1. IN BRIEF

A typical La Niña like rainfall pattern was observed during January, with widespread rainfall recorded in various parts of the country.

However this was not enough, as rainfall recorded at various stations were generally average to below average and more rain is needed to overcome the rainfall deficiencies of the past dry season.

Vanuabalavu was the lone station with well above average rainfall, 2 recorded above average rainfall, 12 recorded average rainfall and 9 recorded below average rainfall.

There were two major widespread rainfall events during the month. The first event was during the second week and the second in the last week of the month. Most of the stations in the Northern and Western Divisions received their maximum daily rainfall during the second week of the month. Nadarivatu recorded the highest one day rainfall of 404.5mm on the 14th.

The maximum air temperatures were generally normal to above normal over the country with 16 out of the 21 stations recording anomalies ≥+0.6°C and 5 within ±0.5°C

The minimum air temperatures were generally normal to above normal as well over the Fiji Group, with 14 out of 21 sites registering anomalies within ±0.5°C, 4 sites recorded anomalies within ≥+0.6°C and Lautoka was the lone station with anomalies ≤0.6°C.

A number of stations recorded their daily coolest night time temperatures during the second week of the month. The coolest of 12.9°C was recorded at Nadarivatu, followed 14.5°C at Monasavu, both on the 9th.

The night time temperatures were generally normal to above normal over the Fiji Group. The highest daily night time temperature of 27.5°C were recorded at Matuku on the 21st and Tokotoko on the 22nd. Tokotoko’s temperature is also a new record, replacing the previous record of 26.2°C, established 24 years ago (Table 1).

1. WEATHER PATTERNS

January’s weather was influenced by an active intra-seasonal weather pattern with enhanced weather activity over Fiji from the 10th to the 15th.

The month began with a weak trough to the east of the group affecting Kadavu, Lomaiviti Group, Lau Group and the eastern parts of larger islands till 2nd of January before dissipating. A high pressure system to the far southeast of Fiji extended a ridge of high pressure over the group. Moreover, a trough of low pressure to the northeast of Fiji gradually moved over the group and affected the country from the 24th to 26th. The highest 24 hour rainfall of 57.5mm was recorded in Viva for this system on the 26th.

Towards the end of the month, a trough of low pressure affected the group from. The highest 24 rainfall of 73.8 mm was recorded at Nausori Airport on the 30th.

Rotuma’s weather was dominated by a series of troughs of low pressure producing rain and showers on most of the days.

*Previously known as the Fiji Islands Weather Summary and Monthly Weather Summary
3. **RAINFALL**

A typical La Niña like rainfall pattern was observed during the month, however, it was not totally reflected in the amount of rainfall recorded at various stations. Generally average to below average rainfall was recorded during the month.

Out of the 23 rainfall reporting sites, Vanuabalavu was lone station that recorded well above average rainfall, 2 stations recorded above average rainfall, 12 recorded average and 9 below average rainfall reported (Table 2 & Figures 1-5).

An active trough to the northeast of the Fiji Group resulted in widespread heavy rain events during the second week of the month. These resulted in Vanuabalavu and most of the stations in the Northern and Western Divisions recording their highest 24hour rainfall.

The highest total monthly rainfall of 1057.5mm was recorded at Nadarivatu, followed by 597.5mm at Yaqara, 569.7mm at Monasavu, 543.5mm at Rarawai Mill (Ba), 523.5mm at Keiyasi (Sigatoka Valley), 509.5mm at Vanuabalavu (Lau)and 474.0mm at Lomaivuna (Naitasiri).

Most of the stations recorded their maximum 24hour rainfall on the 14th. Nadarivatu record a maximum 24hour rainfall of 404.5mm, followed by 327.5mm at Yaqara, 256.6mm at Ba, 225.9mm at Lautoka, on the 14th respectively, 222.5mm at Rakiraki, 210.5mm at Penang, 175.0mm at Monasavu on the 14th, 158.0mm at Vanuabalavu on the 11th, and 104.0mm at Keiyasi on the 14th.

Monasavu recorded the highest number of rain days (rainfall ≥ 0.1mm) with 28 days, followed by 26 days at Rotuma, 23 days at RKS Lodoni, 22 days at Rakiraki, Lomaivuna and Nausori Airport, 21 days at Seqaqa, Navua and Keiyasi (Sigatoka), 20 days at Nadarivatu, Lakeba and Vunisea (Kadavu) and 19 days at Vanuabalavu.

