

Northern Territory Pastoral Feed Outlook

March 2018

The purpose of this quarterly outlook is to summarise information relevant to the pastoral industry such as current feed supplies, seasonal conditions, the development of drought conditions in central Australia and fire risk.

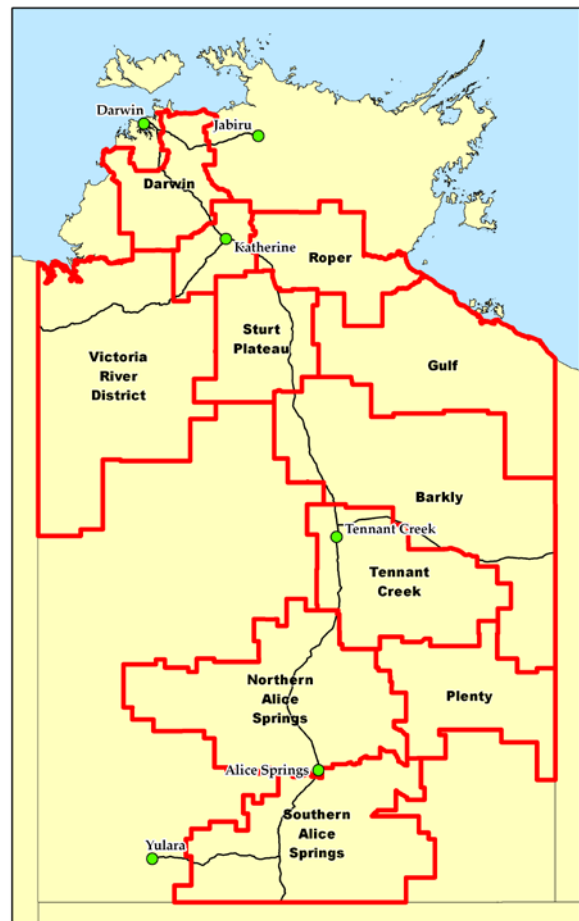
You can see the entire document and all districts by continuing to scroll through this file. If you are interested in selected sections, you can click on the links below.

[Summary of current situation & trends - all districts](#)

[Northern Territory Seasonal Outlook – as at March 2018](#)

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Summary of current situation & trends - all districts – March 2018

KEY	Green = low risk	Orange = watch	Red = high risk
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KEY	↑ = increasing trend	↓ = decreasing trend	↔ = steady
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Indicator	Northern Territory Pastoral Districts											Comments
	Darwin	Katherine	VRD	Sturt Plateau	Roper	Gulf	Barkly	Tennant Creek	Northern Alice Springs	Plenty	Southern Alice Springs	
2017/2018 total pasture growth	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↔	↔	↔	↓	↔	Arrows indicate trend compared to the long-term mean.
Current estimated standing biomass	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↑	↔	↓	↓	↓	↓	Arrows indicate trend since previous quarter.
Current fire risk	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter.
Current seasonal outlook	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	Arrows indicate the trend since previous quarter and taking into account the forecasted model predictions.

For further information about this Outlook, please contact Chris Materne on 08 8951 8135 or Dionne Walsh on 08 8999 2178

Northern Territory Seasonal Outlook

as at March 2018

Sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/outlooks/>

The national outlook for April to June 2018 indicates that:

- **Average** rainfall conditions are expected across much of the NT.
- In April, **wetter** than average conditions are more likely across the Top End and Southern NT.
- **Cooler** than average days and nights are more likely across the Top End.
- In April, **cooler** than average days and nights are more likely across the majority of the NT.

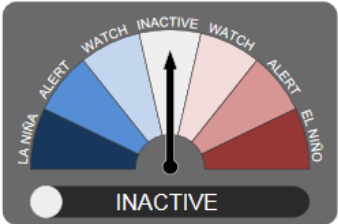

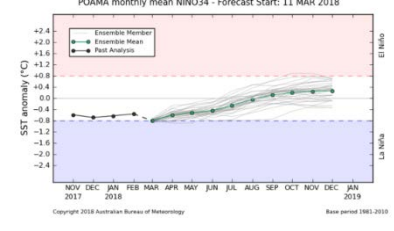

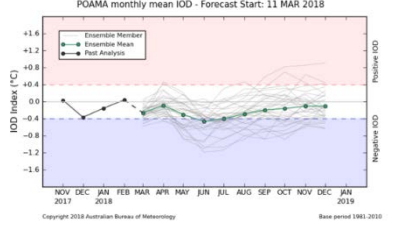
The La Niña in the tropical Pacific Ocean has ended, and ENSO neutral conditions now prevail. With neutral conditions also in the Indian Ocean, there is no strong push towards broadscale wetter or drier conditions for much of the country.



Chance of exceeding the median rainfall
April to June 2018



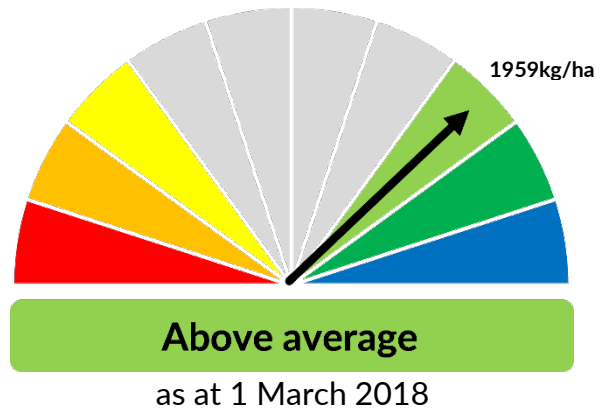
Chance of exceeding the median max. temp.
April to June 2018

Seasonal Indicators	Comments (sourced from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology)	
<p>El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/</p> <p>Current outlook: Neutral</p> <p>ENSO status:</p> 	<p>La Niña ends, ENSO returns to neutral</p> <p>The 2017–2018 La Niña has ended. El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) indicators have eased back to neutral levels over the past several weeks. This means the ENSO Outlook has shifted from La Niña to Inactive.</p> <p>A neutral ENSO pattern does not necessarily signify average rainfall and temperature for Australia. Rather, it indicates a reduced chance of prolonged very wet or dry, or very hot or cold conditions, and that other climate drivers may have greater influence over the coming months.</p> <p>The weak and short-lived La Niña had relatively little effect on Australian rainfall patterns over the 2017–2018 summer. However, it may have kept temperatures higher than average in southern parts of the country due to weather patterns being slower moving, and further south than normal.</p>	 
<p>Indian Ocean Dipole (IOD) http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/enso/#tabs=Indian-Ocean</p> <p>Current outlook: Neutral</p>	<p>IOD also neutral.</p> <p>All six of the climate models surveyed by the Bureau indicate that the IOD will remain neutral into the southern hemisphere winter of 2018.</p> <p>The influence of the IOD on Australian climate is weak during December to April. This is because the monsoon trough shifts south over the tropical Indian Ocean changing wind patterns, which prevents the IOD pattern from being able to form.</p>	 

