

CASE STUDY: Cairns Cyclone, 9th February 1927

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A severe tropical cyclone crossed the coast just to the north of Cairns. The lowest pressure reading at Cairns was 971 hPa. Many buildings were unroofed or damaged and some 16 totally destroyed. There was considerable damage done to the hotel and houses at Malanda. The sea wall at Cairns was broken in several places. The cyclone turned into a disastrous rain depression. Unprecedented floods occurred in North Coast Rivers. Halifax, Ingham, Innisfail and Tully were partly submerged. There were many drownings, 23 at Ingham, 15 at Cardwell and 1 at Townsville. 2,500 cattle and 1,500 horses were drowned at Ingham. Losses to crops stock and property in the Herbert reached 300,000 pounds (1927). There was rail damage with washaways and many bridges carried away. There was also flooding in south of state, with Surat under water and a drowning fatality at Toowoomba. Seven persons were also drowned near Miles and crops in West Moreton badly damaged. A large dam at Koorboora was wrecked. A total of 47 people lost their lives.

The peak flood at the Ingham pump station of 14.17metres was at 12 noon 10 February 1927.

Below are charts analysed from observational data held in National Archives.

Additional data from Archives and Cairns Post article:-

Cairns at 9am 9/2/27 bar was 29.66 inches or 1004.4hPa ,

At noon 9/2/27 bar was 29.44 inches or 997.0hPa ,

At 3pm 9/2/27 bar was 29.28 inches or 991.5hPa with strong gale SSW 44 knots.

At 8pm 9/2/27 bar was 28.98 inches or 981.4hPa wind 51 knots gusting to 59 knots,

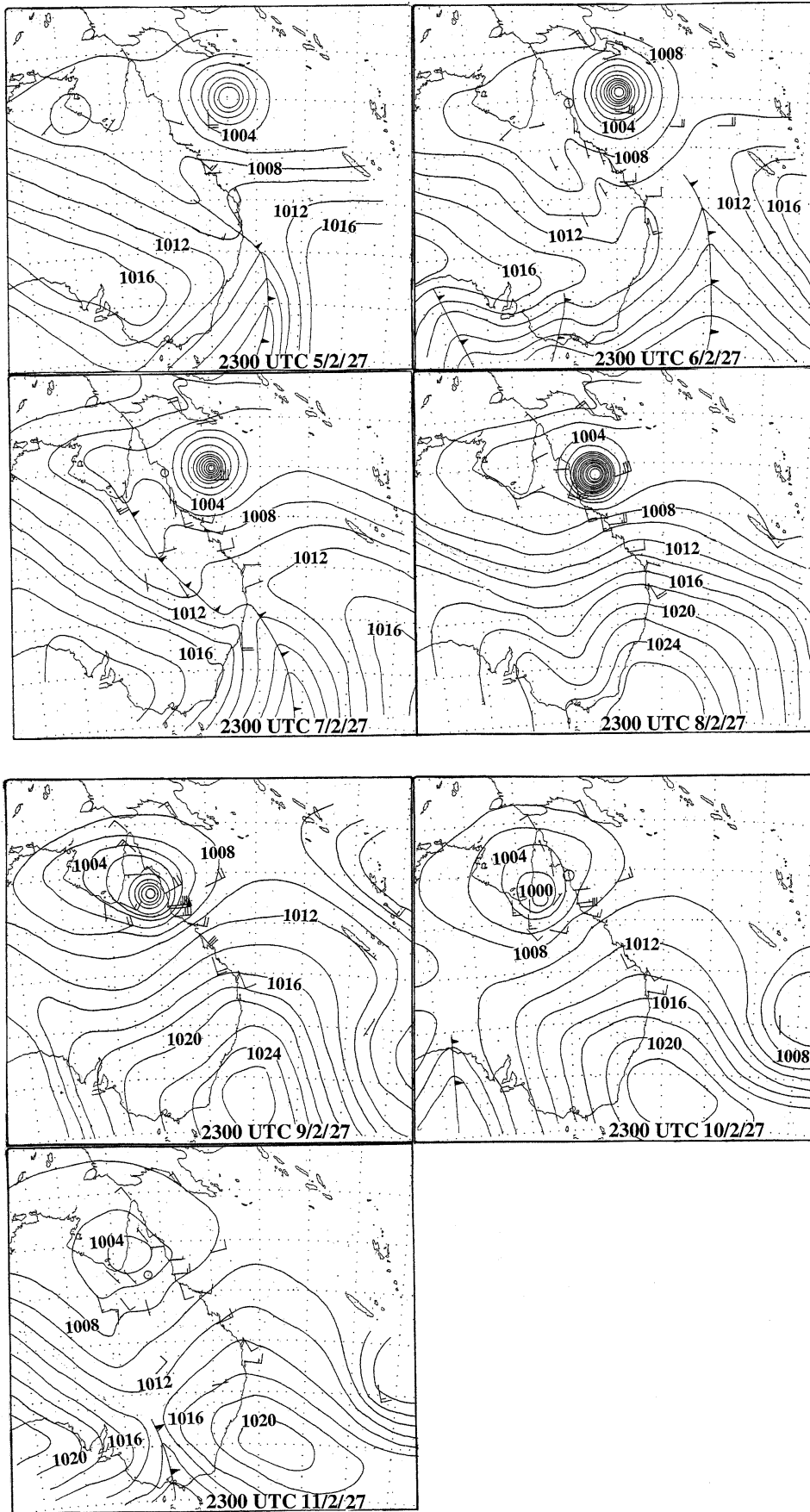
At 9pm 9/2/27 bar was 28.88 inches or 978.0hPa and at 9.30pm was 28.74inches or 973.2hPa with violent hurricane force winds.

