
NWQROC REGIONAL PROFILE

NORTH WEST QUEENSLAND REGIONAL ORGANISATION OF COUNCILS
(NWQROC)

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NWQROC REGIONAL PROFILE

Regional Profile Summary

The NWQROC economy featured a Gross Regional Product of \$5.1 billion in 2016-17, with the region's mining sector accounting for nearly two-thirds of this value in addition to accounting for around 10% of Queensland's total mining sector activity.

The North West region is identified as one of the world's richest mineral producing areas, containing copper, lead and zinc as well as major silver and phosphate deposits and strong rare earth potential. It has delivered significant economic benefits (and royalties) to the state for decades and significant proven reserves exist for resource extraction to continue to occur for a lengthy period. Opportunities exist to further develop the resources sector, in addition to other sectors such as beef cattle (and processing), irrigated agriculture and horticulture, transport and logistics, riverine and marine economies, digital transformation, tourism attraction and renewable energies investments.

Facilitating a stronger and more resilient NWQROC region will enhance state and national growth outcomes.

Despite the significant natural advantages and opportunities presented across a number of sectors, the region faces some significant challenges that need to be addressed by all levels of government in working together and with industry, including:

- Heavy reliance on the mining sector and exposure to external influences and decision-making.
- Limited (and reducing) population base.
- Severe and prolonged drought.
- Tyranny of distance.
- Local jobs being taken up by non-residents (equating to in excess of 50% of total available jobs in some Council areas).
- A deteriorating labour market (with one third of jobs in 2012 now disappeared).
- Limited access to appropriate education and training.
- Reliance on external funding and risks associated with government decision making.

NWQROC Councils have very limited funds due to a limited (and reducing) ratepayer base and as such are heavily reliant on appropriate external funding to support both capital and operating expenditure commitments. NWQROC Councils manage \$2.63 billion worth of assets, have an operational spend alone of \$177 million per annum and employ anywhere between 3% and 40% of residents in local areas.

Composition

The North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC) comprises the Burke Shire, Carpentaria Shire, Cloncurry Regional, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire, Flinders Shire, McKinlay Shire, Mount Isa Regional and Richmond Shire Councils.

Population

The NWQROC region has a population of 28,970 persons but has declined at an average annual rate of 2.6% over the past five years. Mount Isa is the primary population and service centre of the NWQROC region, comprising around 65% of total population. Just under 25% of NWQROC region residents are Indigenous.

The average age in the region is 33.5 years, which is heavily influenced by the significance of the relatively young Mount Isa population. Residents tend to have a lower level of education and qualification than in other areas of the state and nation, with a relatively high prevalence of Certificate level education reflecting the type of work available in the region. Full-time participation in secondary schooling in the region is lower than in Queensland and Australia.

The average household in the NWQROC region earned \$1,960 per week in 2016, above the state and national averages given the influence of resources sector activity and employment. However, individual Council area income levels differ markedly depending on the prominent industries in each location.

The Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage highlights a mix of outcomes within the NWQROC region, with some Council areas deemed to be at a relative disadvantage and others at a relative advantage. Doomadgee is identified as an area with a very high level of disadvantage.

Economic Activity

The NWQROC regional economy totalled \$5.1 billion in Gross Regional Product terms in 2016/17, with average annual growth of 1.3% between 2011/12 and 2016/17 as a result of an upturn in resources sector activity in selected Council areas. However, a number of individual Council areas within the region contracted sharply over the period including Burke which suffered as a result of the Century mine closure.

Nearly two-thirds of the region's Gross Regional Product can be attributed to the mining sector, which contributes more than 7 times that of the agriculture, forestry and fishing sector and accounts for around 10% of mining sector activity across Queensland. Such a high level of dependency means that the economic landscape of NWQROC – and therefore its population base – is susceptible to industry changes and external decisions/influences. Drought conditions have also hit the region hard.

Economic activity per capita is very high on average across the NWQROC region (2.7 times that recorded for Queensland as a whole) as a result of high value resources sector activity. The only Council area with a GRP per capita below the Queensland average is Doomadgee which has a limited economic base.

Employment

Despite accounting for around two thirds of the NWQROC region Gross Regional Product, the mining industry only accounts for 25% of jobs held by residents of the region and 30% of jobs held by both residents and non-residents. Still, NWQROC region residents are extremely reliant on the mining industry for their employment, with 1 in 4 workers employed in the sector compared to 1 in 41 for Queensland and 1 in 58 for Australia. Other important employers in the region include health care and social assistance, public administration and safety, agriculture, forestry and fishing, and education and training.

In 2016, 21% of total jobs available in the region were held by non-residents, with just under half of these jobs in the mining industry. Other sectors with significant external worker demands included construction and manufacturing. Council areas with the greatest reliance on non-resident workforces include Cloncurry (53% of total jobs) and Richmond (46% of total jobs). The figures highlight the importance of the NWQROC region to surrounding regions, with direct 'export' of a considerable number of FIFO jobs held by residents of Townsville, Cairns and South-East Queensland.

Employment in the NWQROC region has softened markedly in recent years, with the number of persons employed in the region declining by a total of 6,060 persons between the year ending March 2012 and the year ending March 2018. This equates to around one third of previously available jobs disappearing from the region, or an average

decline of 6.3% per annum. As a consequence, the unemployment rate has increased from 7.2% to 10.7%, with the Carpentaria labour market catchment (including Burke, Carpentaria and Doomadgee) having unemployment in excess of 34%.

Regional Initiatives and Opportunities

The North West region is identified as one of the world's richest mineral producing areas, containing copper, lead and zinc as well as major silver and phosphate deposits and strong rare earth potential. It has delivered significant economic benefits (and royalties) to the state for decades and significant proven reserves exist for resource extraction to continue to occur for a lengthy period. Excellent prospectivity also exists across a range of existing and new commodities.

The restarting of operations of a smaller scale at Century mine, the reopening of the Capricorn Copper mine and Lady Loretta zinc mine, and the establishment of the MMG Dugald River zinc mine will all provide positive economic stimulus to the region through the next decade. Additional development in the resources sector will further boost the region's prospects and contribution to the state and national economies. Significant opportunities also exist outside of the resources sector in beef cattle (and processing), irrigated agriculture and horticulture, transport and logistics, riverine and marine economies, digital transformation, tourism attraction and renewable energies investments.

Overall, it is essential for all levels of government to work together and with industry to strengthen economic and community resilience in the NWQROC region to ensure that ongoing investment occurs to take advantage of the significant natural advantages and opportunities presented across a number of sectors in the region. Facilitating a stronger and more resilient NWQROC region will enhance state and national growth outcomes.

Councils

The eight NWQROC Councils are responsible for servicing around 29,000 residents within 11,000 rateable properties across a total geographic area of 305,835 square kilometres, meaning that they are required to service (on average) 10.56 square kilometres for every person living in the region. Within this service area, there are 10,988km of Council-controlled roads (0.38km per capita) and 15,268km of roads when including State-controlled roads (0.53km per capita).

NWQROC Councils provide water supply to 12,190 connections in 17 different communities (16 potable, 1 non-potable) via 25 different water sources (including rivers, bores and dams), 10 Water Treatment Plants and three disinfection schemes. NWQROC Councils also provide sewerage services to 11,624 connections in 10 different communities via 10 Sewage Treatment Plants.

