

6 REGIONAL AND REMOTE

This chapter starts with an examination of three statistical divisions in western Queensland: South West, Central West and North West. These divisions cover a huge geographical area from the Gulf of Carpentaria to the New South Wales border (Map 1). They have a combined population of 66 500 people.

Then we examine the West Moreton and Darling Downs statistical divisions which cover much of regional South East Queensland.

6.1 SOUTH WEST, CENTRAL WEST AND NORTH WEST

South West has a population of 24 800 and Central West has a population of 10 800. North West has 30 900 people. Divisions with small populations sometimes record high rates of homelessness but have few homeless people.

Table 6.1 shows that there were 211 homeless people in South West and 187 in Central West, although the rates of homelessness were 85 and 172 per 10 000 respectively. There were 63 homeless people in Longreach and 57 in Roma. Most people were staying temporarily with other households or in SAAP accommodation. There were no other geographical concentrations.

6.1 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, SOUTH WEST, CENTRAL WEST AND NORTH WEST

	South West	Central West	North West
Number	211	187	643
Rate	85	172	208

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2006.

In North West, there were 643 homeless people and the rate was 208 per 10 000. The main concentration was in Mount Isa where there were 356 homeless people. Mount Isa is a mining city with a population of 19 660. In Mount Isa, there were 67 people in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough and 41 of these were Indigenous. There were 162 people staying temporarily with friends or relatives and most (90 per cent) were non-Indigenous. Another 98 people were staying in boarding houses (24 per

cent Indigenous) and 29 were in SAAP. Altogether, about one-quarter (26 per cent) of the homeless in Mount Isa were Indigenous.

6.2 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND NUMBER OF MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, SOUTH WEST, CENTRAL WEST AND NORTH WEST

	South West	Central West	North West
Number of homeless	211	187	643
Rate per 10 000	85	172	208
Caravan	34	6	67
Total	245	193	710
Rate per 10 000	99	178	229

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2006.

There were few marginal residents of caravan parks in these statistical divisions. The number was 67 in North West (Table 6.2), of whom 44 were in Mount Isa; 34 in South West; and six in Central West.

6.2 WEST MORETON AND DARLING DOWNS

West Moreton includes two statistical subdivisions: Upper West Moreton (population 18 600), which includes the shires of Esk and Kilcoy, and Lower West Moreton (population 50 000), which includes Gatton and Laidley.

Darling Downs has two subdivisions: Toowoomba (population 114 500) and Darling Downs SD Balance (population 99 300), which includes Dalby and Goondiwindi.

The rate of homelessness was 101 per 10 000 in Upper West Moreton and there were 187 homeless people (Table 6.3). The rate was lower in Darling Downs (63 per 10 000), but there were 623 homeless people. The rate was 48 per 10 000 in Lower West Moreton (242 homeless people) and 46 per 10 000 in Toowoomba (530 homeless people).

6.3 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, WEST MORETON AND DARLING DOWNS

	Upper West Moreton	Lower West Moreton	Total	Toowoomba	Darling Downs SD Bal	Total
Number	187	242	429	530	623	1153
Rate	101	48	63	46	63	54

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2006.

Table 6.4 shows that there were few people in SAAP accommodation or in boarding houses in the three rural subdivisions. Most people were either staying with other households or were in the primary population. Some people in the primary population were sleeping rough, but most were purchasing blocks of land and living in improvised dwellings 'out in the bush'.

In Toowoomba, 39 per cent of the homeless were staying with other households, 35 per cent were in boarding houses and 25 per cent were in SAAP. Local informants reported that boarding houses were often in poor condition, that 'couch surfing is common' and that 'few people sleep rough'.

6.4 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, WEST MORETON AND DARLING DOWNS

Percentage

	Upper West Moreton	Lower West Moreton	Total	Toowoomba	Darling Downs SD Bal	Total
Boarding house	14	10	12	35	11	22
SAAP	0	3	2	25	1	12
Friends/relatives	30	43	37	39	45	42
Improvised dwell.	56	44	49	1	43	24
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Number

	Upper West Moreton	Lower West Moreton	Total	Toowoomba	Darling Downs SD Bal	Total
Boarding house	26	25	51	183	65	248
SAAP	0	8	8	132	7	139
Friends/relatives	57	104	161	208	281	489
Improvised dwell.	104	105	209	7	270	277
	187	242	429	530	623	1153

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2006.

Table 6.5 shows that there were 66 marginal residents of caravan parks in Upper West Moreton and 72 in Lower West Moreton. If marginal residents of caravan parks are included in the homeless population, the rate increases from 101 to 136 per 10 000 in Upper West Moreton and from 48 to 63 in Lower West Moreton. In Darling Downs SD Balance, the rate increases from 63 to 82 per 10 000.

6.5 NUMBER OF HOMELESS AND NUMBER OF MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, WEST MORETON AND DARLING DOWNS

	Upper West Moreton	Lower West Moreton	Total	Toowoomba	Darling Downs SD Balance	Total
No. of homeless	187	242	429	530	623	1153
Rate per 10 000	101	48	63	46	63	54
Caravan	66	72	138	64	195	259
Total	253	314	567	594	818	1412
Rate per 10 000	136	63	83	52	82	66

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2006.