Darwin District

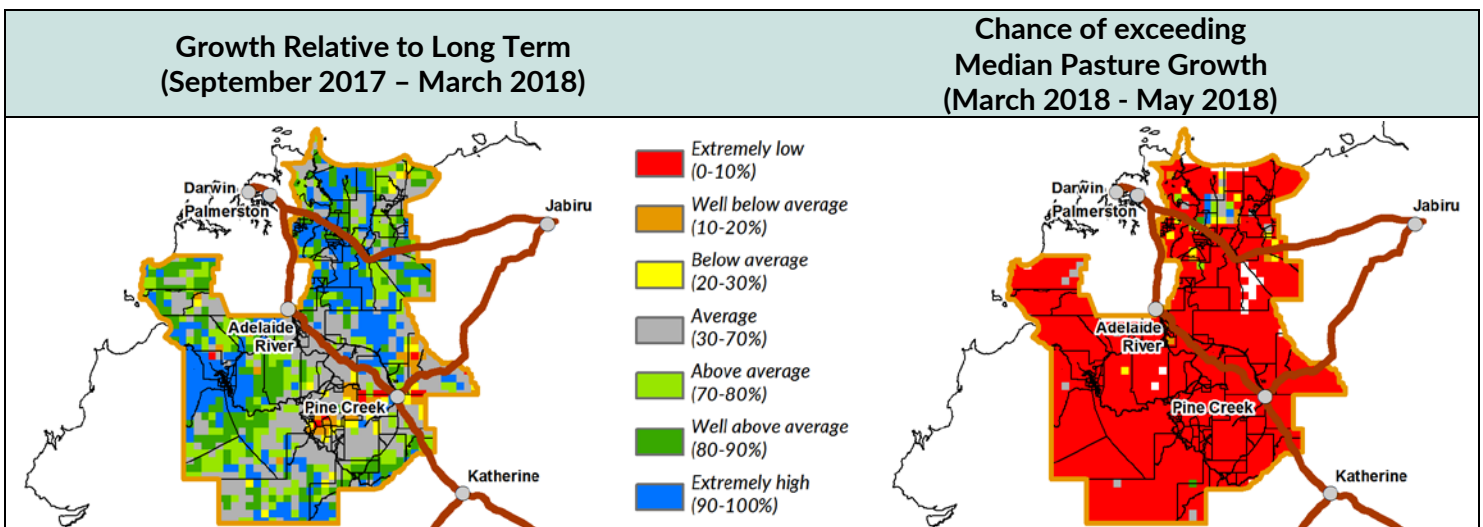
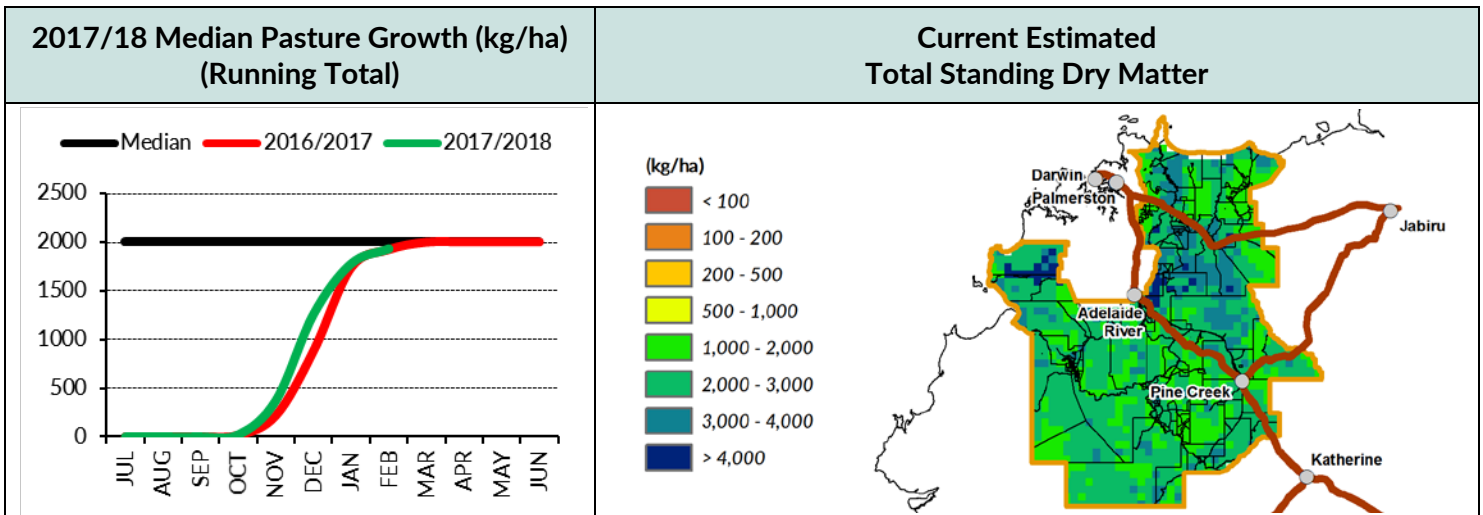
2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far

- After a good start to the wet season, pasture growth is now tracking similar to this time last year
- 25% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 100% of the district had a moderate fire risk as at 1 March 2018



In a typical wet season, pasture growth in the Darwin region tends to be limited by available soil nitrogen rather than soil moisture. Therefore a poor wet season may not generally affect the total quantity of pasture grown on upland country.

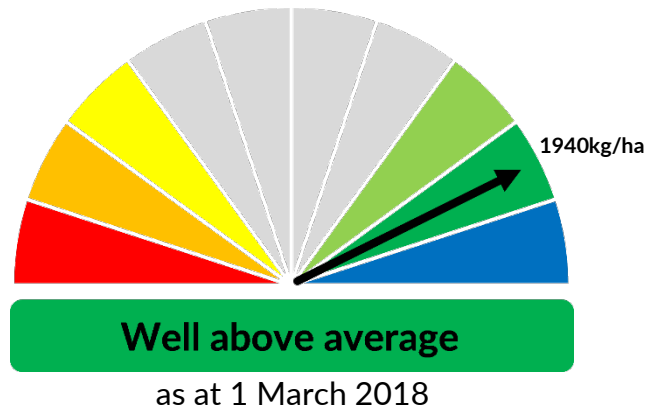
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	0%	59%	39%	2%
Total Standing Dry Matter	0%	28%	56%	16%



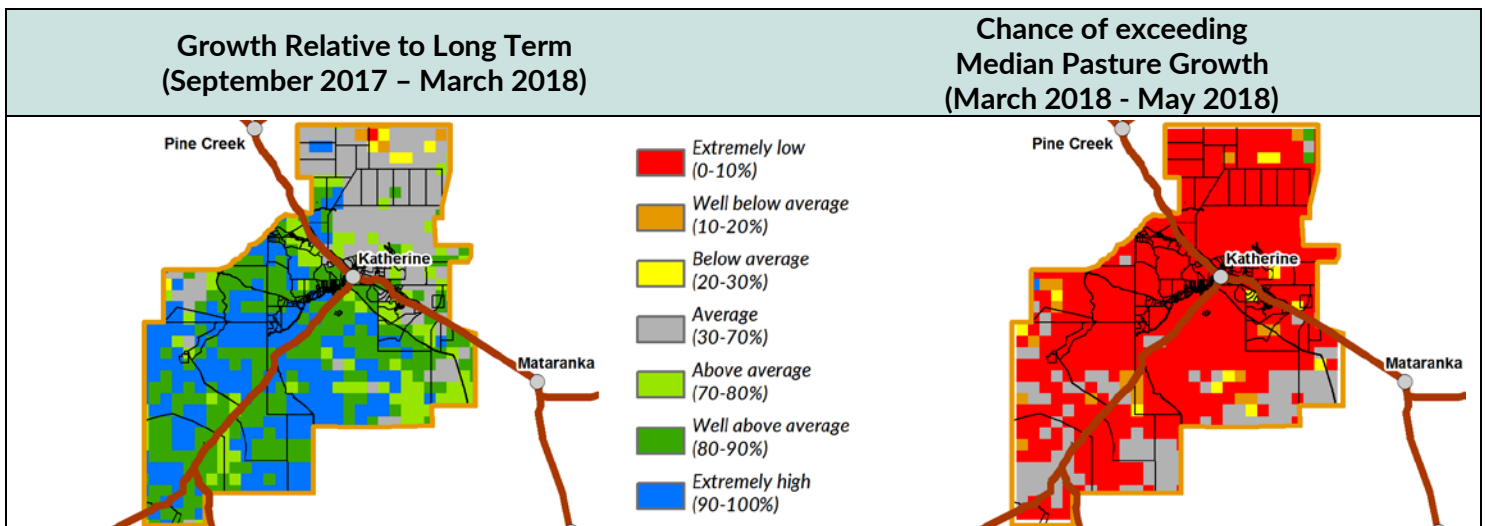
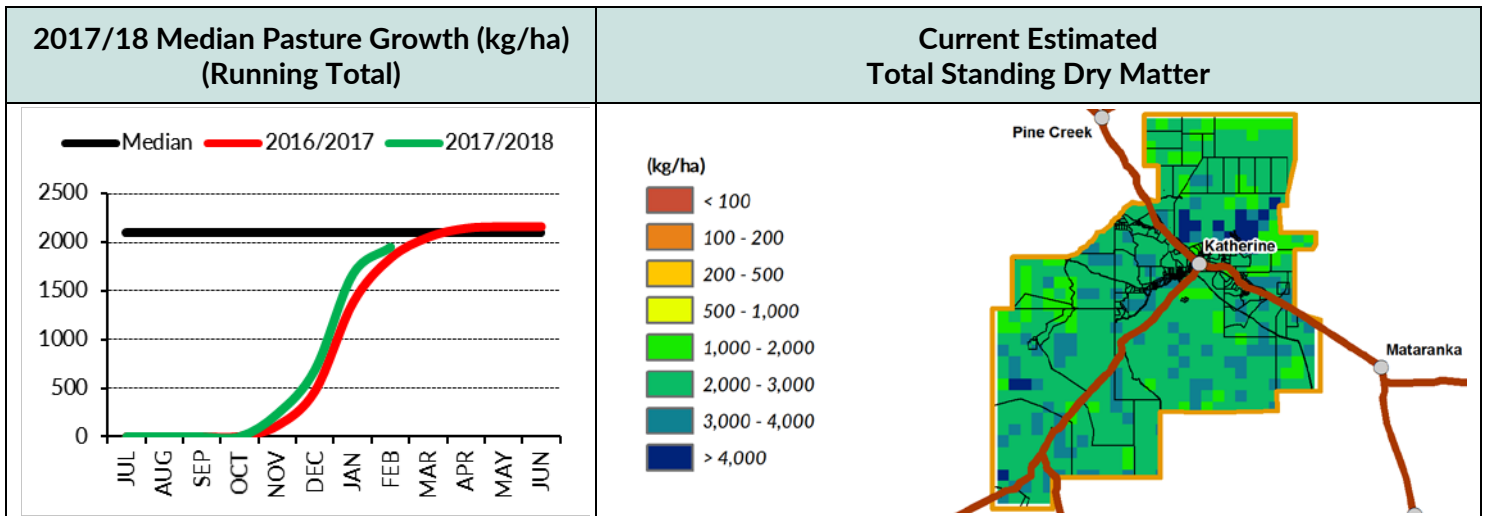
Katherine District

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far

- After a good start to the wet season, pasture growth is still tracking slightly ahead of this time last year
- 20% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 100% of the district had a moderate fire risk as at 1 March 2018



