



**WESTERN REGION TECHNICAL ATTACHMENT
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**EL NINO SOUTHERN OSCILLATION (ENSO) DIAGNOSTIC ADVISORY 88/3
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Equatorial winds in February showed a continued trend towards normal conditions throughout the Pacific. Positive sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies decreased sharply along the equator in all three index regions. However, SST anomalies remained greater than $+0.5^{\circ}\text{C}$ in the central Pacific region (Niño 4) and greater than normal convective activity persisted in that region. Also, sea level pressure was greater than normal at Darwin ($+0.4$ mb) and less than normal at Tahiti (-0.9 mb) resulting in a negative value of the Southern Oscillation Index (-0.6).

Positive outgoing longwave radiation (OLR) anomalies, indicating drier than normal conditions, prevailed over much of Australia during February, although in equatorial regions just to the north negative OLR anomalies, wetter than normal conditions, were observed. Negative OLR anomalies were also observed along the South Pacific Convergence Zone, a band of clouds and low level wind convergence extending from the equator, just west of the date line, southeastward over the South Pacific.

During most of 1987, upper tropospheric (200 mb) easterly anomalies were observed over much of the equatorial belt. In February 1988 easterly anomalies were virtually absent along the equator and westerly anomalies generally prevailed. The largest westerly anomalies were observed in the central and eastern Pacific accompanied by a pair of cyclonic anomaly centers, one north and one south of the equator.

Although most atmospheric and oceanic indices indicate a continued trend towards normal in the equatorial Pacific, residual positive SST anomalies in the central Pacific are continuing to support enhanced cloudiness and precipitation in that region.

Climate Analysis Center
National Meteorological Center
National Weather Service
World Weather Building
Washington, D.C. 20233