

## THE WEATHER IN NEW ZEALAND IN FEBRUARY 1987

*General*—February was a little cooler, but sunnier than usual in most places.

South-westerlies prevailed over the North Island, and had their highest frequency at Auckland Airport for almost 20 years. North-westerlies predominated over the south of New Zealand, with near normal frequencies for February. Mean sea level pressures were 1 to 2 hPa below normal over the whole of the country.

*Rainfall*—This February it was very dry in Bay of Plenty and from Waikato to Northland. In these areas rainfall was about 10 to 40 percent of normal for the month. Only 8 mm was recorded at Tauranga Airport, making this the driest February there since 1973, and the third driest since 1936. Some farmers in these regions noted near drought conditions, with water in small creeks and wells running dry or very low in places.

Over the South Island it was rather wet in Canterbury and Otago, with rainfall totals of more than twice normal. It was the wettest February at Christchurch Airport since 1951 (though most of the rain fell on only four days), and for at least 20 years at Dunedin Airport. Elsewhere rainfall was near or below normal.

*Temperatures*—Mean daily temperatures were cooler than usual for February over most of New Zealand. In Waikato, King Country and inland South Canterbury mean daily temperatures were 1°C below normal. Over the remainder of the North Island, on the west coast of the South Island and in central Otago they were about 0.5°C below normal. Elsewhere temperatures were near normal for February.

A very low -2°C was recorded on the morning of the 3rd at Waiouru, being the coldest February morning there in over 20 years.

*Sunshine*—Hours of bright sunshine were well above normal in most places north of King Country, Hamilton, and in Gisborne, Hawke Bay, Wellington, Marlborough and Nelson. It was cloudier than usual south of Oamaru. At Invercargill Airport a total of 113 hours was recorded (68 percent of normal), being the lowest there in February since records began in 1935.

J. S. HICKMAN, Director.