

5 REGIONAL AND REMOTE

There are six statistical divisions covering regional South Australia, comprising 16 subdivisions spread across a large geographical area (Map 3). They have a population of 405 870, and there were 2743 homeless people. Four of the divisions (Yorke and Lower North, Murray Lands, South East and Eyre) have populations of less than 70 000. These are areas where there can be high rates of homelessness but relatively few homeless people. This chapter investigates whether the homeless population was spread evenly across the remainder of South Australia.

5.1 OUTER ADELAIDE

The Outer Adelaide statistical division has a population of 123 000. It includes three predominantly rural subdivisions which have a number of small towns. The subdivisions are Barossa with a population of 40 800, Mount Lofty Ranges (population 41 750), Fleurieu (population 36 900) and Kangaroo Island (population 4250).

5.1 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, Outer Adelaide

	Barossa	Mt Lofty Ranges	Fleurieu	Kangaroo Island	All
Number	106	111	153	37	407
Rate	26	27	41	87	33

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

Table 5.1 shows that the rate of homelessness was 33 per 10 000 in Outer Adelaide where there were 407 homeless people. There were 153 homeless people in the Fleurieu subdivision, 111 in the Mount Lofty Ranges and 106 in the Barossa Valley. The rate of homelessness was highest on Kangaroo Island (87 per 10 000), but there were only 37 homeless people.

In Barossa, Mount Lofty Ranges and Fleurieu, roughly 70 to 80 per cent of the homeless were staying with other households and 10 to 24 per cent were in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out (Table 5.2). There were two or three small boarding houses in Fleurieu, probably in Victor Harbour or Goolwa, and there was a SAAP service in the Barossa Valley.

5.2 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, OUTER ADELAIDE

Percentage					
	Barossa	Mt Lofty Ranges	Fleurieu	Kangaroo Island	Total
Boarding house	0	7	16	22	10
SAAP	6	0	0	0	1
Friends/relatives	84	69	68	59	72
Improvised dwellings	10	24	16	19	17
	100	100	100	100	100

Number					
	Barossa	Mt Lofty Ranges	Fleurieu	Kangaroo Island	Total
Boarding house	0	8	24	8	40
SAAP	6	0	0	0	6
Friends/relatives	89	76	104	22	291
Improvised dwellings	11	27	25	7	70
	106	111	153	37	407

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

For some policy purposes, marginal residents of caravan parks might be thought of as part of the tertiary population. This is particularly the case in rural communities where there are fewer boarding houses than in the cities. Table 5.3 shows that there were 70 marginal caravan park residents in the Barossa, but only 24 and 27 in Mount Lofty Ranges and Fleurieu, and none on Kangaroo Island.

5.3 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, OUTER ADELAIDE

	Barossa	Mt Lofty Ranges	Fleurieu	Kangaroo Island	Total
Number of homeless	106	111	153	37	407
Rate per 10 000	26	27	41	87	33
Caravan park residents	70	24	27	0	121
Total	176	135	180	37	528
Rate per 10 000	43	32	49	87	43

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

5.2 YORKE AND LOWER NORTH

Yorke and Lower North covers a large area (Map 1). The Yorke subdivision has a population of 25 200 and Lower North has a population of 18 700. There were 88 homeless people on the Yorke Peninsula and 107 in Lower North (Table 5.4). The rates of homelessness were 35 and 57 per 10 000 respectively. Seventy per cent of the homeless were staying with other households and 15 per cent were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough. There were a couple of small boarding houses in Lower North and 12 people in SAAP accommodation.

5.4 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, YORKE AND LOWER NORTH

	Yorke	Lower North	Total
Number	88	107	195
Rate	35	57	44

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

5.3 SOUTH EAST

South East is a predominantly rural area which borders Victoria. It has two subdivisions: Upper South East (population 19 000) and Lower South East (population 43 200).

Table 5.5 shows that the rates of homelessness were 37 per 10 000 in the Upper South East where there were 71 homeless people, and 58 per 10 000 in the Lower South East where there were 252 homeless people.

5.5 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, SOUTH EAST

	Upper South East	Lower South East	Total
Number	71	252	323
Rate	37	58	52

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

The homeless population was distributed somewhat differently in the two subdivisions (Table 5.6). In Upper South East, most of the homeless were either with other households or in the improvised dwellings category. There were no people in SAAP accommodation.

In Lower South East, 47 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP and 39 per cent were staying temporarily with other households. Another 28 people were in boarding houses and eight were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough.

