

December 2013

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 – December 2013](#)

[Northern Territory Seasonal Outlook – as at December 2013](#)

Individual District Summaries:

[Darwin District](#)

[Katherine District](#)

[Victoria River District](#)

[Sturt Plateau District](#)

[Roper District](#)

[Gulf District](#)

[Barkly District](#)

[Tennant Creek District](#)

[Northern Alice Springs District](#)

[Plenty District](#)

[Southern Alice Springs District](#)



Summary of current situation & trends - all districts – December 2013

KEY Green = low risk Orange = watch Red = high risk

KEY ↑ = increasing trend ↓ = decreasing trend ↔ = steady

Indicator	Northern Territory Pastoral Districts											Comments
	Darwin	Katherine	VRD	Sturt Plateau	Roper	Gulf	Barkly	Tennant Creek	Northern Alice Springs	Plenty	Southern Alice Springs	
2013/14 total pasture growth	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	Arrows indicate trend compared to the long-term median.
Current estimated standing biomass	↔	↓	↔	↓	↓	↔	↔	↔	↑	↔	↑	Arrows indicate trend since previous quarter.
Current seasonal outlook	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↑	↑	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter and taking into account the forecasted model predictions.
Current fire risk	↓	↔	↔	↓	↔	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter.

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

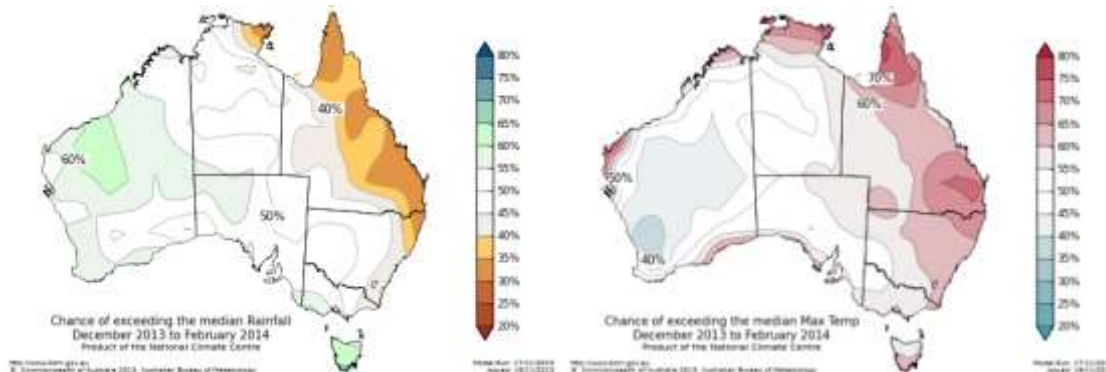
Sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology


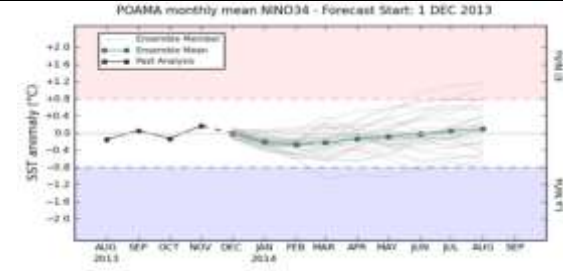
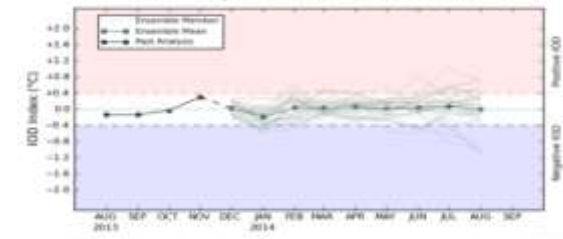
http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/rain_ahead.shtml

The national outlook for December 2013 to February 2014 indicates that:

- **Drier** than normal season is more likely for much of northeast Australia including Arnhem Land.
- **Wetter** than normal season is more likely for the western parts of Australia and may extend into the far south-western Alice Springs region.
- **Warmer** days and nights more likely over the Top End of the NT.

Climate influences include neutral tropical Pacific, and local sea surface temperature patterns.



