

Australian Government

Bureau of Meteorology

August 2012

New Weather Stations and Radar

Earlier this year the Bureau of Meteorology commissioned a new radar on the Tasman Peninsula. This radar can “see” over to the west coast, up the east coast and a long way to the south and southwest.

This will give many hours warning of approaching rainbands and cold fronts from the west of the state.

<http://www.bom.gov.au/products/IDR762.loop.shtml>

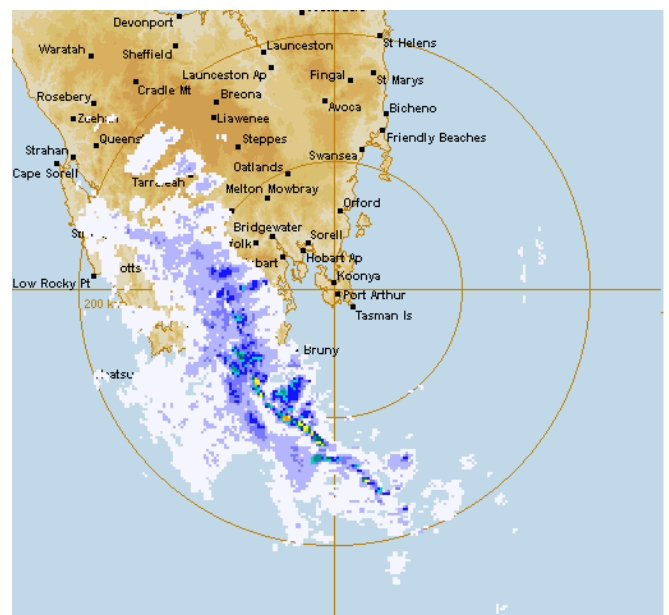
As part of this project two new automatic weather stations will begin operation. The first which is already operating is located on the coast near Dunnalley. This site gives an indication of the wind speed and direction in Norfolk Bay.

Another site will be opened within a few months on Dennes Point (Bruny Island). This data will be a boon for southeast Tasmanian boating community.

By looking on their smart phones mariners in the channel will get an idea of the wind on Storm Bay before “poking their nose” out into what can be adverse conditions. Those boating around Hobart will be able to monitor the time of onset and the strength of the sea breeze at Dennes Point to give an idea of what time it will get to the Hobart area.



Above: The new Dunnalley weather station with Fulham Island in the background.



Rain Rate
Light Moderate Heavy

Above: Radar image of a cold front passing over southern Tasmania.

New Viewer Available for Graphical Forecasts

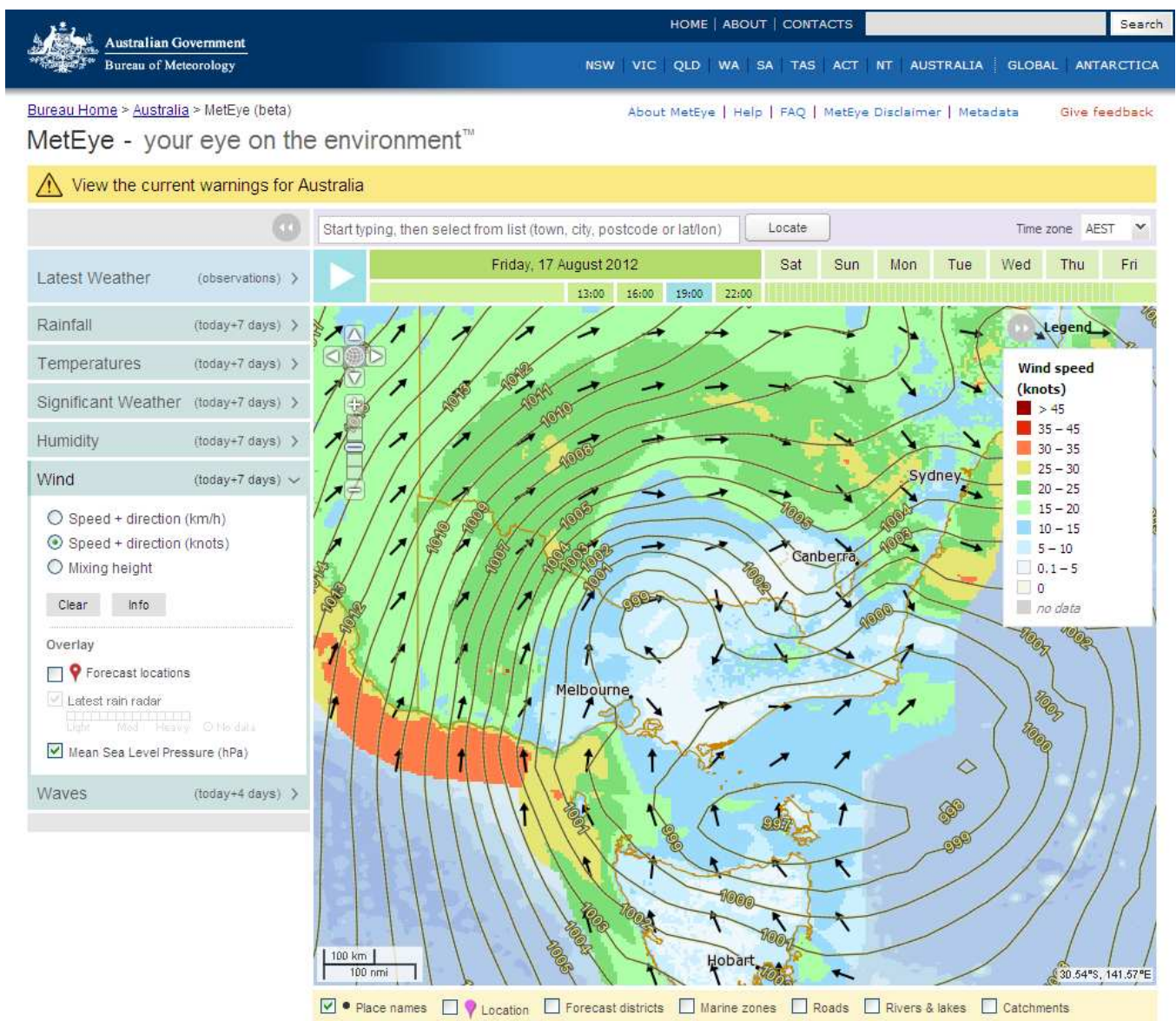
Many Tasmanian mariners are familiar with the Bureau of Meteorology's forecast explorer system which shows a range of forecast weather elements over and around Tasmania. Later this year the Bureau will change to a new graphical forecast viewer called Meteye.

