



Media release

Thursday 10 December

Otago radar in operation

As of today, people in Otago can access real-time radar data through MetService platforms.

Acting MetService Chief Executive Keith Hilligan states, "It's been a long time coming, but we know this radar will make a difference to Otago communities, and we are delighted it is in operation before Christmas. The radar further strengthens our national radar network, while providing additional resilience to Otago communities especially in severe weather events."

The radar site, located 25 kilometres northwest of Dunedin and 750 metres above sea level, provides excellent coverage of Dunedin City, the Taieri and Clutha River catchments, and eastern Otago from the Catlins to the Waitaki.

The \$3 million radar is the tenth in the national network of weather radar owned and operated by MetService. The radar uses the latest dual polarisation technology which can identify different types of precipitation, be it rain, hail or snow.

MetService is designated as New Zealand's only severe weather forecasting and warning authority through its contract with the Ministry of Transport, and the national weather radar network plays an essential role in the delivery of public-safety services.

Aside from its forecasting value to MetService meteorologists, real-time radar data is of great importance to hydrologists, emergency management staff and the coastal Otago community, to plan, prepare and make decisions based on the likely impact of weather.

Mayor of Dunedin Aaron Hawkins says, "A local weather radar is something our community desperately needs. More accurate weather forecasting is helpful for anyone who works on the land, and means we'll be able to plan our responses to extreme weather events more effectively."

Otago Regional Council's GM of Operations Gavin Palmer adds, "MetService's new weather radar joins a range of data inputs for more accurately predicting and understanding weather hazards facing coastal Otago, and particularly South Dunedin. It's great to have the cutting edge in severe weather forecasting here in Otago, and it will have real benefits for our communities during floods."

“Building a new radar that provides accurate coverage in Coastal Otago’s complex terrain was a challenging project, there’s been many factors to consider. We reviewed more than 20 locations before even confirming the radar site. I want to pass on our thanks to the landowner for their support throughout the process, both Dunedin City and Otago Regional Councils for their commitment, and the wide range of contractors we’ve worked alongside to get this radar in operation. And finally, our own project team here at MetService who have worked so hard to get this operating” says Keith Hilligan.

All New Zealand radar imagery is updated every seven and a half minutes, and is available on metservice.com, MetService apps, and through MetService commercial products.

Ends

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- Radar data allows MetService to provide a severe thunderstorm warning service within the radar coverage area as part of its severe weather warnings and watches programme, as it does for the nine other radar areas in New Zealand. The public can [sign up here](#).
 - MetService operate nine other radar in Northland, Auckland, Bay of Plenty, Taranaki, Hawkes Bay / Gisborne, Wellington, West Coast, Canterbury and Southland.
 - Images of the completed Otago Radar, the build process of the radar, and MetService radar locations are attached.