Seasonal Indicators	Comments (sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology)	
<p>El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/ Current outlook: Neutral</p> 	<p>ENSO remains neutral</p> <p>The El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) remains neutral, with the majority of atmospheric and oceanic indicators close to their long-term average. The Southern Oscillation Index (SOI) has risen steeply over the past two weeks; this is partially an effect of monsoon activity over Darwin. International climate models indicate that the tropical Pacific will remain neutral at least through to the austral autumn.</p> 	
<p>Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/ Current outlook: Neutral</p>	<p>IOD remains neutral</p> <p>This neutral period follows on from a negative IOD event which became established during May 2013 and contributed to above average rainfall over parts of southern Australia from late autumn to mid-winter. The IOD consensus outlook from the four available models, indicates neutral values are likely to persist until at least the onset of the Australian monsoon. After this time, the IOD typically has little effect on Australian climate until the autumn–winter months.</p> 	
<p>Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/tropnote/tropnote.shtml Current outlook: Weak</p> <p>The MJO is an eastward moving "pulse" of cloud and rainfall near the equator that typically recurs every 30 to 60 days. It influences the timing, development and strength of the major global monsoon patterns, including northern Australia.</p>	<p>MJO has remained indiscernible. (Issued on Tuesday 3 December 2013)</p> <p>The MJO has been weak or indiscernible since early October. Several of the climate models surveyed by the Bureau forecast a weak MJO to develop over the Indian Ocean this week and move eastward into the Maritime Continent region during the second week of December. The risk of tropical cyclone development over the southeast Indian Ocean will be elevated under these conditions. This scenario would also increase the chance of a monsoon burst over northern Australia before the end of the year. Other models indicate the MJO is more likely to remain weak and indiscernible in the coming weeks. In this case, the MJO would not be expected to affect tropical weather.</p>	

Risks:

- None to report



2013/14 Wet Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)

Pasture Growth* (% of district)	Below Average 3%	Average 43%	Above Average 54%
	<1,000kg/ha 94%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 6%	>2,000kg/ha 0%

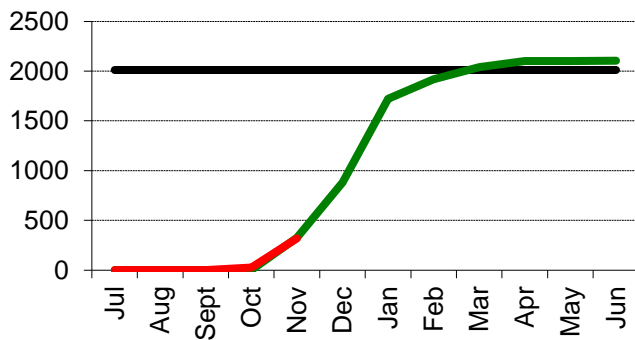
Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 38%	Average 34%	Above Average 28%
	<250kg/ha 2%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 48%	>3,000kg/ha 3%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 68%	Moderate 32%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	1%		

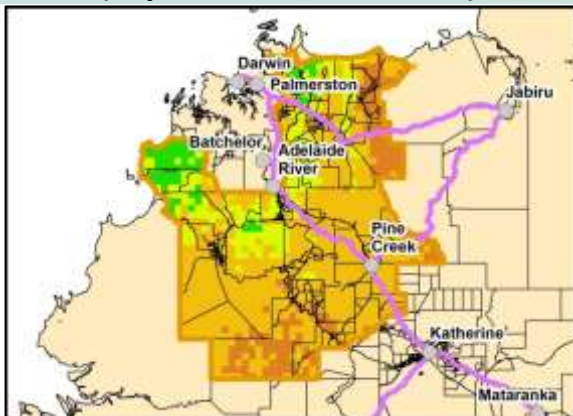
* In the Top End, pasture growth tends to be similar year to year regardless of rainfall. This is because pasture growth in the Top End is typically not water-limited and keeps growing until available soil nitrogen is exhausted. For this reason, any interpretation of growth being above or below the median should be treated cautiously because the actual difference between years is relatively small.

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

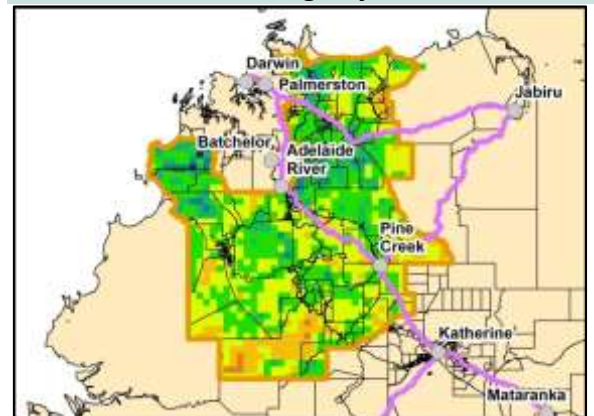
— Median — 2012/13 — 2013/14



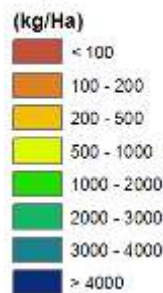
Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Legend



Risks:

- As at 1 December, 100% of the district had a high fire risk

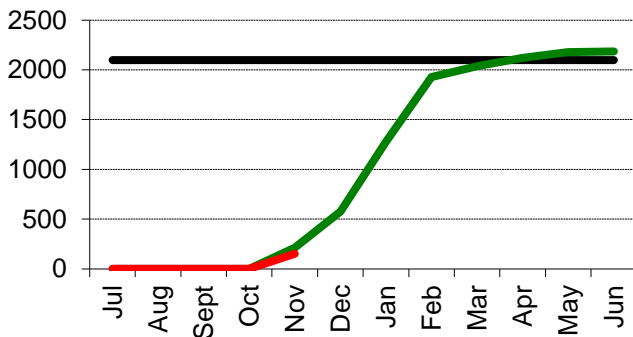


2013/14 Wet Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 8%	Average 71%	Above Average 22%
	<1,000kg/ha 100%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 0%	>2,000kg/ha 0%

