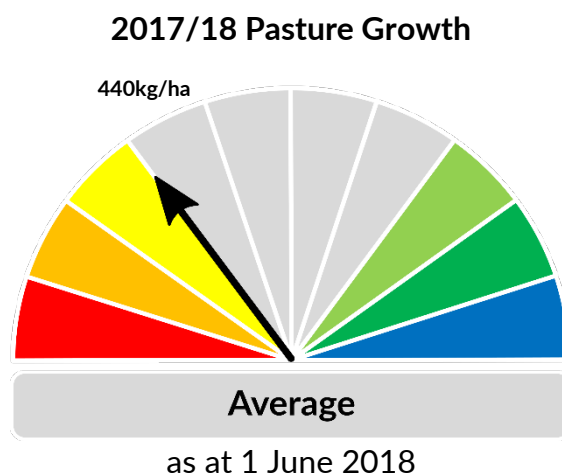


As at 1 June 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	8%	52%	34%	6%
Total Standing Dry Matter	6%	8%	11%	75%

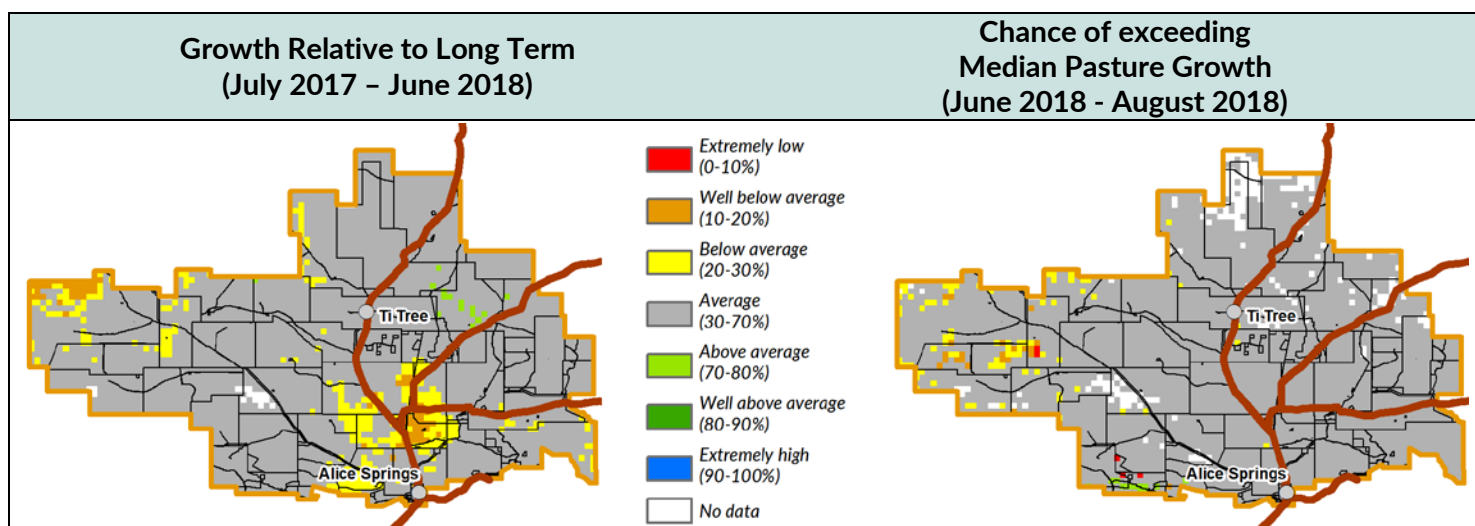
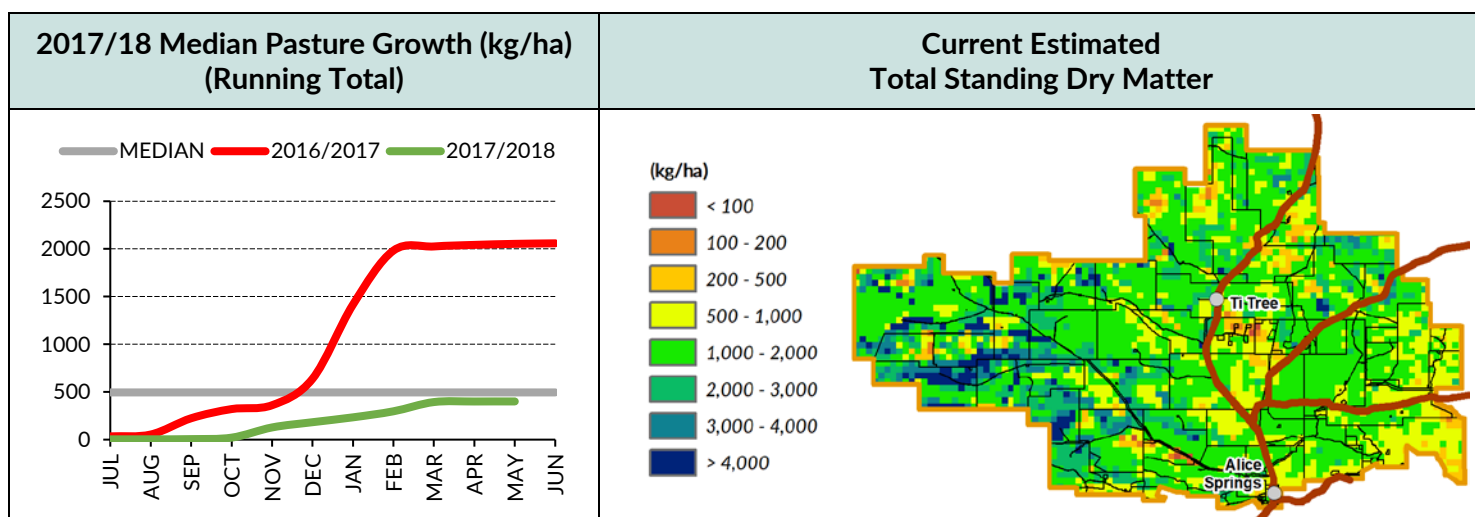


