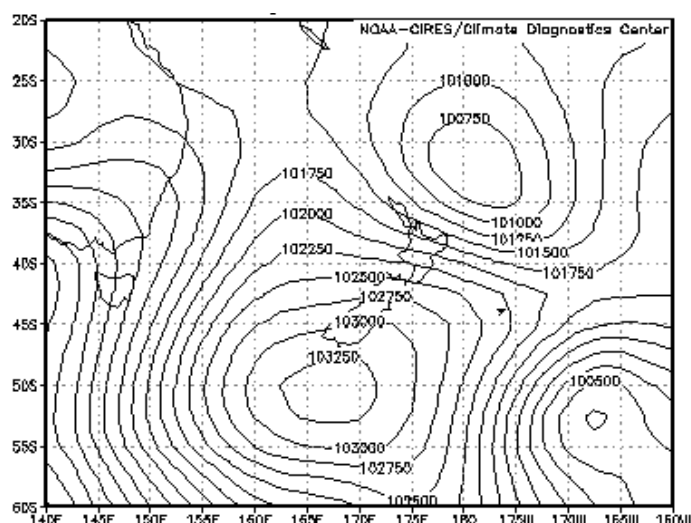


Coastal Storm Database - Event Summary

Date: 16-18 May 1956	Wind Direction: SE
Event Type: Wave/Erosion	Gisborne Duration (Hours): -
Location: Gisborne/Wellington	Wellington Duration (Hours): -
Origin: Subtropics	Pressure Gradient: ESE
Type: Subtropical Low	

17-May-1956 12:00



Synoptic Conditions

A cyclone from the Tasman sea moved southeastward over the upper South Island and spread a large trough to the northwest whilst east of Canterbury. This trough then developed into a closed centre north of North Cape and at a time when a large intense anticyclone had moved onto NZ. On the 16th, these systems combined and a strong ESE airstream was created over eastern North Island and was most intense over the upper North Island. This situation continued on the 17th during which the anticyclone strengthened and the cyclone moved slowly eastward. The ESE airstream continued to blow on the 18th and 19th but at much less force.

Sea Conditions

Rough seas off Gisborne
High seas at East Cape

Impact Area

Gisborne

East Cape

Wairarapa

Impacts and Damages

- Weather described as a typical "old man southerly"
- Rough seas off coast
- High seas at Te Araroa, waves reached over 2 chains above normal high tide;
- Telephone service outages at Te Araroa
- Bad weather in Cook Strait prevented coastal vessels reaching Port

Impact Area

Eastern
Coromandel

Impacts and Damages

- Beach erosion at Whangamata; waves estimated at 15ft (4.5m) eroded foredune upto an estimated 30ft (~9m); houses dangling over the edge of foredune
- Heavy seas pounded Waihi Beach and caused serious flooding and erosion; waves estimated at 5-6ft (2m), and water inside Waihi surf club

Data Source

- 1 Protection for Baches at Whangamata: New Zealand Herald, 22/05/1956, p10
 - 2 Tidal Flooding of Properties at Waihi Beach: Dominion Post, 21/05/1956, p10
 - 3 Seas Smash Into House - Families Ordeal at Waihi Beach: New Zealand Herald, 19/05/1956, p13
 - 4 Cold Marked Last Friday of Holidays: Dominion Post, 19/05/1956, p12
 - 5 Capital Had Worst of NZ Storms: Dominion Post, 18/05/1956, p10
 - 6 Heavy Seas Pound Bay of Plenty: Gisborne Herald, 21/05/1956, p6
 - 7 High Winds Cause Damage at Te Araroa: Gisborne Herald, 18/05/1956, p6
 - 8 Rough Seas, But no Signs of Damage: Gisborne Herald, 18/05/1956, p6
 - 9 Dry Southerly After Last Week's Rain: Gisborne Herald, 18/05/1956, p6
 - 10 Waves up to 15ft lash Beaches in Freak Storm: Gisborne Herald, 18/05/1956, p6
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