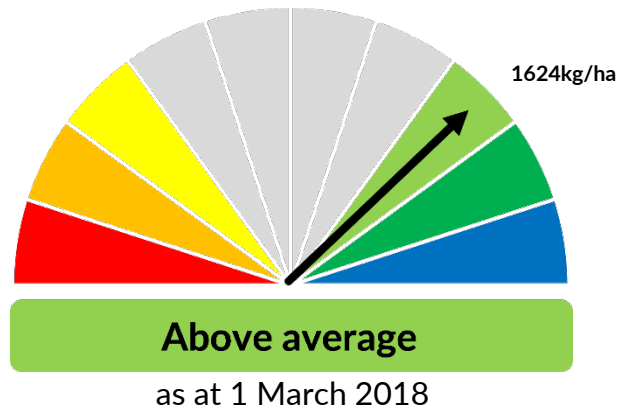
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	0%	55%	45%	0%
Total Standing Dry Matter	0%	12%	70%	18%



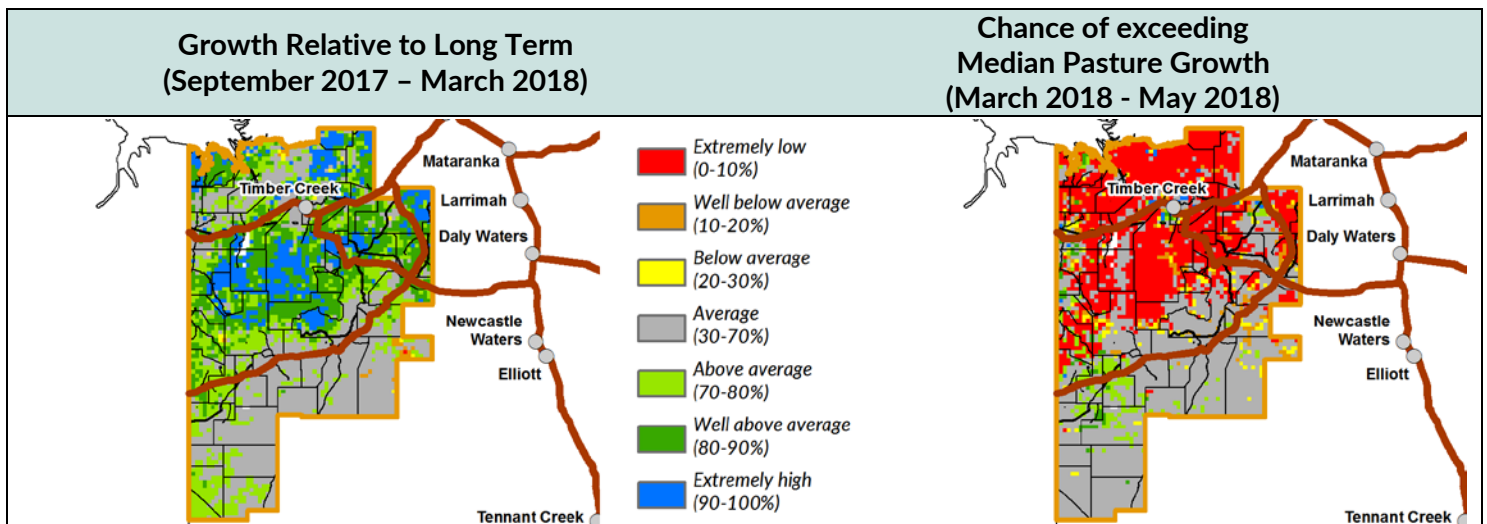
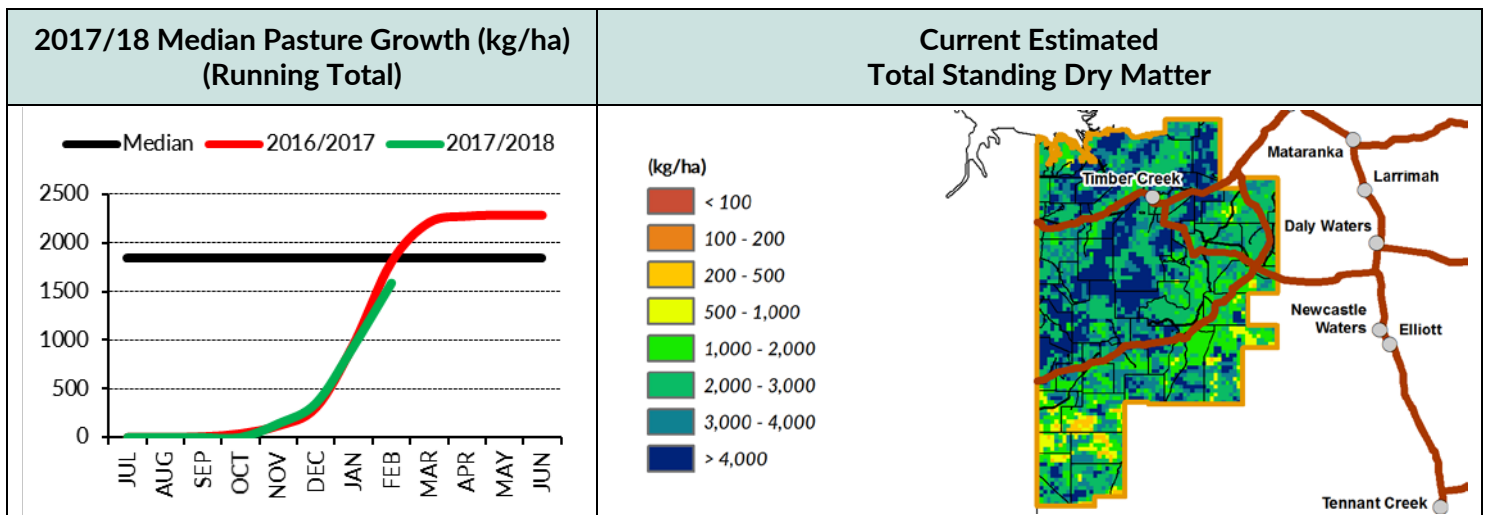
Victoria River District

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far

- Pasture growth is tracking similar to this time last year
- 19% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 40% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 March 2018



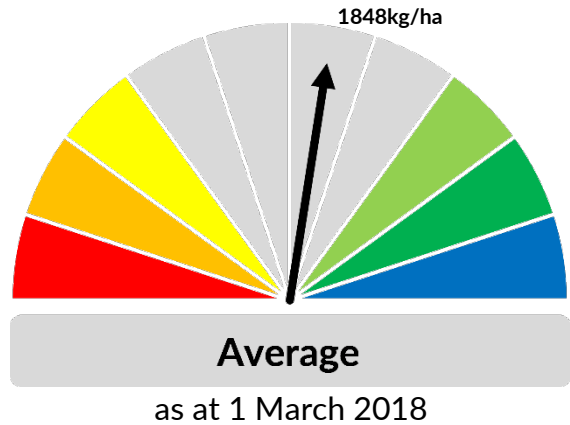
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	23%	42%	33%	2%
Total Standing Dry Matter	5%	16%	38%	41%