Northern Alice Springs District

- 2017/18 pasture growth is well behind last year but only slightly lower than the long-term median
- 7% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (less than 1% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 99% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018



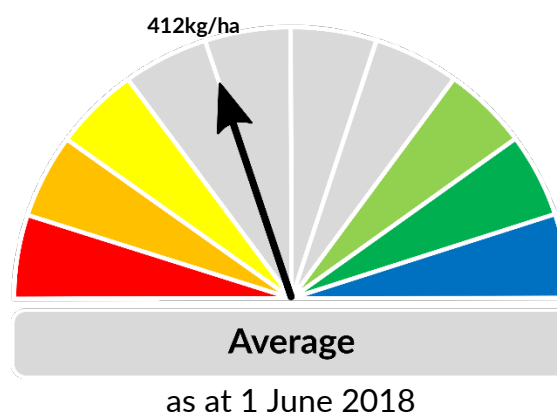
As at 1 June 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	25%	40%	32%	3%
Total Standing Dry Matter	2%	4%	21%	73%



Plenty District

- Pasture growth is well behind this time last year but similar to the long-term median
- Central areas of the district have experienced below average pasture growth (in the lowest 30% of years)
- 1% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 95% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018

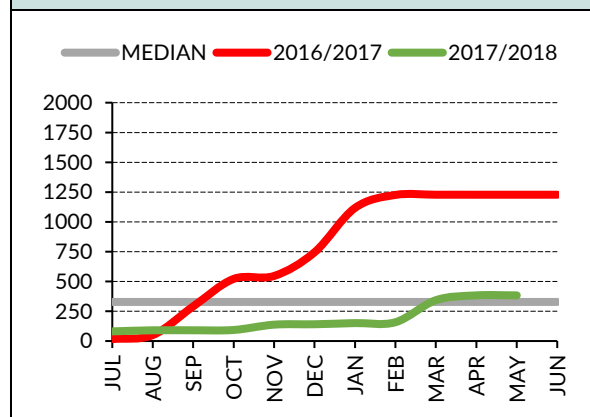
2017/18 Pasture Growth



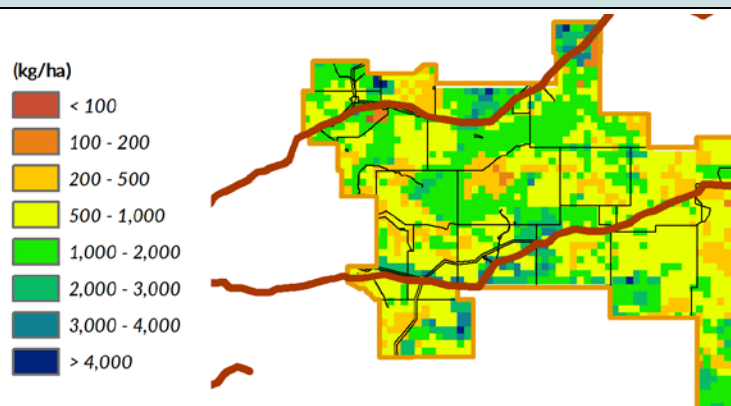
As at 1 June 2018

(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	29%	45%	22%	4%
Total Standing Dry Matter	2%	12%	44%	42%