On the other hand, the least number of rain days of 9 days was recorded at Viwa, 12 days at Yasawa and 13 days at Yaqara and Yasawa-i-Rara.
4. AIR TEMPERATURES

A. Maximum Daytime Air Temperatures

The maximum air temperatures were generally normal to above normal over the country with 16 out of the 21 stations recording anomalies ≥+0.6°C and 5 within ±0.5°C (Table 2 & Figures 2-5).

The warmest days on average was experienced at Yaqara with 33.0°C, followed by Momi with 32.8°C, Rarawai Mill and Nacocolevu with 32.7°C and Labasa Airport with 32.4°C. The coolest site on average during the month was Nadarivatu with mean monthly temperature of 26.1°C, followed by Monasavu with 27.2°C.

The highest daily maximum temperature of 35.2°C was recorded at Laucala Bay (Suva) on the 23rd, followed by 35.0°C at Momi and Rarawai Mill (Ba) on the 8th and 21st, 34.7°C at Navua and Nadi Airport on the 6th and 21st and 34.0°C at Lautoka on the 21st.

On the other hand, the lowest daily maximum temperature of 21.2°C was recorded at Nadarivatu on the 15th, followed by 24.4°C at Monasavu on the 10th.

The highest mean monthly departure from normal of +1.9°C was recorded at Vunisea (Kadavu), followed by +1.7°C at Monasavu, +1.5°C at Nacocolevu and Penang Mill and +1.4°C at Nabouwalu (Table 2).

Laucala Bay and Navua record their new highest daily maximum temperatures, replacing previous records established in 2001 (Table 1).

B. Minimum Night-time Air Temperatures

The minimum air temperatures were generally normal to above normal over the Fiji Group, with 14 out of 21 sites registering anomalies within ±0.5°C, 4 sites recorded anomalies within ±+0.6°C and Lautoka was the lone station with anomalies ≤0.6°C (Table 2 & Figures 2-5).

The coolest nights on average was experienced at Nadarivatu with 18.2°C, followed by Monasavu with 19.1°C and 22.2°C at Labasa Airfield.

Vanuabalavu recorded the warmest night on average with 26.6°C, followed by 25.3°C at Rotuma, 25.1°C at Viwa, 24.9°C at Nabouwalu and 24.8°C at Udu Point.

The lowest daily minimum temperature of 12.9°C was recorded at Nadarivatu, followed by Monasavu with 14.5°C, both on the 9th. 15.0°C was recorded at Lautoka on the 11th and 16.0°C at Nausori on the 1st.  Nadarivatu record 14.8°C on the 18th and 15.2°C on the 19th.

On the other hand, the warmest night was observed at Matuku and Navua with 27.5°C on the 22nd and 21st, followed by 27.4°C at Viwa on the 21st, 26.7°C at Vunisea (Kadavu) on the 23rd, 26.5°C at Nabouwalu, Yaqara and Nausori Airport on the 20th and 23rd respectively.

The highest positive mean monthly minimum temperature departure from normal of +1.6°C was recorded at Tokotoko (Navua), followed by +1.0°C at Savusavu Airfield, +0.9°C at Vunisea (Kadavu) and +0.7°C at Nabouwalu. The lowest negative departure from normal was at Lautoka with –0.9°C, followed by –0.3°C at both Penang Mill and Lakeba (Lau).

TABLE 1. CLIMATE RECORDS ESTABLISHED IN JANUARY 2018

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<tr>
<th>Element</th>
<th>Station</th>
<th>Observed (record)</th>
<th>On</th>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Previous (record)</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Records Began</th>
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<td>New High</td>
<td>34.6°C</td>
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<td>Daily Maximum Temperature</td>
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<td>33.5°C</td>
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<td>Daily Minimum Temperature</td>
<td>Tokotoko (Navua)</td>
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<td>New High</td>
<td>26.2°C</td>
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<td>1992</td>
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<td>Mean Monthly Max Temperature</td>
<td>Tokotoko (Navua)</td>
<td>31.8°C</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>New High</td>
<td>31.4°C</td>
<td>2001</td>
<td>1992</td>
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Note: All comparisons in this summary are with respect to “Climatic Normals”. This is defined to be the average climate condition over a 30-year period. Fiji uses 1971-2000 period as its “climatic normal” period, unless otherwise stated.
### TABLE 2. DAILY CLIMATE REPORTING SITES: SUMMARY FOR JANUARY 2018