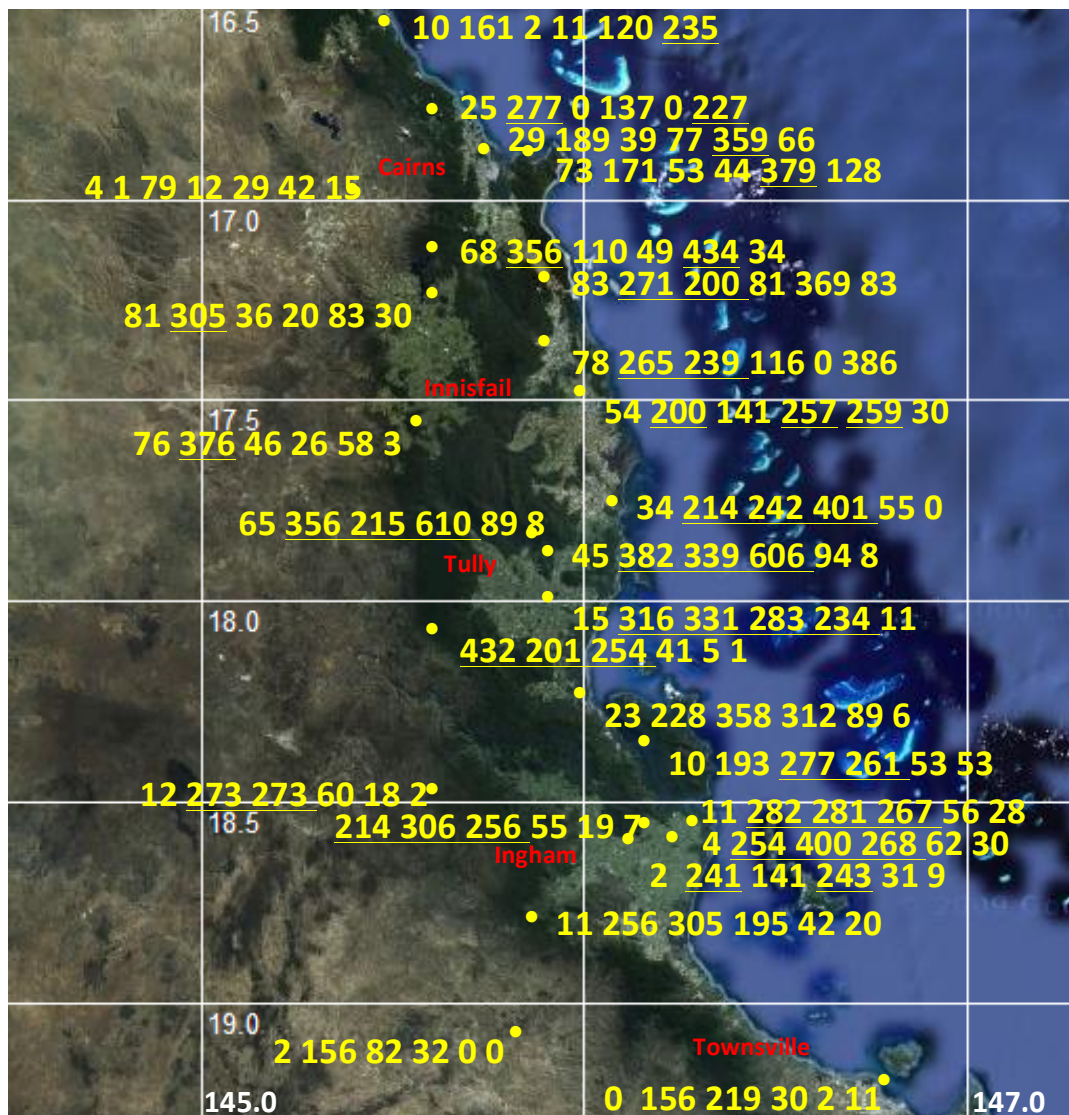
At 1046pm 28.79inches or 974.9hPa

At 1056pm 28.71inches 972.2hPa still with hurricane force winds.

Lowest bar at Cairns was 28.67 