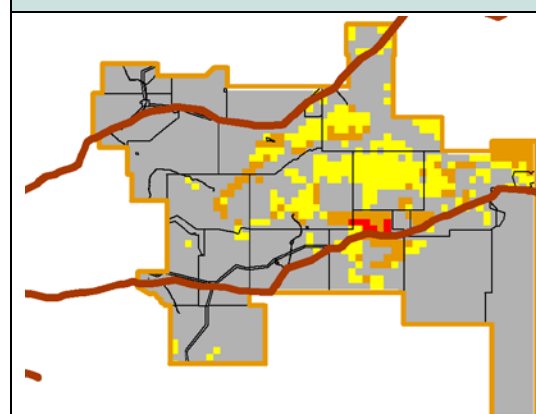
2017/18 Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



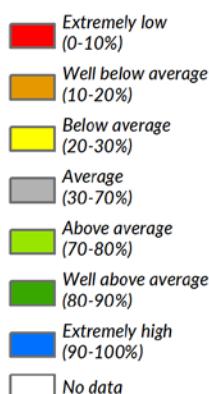
Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Growth Relative to Long Term (July 2017 – June 2018)

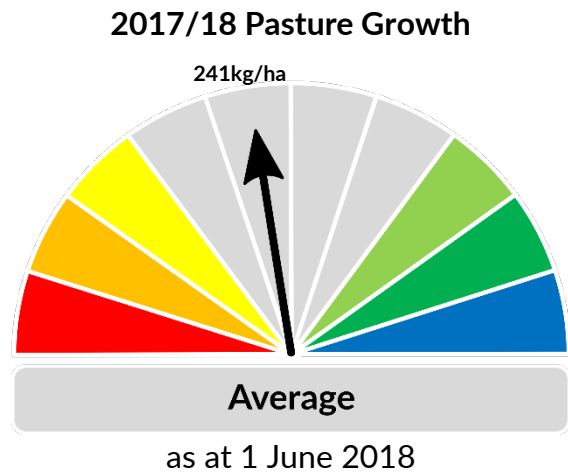


Chance of exceeding Median Pasture Growth (June 2018 – August 2018)