In total, NWQROC Councils manage \$2.63 billion worth of assets, equating to \$91,000 per capita (ranging from \$36,000 in Mount Isa to \$570,000 in Burke). These extensive capital investments must be financed, renewed and maintained with a significant reliance on external funding sources.

Councils in the region provide essential economic stimulus to local communities, with NWQROC Councils spending a total of \$176.77 million per annum (\$6,100 per capita, ranging from of \$2,100 in Mount Isa to \$40,200 in Burke) on labour, goods and services as part of their normal operations (i.e. excluding capital expenditure). Across the region, 855 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees are directly employed by NWQROC Councils which equates to 7% of the region's jobs (ranging from 3% in Mount Isa to 40% in Burke).

NWQROC Councils require appropriate external funding support and as such there is a heavy reliance on operating grants to ensure that they remain financially sustainable and are able to continue to provide essential infrastructure and services to local communities. The contribution of operating grants to total Council revenue averaged 35% across the entire region between 2011/12 and 2017/18 (ranging from 14% in Mount Isa to 58% in Carpentaria).

Importantly, and in addition to growth in external funding support, greater certainty and predictability in the sources and levels of this funding are required. Strategic infrastructure investment and service provision can only be achieved if there is certainty in long-term funding levels essential to financial sustainability and community development.

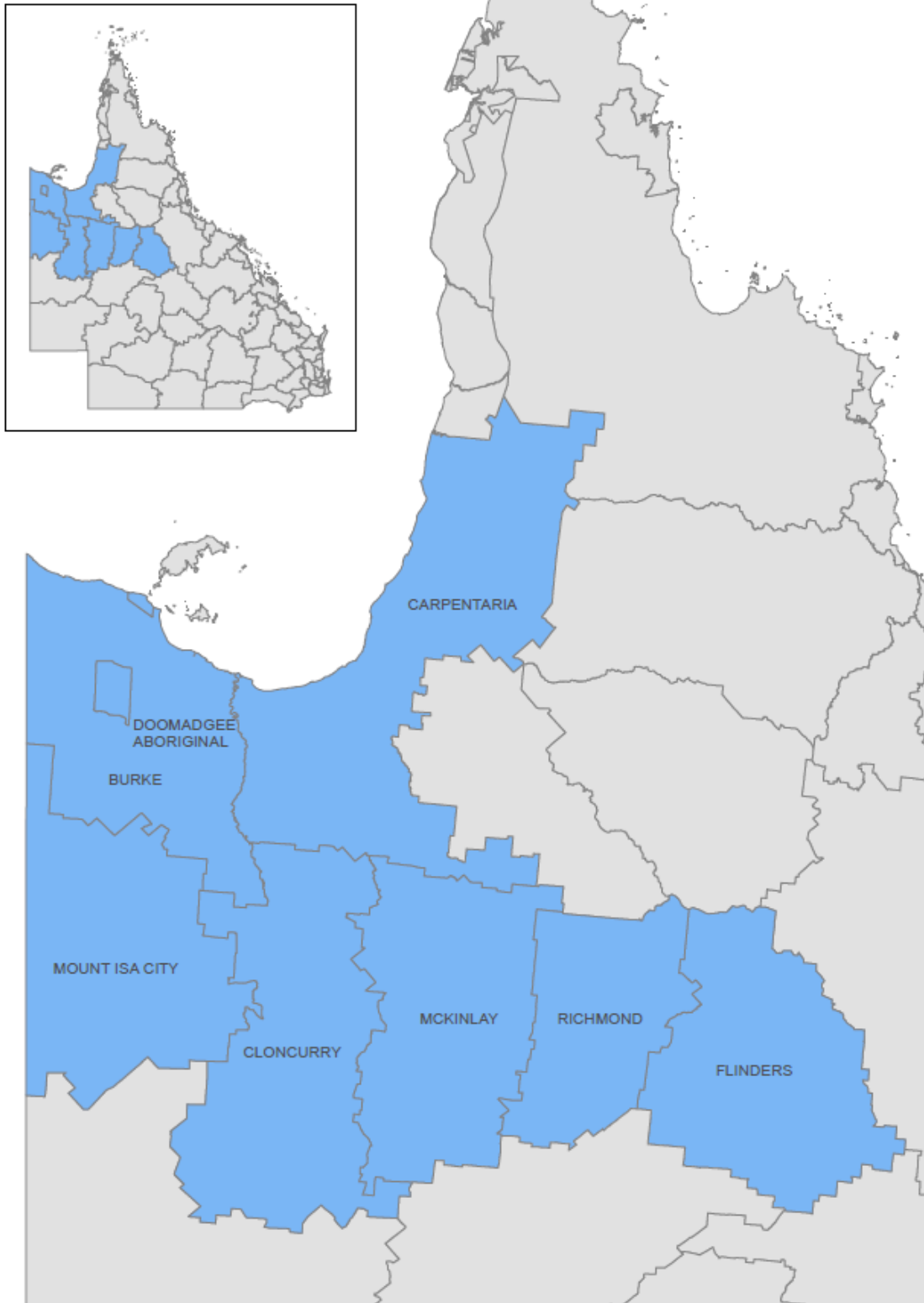
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1. INTRODUCTION

The North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC) comprises the Burke Shire, Carpentaria Shire, Cloncurry Regional, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire, Flinders Shire, McKinlay Shire, Mount Isa Regional and Richmond Shire Councils.

Figure 1.1: North-West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils



AEC has been engaged to provide an introductory Regional Profile for the NWQROC region including core economic, social and Council data as outlined in the table below.

Table 1.1: Social, Economic and Council Datasets Included in the Regional Profile

Social	Economic	Council
Resident Population	Gross Regional Product	Rateable Properties
Indigenous Representation	Industry Sector Dependency	Roads
Population Stability	Employment by Industry	Water & Sewerage Services
Age Profile	Employment & Unemployment	Asset Base
Household & Personal Income	Regional Initiatives & Opportunities	Operating Expenditure
Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas		Local Government Employees
Education		Reliance on Operating Grants

Source: AEC.

The Regional Profile provides an analysis of the NWQROC region as a whole, whilst also providing data for the eight regional local government areas that comprise NWQROC. Outcomes are benchmarked against Queensland and Australia where applicable.

2. SOCIAL INDICATORS

2.1 RESIDENT POPULATION

The NWQROC resident population declined by 4,050 persons between 2012 (33,023 persons) and 2017 (28,970 persons), equating to an average annual population decline of 2.6%. Mount Isa is the primary population and service centre of the NWQROC region, comprising around 65% of total population in 2017 (18,899 residents).

All Council areas within the region declined during the period, except for Doomadgee which recorded average annual population growth of 1.8%. Population decline in Mount Isa (13.7%) accounted for around three quarters of the regional population decline over the five-year period, although large percentage declines were also recorded by Burke (37.0%), McKinlay (24.0%) and Flinders (15.1%).

The declining population trend of the NWQROC region conflicts with the broader Queensland and Australian growth trends at average annual growth rates of 1.5% and 1.6%, respectively.