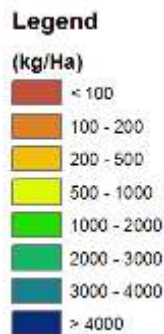
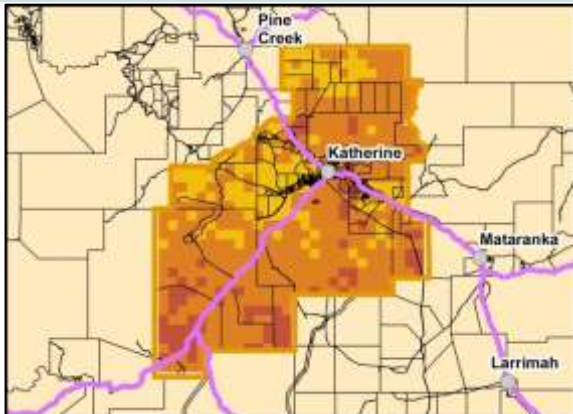
Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 33%	Average 41%	Above Average 25%
	<250kg/ha 1%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 61%	>3,000kg/ha 2%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 100%	Moderate 0%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	2%		

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

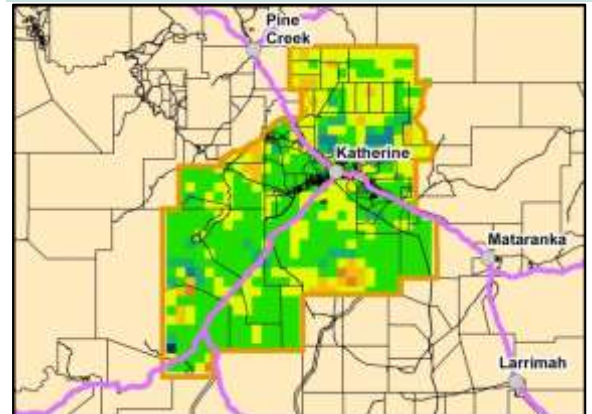
— Median — 2012/13 — 2013/14



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

- As at 1 December, 100% of the district had a high fire risk

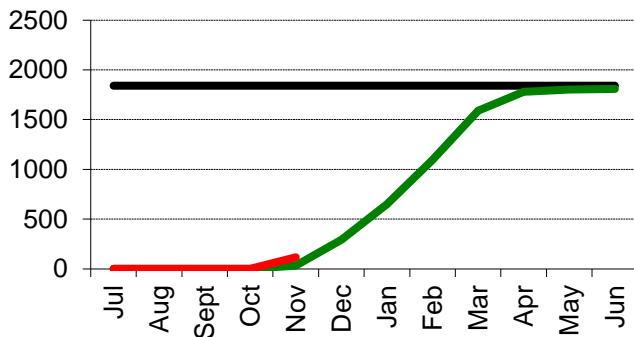


2013/14 Wet Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 4%	Average 58%	Above Average 38%
	<1,000kg/ha 100%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 0%	>2,000kg/ha 0%

Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 34%	Average 48%	Above Average 19%
	<250kg/ha 1%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 62%	>3,000kg/ha 15%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 100%	Moderate 0%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1%		

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

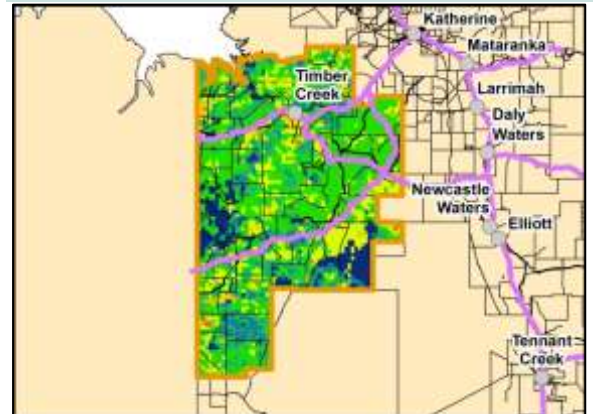
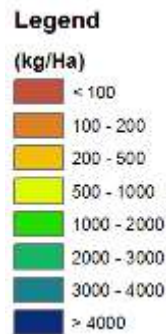
— Median — 2012/13 — 2013/14