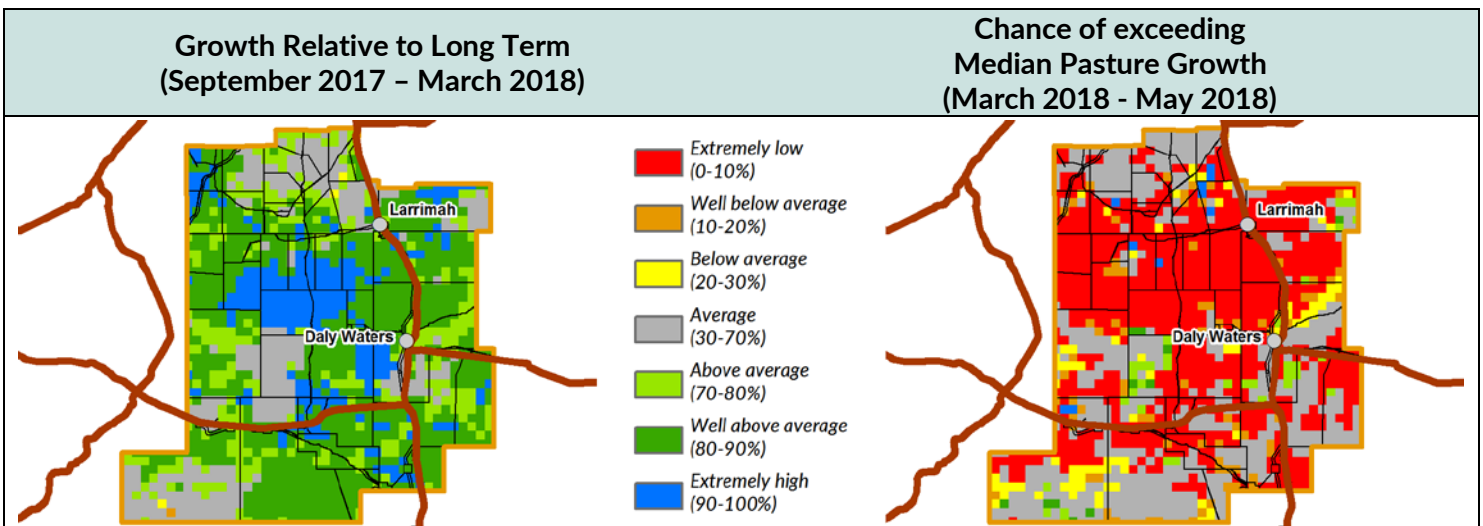
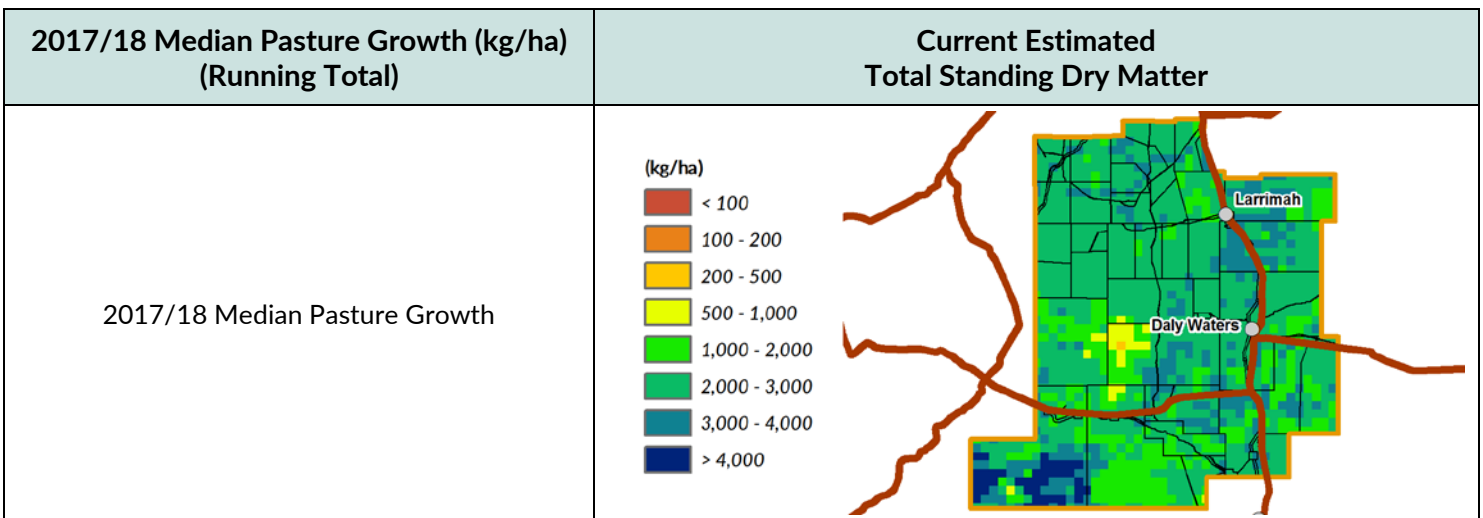
Sturt Plateau District

- Pasture growth is tracking similar to this time last year
- 24% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 7% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 March 2018

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far



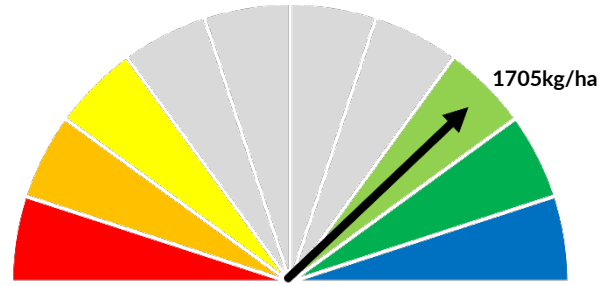
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	5%	50%	45%	0%
Total Standing Dry Matter	1%	18%	62%	19%



Roper District

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far

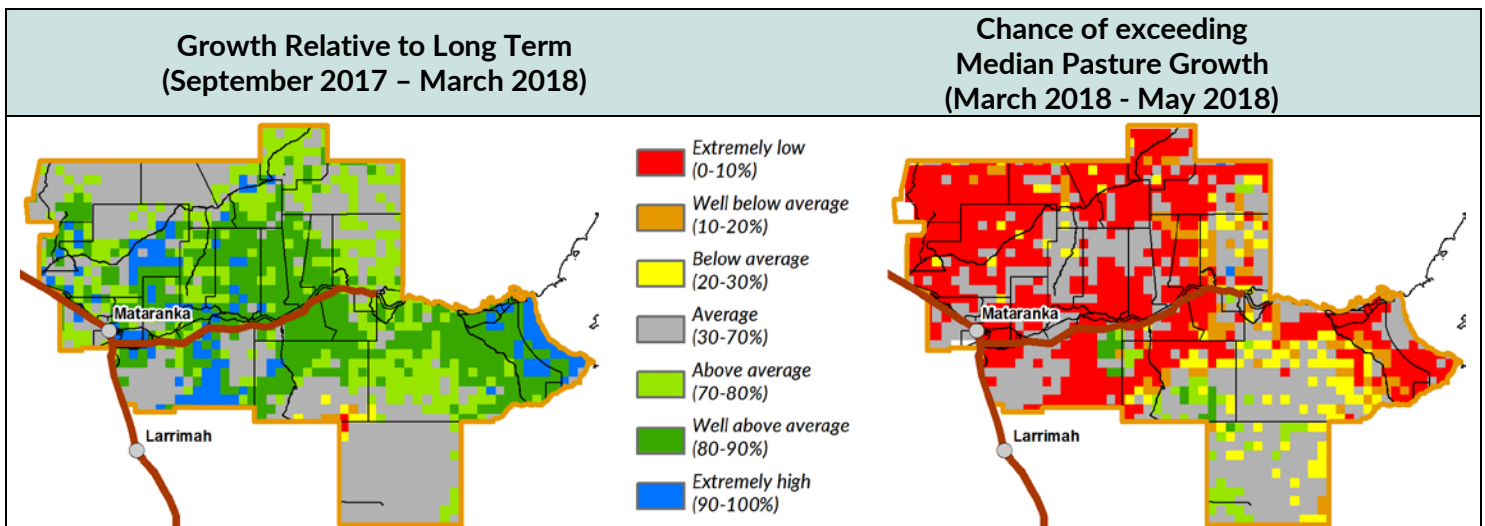
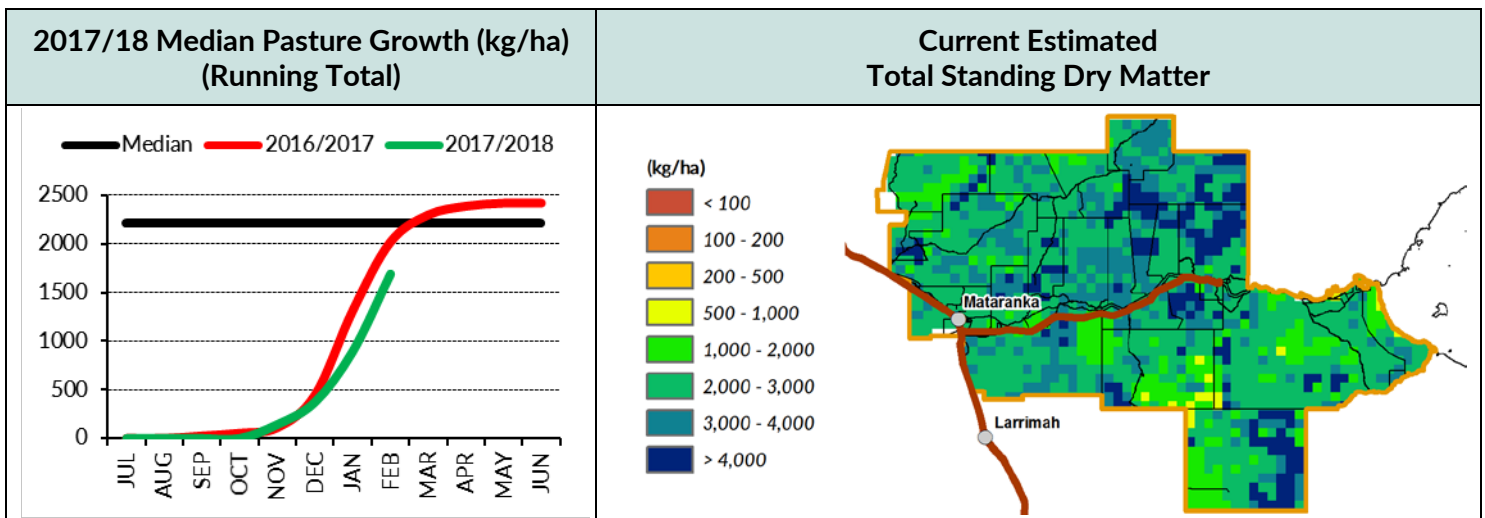
- Pasture growth is tracking slightly behind this time last year
- 19% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 4% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 March 2018