inches or 970.9hPa at 11pm 9/2/27.

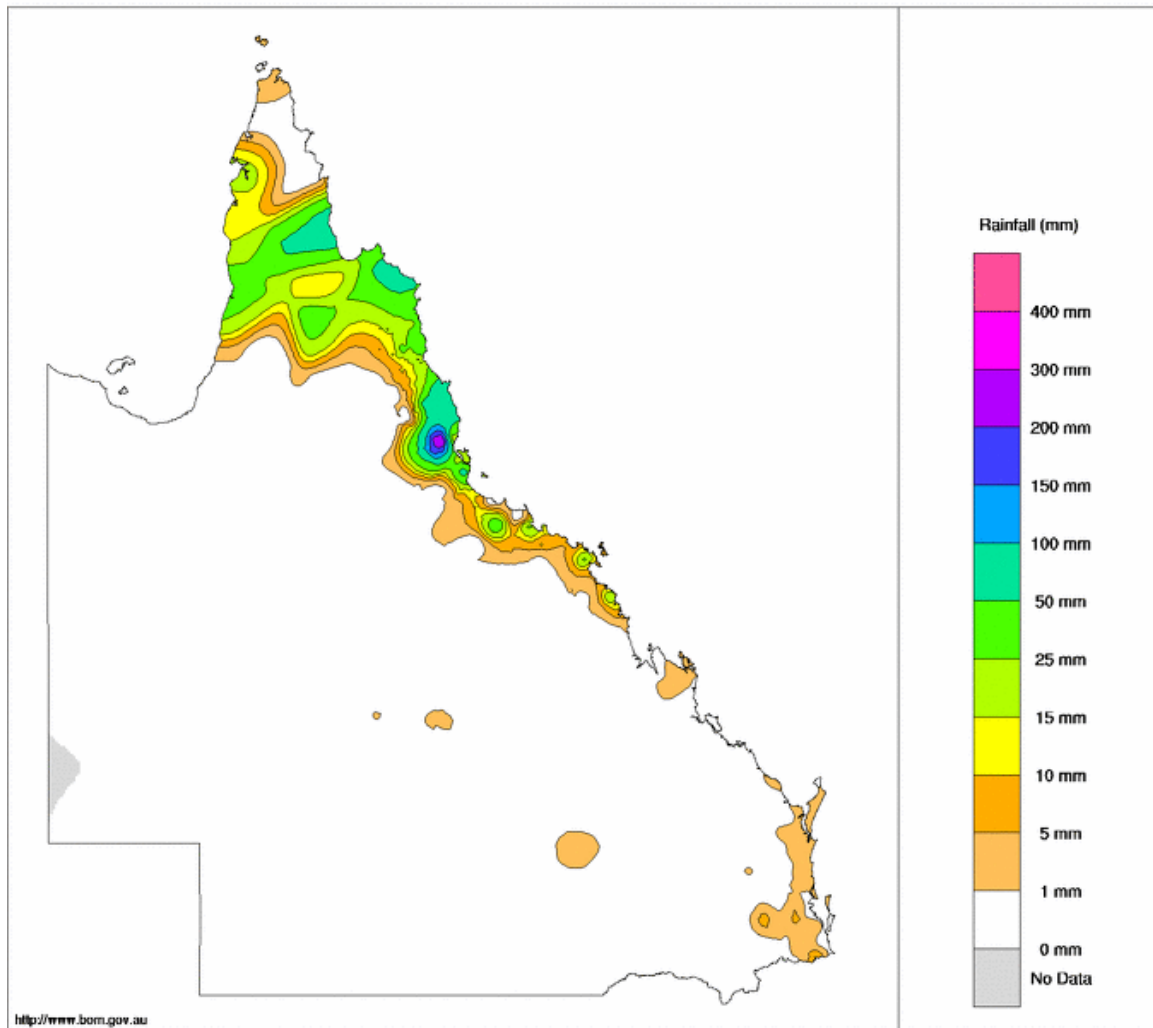
Rapid rise in bar by 11.35pm to 28.92 or 979.3hPa. By then the worst of the wind was over.



