

# Red-dust sunset as west Australia braces for cyclone

January 11 2013

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This handout photo taken and posted by Perth Weather Live shows a towering red dust storm over the ocean, ahead of a cyclone approaching Onslow, on the West Australian coast. Tug boat worker Brett Martin, who captured the fearsome pictures 25 nautical miles from the town of Onslow, reported conditions were glassy and flat before the storm hit late on January 9, 2013.

Western Australians were bracing for a cyclone with residents warned to

batten down for storms and destructive winds gusting up to 140 kilometres per hour (90 mph).

Cyclone Narelle was estimated to be 525 kilometres (325 miles) north of Exmouth and 505 kilometres north-west of Karratha near the Pilbara mining region and moving southwest at 13 kilometres per hour.

"Although there is no immediate danger you need to start preparing for dangerous weather and keep up to date," the [Western Australia](#) department of fire and emergency services said in an alert.

Images posted by Perth Weather Live showed a towering [red dust](#) storm over the ocean ahead of the cyclone.

A huge wall of reddish cloud, topped off with billowing white rose up from the ocean.

Tug boat worker Brett Martin, who captured the fearsome pictures 25 nautical miles from the town of Onslow, reported conditions were glassy and flat before the storm hit late Wednesday.

But when the wild weather arrived, the swell lifted to two metres, winds increased to 40 knots and visibility was reduced to 100 metres.

Bureau of Meteorology duty forecaster Austen Watkins told the West Australian newspaper the stunning view was created as wind and rain caused the storm to dump the sand and dust it had ingested while passing Onslow.

Western Australia's Pilbara region is an important resources hub, with major [iron ore](#) and gas facilities. Cyclones are common in northern and western Australia during the warmer months of summer.

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