Meteye will have all the information that is contained in the current forecast explorer but have increased functionality.

The first thing the user will notice is the navigation moves away from tiles (pre selected areas) to a more google earth type navigation of drag and zoom.

Users will be able to overlay various layers over the forecast. For instance in the picture below the isobars from the weather map have been overlain on top the wind speed and direction. Other overlays are sea surface temperature, radar images and satellite pictures.

Meteye is currently being tested and evaluated and is expected to be available to the public around October that should coincide with the beginning of the boating season.



Service Well Received

The automated Coast Radio VHF service broadcasts of the inshore forecasts for the Derwent Estuary, Frederick Henry and Norfolk Bay, Storm Bay and Channel Forecast have been very well received by the south eastern boating community

The broadcasts are on the hour and half hour during eastern standard time, and on the quarter hour during daylight saving time on VHF channel 1.

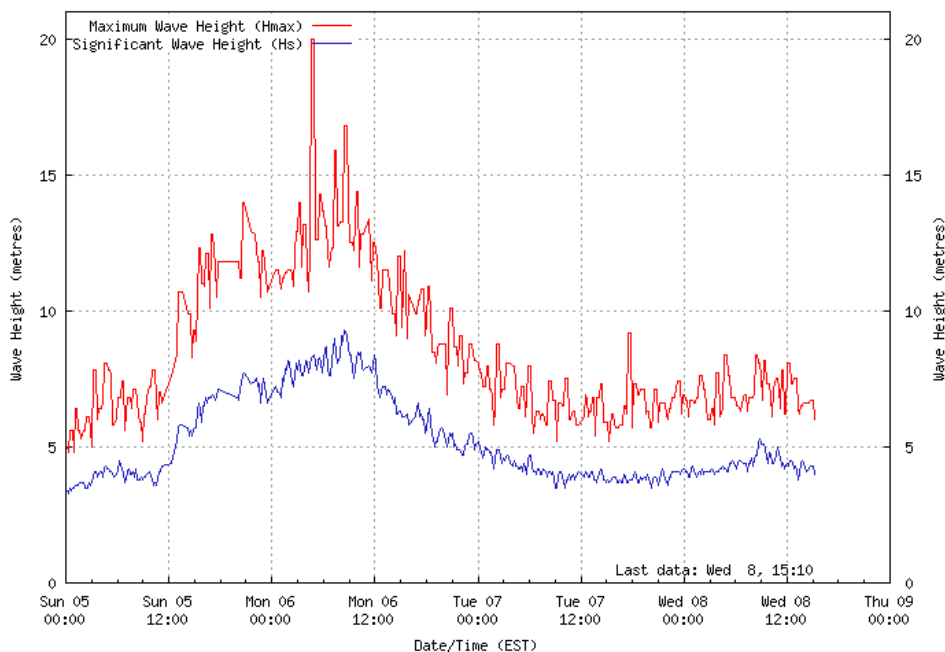
Monster Wave

A deep low pressure system passed to the south of Tasmania during the evening of Sunday August 5 and through Monday morning the 6th. This caused very strong winds over much of the state. The highest gusts were 154 kmh at Maatsuyker Island and 146 kmh at Tasman Island. There were 8 separate weather warnings out for Tasmania during that period including a severe weather warning for damaging wind gusts over the land and a storm force wind warning for the coastal waters off south-western Tasmania.

Forecasts for the marine area were for seas (caused by the wind blowing at the time) of up to 6 metres and swell (waves from distant storms) of up to 8 metres. This gave a significant wave height of 10 metres with maximum wave heights of 20 metres.

It can be seen from the graph that this is what occurred. This is a very good example of the advice that appears on all the Bureau of Meteorology marine forecasts.

“Wind gusts can be 40 percent stronger than the averages given here, and maximum waves may be up to twice the height”



Praise/Complaints/Queries

If you wish to have an explanation of any marine weather matter please email pubmarine.tas@bom.gov.au or call 03 6221 2081 during normal business hours. Use the same email address and phone number if you wish to be put on the address list for this newsletter.