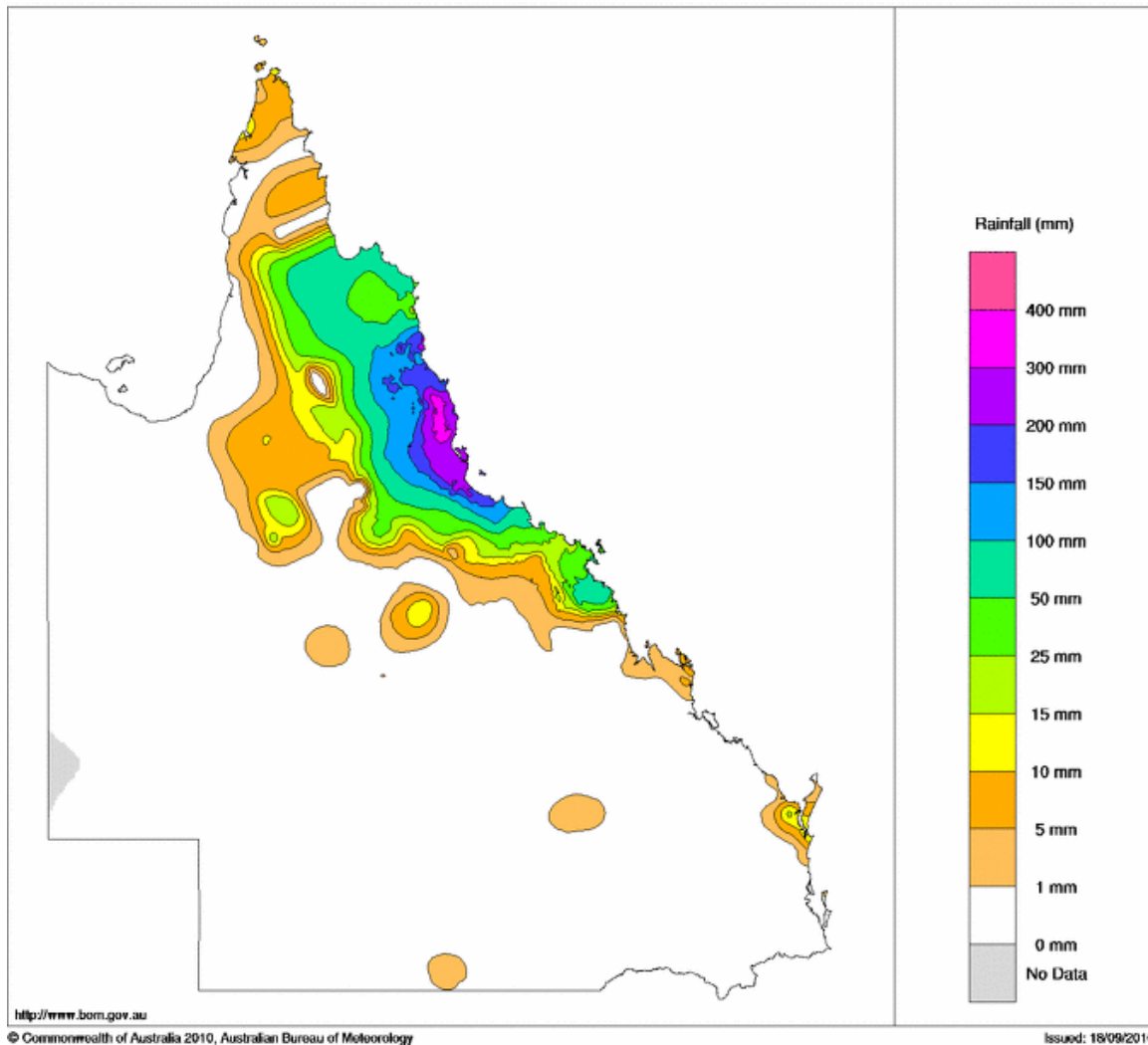


Six day 24hour rainfall totals (mm) from 24h to 9am 9 Feb to 24h to 9am 14 Feb 1927.
610mm fell at Bayan near Tully in the 24 hours to 9am 12 February and 606mm over the same period at Tully which still stands today as an all time daily rainfall record.