Seventy-two per cent of the homeless (181 people) in Lower South East were in Mount Gambier, where there were 117 people in SAAP accommodation and 53 with other households. In Mount Gambier, the number of people in SAAP accommodation had increased from 69 in 2001 to 117 in 2006. We spoke with local service providers and these conversations confirmed that local services had sufficient capacity to accommodate 117 people, including children.

5.6 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, SOUTH EAST

Percentage

	Upper South East	Lower South East	Total
Boarding house	13	11	11
SAAP	0	47	36
Friends/relatives	63	39	45
Improvised dwellings	24	3	8
	100	100	100

Number

	Upper South East	Lower South East	Total
Boarding house	9	28	37
SAAP	0	117	117
Friends/relatives	45	99	144
Improvised dwellings	17	8	25
	71	252	323

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

There were few marginal caravan park dwellers in either subdivision (17 in 'Upper' and 35 in 'Lower'). The total number of homeless and marginally housed people was 88 in the Upper South East. In Lower South East, the total number was 287, of whom 70 per cent were in Mount Gambier.

5.4 MURRAY LANDS

Murray Lands covers a large area (Map 1). The Riverland subdivision has a population of 40 000 and includes the towns of Barmera, Berri and Renmark. Murray Mallee has a population of 26 600 and includes Murray Bridge.

5.7 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, MURRAY LANDS

	Riverland	Murray Mallee	Total
Number	434	186	620
Rate	108	70	93

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

There were 434 homeless people in Riverland where the rate of homelessness was 108 per 10 000 (Table 5.7). The rate was 70 per 10 000 in Murray Mallee where there were 186 homeless people.

Table 5.8 shows that 40 per cent of the homeless in Murray Mallee were staying temporarily with other households and 30 per cent were in the improvised dwellings category (56 people). Another 30 per cent were in SAAP accommodation, probably in Murray Bridge.

In Riverland, 55 per cent of the homeless (241 people) were staying with friends or relatives. Another 24 per cent (103 people) were in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping rough and eighteen per cent were in SAAP.

Local service providers in Riverland and in Murray Mallee confirmed the numbers in SAAP accommodation. They also knew of people sleeping rough. In Riverland, several local informants described how itinerant workers arrive when the fruit picking season begins. Some gain employment but others do not. People sleep rough on the banks of the Murray or erect primitive dwellings.

The census data for Riverland and Murray Mallee also indicated that there were people in improvised dwellings that were either owned, being purchased or rented. These were mainly families and they were living in sheds or garages. One service provider knew of people living in shacks who intended to build houses. Under the cultural definition of homelessness, someone living in an improvised dwelling is homeless, even if they hope to

have a conventional house in the future – but the policy implications of this kind of homelessness are different.

5.8 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, MURRAY LANDS

Percentage			
	Riverland	Murray Mallee	Total
Boarding house	3	0	2
SAAP	18	30	21
Friends/relatives	55	40	51
Improvised dwellings	24	30	26
	100	100	100

Number			
	Riverland	Murray Mallee	Total
Boarding house	11	0	11
SAAP	79	55	134
Friends/relatives	241	75	316
Improvised dwellings	103	56	159
	434	186	620

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

5.5 EYRE

Eyre stretches from the Gulf of St Vincent to the West Australian border. It covers a huge area but has a tiny population. The Lincoln subdivision has 27 300 people and West Coast has 6000 people.

Table 5.9 shows that the rate of homelessness was 103 per 10 000 in Lincoln and 200 per 10 000 in West Coast, but Lincoln had 282 homeless whereas West Coast had 121.

5.9 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, EYRE

	Lincoln	West Coast	Total
Number	282	121	403
Rate	103	200	121

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

Half (49 per cent) of the homeless in West Coast were staying with friends or relatives, 26 per cent (31 people) were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough, and 25 per cent (30 people) were in SAAP accommodation (Table 5.10). Local service providers in Ceduna confirmed the SAAP figure and thought there could 'easily be 35 to 40 people sleeping rough'. Indigenous people come to town from their homelands and they 'bed down in the scrub on the outskirts of town'.

5.10 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, EYRE

Percentage			
	Lincoln	West Coast	Total
Boarding house	4	0	3
SAAP	39	25	35
Friends/relatives	31	49	37
Improvised dwellings	26	26	25
	100	100	100

Number			
	Lincoln	West Coast	Total
Boarding house	12	0	12
SAAP	110	30	140
Friends/relatives	88	60	148
Improvised dwellings	72	31	103
	282	121	403

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

In Lincoln, 39 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP, 31 per cent were staying with friends or relatives and 26 per cent were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough. The number of people in SAAP had increased from 28 in 2001 to 110 in 2006. Service providers corroborated the figure of 110. They reported 'lots of couch surfing in Port Lincoln' and described 'people sleeping under bridges' and 'out in the national park'. However, the census data indicated that three-quarters of the primary population (15 households) were in improvised dwellings that were either owned, being purchased or rented. They were probably in shacks on the outskirts of town or in the bush.

