

## SAKSA WEATHER BEACH CHAT – SUNDAY 22/11/2015

### KEY POINTS FOR WEATHER WATCHING – SAFETY

#### **CLOUDS:**

Clouds are the single best indicators for determining wind changes. A clear day of a sea breeze with a cloud band approaching is something you should watch. The wind is going to be radically affected with the approaching cloud, you need to be either out of the water before it hits (preference) or if you cannot help it be prepared to handle it out on the water. The worst place to be if a front hits in just on the beach where all the hard objects are. By using clouds as a guide you can better avoid being caught out.

**Worst case scenario:** Cloud in very thick and heavy bands coming towards you. As the cloud builds in size that means there might be a stronger front, very strong winds that might lead to impossible conditions. Our South Australian weather comes from west to east so on the city shores it's coming at you. A front like this means trouble to all water users. This band in the photo shown below is to be avoided but it could be worse as it does not have the higher 'Cumulus' plumes above it. Either type indicates very significant changes in the weather.

**Simple:** Big clouds mean big trouble – watch them closely; they are coming towards you with changes in the wind. A cautious approach would be to go to the beach, put the kite down and see what happens.



Photo 1 Frontal heavier cloud approaching.

**Best case scenario:** When keeping an eye on the clouds see how much blue sky there is around and behind them especially to the horizon. You should be very interested in the amount of blue sky. More sky means cleaner and friendlier wind. And a strong weather front is not associated with broken up clouds such as

Alto cumulus or Strato cumulus like this photo.



Photo 2 broken clouds with blue sky to the horizon.

You can see in photo 2 that there is a lot of broken could, wispy light and white and lots of sky. You will rarely see this create severe weather changes.

Note that sometimes a could patch like this will develop into darker and heavier cloud. Sometimes in a particular area and you can watch it go past. There will always be wind turning around such clouds and often in different directions and strengths to the prevailing wind

### **MIXED CLOUDS:**

So how can you predict things when all it is is couldy?

This is a much harder skill and in actual fact there is no exact science as wind will behave erratically and without warning. However, you can see patterns to reduce your risk. The first rule is the dark and looming coulds that carry rain. As they approach you can easily see them and be wary of them. In winter type weather conditions these clouds will produce heavy rain or light drizzle and radcially change the wind. If you feel wary or nervous as such heavy patterns of weather approach then you are thinking clearly. You should be!

When turning up to the kite spot or when out of the water look out for these patterns. Let them pass and sometimes the wind will clean up nicely afterwards.

### **RAIN RADAR**

In normal weather prediction, but especially on cloudy and heavier days the rain radar is an excellent tool to check on what is happening. In South Australia click on the rain radar and then onto the Sellicks or Adelaide radar, then use the distances to take the radar loop futher out. This will show you what rain is on the way

which means a frontal system and sudden wind changes. There is a loop photo that indicates the direction it is heading and if its building. Rain can produce extreme wind squalls, wind direction changes and also sudden lulls and leave you out to sea. With smart phones its pretty easy to keep an eye on the approaching weather rain. We are often sitting in the car looking over the rain radar working out if a coffee or three will be better and let it all pass. (remember that rain can build out of nowhere so this is just an indicator).

<http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/radar/>



## **INTERACTIVE WEATHER AND WAVE FORECAST FROM THE BOM**

This report is one of the best if not the best and most reliable. It allows you to select the type of system you want to predict and click on the refresh button (to the right). The synoptic weather pattern, wind, swell etc. (Note this map does not show frontal systems)

<http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/charts/viewer/?IDCODE=IDY00050>

## **FRONTAL SYSTEMS**

The biggest change to the weather is a frontal system. That is where a high pressure system is passing over and a new low is pushing through. The cold change forces wind into the previous warm air and sudden strong wind and rain squalls are apparent. For the frontal systems the rain radar and the four day synoptic chart will show these patterns approaching. Definitely wait until those systems have passed and reassess the conditions. Generally there is no reason to be out ahead of a frontal system.

[http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/charts/4day\\_col.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/charts/4day_col.shtml)

## **SUMMER SOUTH EASTERLIES**

Along the metro and mid coast the prevailing wind (non-frontal) will start to pull a southerly, south south west or south west sea breeze. However, be very aware that this is short lived and the south easterly is offshore wind and it will prevail at some time during the later part of the day. Be aware on the Midcoast this will happen very early even as early as 4.00pm. In the city it might change later and then go offshore anytime from 4-6pm. Be aware and look out for that change to offshore. Suddenly you will be left out to sea and the wind will keep pushing you further out.

## **TAKING OFF IS OPTIONAL**

Remember that in the aviation world there is a very important saying. "Taking off is optional but landing is compulsory." So once you take that kite off for flight, remember that no matter the conditions, the equipment or the pilot you are going to have to land one way or another. So if in doubt don't go out, and there will be a better day before you know it. Its kitesurfing and you know it won't be long before a great wind blows again.

Have fun and stay safe

Darren Wise

Commissioner SAKSA