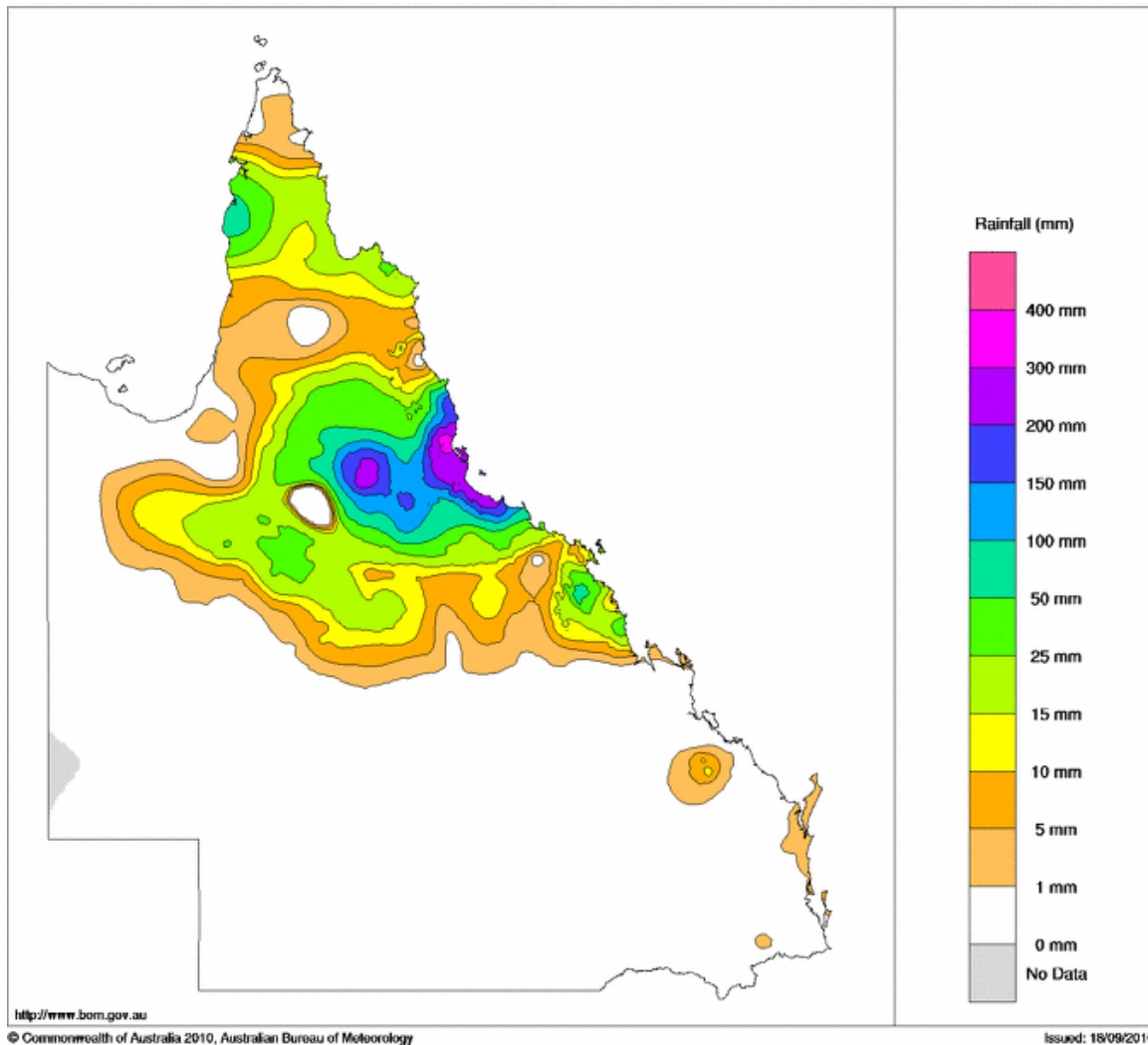
Queensland Rainfall Totals (mm) 9th February 1927
Product of the National Climate Centre