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site Name</th>
<th>Mean Rainfall (MM)</th>
<th>Rainfall %</th>
<th>Max. Rainfall (MM)</th>
<th>Total Rainfall Days</th>
<th>Extreme Rainfall Days</th>
<th>Sunshine Total (Hrs)</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Mean Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Average Daily Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Extreme Temperature (°C)</th>
<th>Wind (Kt)</th>
<th>Sun (SQ.M)</th>
<th>Solar Radiation (MJ)</th>
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</table>

**TEMPERATURE (- °C), HUMIDITY (%)**, **WIND (Kt)**, **SUN (SQ.M)**

- **Mean Temperature** is (max+min)/2
- **Sun** is Mean Speed at 06, 12, 18, 24 Hours
- **Solar Radiation** is Calculated from Sunshine Duration
- **Departure from Long-Term Averages** (1971-2000)
- **Number of Days with 0.1mm or More Rain**
- **Percent of Long-Term Averages**
- **Missing Records of Less Than or Equal to 5 Days**
The monthly average RH in the Northern Division ranged from 74% to 97%, with daily values from 64% to 97%. The lone positive mean monthly RH of +8% was recorded at Udu Point. Significant negative mean monthly anomaly of –4% was recorded at Labasa Airfield, followed by –3% at Matei Airfield.

The monthly average RH in the Western Division ranged between 71% and 85%, while the daily values were between 57% to 100%. Nacocolevu was the lone site with above normal mean monthly RH, with an anomaly of +6%. The rest of the sites recorded negative RH anomalies with the most significant departure of –10% observed at Penang Mill, followed by –4% at both at Rarawai Mill (Ba) and –3% at Lautoka Mill.

The monthly average RH in the Central Division ranged between 76% and 83%, with the daily values between 58% to 100%. Significant departure of –5% was recorded at Laucala Bay, followed by –1% at Nausori Airport. Koronivia and Navua recorded average monthly relative humidity equivalent to its long term normal.

Normal to above normal bright sunshine hours were recorded at all sunshine recording sites. Nacocolevu, Nadi Airport, Laucala Bay and Rotuma recorded 128%, 115%, 108% and 106% of their normal sunshine hours, respectively (Table 2).

Nadi Airport recorded 243.4 hours of total bright sunshine, with a mean of 7.9 hours/day. The highest sunshine hours of 12.4 hours was recorded on the 5th, followed by 11.9 hours on the 8th, 11.8hours on the 28th, while more than 10 hours of sunshine were also recorded on eight days of the month. On the other hand, overcast conditions were recorded on the 14th and 16th.

Laucala Bay recorded 209.2 hours of total monthly bright sunshine, with a mean of 7.2 hours/day. The longest duration of bright sunshine of 13.1 hours was recorded on the 4th, followed by 11.7 hours on the 7th and 11.0 hours on both 3rd and the 24th respectively. Overcast conditions with no bright sunshine were recorded on the 14th to 16th, while there were 2 days of missing observations.

The total monthly bright sunshine at Nacocolevu was 228.0 hours, with a daily mean of 7.4 hours/day. The longest duration of 11.5 hours was recorded on the 18th, followed by 11.0 hours on the 5th, 9th, 11th, 21st and 24th respectively. On the other hand, the lowest of 1.0 hours of sunshine was recorded on the 16th.

Rotuma managed to record 180.5 hours of sunshine during the month, with the longest sunshine hours of 9.2 hours recorded on the 5th, followed by 9.0 hours on the 1st.
8. WIND SUMMARY

The 10-minute average wind statistics recorded every three hours at Nadi Airport during the month showed that the easterly winds were dominant, accounting for 37.5% of the total observations. This was followed by westerly winds with 19.4% and north westerly winds with 5.2% of the observations (Figure 6(a)). Calm conditions accounted for 13.7% of the observations. The wind strengths were generally light to gentle, with moderate breeze being recorded on certain times of the day (Figure 6a & 6b).