Table 2.1: Resident Population, Recent Population Growth and Population Density, 2012 and 2017

Region	Population		Change			Geographic Area (km ²)	Density Persons/km ²
	2012	2017	Persons	Total %	Annual %		
Burke	551	347	-204	-37.0%	-8.8%	39,684	0.01
Carpentaria	2,170	2,004	-166	-7.6%	-1.6%	64,121	0.03
Cloncurry	3,356	3,123	-233	-6.9%	-1.4%	47,971	0.07
Doomadgee	1,368	1,492	+124	+9.1%	+1.8%	1,828	0.82
Flinders	1,792	1,521	-271	-15.1%	-3.2%	41,200	0.04
McKinlay	1,039	790	-249	-24.0%	-5.3%	40,737	0.02
Mount Isa	21,906	18,899	-3,007	-13.7%	-2.9%	43,713	0.43
Richmond	841	794	-47	-5.6%	-1.1%	26,581	0.03
NWQROC	33,023	28,970	-4,053	-12.3%	-2.6%	305,835	0.09
QLD	4,569,863	4,928,457	+358,594	+7.8%	+1.5%	1,730,172	2.85
Australia	22,742,475	24,598,933	+1,856,458	+8.2%	+1.6%	7,688,126	3.20

Notes: Annual % reflects the average annual growth between 2012 and 2017.

Source: AEC, ABS (2018), ABS (2016a).

2.2 INDIGENOUS REPRESENTATION

As at the 2016 Census, just under 25% of NWQROC region residents were Indigenous which is considerably higher than the Queensland and Australian outcomes of 96% and 97%, respectively. Doomadgee has the greatest Indigenous presence, followed by Burke, Carpentaria and Mount Isa.

Table 2.2: Indigenous Representation, 2016

Region	Non-Indigenous	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander
Burke	48.8%	49.6%	0.0%	1.6%
Carpentaria	55.1%	42.6%	1.1%	1.2%
Cloncurry	73.4%	24.5%	1.0%	1.0%
Doomadgee	5.3%	94.2%	0.0%	0.5%
Flinders	92.8%	6.7%	0.0%	0.4%
McKinlay	96.0%	4.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Mount Isa	80.9%	17.8%	0.5%	0.7%
Richmond	92.8%	6.1%	0.0%	1.1%
NWQROC	75.3%	23.4%	0.5%	0.8%
QLD	95.8%	3.4%	0.5%	0.4%
Australia	97.0%	2.7%	0.1%	0.1%

Source: ABS (2017a).

2.3 POPULATION STABILITY

This section does not consider the loss of residents from a region, and only considers the movement patterns of those residing in each area at the time of the 2016 Census.

When considering only those persons residing in each area at the time of the 2016 Census, the NWQROC region has a slightly higher degree of population instability in aggregate when compared to the rest of the state, with 78.8% of residents being in the same location as they were a year earlier in 2016 (compared with 79.9% for Queensland and 82.3% for Australia) and 48.7% of residents being in the same location as they were five years earlier (compared with 48.9% for Queensland and 53.1% for Australia).

When looking at the location compared with five years ago, Council areas with the greatest degree of population instability are Mount Isa, Cloncurry and Richmond, while Council areas with the greatest degree of population stability are Doomadgee, McKinlay, Burke and Flinders.

The high level of resident movement in selected Council areas can be attributed to the region's reliance on specific industry types, such as the resources sector.

Table 2.3: Population Stability, 2016 vs 2015 and 2016 vs 2011

Region	Location Compared to 1 Year Ago				Location Compared to 5 Years Ago			
	Same Area	Australia Elsewhere	Overseas	Not Applicable	Same Area	Australia Elsewhere	Overseas	Not Applicable
Burke	76.2%	21.8%	1.9%	0.0%	57.5%	36.1%	1.5%	4.9%
Carpentaria	77.7%	21.1%	0.5%	0.7%	52.0%	40.5%	0.6%	6.8%
Cloncurry	76.4%	21.9%	0.2%	1.5%	46.3%	43.1%	2.7%	7.9%
Doomadgee	89.5%	7.9%	0.2%	2.4%	74.0%	13.3%	0.4%	12.4%
Flinders	84.0%	14.8%	0.0%	1.2%	57.0%	34.6%	1.1%	7.4%
McKinlay	83.6%	14.4%	1.0%	1.0%	57.5%	32.7%	2.3%	7.5%
Mount Isa	77.8%	19.5%	0.9%	1.8%	45.4%	40.4%	5.1%	9.2%
Richmond	78.0%	20.0%	0.4%	1.6%	48.0%	42.9%	2.0%	7.1%
NWQROC	78.8%	18.8%	0.7%	1.6%	48.7%	38.7%	3.8%	8.8%
<i>QLD</i>	<i>79.9%</i>	<i>17.4%</i>	<i>1.6%</i>	<i>1.2%</i>	<i>48.9%</i>	<i>39.6%</i>	<i>5.3%</i>	<i>6.3%</i>
<i>Australia</i>	<i>82.3%</i>	<i>14.6%</i>	<i>1.9%</i>	<i>1.2%</i>	<i>53.1%</i>	<i>34.3%</i>	<i>6.4%</i>	<i>6.3%</i>

Notes: Not applicable applies to persons not born 1 or 5 years ago.
Source: ABS (2017a).

2.4 AGE PROFILE

NWQROC features a relatively young population with an average age of 33.5 years, heavily influenced by the significance of the relatively young Mount Isa population which accounts for 65% of the region's population. By comparison, the Queensland and Australian average ages are 38.2 years and 38.6 years, respectively.

The region has 46.7% of residents aged under 30 years (compared with 39.3% for Queensland and 38.5% for Australia) and 2.4% of residents aged 60 years and over (compared with 20.8% for Queensland and 21.3% for Australia).

Looking at individual NWQROC Council areas:

- Doomadgee has by far the youngest age profile, with an average age of just 23.8 years and 38.1% of residents aged 14 years or less.
- Mount Isa (32.5 years), Cloncurry (35.7 years), Richmond (36.4 years), Carpentaria (37.2 years) and Burke (37.6 years) also have average ages below the state average (38.2 years).
- Flinders has the oldest age profile, with an average age of 41.3 years and 26.8% of residents aged 60 years and over.
- McKinlay (38.6 years) also has an average age above the state average (38.2 years).

Age profiles can be a sign of migration trends (e.g. transient workforces to service particularly industries such as the resources sector) or an indication of the availability or lack of availability of particular infrastructure and service provision (e.g. schools, universities, aged care facilities). For example, areas with a high proportion of children highlight a demand for appropriate educational infrastructure, but areas with a low proportion of children may be a sign that insufficient educational infrastructure exists with residents forced to migrate to other areas for schooling.

Table 2.4: Age Profile, 2016

Age	0-14	15-29	30-44	45-59	60-74	75+	Avg Age
Burke	14.9%	21.3%	26.3%	19.6%	13.5%	4.4%	37.6
Carpentaria	22.5%	18.8%	17.1%	22.4%	14.8%	4.4%	37.2
Cloncurry	20.7%	21.4%	23.6%	20.8%	11.6%	1.8%	35.7
Doomadgee	38.1%	28.2%	20.1%	11.3%	2.4%	0.0%	23.8
Flinders	17.1%	17.1%	16.4%	22.6%	20.6%	6.2%	41.3
McKinlay	16.7%	14.9%	27.0%	20.2%	16.7%	4.4%	38.6
Mount Isa	24.3%	24.0%	22.7%	18.5%	8.3%	2.1%	32.5
Richmond	20.7%	27.1%	16.7%	19.6%	9.9%	5.9%	36.4
NWQROC	23.7%	23.0%	22.0%	18.9%	9.8%	2.5%	33.5
QLD	19.4%	19.9%	20.3%	19.6%	14.5%	6.3%	38.2
Australia	18.7%	19.9%	20.7%	19.5%	14.4%	6.8%	38.6

Source: ABS (2017a).