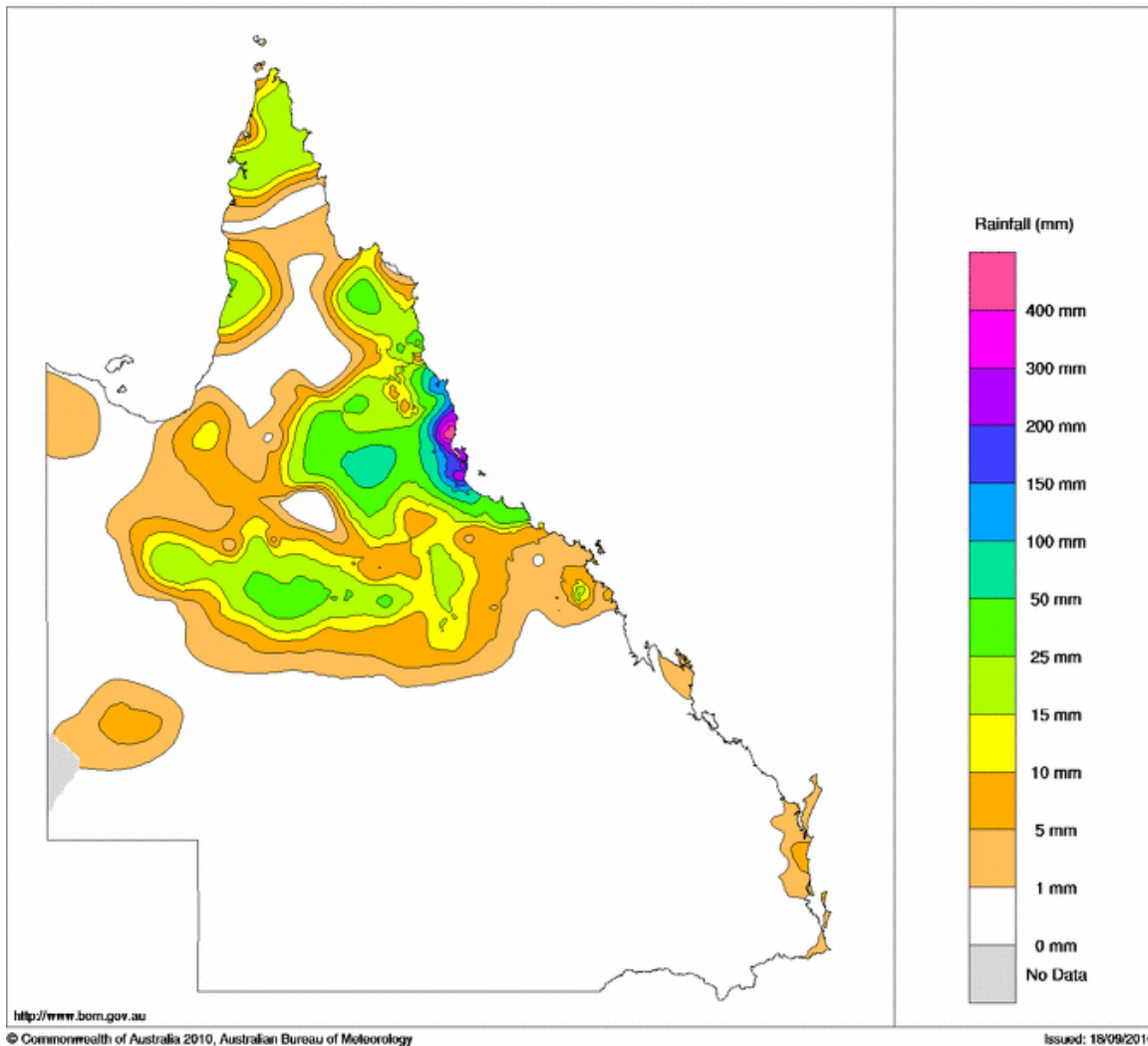
Queensland Rainfall Totals (mm) 10th February 1927
Product of the National Climate Centre



Queensland Rainfall Totals (mm) 11th February 1927
Product of the National Climate Centre



Queensland Rainfall Totals (mm) 12th February 1927
Product of the National Climate Centre



Queensland Rainfall Totals (mm) 13th February 1927
Product of the National Climate Centre