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

- As at 1 December, >90% of the district had a high fire risk

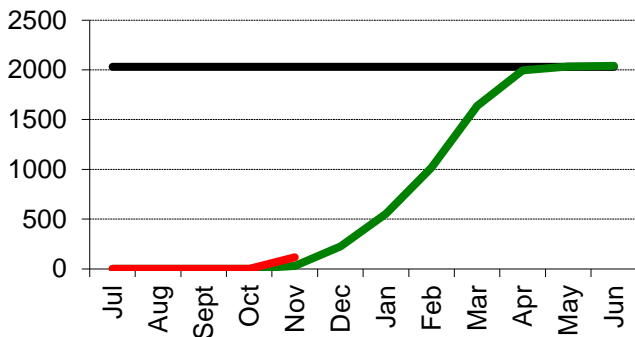


2013/14 Wet Season(as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 3%	Average 52%	Above Average 45%
	<1,000kg/ha 100%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 0%	>2,000kg/ha 0%

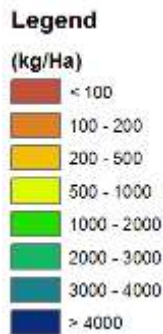
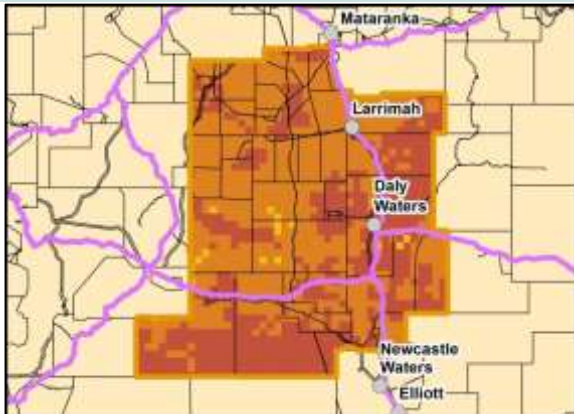
Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 25%	Average 58%	Above Average 17%
	<250kg/ha 3%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 57%	>3,000kg/ha 1%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 93%	Moderate 7%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	1%		

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

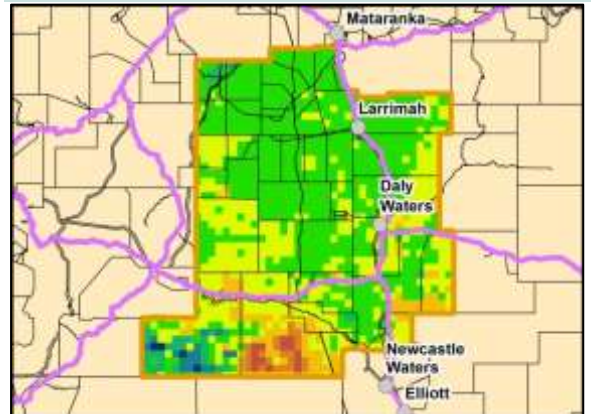
— Median — 2012/13 — 2013/14



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)

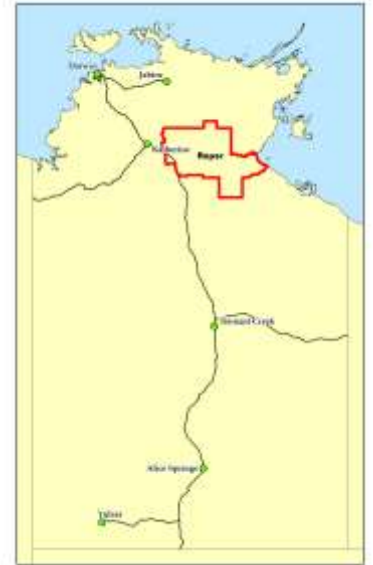


Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

- As at 1 December, 100% of the district had a high fire risk

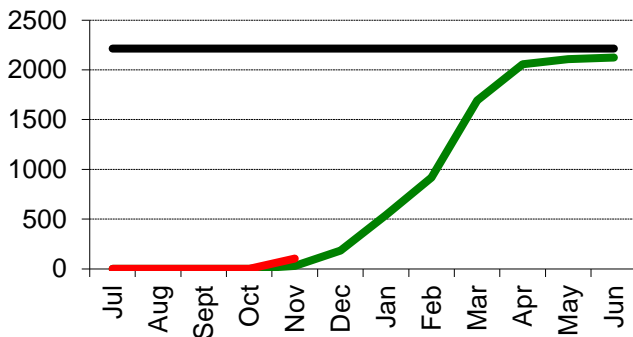


2013/14 Wet Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 2%	Average 53%	Above Average 45%
	<1,000kg/ha 100%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 0%	>2,000kg/ha 0%