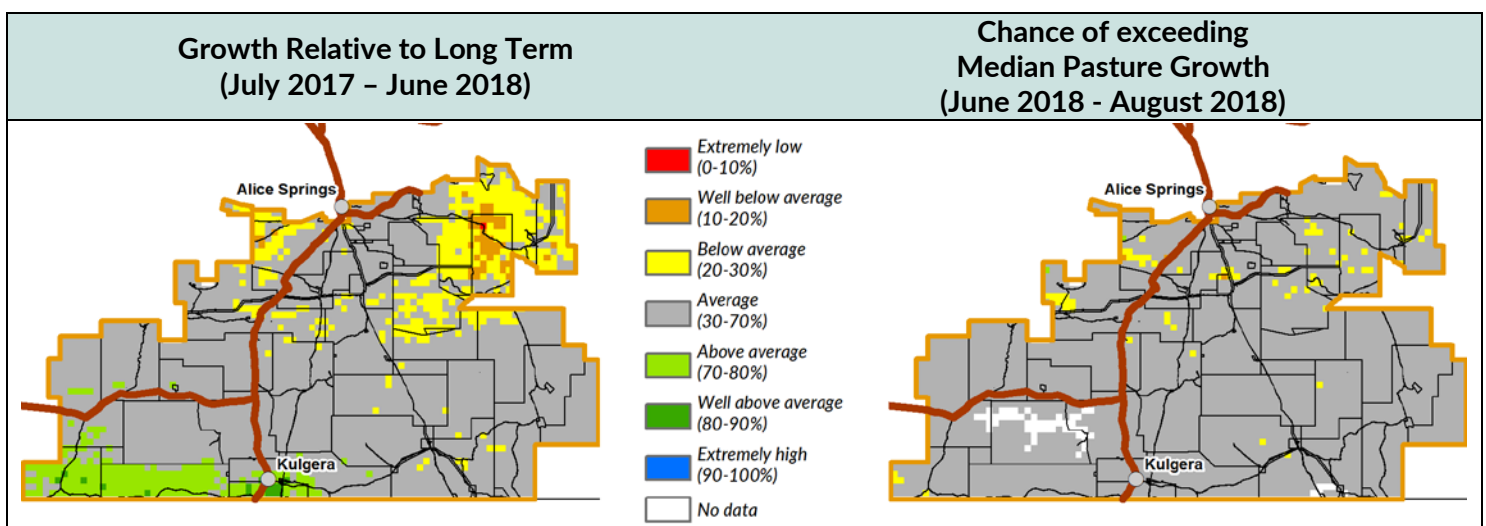
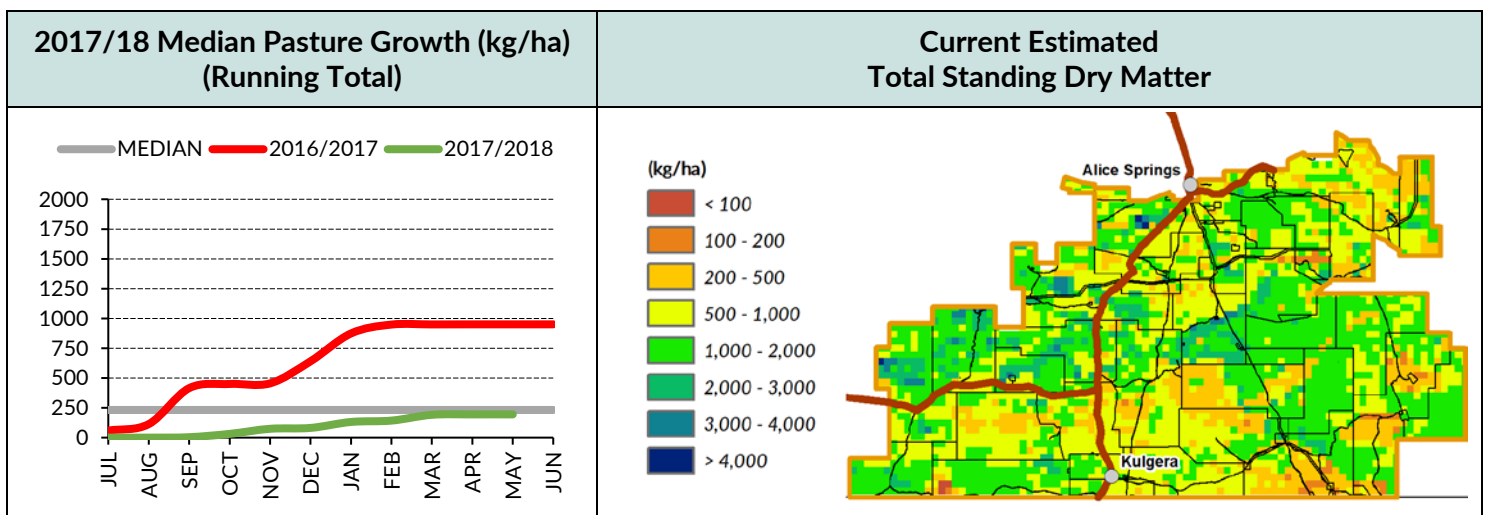


Southern Alice Springs District

- Pasture growth is well behind this time last year but only slightly less than the long-term median
- North east parts of the district have experienced below average growth (lowest 30% of years)
- Less than 1% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (15% of this burnt area has been burnt since 1 January 2018)
- 92% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 June 2018



As at 1 June 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	65%	27%	8%	0%
Total Standing Dry Matter	2%	14%	36%	48%



Pasture Information

The pasture and fire risk information in this document is derived from AussieGRASS. AussieGRASS is a model that simulates pasture growth and standing biomass using climate data, vegetation mapping, fire history and regional estimates of grazing pressure. The model can be used to track simulated pasture growth and total standing pasture biomass at the landscape scale.

Note that the model does not use stocking rate data for individual properties. Where stock numbers are significantly higher or lower than typical for a district, model estimates of total standing dry matter may be erroneous.

Disclaimer

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