At Nausori Airport, the east to southeasterly winds were dominant, accounting for 34.2% of the observations, followed by north westerly winds accounted for 23% of the records and southerly winds recorded on 6.9% of the total observations. The calm conditions were observed on 16.9% of the occasions. Wind strengths at Nausori Airport were mostly light to gentle, with moderate breeze recorded on certain periods (Figure 7a & 7b).

Satellite data shows that variable wind anomalies were observed within the Fiji region during the month (Figure 13).

Note:

The 10-minute average wind statistics recorded every three hours at Nadi Airport during the month showed that the easterly winds were dominant, accounting for 37.5% of the total observations. This was followed by westerly winds with 19.4% and north westerly winds with 5.2% of the observations (Figure 6(a)). Calm conditions accounted for 13.7% of the observations. The wind strengths were generally light to gentle, with moderate breeze being recorded on certain times of the day (Figure 6a & 6b).

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Note:
9. **EVAPORATION**

The total monthly raised pan evaporation at Nadi Airport was 196.9mm, with the highest of 13.5mm recorded on the 23rd. Laucala Bay recorded total monthly evaporation of 110.2mm, with the highest daily evaporation of 8.0mm on the 7th (Figure 8).

10. **RADIATION**

The mean daily solar radiation at Nadi Airport was below average during the month (20.1 J/M²) compared to 21.2MJ/M² over 30 year average (1971-2000) (Figure 9).

11. **SEA SURFACE TEMPERATURE (SST)**

*Normal SSTs were present in the Fiji region during January (base period: 1981-2010).*

Source: [http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/map/clim/sst.shtml](http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/map/clim/sst.shtml)
12. CLOUD COVER

Figure 11:
OLR anomalies indicate presence of normal cloud cover in the Fiji region during January (Fiji: ~17ºS, 180º) (base period: 1981-2010).

Source: http://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/map/clim/olr.shtml

13. SEA LEVEL

Figure 12:
Sea level anomalies of 0 to ~5cm persisted in the Fiji Waters during January (base period: 1981-2010).

Source: http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/ocean/weeklyenso_clim_81-10/wksl_anm.gif

14. WIND ANOMALIES

Figure 13:
Reanalysis data show variable winds were dominant in the Fiji region during January (Fiji: ~17ºS, 180º) (base period: 1981-2010).

Source: https://www.esrl.noaa.gov/psd/map/images/rnl/sfcwnd_30b.rnl.html
Flooding in Western Division - 14th January 2018

Heavy downpour caused flooding in the Western Division, particularly along the Lautoka and Rakiraki areas on 14th January 2018. This was caused by an active trough that was located to the northeast of Fiji and slowly moved southwest over the Fiji Group. This trough affected the group between the 12th until the 17th. The heavy rainfall observed on the 14th resulted in stations in the Western Division recording their maximum 24-hour rainfall.

Notable 24-hour rainfall of 404.4mm was recorded at Nadarivatu, 327.5mm at Yaqara, 256.6mm at Rarawai Mill, 225.9mm at Lautoka Mill, and 210.5mm at Penang Mill all recorded from 9am on 14th till 9am on 15th (Figure 14).

High intensity rainfall of 69mm/hr was recorded at Toge (1500hrs to 1600hrs), 60mm/hr was recorded at Nadarivatu (between 1700hour to 1800hrs), 59mm/hr at Yaqara (1500hrs to 1600hrs), 54.5mm/hr at Lautoka Mill (1200hrs to 1300hrs), 50.5mm/hr at Monasavu (1700hrs to 1800hrs) and 44.5mm/hr at Rarawai Mill (1300hrs to 1400hrs). The above stations also recorded significant falls of more than 40.0mm/hr on a number of occasion on the 14th (Figure 15).

Flooding reports were received from Rakiraki low lying areas including Qalau, Waimari and Nokonoko which were under three feet water. In Tavua, parts of Tavua Town were under water, Matacawa Bridge, Yaladro flat and Balata flat were under water. In Ba, Vatulaulau Road, Namsoau Bridge and Rarawai Bridge were under flood waters. In Lautoka, Tavakubu Road near the Girmi Center and Drasa Avenue, Buabua Road, Naikabula Junction, Field 40 junction, and Vomo Street Opposite Leonidas Street were flooded. A number of roads and bridges along Lautoka to Rakiraki areas were closed to traffic due to the flooding.