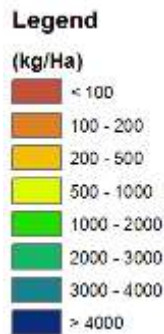
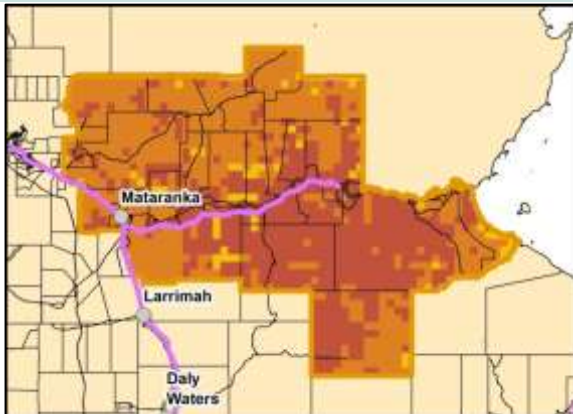
Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 29%	Average 50%	Above Average 21%
	<250kg/ha 0%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 73%	>3,000kg/ha 8%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 100%	Moderate 0%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	1%		

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

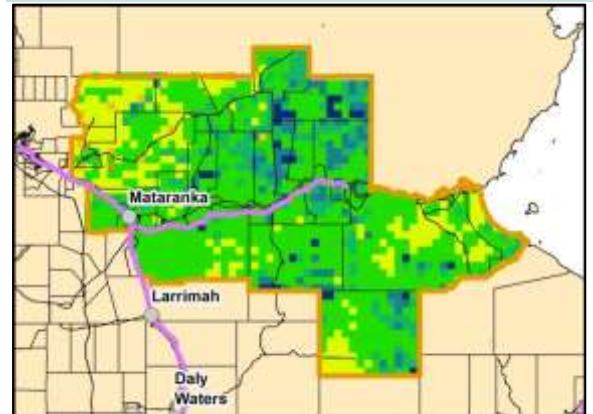
— Median — 2012/13 — 2013/14



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

- As at 1 December, 99% of the district had a high fire risk

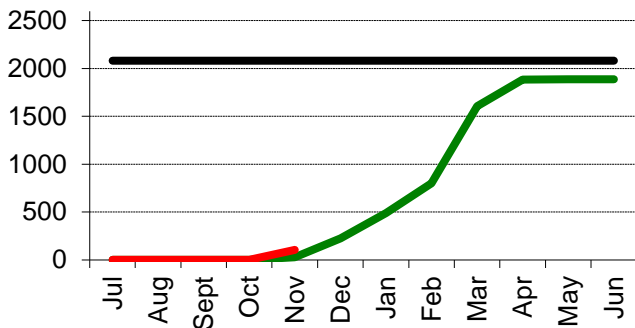


2013/14 Wet Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 0%	Average 25%	Above Average 75%
	<1,000kg/ha 100%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 0%	>2,000kg/ha 0%

Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 35%	Average 47%	Above Average 18%
	<250kg/ha 0%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 63%	>3,000kg/ha 8%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 99%	Moderate 1%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1%		

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

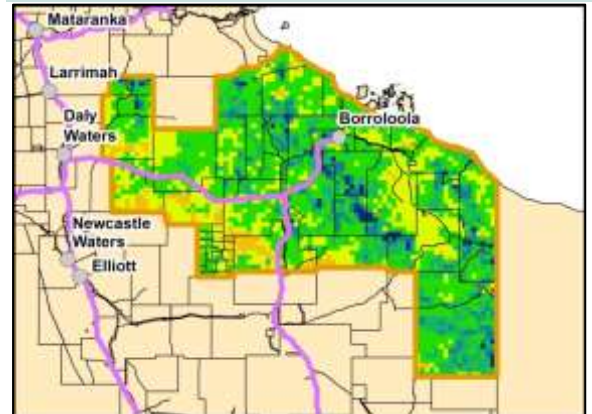
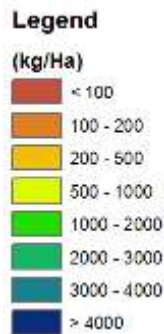
— Median — 2012/13 — 2013/14



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

- None to report

2013/14 Wet Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)

Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 47%	Average 29%	Above Average 24%
	<1,000kg/ha 100%	>1,000 & <2,000kg/ha 0%	>2,000kg/ha 0%

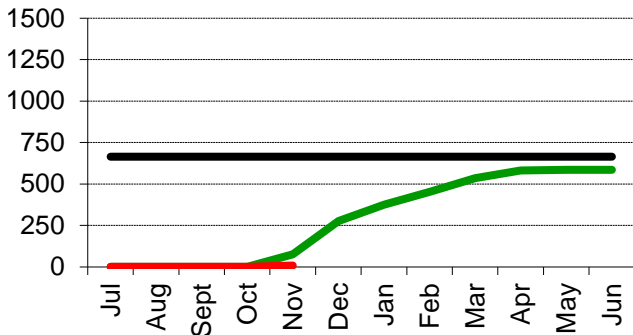
Currently

Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 15%	Average 65%	Above Average 20%
	<250kg/ha 16%	>1,000 & <3,000kg/ha 23%	>3,000kg/ha 2%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 59%	Moderate 34%	Low 7%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1%		