2.5 AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD AND PERSONAL INCOME

NWQROC featured a relatively high average household income of \$1,960 per week in 2016, heavily influenced by the significance of the higher earning Mount Isa population which accounts for 65% of the region's population. By comparison, the Queensland and Australian average household incomes were \$1,730 and \$1,802, respectively. Personal incomes were also relatively high at \$1,094 (compared with \$864 for Queensland and \$886 for Australia).

Looking at individual NWQROC Council areas:

- Only Mount Isa and Cloncurry featured both average household incomes (\$2,239 and \$1,746, respectively) and average personal incomes (\$1,189 and \$1,208, respectively) above the Queensland average, influenced by resources sector activity and employment.
- McKinlay (\$1,189) and Carpentaria (\$880) also featured average personal incomes above the Queensland average, but average household incomes (\$1,597 and \$1,407, respectively) below the Queensland average.
- Doomadgee featured by far the lowest average personal and household incomes (\$443 and \$1,256, respectively), influenced by a high level of unemployment.
- Flinders (\$801 and \$1,419), Richmond (\$801 and \$1,422) and Burke (\$828 and \$1,534) also featured personal and household incomes below the Queensland average.

Table 2.5: Average Weekly Household and Personal Income, 2016

Region	Personal	Household
Burke	\$828	\$1,534
Carpentaria	\$880	\$1,407
Cloncurry	\$1,208	\$1,746
Doomadgee	\$443	\$1,256
Flinders	\$801	\$1,419
McKinlay	\$1,054	\$1,597
Mount Isa	\$1,189	\$2,239
Richmond	\$801	\$1,422
NWQROC	\$1,094	\$1,960
<i>QLD</i>	<i>\$864</i>	<i>\$1,730</i>
<i>Australia</i>	<i>\$886</i>	<i>\$1,802</i>

Source: ABS (2017a).

2.6 SOCIO-ECONOMIC INDEXES FOR AREAS

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage, which relates to people's access to material and social resources, and their ability to participate in society.

The following three indices are provided in the table below for each NWQROC Council, with a lower ranking representing a greater degree of disadvantage:

- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD), which consists of dimensions of income, education, employment, occupation and housing.
- Index of Economic Resources (IER), which Includes variables relating to financial aspects of relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage (e.g. indicators of high and low income, variables that correlate with high or low wealth).
- Index of Education and Occupation (IEO), which Includes variables relating to the educational and occupational aspects of relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage (e.g. skills, qualifications).

Table 2.6: Indexes of Relative Socio-economic Advantage and Disadvantage, 2016

Region	Score			Percentile within QLD			Percentile within Australia		
	IRSAD	IER	IEO	IRSAD	IER	IEO	IRSAD	IER	IEO
Burke	921	864	937	40	23	60	23	9	35
Carpentaria	874	865	918	23	25	40	10	9	20
Cloncurry	946	931	928	57	31	49	41	16	27
Doomadgee	660	534	827	7	4	11	2	1	2
Flinders	947	980	939	61	68	63	43	47	36
McKinlay	992	1,008	971	92	85	87	74	72	62
Mount Isa	972	968	939	78	55	61	60	35	36
Richmond	959	971	940	66	56	64	50	38	37
Average	909	890	925	53	43	54	38	28	32
Median	947	950	938	59	43	61	42	26	36

Notes: Areas are ordered from lowest to highest score, with the lowest 1% given a percentile number of 1 and so on, up to the highest 1% of areas which are given 100. This means that areas are divided up into one hundred groups, depending on their score. Percentile 1 is the most disadvantaged. The area-based percentiles presented in this data cube contain equal number of areas, not people.

Source: ABS (2017b).

With respect to the Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage:

- McKinlay is highly advantaged, being in the 92nd percentile in Queensland and the 74th percentile in Australia – its Gross Regional Product per capita is significantly higher than the regional, state and national averages. When comparing across Queensland, Mount Isa (78%), Richmond (66%), Flinders (61%) and Cloncurry (57%) are also considered to be relatively advantaged. When comparing across Australia, only Mount Isa (60%) is also considered to be relatively advantaged.
- Doomadgee is highly disadvantaged, being in the 7th lowest percentile in Queensland and the 2nd lowest percentile in Australia. When comparing across Queensland, Carpentaria (23%) and Burke (40%) are also considered to be relatively disadvantaged. When comparing across Australia¹, Carpentaria (10%), Burke (23%), Cloncurry (41%) and Flinders (43%) are also considered to be relatively disadvantaged.

With respect to the Index of Economic Resources:

- McKinlay is highly advantaged, being in the 85th percentile in Queensland and the 72nd percentile in Australia. When comparing across Queensland, Flinders (68%), Richmond (56%) and Mount Isa (55%) are also considered to be relatively advantaged. When comparing across Australia, no other NWQROC Councils are considered to be relatively advantaged.
- Doomadgee is highly disadvantaged, being in the 4th lowest percentile in Queensland and the 1st lowest percentile in Australia. When comparing across Queensland, Burke (23%), Carpentaria (25%) and Cloncurry

¹ Richmond lies within the 50th percentile.

(31%) are also considered to be relatively disadvantaged. When comparing across Australia, Burke (9%), Carpentaria (9%), Cloncurry (16%), Mount Isa (35%), Richmond (38%) and Flinders (47%) are also considered to be relatively disadvantaged.

With respect to the Index of Education and Occupation:

- McKinlay is highly advantaged, being in the 87th percentile in Queensland and the 62nd percentile in Australia. When comparing across Queensland, Richmond (64%), Flinders (63%), Mount Isa (61%) and Burke (60%) are also considered to be relatively advantaged. When comparing across Australia, no other NWQROC Councils are considered to be relatively advantaged.
- Doomadgee is highly disadvantaged, being in the 11th lowest percentile in Queensland and the 2nd lowest percentile in Australia. When comparing across Queensland, Carpentaria (40%) and Burke (49%) are also considered to be relatively disadvantaged. When comparing across Australia, Carpentaria (20%), Cloncurry (27%), Burke (35), Mount Isa (36%), Flinders (36%) and Richmond (37%) are also considered to be relatively disadvantaged – the lower rankings reflect the relatively high proportion of residents without qualifications, without jobs or with low skilled jobs.

2.7 EDUCATION

The educational status of residents can provide insight into the relative availability and access to education, in addition to the skill requirements of available jobs in the region.

In 2016, 46.7% of NWQROC region residents old enough to have finished school had completed year 12 and 42.2% had completed some form of post-school qualification, lower than both Queensland (55.5% and 47.7%, respectively) and Australia (56.8% and 48.9%, respectively). Figure 2.1 shows that the full-time participation rate in secondary schooling in 2016 in the NWQROC region (60.2%) was considerably lower than that for Queensland (83.2%) and Australia (84.1%).