Above average

as at 1 March 2018

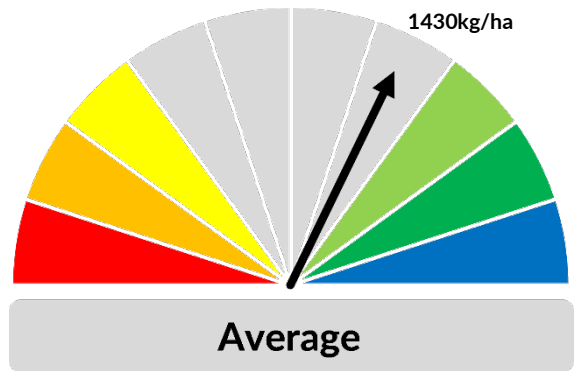
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	7%	61%	31%	1%
Total Standing Dry Matter	1%	13%	53%	33%



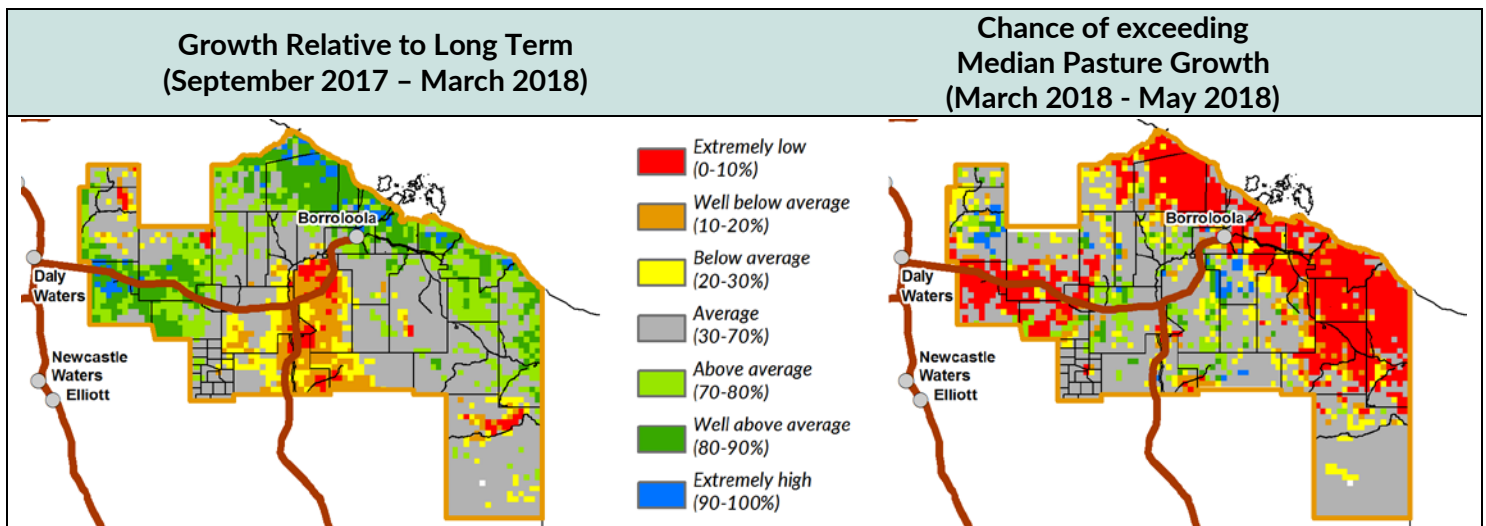
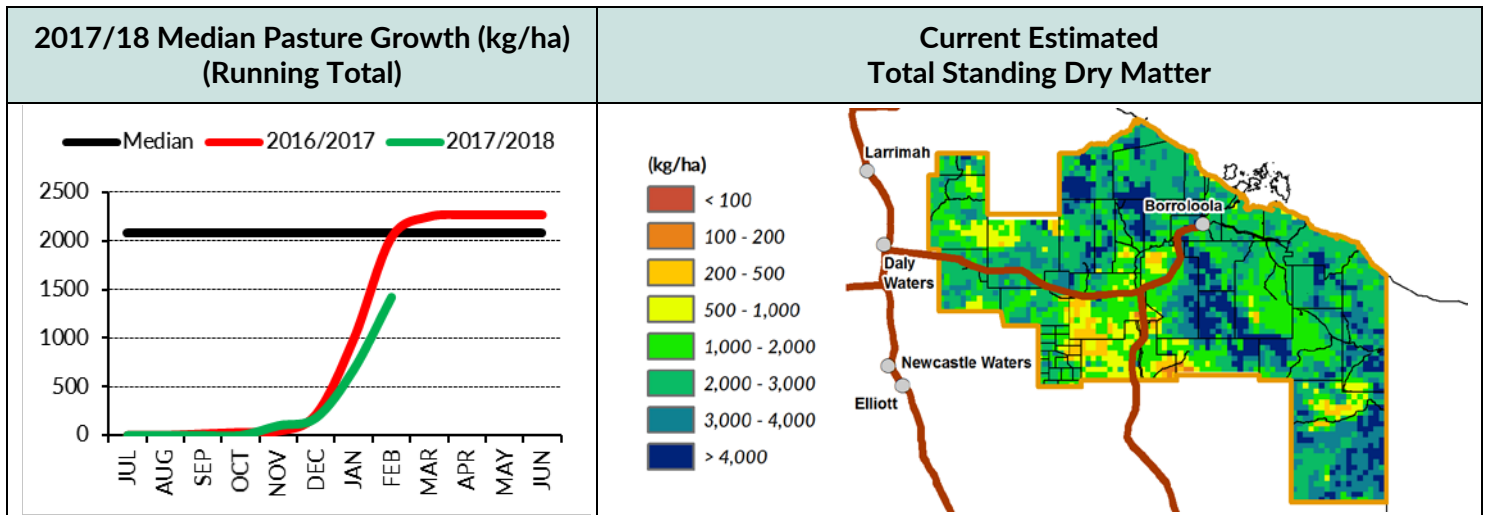
Gulf District

- Pasture growth is tracking slightly behind this time last year
- 25% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 33% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 March 2018

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far



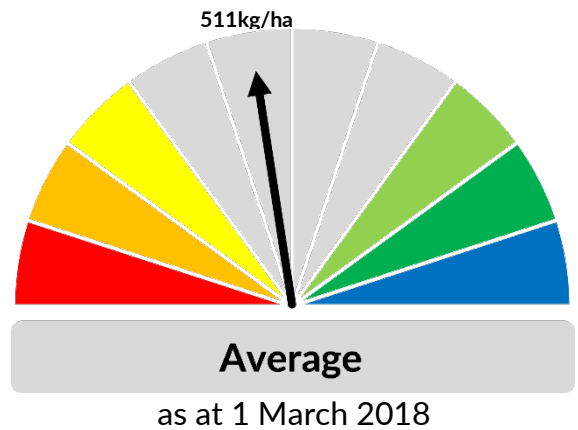
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<1,000kg/ha	1,000 - 2,000kg/ha	2,000 - 3,000kg/ha	>3,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	30%	46%	24%	0%
Total Standing Dry Matter	10%	23%	37%	30%



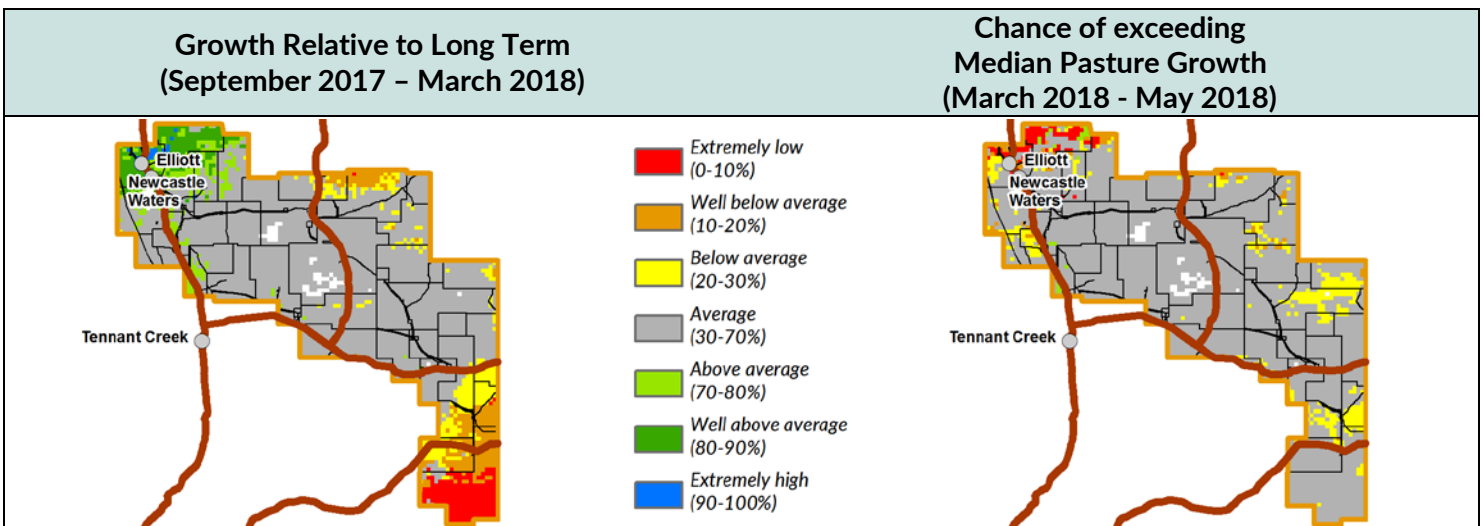
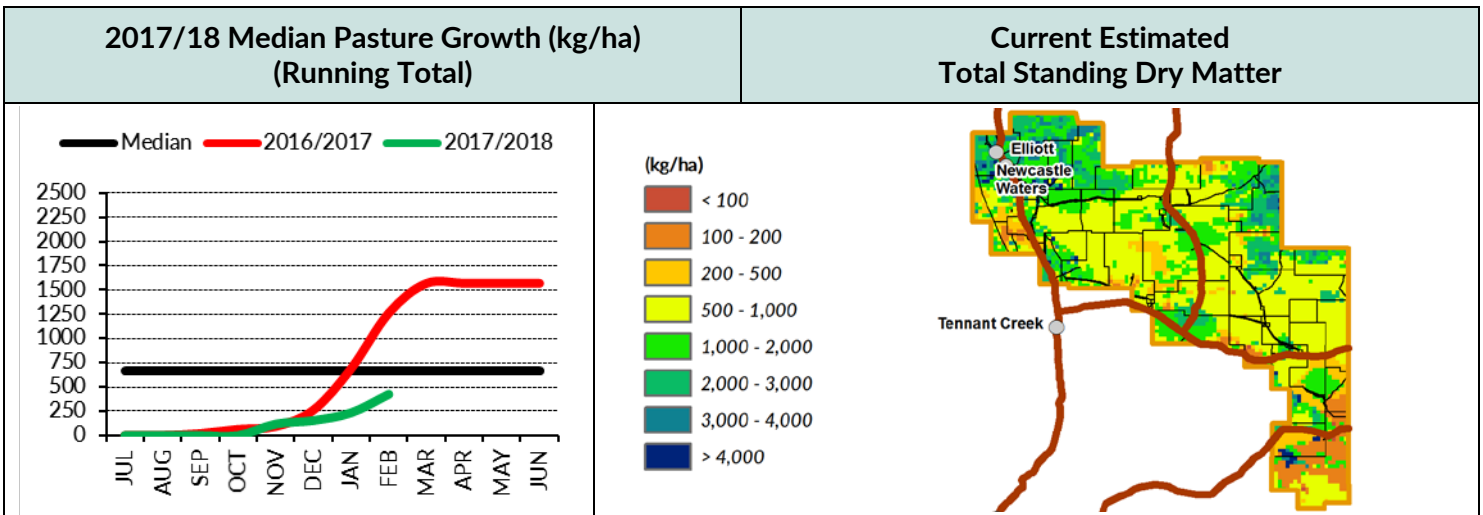
Barkly District