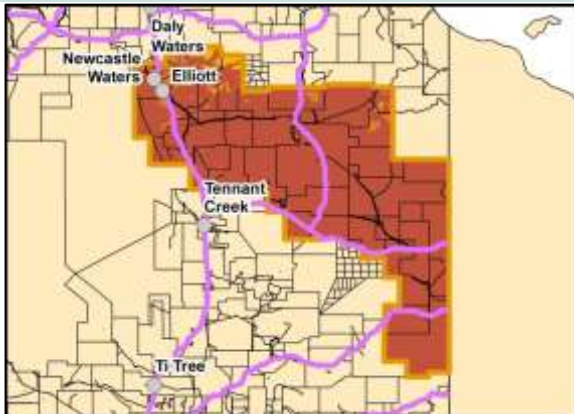


**Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha)
(Running Total)**

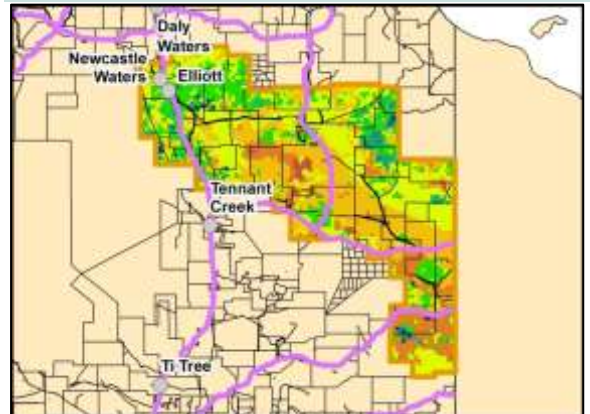
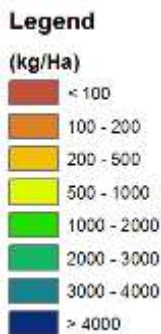
— Median — 2012/13 — 2013/14



**Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth
(July 2013 – November 2013)**



**Current Estimated
Total Standing Dry Matter**



Risks:

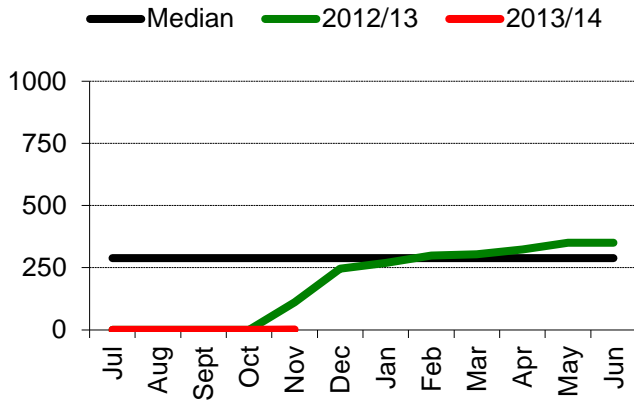
- As at 1 December, 95% of the district had a high fire risk



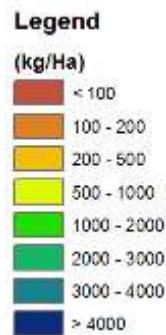
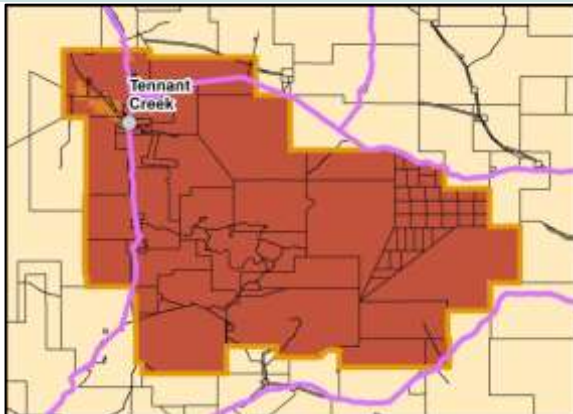
2013/14 Wet Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 77%	Average 23%	Above Average 0%
	<250kg/ha 100%	>250 & <500kg/ha 0%	>500kg/ha 0%

Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 13%	Average 54%	Above Average 33%
	<250kg/ha 4%	>250 & <1,000kg/ha 37%	>1,000kg/ha 59%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 95%	Moderate 5%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	1%		

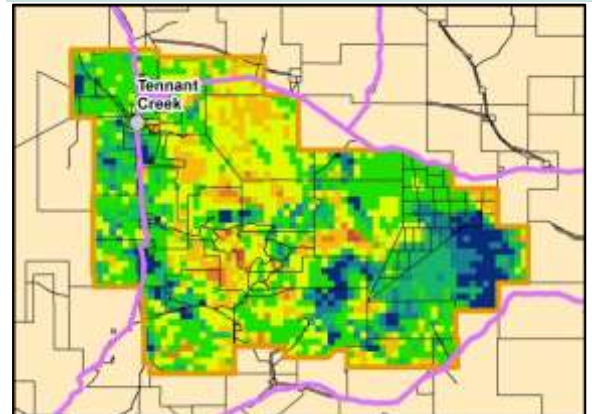
Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