Looking at individual NWQROC Council areas:

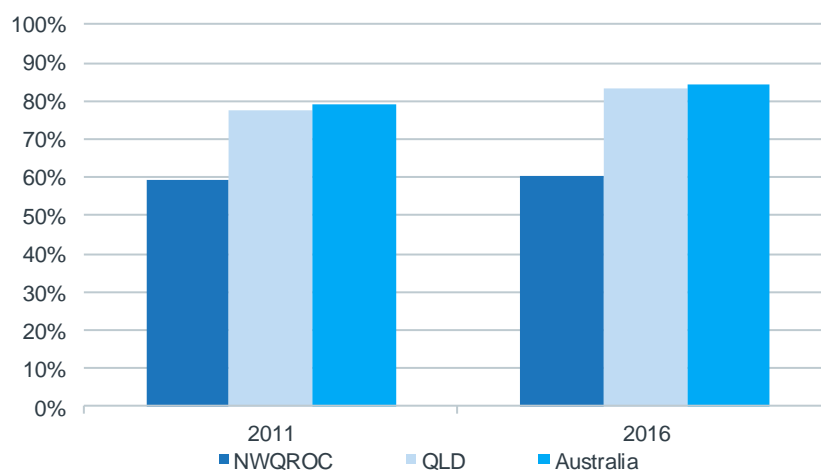
- Doomadgee had the lowest rates of high school completion (15.6%) and post-school education (15.3%).
- Relatively low levels of high school completion and post-school education also existed in Carpentaria (32.9% and 38.6%, respectively), Flinders (37.5% and 35.2%, respectively) and Richmond (38.7% and 40.1%, respectively).
- Mount Isa had the highest rates of high school completion (51.5%) and post-school education (44.7%), albeit with both of these rates being below the Queensland and Australian averages.
- Certificate level education is more prevalent in the NWQROC region (24.8%) than for Queensland (21.0%) and Australia (18.5%).

Table 2.7: Educational Attainment, 2016

Region	School		Post-School					
	Completed Year 12	Did Not Complete	Postgrad Degree	Grad Dip/ Grad Cert	Bachelor Degree	Advanced Dip / Dip	Cert Level	No Qual
Burke	46.3%	53.7%	0.0%	0.0%	6.5%	12.5%	29.1%	51.8%
Carpentaria	32.9%	67.1%	1.3%	0.9%	6.5%	7.0%	22.8%	61.4%
Cloncurry	46.4%	53.6%	2.3%	1.1%	9.7%	6.3%	25.1%	55.4%
Doomadgee	15.6%	84.4%	1.1%	1.0%	2.3%	2.2%	8.6%	84.7%
Flinders	37.5%	62.5%	0.8%	0.6%	6.8%	5.5%	21.4%	64.8%
McKinlay	46.3%	53.7%	0.9%	0.9%	10.1%	5.5%	26.2%	56.5%
Mount Isa	51.5%	48.5%	1.9%	1.3%	9.6%	5.5%	26.4%	55.3%
Richmond	38.7%	61.3%	1.4%	1.5%	7.6%	7.6%	22.0%	59.9%
NWQROC	46.7%	53.3%	1.8%	1.2%	8.8%	5.6%	24.8%	57.8%
<i>QLD</i>	<i>55.5%</i>	<i>44.5%</i>	<i>3.5%</i>	<i>1.7%</i>	<i>12.8%</i>	<i>8.6%</i>	<i>21.0%</i>	<i>52.3%</i>
<i>Australia</i>	<i>56.8%</i>	<i>43.2%</i>	<i>4.8%</i>	<i>2.0%</i>	<i>14.9%</i>	<i>8.7%</i>	<i>18.5%</i>	<i>51.1%</i>

Notes: Postgrad = postgraduate, Grad = graduate, Dip = diploma, Cert = certificate, Qual - qualification
Source: ABS (2017a).

Figure 2.1: Education Containment, Persons Aged 16 Years in Full-Time Study, 2011 vs 2016



Source: AEC, ABS (2017a)

3. ECONOMIC INDICATORS

3.1 GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

Between 2012 and 2017, the NWQROC economy grew by an average of 1.3% per annum (or a total of 6.7% over the period), to reach \$5.1 billion. Growth was more subdued in the region when compared to Queensland and Australia.

Despite the region experiencing growth over the period, economic contraction over the period has occurred in Burke (-87.7% primarily due to reduced resources sector activity), Flinders (-27.4% primarily due to reduced farm sector activity, construction sector activity and transport sector activity), Carpentaria (-13.8% primarily due to reduced resources sector activity and farm sector activity) and Doomadgee (-6.1% primarily due to reduced construction sector activity). The Century Mine closure has also significantly impacted the region's economic performance. Drought conditions have also hit the region hard.

Selected Council areas have experienced solid growth as a result of an upturn in resources sector activity, including Cloncurry (+25.8%), Mount Isa (+17.2%) and McKinlay (+13.5%).

Economic activity per capita is very high on average across the NWQROC region as a result of resources sector activity. The only Council area with a GRP per capita below the Queensland average is Doomadgee which has a limited economic base.

Table 3.1: Gross Regional Product, Chain Volume Measure (2016-17 Prices), 2011/12 to 2016/17

Region	GRP (\$ million)		Change			GRP per capita
	2012	2017	\$M	Total %	Annual %	
Burke	\$320.8	\$39.5	-\$281.3	-87.7%	-34.2%	\$113,865
Carpentaria	\$214.8	\$185.2	-\$29.6	-13.8%	-2.9%	\$92,391
Cloncurry	\$483.8	\$608.6	+\$124.9	+25.8%	+4.7%	\$194,882
Doomadgee	\$42.6	\$40.1	-\$2.6	-6.1%	-1.2%	\$26,843
Flinders	\$228.3	\$165.8	-\$62.5	-27.4%	-6.2%	\$109,007
McKinlay	\$486.8	\$552.5	+\$65.7	+13.5%	+2.6%	\$699,343
Mount Isa	\$2,906.8	\$3,408.1	+\$501.4	+17.2%	+3.2%	\$180,335
Richmond	\$105.3	\$110.9	+\$5.6	+5.3%	+1.0%	\$139,651
NWQROC	\$4,789.3	\$5,110.6	+\$321.4	+6.7%	+1.3%	\$176,412
QLD	\$295,028.3	\$326,995.0	+\$31,966.7	+10.8%	+2.1%	\$66,348

Notes: Annual % reflects the average annual growth between 2012 and 2017.

Source: AEC (unpublished).

Mount Isa serves as the regional service centre and 'hub' for the NWQROC region.

3.2 INDUSTRY SECTOR DEPENDENCY

In 2016-17, the top five contributing sectors to the NWQROC region economy included mining (65.4%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (9.1%), construction (3.9%), public administration and safety (2.6%) and manufacturing (2.5%). These top five sectors account for 83.9% of the region's economy, with 65.9% from mining alone. Queensland has a more balanced economic composition, with the top five sectors only contributing 43.5% of activity.

The North West region's mining industry accounts for 10% of total mining industry Gross Regional Product in Queensland. Such a high level of dependency means that the economic landscape of NWQROC – and therefore its population base – is extremely susceptible to industry changes and external decisions/influences. A good example is the impact of the closure of the Century mine on Burke and the broader region.

