

Long-term Trend in Melbourne Rainfall

Harvey Stern¹, Neal Moodie¹, John Cornall-Reilly¹, Tim Forster¹, and Patrizia McBride¹
¹Bureau of Meteorology, Melbourne, Victoria.
E-mail:h.stern@bom.gov.au

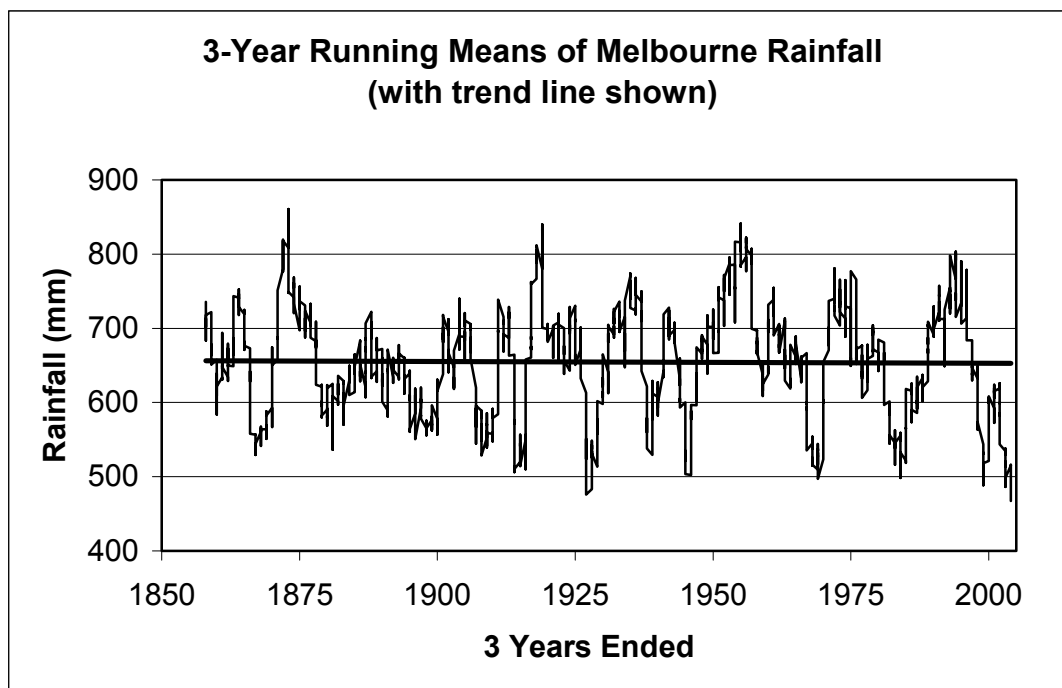
1 Introduction

Since 1997, Melbourne has experienced seven consecutive years with annual rainfall below the long-term normal. This is the first time that there have been seven consecutive dry years. The purpose of the paper is to explore the statistical significance of the long-term rainfall trend, with a view to establishing whether the recent years' dry spell might reflect a statistically significant change in the climate.

2 Discussion

Figure 1 depicts the long-term trend in Melbourne rainfall. It shows that there have been a number of extended dry periods similar to the most recent one, and the depicted trend line suggests little overall change.

Figure 1 Long-term Trend in Melbourne Rainfall



3 Conclusion

Melbourne's rainfall record displays no overall long-term trend, notwithstanding the most recent dry spell.