

New Weather

Club member, Owen Mace, explains the new weather forecasts

Have you noticed that the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) sites have changed? When you click on your favourite bookmarks for weather forecasts they are not what you expected.

The reason is that the BOM is improving its services around the country and on 26 October the web pages for South Australia changed. Already Victoria, New South Wales and Tasmania have received these "new generation weather forecasting services" so we are the fourth state to be upgraded – ahead of New South Wales, Queensland and Western Australia.

What this means is that some of the web page addresses (Universal Resource Locator, URL) have changed and you will probably have to make some changes to the bookmarks in your favourite web browser.

Let's look at the changes, firstly the changes to the BOM web site.

BOM Web Site

There have been changes to forecasts for regional areas in South Australia and now Port Lincoln, Whyalla, Mount Gambier and other centres receive 7-day forecasts for the first time. There are now 14 district forecasts that provide more detailed information on rainfall, winds and fire danger. The Adelaide forecast includes the chance of rainfall and the predicted amount.

However, the interest for us as boaties is that the BOM provides four days of wind and wave information for ten zones and the information is provided in a more



understandable way, according to the Minister's press release. Wind warnings will be issued for the current and following day and warnings will be added to the coastal waters forecast for those days. The web page that I use frequently, wind and wave heights for Metropolitan waters including Goolwa and adjoining lakes, has a new graphical presentation which shows winds and combined sea and swell.

For further information on the changes, including changes for regional and rural areas, see Minister Farrell's media release (1) and (2) for a more detailed explanation of the changes.

Now let's have a look at the new web pages. The images have been taken directly from the BOM web site.

Adelaide Forecast

The Adelaide forecast (3) is a bit more graphical. Here's the important part; the first two days of seven and, on the right, the current day's forecasts, for locations around Adelaide.

Forecasts

Adelaide Waters

If you use your previous Adelaide Waters bookmark you will see that there are two links. The first (4) is very similar to the familiar coastal waters forecast for Adelaide but it does look a bit nicer:

There are forecasts for four days, as previously.

The next one (5) is much more graphical and you can select the time of day up to four days ahead:

The left panel shows wind field (wind speed and direction) over the Gulf and the right panel shows combined wave and swell. Both are colour coded according to the key on the top of the panels.

There are links to Adelaide Metropolitan Waters, Gulf St Vincent forecast and Investigator Strait forecasts on the same web page.

Non-graphical forecasts are available for the ten coastal waters; Far West Coast, Upper West Coast, Lower West Coast, Central Coast, South Central Coast, Upper South East Coast, Lower South East Coast, Spencer Gulf, Gulf St Vincent and Investigator Strait. The following map shows all the SA forecast districts and coastal zones (6).

Marine wind forecasts, such as the one below (7), appear not to have changed.

Summary

So there it is, more detailed forecasts for regional towns and more graphical presentations for marine forecasts. My preference is the graphical (map) presentation of the local waters forecast (5).

How these changes to the BOM site will affect other sites that use BOM information remains to be seen.

Coast Guard said that they have made minimal changes to their regular broadcasts.

Now don't forget to go through your browser bookmarks and change them, as appropriate, to the new web addresses since some have changed.

Acknowledgements

All images are taken from the BOM web site on Wednesday 2 November 2011.

References

- 1 <http://www.environment.gov.au/minister/farrell/2011/mr20111026.html>
- 2 <http://www.bom.gov.au/NexGenFWS/>
- 3 <http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/forecasts/adelaide.shtml>
- 4 <http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/forecasts/adelaide-waters.shtml>
- 5 <http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/forecasts/localwaters.shtml>
- 6 <http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/forecasts/map.shtml>
- 7 <http://www.bom.gov.au/marine/wind.shtml>

Weather Situation

A high pressure system south of the Bight will remain near-stationary before moving eastwards on Thursday to be centred off the Lower South East coast early on Friday morning and off the east coast of Australia on Saturday. A trough of low pressure will develop near the western border late on Friday, and extend over western coasts of the State on Saturday.

Forecast for Wednesday until midnight

No wind warning for Wednesday for Adelaide Metropolitan Waters

Winds	Southerly 5 to 10 knots tending south to southwesterly 10 to 15 knots, reaching 15 to 20 knots north of Brighton during the afternoon. Winds becoming southerly 5 to 10 knots throughout later in the evening.
Seas	0.5 to 1 metres, reaching 1 to 1.5 metres in the afternoon.
Swell	Below 0.5 metres.