The Queensland Government's (2017) Strategic Blueprint for the North West Minerals Province identifies economic diversification and the creation of employment opportunities as a key strategic priority for the North West region.

Table 3.2: Sector Dependency, Top Five Industries Contributing to GRP, 2016-17

Region	Contribution	Industry
Burke	35.3%	Mining
	33.5%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	11.2%	Public Administration and Safety
	7.7%	Construction
	6.7%	Accommodation and Food Services
Carpentaria	49.0%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	7.8%	Construction
	7.6%	Public Administration and Safety
	5.7%	Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services
	5.2%	Health Care and Social Assistance
Cloncurry	67.8%	Mining
	12.3%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	7.8%	Manufacturing
	5.5%	Construction
	1.5%	Transport, Postal and Warehousing
Doomadgee	22.0%	Other Services
	21.6%	Public Administration and Safety
	18.4%	Education and Training
	14.3%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	6.9%	Construction
Flinders	69.0%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	5.8%	Public Administration and Safety
	4.0%	Construction
	3.5%	Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services
	3.4%	Transport, Postal and Warehousing
McKinlay	73.1%	Mining
	15.4%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	3.6%	Construction
	2.2%	Financial and Insurance Services
	1.0%	Public Administration and Safety
Mount Isa	74.2%	Mining
	3.0%	Construction
	2.8%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	2.0%	Manufacturing
	2.0%	Public Administration and Safety
Richmond	29.4%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	17.1%	Construction
	9.0%	Public Administration and Safety
	7.5%	Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services
	5.9%	Manufacturing
NWQROC	65.9%	Mining
	9.2%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	4.0%	Construction
	2.6%	Manufacturing
	2.4%	Public Administration and Safety
QLD	10.8%	Mining
	9.8%	Construction
	8.6%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	7.3%	Financial and Insurance Services
	7.1%	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

Source: ABS (2017a).

3.3 EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

In 2016, the most prominent employment sectors were mining (25.0%), health care and social assistance (10.2%), public administration and safety (9.0%), agriculture, forestry and fishing (8.7%) and education and training (8.4%).

NWQROC region residents are extremely reliant on the mining industry for their employment, with 1 in 4 workers employed in the sector compared to 1 in 41 for Queensland and 1 in 58 for Australia.

Table 3.3: Top Five Industries Contributing to Resident Employment, 2016

Region	Contribution	Industry
Burke	25.6%	Public Administration and Safety
	22.2%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	10.3%	Accommodation and Food Services
	10.3%	Other Services
	6.8%	Arts and Recreation Services
Carpentaria	19.9%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	16.7%	Public Administration and Safety
	11.9%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	9.6%	Education and Training
	9.2%	Accommodation and Food Services
Cloncurry	27.7%	Mining
	12.0%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	10.7%	Transport, Postal and Warehousing
	10.2%	Public Administration and Safety
	7.2%	Construction
Doomadgee	29.3%	Education and Training
	22.1%	Public Administration and Safety
	17.4%	Other Services
	17.0%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	5.8%	Retail Trade
Flinders	39.4%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	13.5%	Public Administration and Safety
	8.5%	Transport, Postal and Warehousing
	7.2%	Retail Trade
	6.0%	Accommodation and Food Services
McKinlay	44.1%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	13.0%	Public Administration and Safety
	10.5%	Mining
	7.2%	Accommodation and Food Services
	6.8%	Construction
Mount Isa	31.9%	Mining
	11.7%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	8.7%	Education and Training
	8.2%	Retail Trade
	6.3%	Public Administration and Safety
Richmond	38.6%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	21.4%	Public Administration and Safety
	7.2%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	5.9%	Construction
	4.0%	Education and Training
NWQROC	25.0%	Mining
	10.2%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	9.0%	Public Administration and Safety
	8.7%	Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
	8.4%	Education and Training
QLD	13.6%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	10.4%	Retail Trade
	9.4%	Education and Training
	9.4%	Construction
	7.7%	Accommodation and Food Services
Australia	13.3%	Health Care and Social Assistance
	10.3%	Retail Trade
	9.1%	Education and Training
	8.9%	Construction
	7.6%	Professional, Scientific and Technical Services

Source: ABS (2017a).

A comparison of employment by place of work with employment by place of usual residence provides an indication of the extent to which local labour is available and/or utilised by local employers. For example, the use of fly-in-fly-out (FIFO) workers in the resources sector would see a higher prominence of employment in the mining industry than represented in the preceding table (which focussed on employment by sector for residents alone).

The table on the following page provides an indication of the difference between employment by place of usual residence and employment by place of work, with a total of 3,592 jobs in the NWQROC region filled by non-residents (equating to 21.1% of total jobs in the region). Just under half of these jobs (1,700 jobs) are in the mining industry. Other sectors with significant external worker demands include construction (459 jobs) and manufacturing (313 jobs).

Council areas with the greatest reliance on non-resident workforces include Cloncurry (53.0% of total jobs) and Richmond (46.3% of total jobs). Council areas with the least reliance on non-resident workforces include Mount Isa (5.2% of total jobs) and Flinders (6.2% of total jobs).

When considering all available jobs in the region, the share of employment captured by the mining industry increases from 25.0% (residents only) to 29.7% (residents and non-residents). The prominence of the mining industry significantly shifts for McKinlay and Cloncurry, with McKinlay's share of employment increasing from 10.5% (residents only) to 48.9% (residents and non-residents) and Cloncurry's share of employment increasing from 27.7% (residents only) to 43.8% (residents and non-residents).

The figures highlight the importance of the NWQROC region to surrounding regions, with direct 'export' of a considerable number of FIFO jobs held by residents of Townsville, Cairns and South-East Queensland. On top of direct employment effects on other regions, the Queensland Government (2017) also acknowledges the important flow-on effects of the region's economic activity to other regional areas and the state economy resulting from supply chain linkages to metal refining and port facilities in Townsville.

Table 3.4: Employment by Place of Usual Residence less Employment by Place of Work, 2016

Industry	Burke	Carpentaria	Cloncurry	Doomadgee	Flinders	McKinlay	Mount Isa	Richmond	NWQROC	QLD	Australia
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	-6	-48	-68	-2	-17	-31	10	61	-100	1	-2,733
Mining	-14	0	-971	0	0	-571	-144	0	-1,700	1,948	-574
Manufacturing	0	-6	-223	0	4	-11	-46	-32	-313	-112	-5,211
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services	0	0	-12	0	-2	-7	-15	-14	-49	110	-99
Construction	-7	-40	-142	-1	-11	-79	-90	-89	-459	1,149	-4,045
Wholesale Trade	0	5	-14	0	4	-8	-4	-13	-30	384	-1,560
Retail Trade	-1	2	-5	-7	6	-1	-15	-63	-85	142	-1,832
Accommodation and Food Services	-13	-11	-53	0	-5	-22	-13	-54	-171	-377	-761
Transport, Postal and Warehousing	0	-7	-61	0	-16	-17	-16	-26	-144	397	-1,485
Information Media and Telecommunications	0	0	-11	0	0	3	7	0	-1	-48	194
Financial and Insurance Services	0	0	-8	0	0	-27	-2	2	-34	109	1,785
Rental, Hiring and Real Estate Services	0	0	-6	0	0	0	-4	-13	-23	-77	-513
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services	6	-3	-25	-2	0	-8	-12	0	-46	921	1,138
Administrative and Support Services	3	-12	-57	-1	-2	-18	-54	-23	-165	-183	-595
Public Administration and Safety	-6	1	-2	-14	0	2	-17	-28	-65	885	193
Education and Training	5	-8	-8	-14	1	0	-35	-18	-78	-934	-2,290
Health Care and Social Assistance	5	-3	-2	-12	-8	-8	-56	-8	-93	-787	-1,875
Arts and Recreation Services	9	0	3	0	-4	0	6	-11	4	-222	-255
Other Services	3	0	-10	-5	-2	0	3	-29	-40	-21	-873
Total	-18	-131	-1,674	-59	-52	-802	-498	-357	-3,592	3,286	-21,390
Proportion of Total Jobs	-11.9%	-14.5%	-53.0%	-17.5%	-6.2%	-63.2%	-5.2%	-46.3%	-21.1%	0.2%	-0.2%

Source: ABS (2017a).