- After a good start to the wet season, pasture growth is now tracking well behind this time last year
- 9% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (less than 1% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 78% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 December 2018

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far



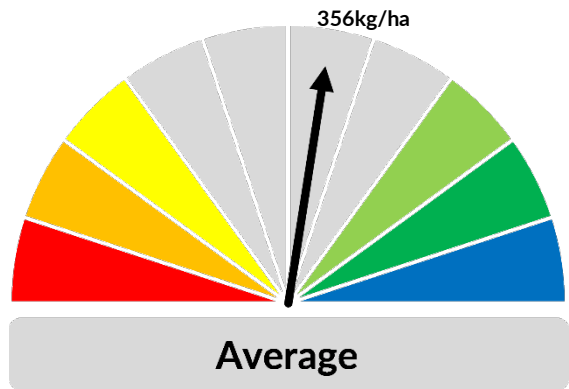
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	23%	42%	26%	9%
Total Standing Dry Matter	8%	6%	43%	43%



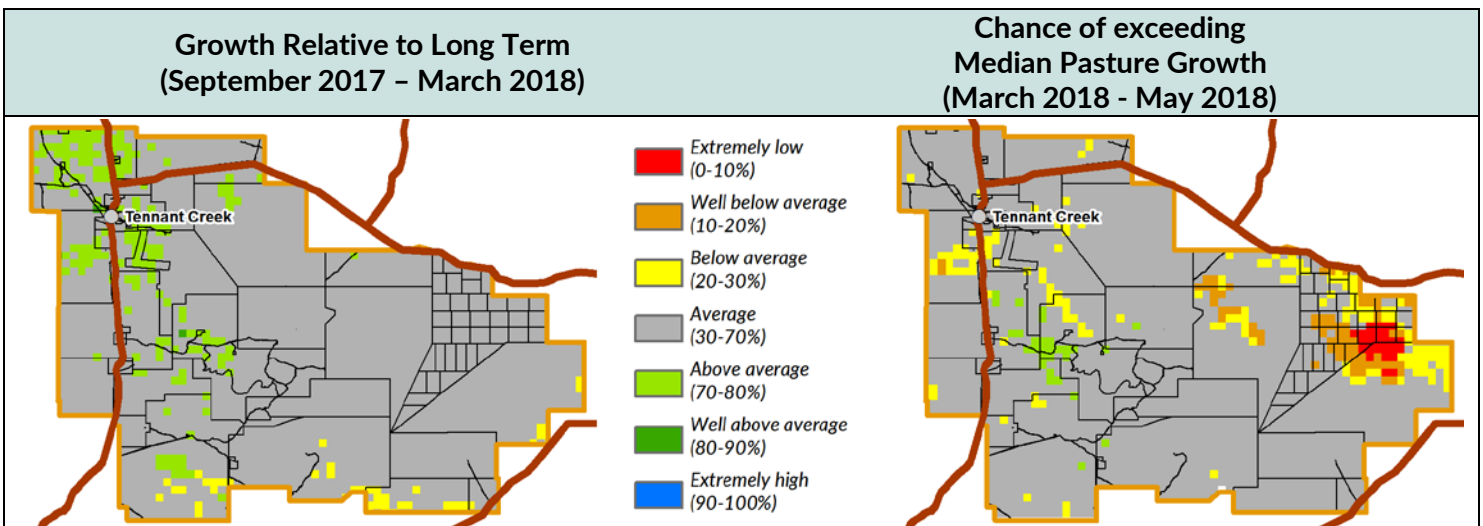
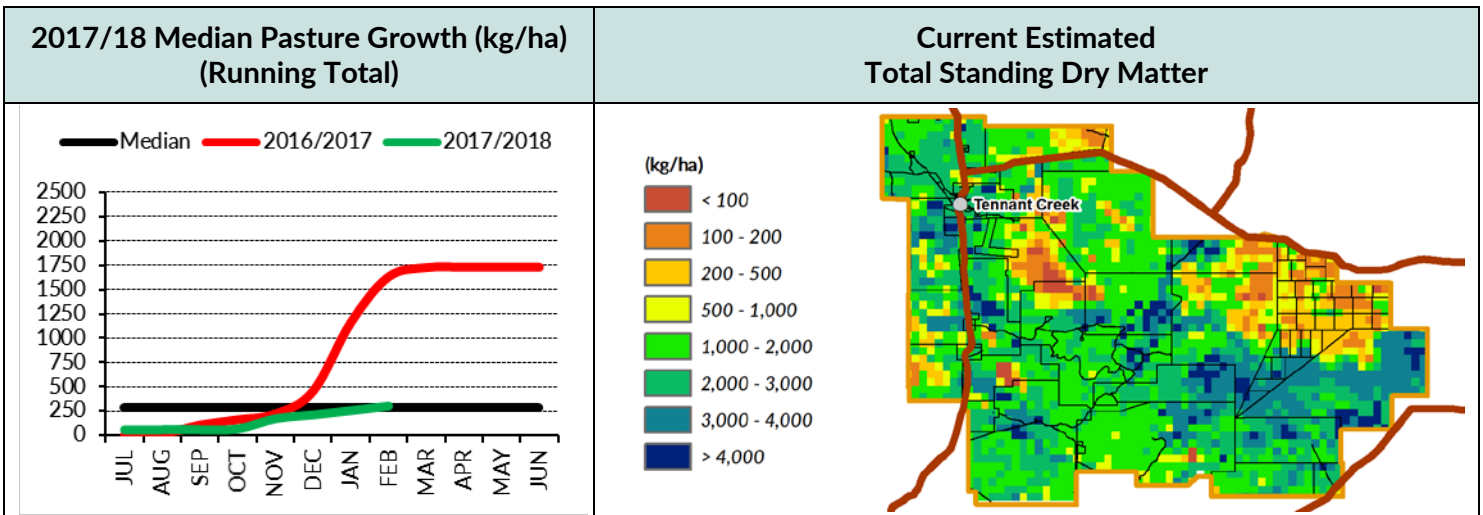
Tennant Creek District

- The 2017/18 wet season is considered average compared to the long-term records, however pasture growth is tracking well behind this time last year
- 25% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (less than 1% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 89% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 December 2018

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far



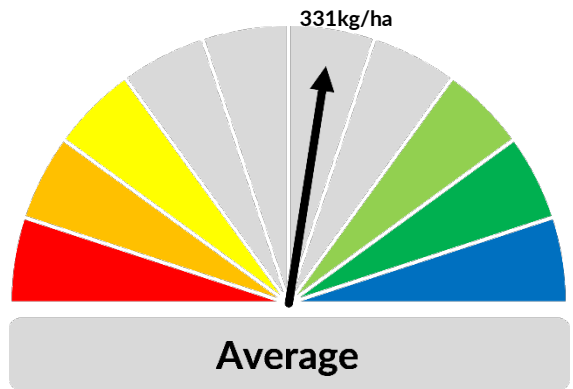
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	33%	50%	14%	3%
Total Standing Dry Matter	9%	5%	8%	78%