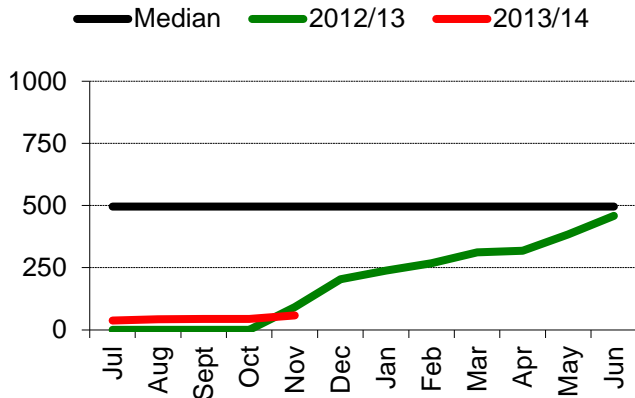
- As at 1 December, >90% of the district had a high fire risk



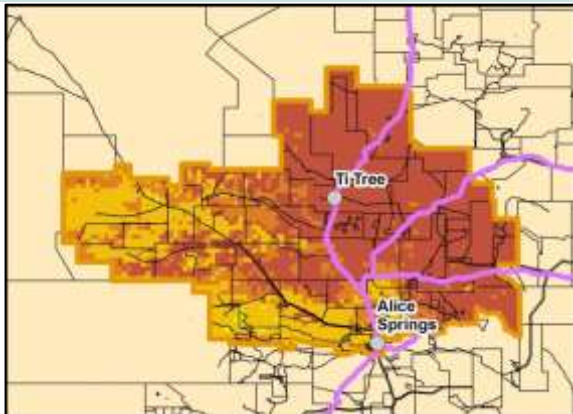
2013/14 Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 28%	Average 50%	Above Average 22%
	<250kg/ha 86%	>250 & <500kg/ha 14%	>500kg/ha 0%

Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 9%	Average 81%	Above Average 11%
	<250kg/ha 3%	>250 & <1,000kg/ha 47%	>1,000kg/ha 50%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 94%	Moderate 6%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1%		

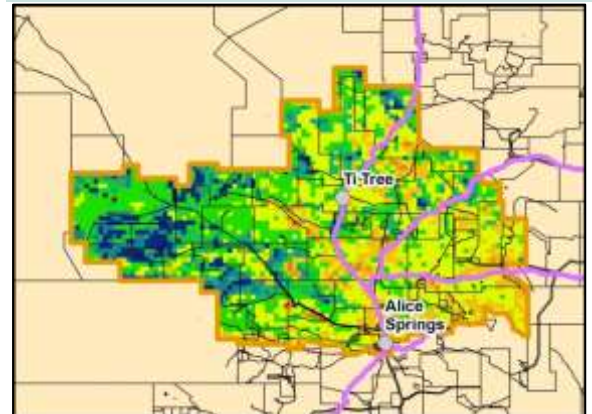
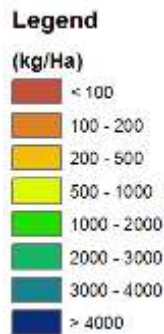
Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

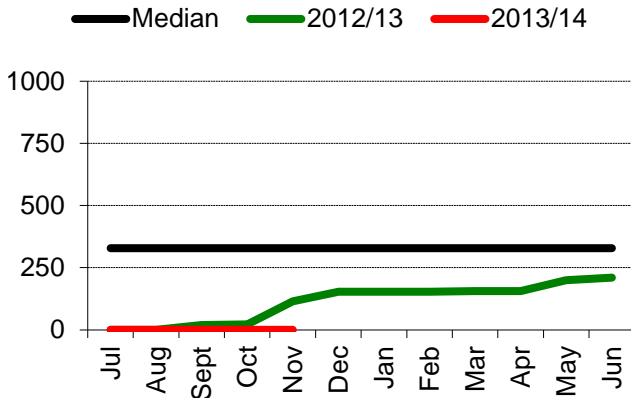
- As at 1 December, >85% of the district had a high fire risk



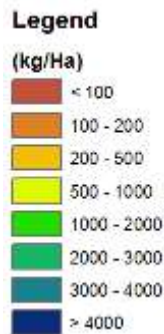
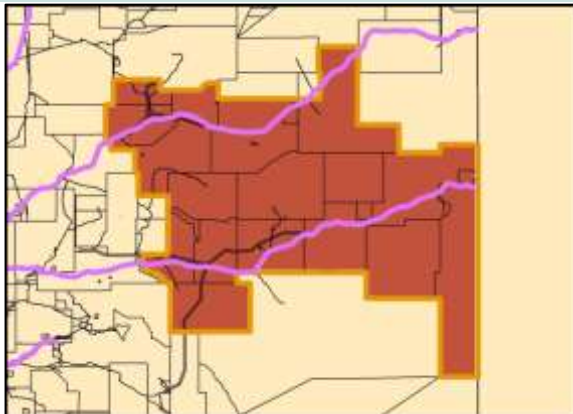
2013/14 Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 60%	Average 40%	Above Average 1%
	<250kg/ha 100%	>250 & <500kg/ha 0%	>500kg/ha 0%

Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 6%	Average 56%	Above Average 38%
	<250kg/ha 6%	>250 & <1,000kg/ha 54%	>1,000kg/ha 40%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 86%	Moderate 14%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	0%		

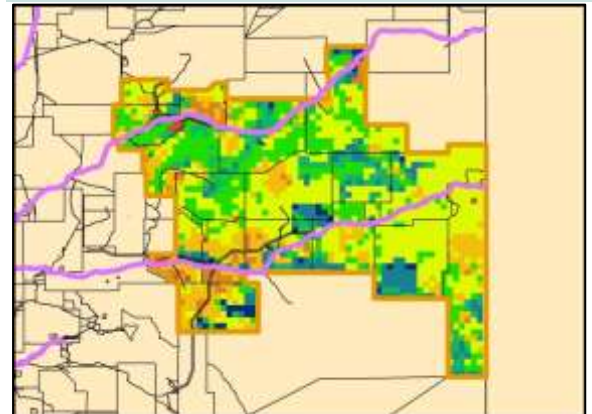
Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



Risks:

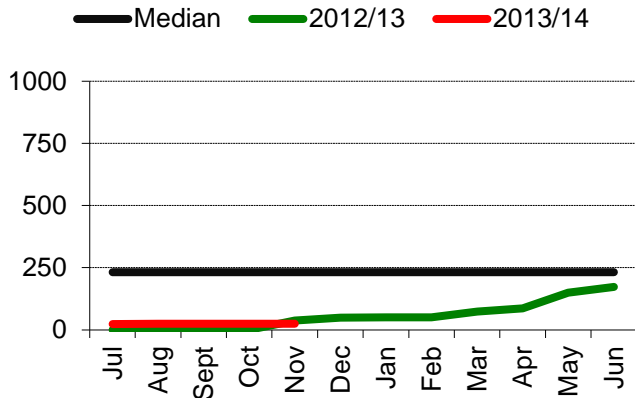
- As at 1 December, >85% of the district had a high fire risk



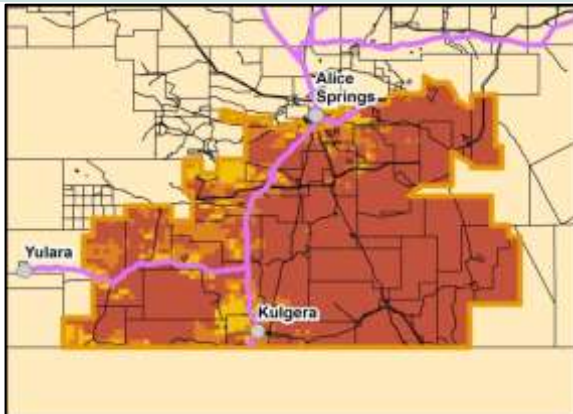
2013/14 Season (as at 30 Nov 2013)			
Pasture Growth (% of district)	Below Average 34%	Average 35%	Above Average 31%
	<250kg/ha 97%	>250 & <500kg/ha 3%	>500kg/ha 0%

Currently			
Total Standing Dry Matter (% of district)	Below Average 11%	Average 54%	Above Average 36%
	<250kg/ha 4%	>250 & <1,000kg/ha 49%	>1,000kg/ha 47%
Fire Risk (% of district)	High 89%	Moderate 11%	Low 0%
Area Burnt (% of district)	<1%		

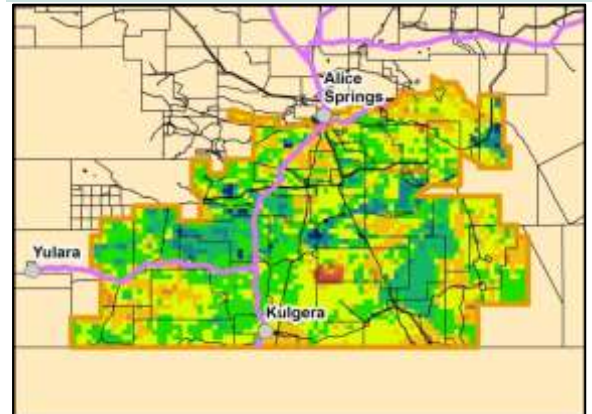
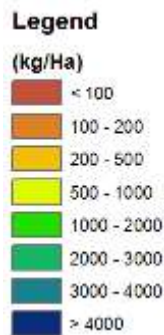
Median Pasture Growth (kg/ha) (Running Total)



Total 2013/14 Pasture Growth (July 2013 - November 2013)



Current Estimated Total Standing Dry Matter



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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