3.4 EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT

Note: Small area labour markets data can be problematic in areas where the labour force is small. Further, calculations are done at an SA2 catchment level and the reported performance of localities in the same SA2 catchment will be intertwined, e.g. Burke, Doomadgee and Carpentaria all reside within the Carpentaria SA2 catchment and as a consequence if Carpentaria and Doomadgee have high unemployment then so will Burke based on the calculation methodology.

Employment in the NWQROC region has softened markedly in recent years, with the number of persons employed in the region declining by a total of 6,060 persons between the year ending March 2012 and the year ending March 2018. This equates to a 32.4% decline in the number of jobs in the region, or an average decline of 6.3% per annum. The declines have been reasonably consistent across each Council area, and contrast with the 1.0% and 1.4% average annual employment growth rates achieved in Queensland and Australia over the same period. The timing of the decline in employment corresponds with the closure of the Century mine.

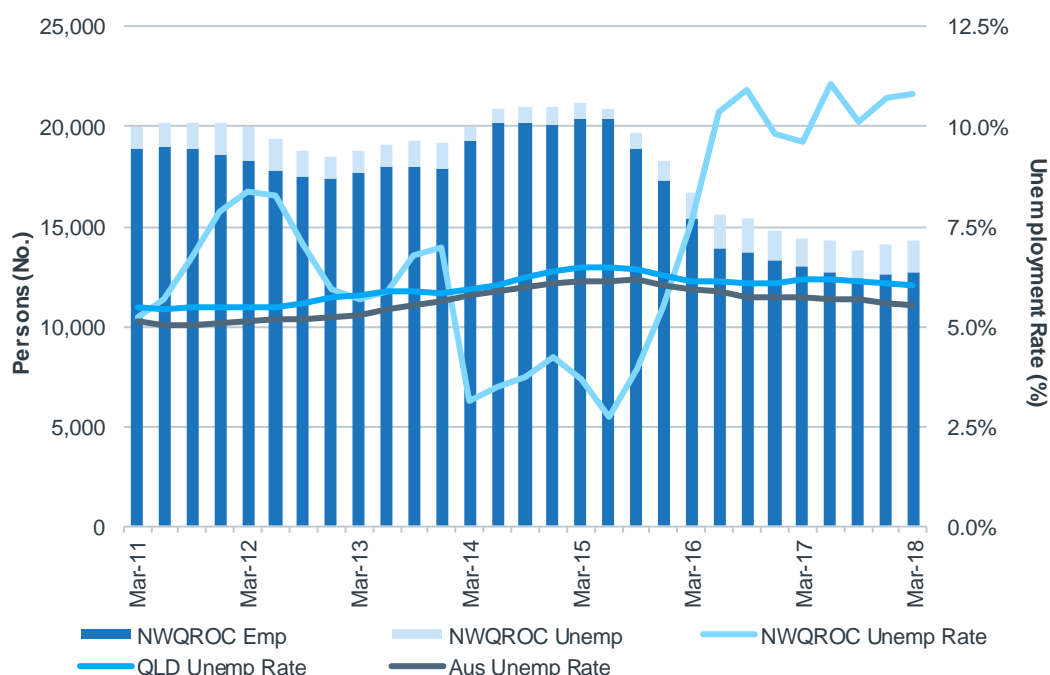
As a consequence, the unemployment rate has increased from 7.2% to 10.7%, with Burke, Carpentaria and Doomadgee having an unemployment rate in excess of 34%.

Table 3.5: Employment and Unemployment, 2012 and 2018

Region	Employment		Change			Unemployment Rate	
	2012	2018	Employed	Total %	Annual %	2012	2018
Burke	188	119	-69	-36.8%	-7.4%	21.7%	34.5%
Carpentaria	746	474	-273	-36.5%	-7.3%	22.2%	34.4%
Cloncurry	2,010	1,402	-609	-30.3%	-5.8%	9.9%	7.9%
Doomadgee	471	297	-175	-37.1%	-7.4%	21.4%	34.4%
Flinders	1,149	780	-369	-32.1%	-6.3%	2.7%	4.7%
McKinlay	678	458	-220	-32.5%	-6.3%	2.0%	4.7%
Mount Isa	12,921	8,746	-4,175	-32.3%	-6.3%	5.6%	8.8%
Richmond	532	362	-170	-32.0%	-6.2%	2.8%	4.7%
NWQROC	18,697	12,637	-6,060	-32.4%	-6.3%	7.2%	10.7%
QLD	2,266,941	2,404,845	+137,904	+6.1%	+1.0%	5.5%	6.1%
Australia	11,206,956	12,208,748	+1,001,792	+8.9%	+1.4%	5.1%	5.6%

Notes: 2012 refers to the average outcome for the year ending 2 March 2012 and 2018 refers to the average outcome for the year ending March 2018. Annual % reflects the average annual growth between 2012 and 2018.
Source: Department of Jobs and Small Business (2018).

Figure 3.1: Employment and Unemployment, 2011 to 2018



Source: Department of Jobs and Small Business (2018).

3.5 REGIONAL INITIATIVES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The importance of the NWQROC region to the state economy is highlighted by the Queensland Government (2017) in its Strategic Blueprint for the North West Mineral Province. The North West region is identified as one of the world's richest mineral producing areas, containing copper, lead and zinc as well as major silver and phosphate deposits and strong rare earth potential. Being a region rich in a range of different resources provides some degree of resilience to commodity price volatility.

The closure of the Century mine (Burke) – one of the largest zinc mines in the world – had a significant impact on areas of the NWQROC region, including the Port of Karumba (Carpentaria) where dredging was no longer required to be undertaken. However, New Century Resources (2018) is restarting operations of a smaller scale to monetise remaining mineral assets initially within tailings and then within base metal deposits and dredging of the Karumba channel is being re-established (Johnston 2018). This will provide a boost for the Port of Karumba and potentially allow for mining operations and primary industries to take advantage of the port in exporting into Asia.

Two other recent resources sector developments of significance include:

- The reopening of the Capricorn Copper mine (Mount Isa), with initial products extracted in early 2018 and ongoing employment during the mine's operational life estimated at 200 employees.
- The reopening of the Lady Loretta zinc mine (Mount Isa), with production expected to ramp up in the second half of 2018.
- The achievement of commercial production levels at the MMG Dugald River zinc mine (Cloncurry) in May 2018, with ongoing employment during the mine's operational life estimated at 400 employees.