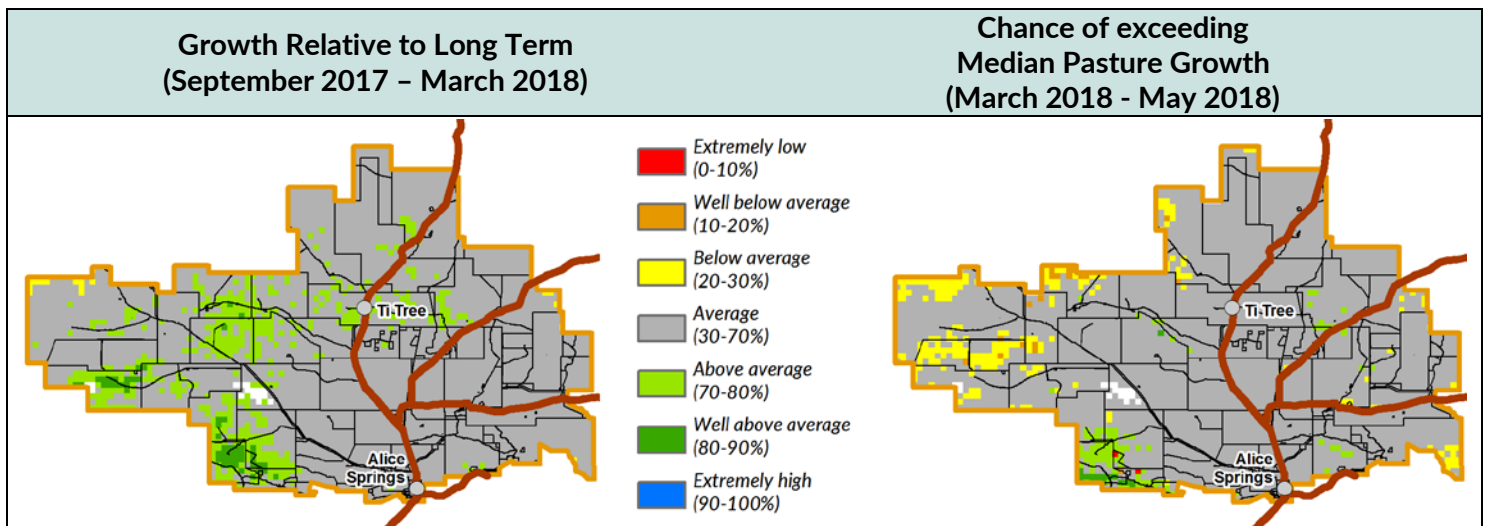
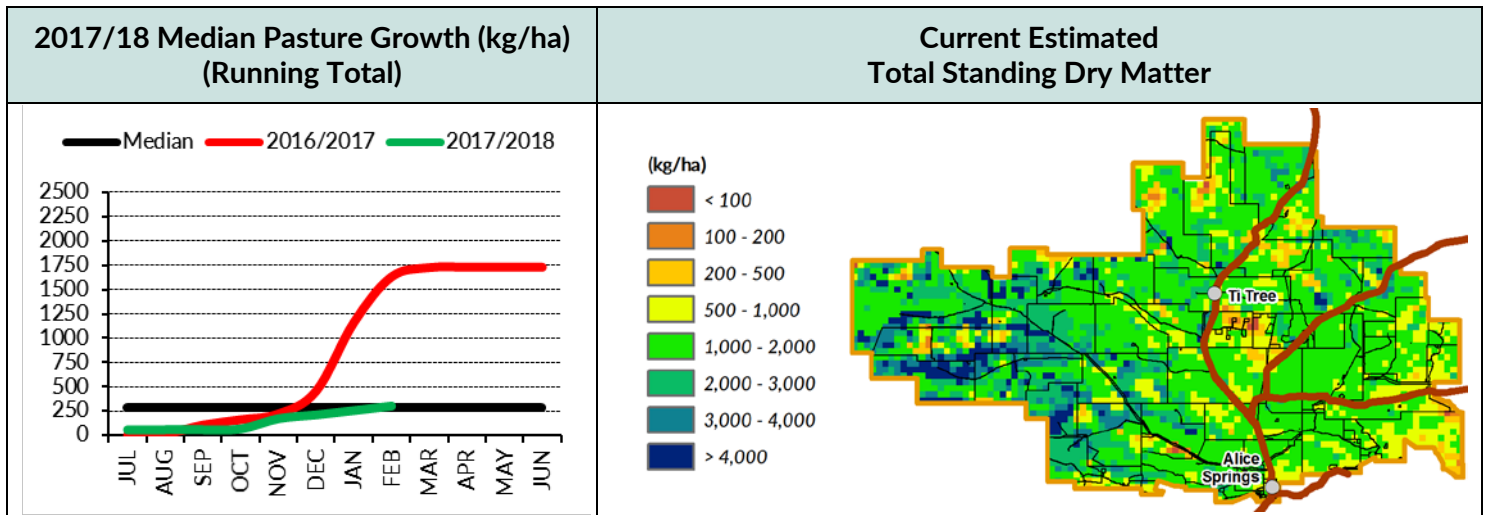
Northern Alice Springs District

- The 2017/18 season is considered average, compared to long-term records, however pasture growth is tracking well behind this time last year
- 7% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (less than 1% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 99% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 March 2018

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far



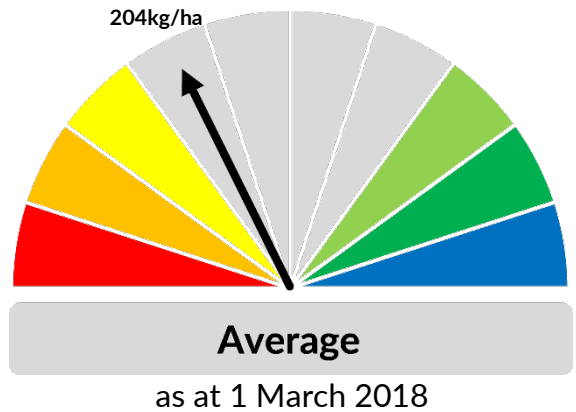
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	44%	37%	18%	1%
Total Standing Dry Matter	1%	4%	15%	80%



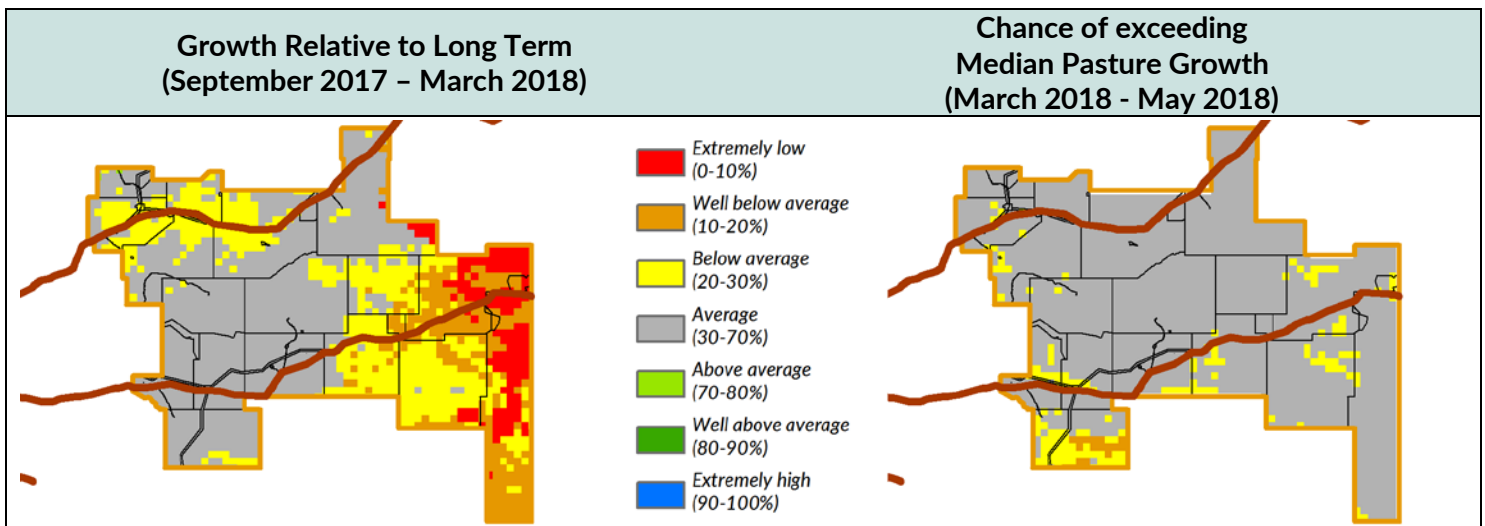
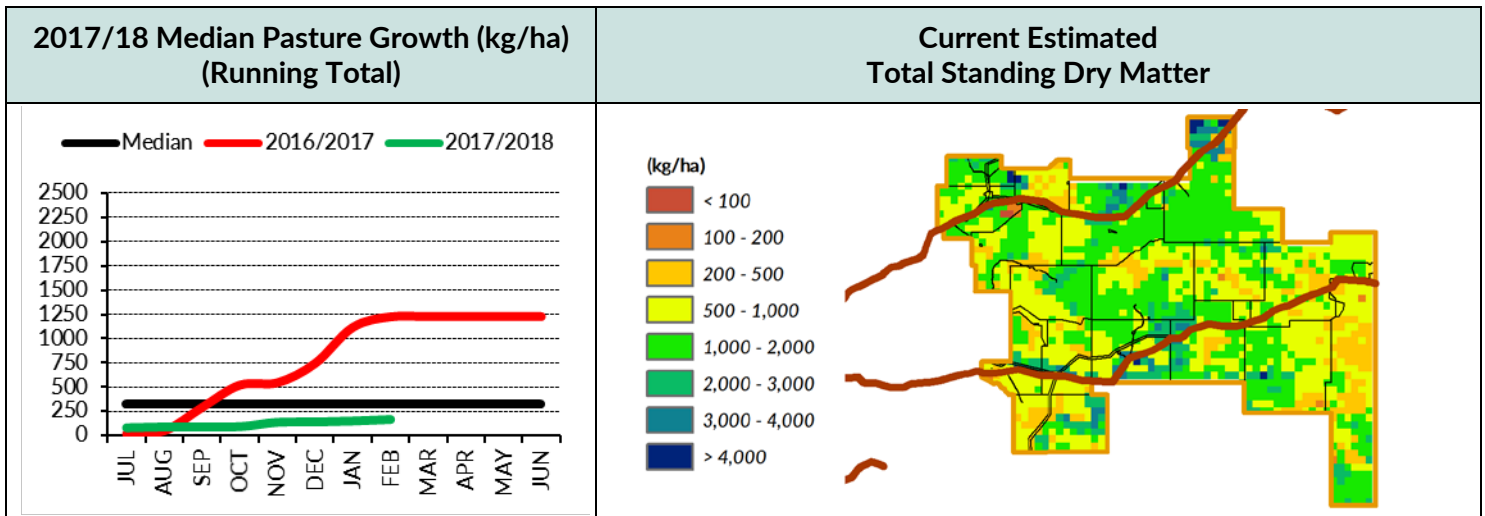
Plenty District