5.6 NORTHERN

The Northern statistical division covers a vast area of South Australia, much of which is uninhabited. There are four subdivisions. Whyalla has a population of 21 600 and most (99 per cent) live in the City of Whyalla. Pirie has a population of 24 900 and just over half are in Port Pirie. The Flinders Ranges has a population of 19 500 and 71 per cent are in Port Augusta. The Far North has a population of 9900 and the main centres are Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs.

5.11 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, NORTHERN

	Whyalla	Pirie	Flinders Ranges	Far North	Total
Number	133	199	241	222	795
Rate	62	80	123	225	105

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

Table 5.11 shows that the rate of homelessness was 105 per 10 000 in the Northern division, but the rates differed between subdivisions. The rate was 62 per 10 000 in Whyalla, 80 per 10 000 in Pirie, 123 per 10 000 the Flinders Ranges, and 225 in the Far North.

5.12 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, NORTHERN

Percentage

	Whyalla	Pirie	Flinders Ranges	Far North	Total
Boarding house	0	20	8	7	9
SAAP	56	44	50	0	36
Friends/relatives	44	28	27	22	29
Improvised dwellers	0	8	15	71	26
	100	100	100	100	100

Number

	Whyalla	Pirie	Flinders Ranges	Far North	Total
Boarding house	0	40	18	15	73
SAAP	75	87	120	0	282
Friends/relatives	58	56	66	50	230
Improvised dwellers	0	16	37	157	210
	133	199	241	222	795

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

Table 5.12 shows that in Whyalla 56 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP accommodation and 44 per cent were staying with other households. The number of people in SAAP had increased from 13 in 2001 to 75 in 2006. Local service providers reported major changes in the provision of services and the number in SAAP was confirmed. Service providers also reported that young people sleep rough in Whyalla, but these teenagers were not counted in the census.

In Pirie, there were 199 homeless people, including 87 in SAAP, 56 with other households and 16 in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping rough. There are five SAAP services in Port Pirie and these can easily accommodate 87 people.

In the Flinders Ranges, 50 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP and all of these were in Port Augusta. Twenty-seven per cent were staying with other households and 15 per cent were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough. The number in SAAP had increased from 41 in 2001 to 120 in 2006. There are five SAAP services in Port Augusta and the largest can accommodate 44 people. Four services account for the remaining 76 people.

In the Far North, 71 per cent (157 people) were in the improvised dwellings category. Just over half were Indigenous people who were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough in their traditional homelands. The remainder were non-Indigenous people in the Unincorporated Far North who were probably miners living in shacks. Another 22 per cent of the homeless (50 people) were staying temporarily with other households, mainly in Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs.

5.13 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, NORTHERN

	Whyalla	Pirie	Flinders Ranges	Far North	Total
Number of homeless	133	199	241	222	795
Rate per 10 000	62	80	123	225	105
Caravan park residents	5	32	25	89	151
Total	138	231	266	311	946
Rate per 10 000	64	93	136	315	125

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

There were 5 marginal caravan park dwellers in Whyalla, 25 in the Flinders Ranges, 32 in Pirie and 89 in the Far North (Table 5.13). If marginal residents of caravan parks are included in the homeless population, then the rate of homelessness in the Northern statistical division increases from

105 to 125 per 10 000. In the Far North, the rate increases from 225 to 315 per 10 000.

5.7 SUMMARY

The overall picture is summarised in Table 5.14. There were 5213 homeless people in Adelaide where the rate of homelessness was 47 per 10 000. However, there were 2743 homeless people in regional and remote South Australia, where the rate was 68 per 10 000.

5.14 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, ADELAIDE AND REGIONAL AND REMOTE SOUTH AUSTRALIA

	Adelaide	Rural and remote	Total*
Number of homeless	5213	2743	7962
Rate per 10 000	47	68	53
Caravan park residents	240	508	748
Total	5453	3251	8710
Rate per 10 000	49	80	58

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

* No geographical information on 6 people.

There is also the issue of whether marginal residents of caravan parks should be included in the tertiary population. For some policy purposes marginal residents of caravan parks might be thought of as part of the tertiary population. If these residents are included, then the rate of homelessness was 49 per 10 000 in Adelaide and 80 per 10 000 in regional South Australia.