



Drought and Precipitation Statement for Antigua – January 2012

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Above normal rainfall for January

The island had above normal rainfall during January with an average total of 3.00 inches. This is the highest since 2008 for the month. Meanwhile, November to January (NDJ) had near normal rainfall; adequate though not abundant rainfall continues. See table 1 for more.

Based on various models, trends, climatology and subjective input, near normal rainfall is most likely for February and for FMA. However, it must be noted that there is a moderate chance, 35%, of a Meteorological Drought over the period FMA.

Period	Rainfall (inches)			Description of Actual (1981 – 2010)	Rainfall Record – 1928 to 2011			
	Actual	Normal (1981 – 2010)	Anomaly (1981 – 2010)		Max	Year	Min	Year
1(Jan)	3.00	2.70	+ 0.30	Above normal	8.57	2006	0.64	1931
3(Nov – Jan)	14.37	12.55	+ 1.82	Near normal	26.06	1999	4.95	1947
6(Aug – Jan)	36.55	28.63	+ 7.92	Above normal	44.96	1937	16.19	1984
9(May – Jan)	56.90	39.15	+ 17.75	Well above normal	64.40	1971	21.65	1931
12(Feb – Jan)	64.98	46.49	+ 18.49	Well above normal	69.81	1952	24.80	1931
24(Feb – Jan)	129.31	93.94	+ 35.37	Well above normal	131.40	1953	65.82	1931

Table 1: Rainfall (inches) over the past 24 months.

Drought

Drought in general means water shortage and rainfall deficiency. This is assessed by first examining the rainfall periods of three months or more for selected places to see whether they lie below the 30th percentile (lowest 30% of the historical records). The approach used to determine the rainfall deficit is an adjusted version of the decile method developed by Gibbs and Maher (1967). An adjusted version of this method is used as the measurement of droughts within the Australian Drought Watch System. The drought levels, based on historical data, are defined as follow:

- **Slight:** rainfall ranges from less than 30th percentile to the 20th percentile
- **Moderate:** rainfall ranges from less than the 20th percentile to the 10th percentile
- **Serious:** rainfall ranges from less than the 10th percentile to the 5th percentile
- **Severe:** rainfall less than the 5th percentile

Probability of drought:

- **Slight Chance:** 5 to 25% chance of occurring
- **Chance:** 30 to 55% chance of occurring
- **Likely:** 60 to 75% chance of occurring
- **Highly Likely/Expected:** Greater than or equal to 80% chance of occurring

Rainfall Description

The following definitions are being used on the 1981 to 2010 rainfall dataset:

- **Well Below normal:** Rainfall totals in the lowest 10% of the dataset
- **Below Normal:** Rainfall totals in the lowest 33.3% of the dataset
- **Near Normal:** Rainfall totals in the middle 33.3% of the data
- **Above Normal:** Rainfall totals in the highest 33.3% of the dataset
- **Well Above Normal:** Rainfall totals in the highest 10% of the dataset
- **Rainfall:** Island average, based on rainfall at the airport and Green Castle

Disclaimer

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Note: The issuing of formal drought and precipitation statements by the Antigua and Barbuda Met Service is not to be taken to mean that there are unprecedented rainfall totals. Rather, the Met Service in harmony with its mission has seen the need to provide these statements to inform the public regarding the state of rainfall in Antigua and Barbuda.