

## THE WEATHER IN NEW ZEALAND IN AUGUST 1986

*General*—August was much wetter and colder than average on the east coast of the South Island, and much drier and warmer than average on the west coast of the South Island.

North-easterlies were more frequent than usual over the north of the North Island, while southerlies prevailed over the South Island. The frequency of north-westerlies at Invercargill Airport was the second lowest for August since records began in 1956. Strong winds were less frequent than usual for August.

Mean sea level pressures were up to 5 hPa below normal in Northland, and up to 8 hPa above normal at Campbell Island to the far south of New Zealand.

Most farmers reported little pasture growth, and there was a shortage of feed on some farms in Hawke's Bay. A high number of lamb losses occurred in the Wairarapa and in Canterbury due to the colder and wetter than usual weather conditions.

Snowfall on the Lewis Pass road made driving conditions hazardous on the night of the 8th. A bus carrying 35 people left the road but no one was injured.

Heavy snow fell over inland Canterbury (15 cm at Methven), on the 8th. Fifteen to 17 centimetres of snow was reported at Hamner Springs, being the heaviest snowfall there since June 1976.

Heavy rain in South Canterbury and North Otago on 10 and 11 August resulted in the flooding of many small coastal streams. Approximately 30 bridge approaches were damaged, 6 being in Waimate. Repairs to damaged roads and bridges in the affected regions have been estimated to cost \$2 million. A civil defence emergency was declared in the Milford (just east of Temuka) and Temuka boroughs. Thirty-five families in the Orakipaoa area, east

of Temuka were evacuated due to the possibility of the Opihi River flooding.

Three hundred and twenty Waikuku Beach residents in North Canterbury were also evacuated when the Ashley River threatened to burst its stopbank.

*Rainfall*—Rainfall was above average in Northland, Auckland, parts of Bay of Plenty and coastal regions of Otago.

Over 200 percent of average rainfall was recorded in coastal areas of Marlborough and in South Canterbury. Timaru Airport recorded over 300 percent of normal rainfall for August.

Due to prevalent southerly conditions over the South Island it was much drier than average on the West Coast of the South Island with most places recording only 35 to 40 percent of normal rainfall for August.

*Temperature*—Mean daily temperatures ranged from 1°C above average in south Westland and Fiordland to 1°C below average in east coast regions of both islands from Gisborne to Canterbury, and including Manawatu and Wellington. Elsewhere mean daily temperatures were 0.5°C below average.

*Sunshine*—It was rather cloudy this month in the Wairarapa where total hours of bright sunshine for the month were only about 80 percent of normal. Hours of bright sunshine were about 10 percent above average in Auckland, Westland, Fiordland and Southland. Elsewhere sunshine was near normal.

J. S. HICKMAN, Director.