- Pasture growth is tracking well behind this time last year
- 1% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 97% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 March 2018

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far



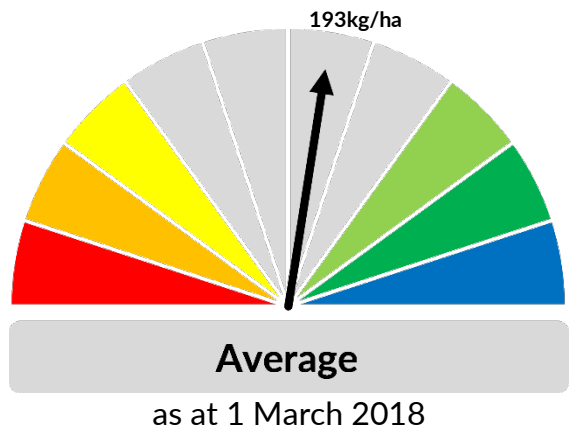
As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	71%	24%	5%	0%
Total Standing Dry Matter	2%	11%	38%	49%



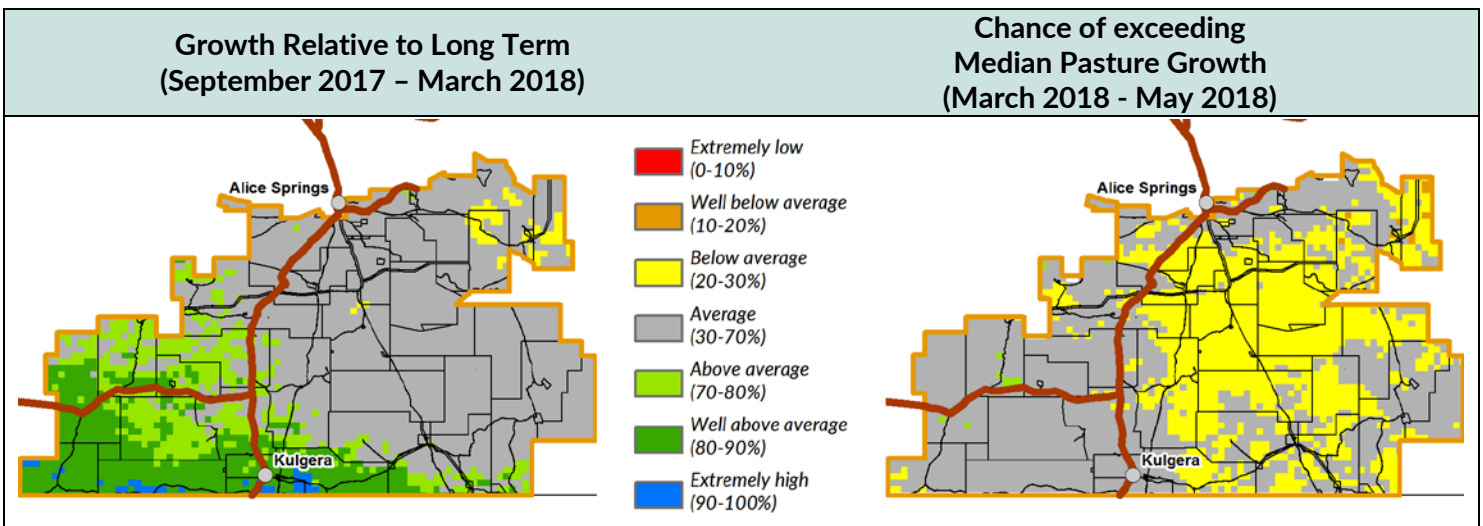
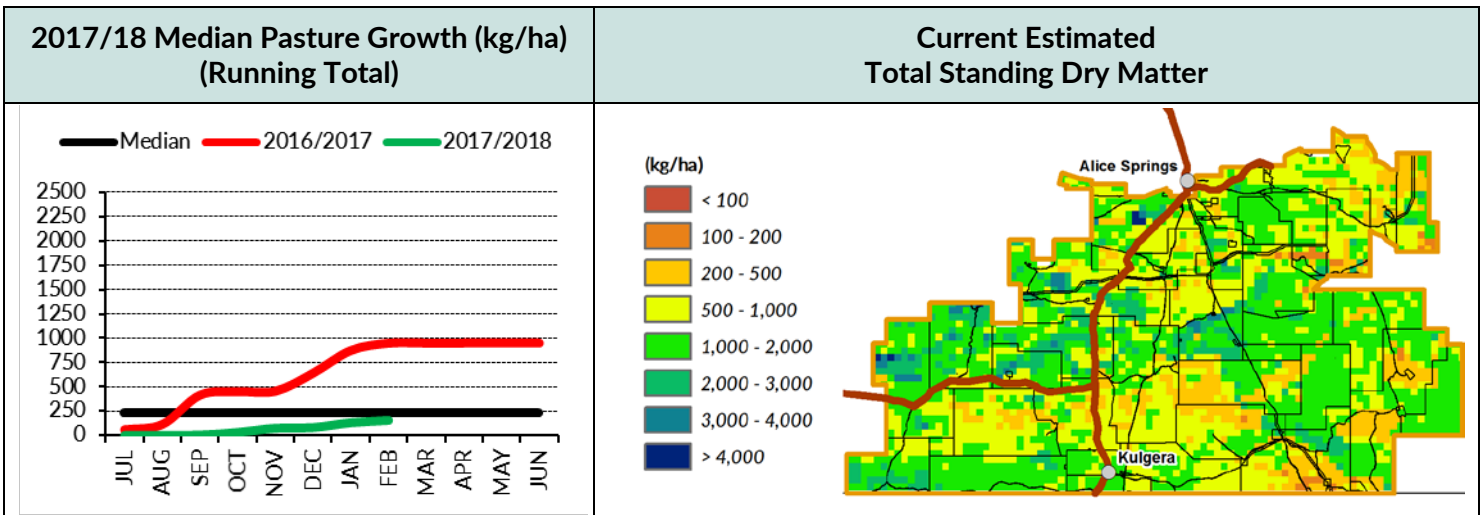
Southern Alice Springs District

- Pasture growth is tracking well behind this time last year
- Less than 1% of the district has been burnt since 1 July 2017 (0% of this since 1 January 2018)
- 94% of the district had a high fire risk as at 1 December 2018

2017/18 Pasture Growth So Far



As at 1 March 2018				
(% of district)	<250kg/ha	250 - 500kg/ha	500 - 1,000kg/ha	>1,000kg/ha
2017/18 Pasture Growth	76%	20%	4%	0%
Total Standing Dry Matter	2%	12%	33%	53%



Pasture Information

The pasture and fire risk information in this document is derived from AussieGRASS. AussieGRASS is a model that simulates pasture growth and standing biomass using climate data, vegetation mapping, fire history and regional estimates of grazing pressure. The model can be used to track simulated pasture growth and total standing pasture biomass at the landscape scale.

Note that the model does not use stocking rate data for individual properties. Where stock numbers are significantly higher or lower than typical for a district, model estimates of total standing dry matter may be erroneous.

Disclaimer

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