The Queensland Government (2017) indicates that the North West region has delivered significant economic benefits (and royalties) to the state for decades and significant proven reserves exist for resource extraction to continue to occur for a lengthy period. Excellent prospectivity also exists across a range of existing and new commodities. Continued resources sector activity in the region will flow through to other regions via supply chain linkages to metal refining and port facilities in Townsville and the FIFO workforces sourced from Townsville, Cairns and South-East Queensland.

Beyond the resources sector, regional economic development organisations such as MITEZ and Gulf Savannah Development highlight a range of potential opportunities that would enhance and take advantage of the economic potential of the NWQROC region, including (but not limited to):

- Additional investment in the beef cattle industry to support strong demands, including beef processing plants to take advantage of proximity to breeding, fattening and grazing areas.
- Water storage development and irrigated agriculture and horticulture farms.
- Transport and logistics facilities to support the mining, heavy industry, meat and livestock and agricultural sectors, in addition to the industrial services, light industry, tourism, wholesale and retail sectors.
- Development of riverine and marine economies.
- Digital transformation strategies (e.g. Normanton to Karumba fibre project).
- Further progression and promotion of the tourism routes across the region to take advantage of the region's unique landscape, national parks, fossil deposits and strong Indigenous heritage.
- Investment in solar, geothermal and wind farms to support renewable energy targets.

Overall, it is essential for all levels of government to work together and with industry to strengthen economic and community resilience in the NWQROC region to ensure that ongoing investment occurs to take advantage of the significant natural advantages and opportunities presented across a number of sectors in the region.

Facilitating a stronger and more resilient NWQROC region will enhance state and national growth outcomes.

4. COUNCIL INDICATORS

4.1 RATEABLE PROPERTIES

There are around 11,000 rateable properties in the NWQROC region.

Table 4.1: Rateable Properties, 2014

Council	Properties
Burke	174
Carpentaria	819
Cloncurry	1,245
Doomadgee	n.a.
Flinders	1,070
McKinlay	481
Mount Isa	6,718
Richmond	468
NWQROC	10,975

Source: Queensland Local Government Grants Commission (2017).

4.2 ROADS

There are 10,988km of Council-controlled roads in the region, equating to 0.38km of road per capita. When including State-controlled roads, this increases to 15,268km of roads and 0.53km per capita.

Table 4.2: Council-Controlled Roads vs State-Controlled Roads (km length)

Region	Local Urban	Local Rural	Total	km/capita
Burke	10	703	713	2.05
Carpentaria	37	1,600	1,637	0.82
Cloncurry	85	1,486	1,571	0.50
Doomadgee	15	98	113	0.08
Flinders	45	1,947	1,992	1.31
McKinlay	28	1,605	1,633	2.07
Mount Isa	161	1,872	2,033	0.11
Richmond	15	1,281	1,296	1.63
NWQROC Local Roads	396	10,592	10,988	0.38
State-Controlled Roads			4,280	0.15
NWQROC Total Local/State Roads			15,268	0.53

Source: Queensland Local Government Grants Commission (2017), Department of Transport and Main Roads (unpublished).

4.3 WATER AND SEWERAGE SERVICES

NWQROC Councils provide water supply to 12,190 connections in 17 different communities (16 potable, 1 non-potable) across the eight Council areas via a total of 25 different water sources (including rivers, bores and dams), 10 Water Treatment Plants and three disinfection only schemes. NWQROC Councils also provide sewerage services to 11,624 connections in 10 different communities across the eight Council areas via a total of 10 Sewage Treatment Plants.

Table 4.3: Water and Sewer Connections, 2016-17

Council	Water	Sewer
Burke	188	133
Carpentaria	899	784
Cloncurry	1,602	1,497
Doomadgee	350	350
Flinders	762	702
McKinlay	460	358
Mount Isa	7,523	7,471
Richmond	406	329
NWQROC	12,190	11,624

Source: qldwater (unpublished).

4.4 ASSET BASE

NWQROC Councils manage \$2.63 billion worth of assets, equating to \$90,581 per capita on average within a range of \$36,124 in Mount Isa to \$569,784 in Burke. These extensive capital investments must be financed, renewed and maintained with a significant reliance on external funding sources.

Table 4.4: Current Replacement Cost (CRC) of Assets, 30th June 2017

Council	CRC (\$'000)	CRC \$ per capita
Burke	\$197,715	\$569,784
Carpentaria	\$493,105	\$246,060
Cloncurry	\$422,725	\$135,359
Doomadgee	\$125,489	\$85,135
Flinders	\$229,659	\$150,992
McKinlay	\$252,223	\$319,270
Mount Isa	\$682,709	\$36,124
Richmond	\$228,320	\$287,557
NWQROC	\$2,631,945	\$90,581

Notes: Doomadgee 2016-17 audited financial statements not yet available, with 2015-16 figures used instead.
Source: AEC, Council Annual Reports, ABS (2018).

4.5 OPERATING EXPENDITURE

NWQROC Councils spend a total of \$176.77 million per annum on labour, goods and services as part of normal operations, excluding the considerable capital expenditure undertaken each year. Annual operating expenditure averages at \$6,102 per capita but varies significantly from \$2,109 in Mount Isa to \$40,219 in Burke.

Table 4.5: Operating Expenditure, 2016-17

Council	Opex \$'000	Opex \$ per capita
Burke	\$13,956	\$40,219
Carpentaria	\$45,762	\$22,836
Cloncurry	\$19,695	\$6,306
Doomadgee	\$11,194	\$7,503
Flinders	\$17,907	\$11,773
McKinlay	\$13,832	\$17,509
Mount Isa	\$39,851	\$2,109
Richmond	\$14,573	\$18,354
NWQROC	\$176,770	\$6,102

Notes: Doomadgee 2016-17 audited financial statements not yet available, with 2015-16 figures used instead.
Source: AEC, Council Annual Reports, ABS (2018).

4.6 LOCAL GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES

A total of 855 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) employees worked for NWQROC Councils in 2016-17, accounting for 6.8% of the region's employed residents (ranging from 2.8% in Mount Isa to 40.4% in Burke). Each FTE services around 34 residents on average (ranging from 7.2 residents in Burke to 78.1 residents in Mount Isa).

Table 4.6: Local Government Employees, 2016-17

Region	FTEs	% of Local Jobs	Residents per FTE
Burke	48	40.4%	7.2
Carpentaria	129	27.2%	15.5
Cloncurry	103	7.3%	30.3
Doomadgee	62	20.9%	24.1
Flinders	110	14.1%	13.8
McKinlay	75	16.4%	10.5
Mount Isa	242	2.8%	78.1
Richmond	86	23.8%	9.2
NWQROC	855	6.8%	33.9

Source: AEC, Council Annual Reports, ABS (2018).

4.7 RELIANCE ON OPERATING GRANTS

The table below indicates the contribution of operating grants provided to each NWQROC Council to total operating revenue. Outcomes for 2016-17 have been adjusted for the prepayment of the Financial Assistance Grants for 2017-18 made in June 2017. No adjustments have been made for differences in the timing of Financial Assistance Grants payments in prior years. Many Councils received flood damage and other special grants during the assessment period that may also distort the numbers on a year to year basis. No adjustments for these operating grants have been made given inconsistencies in reporting different grants across Councils.

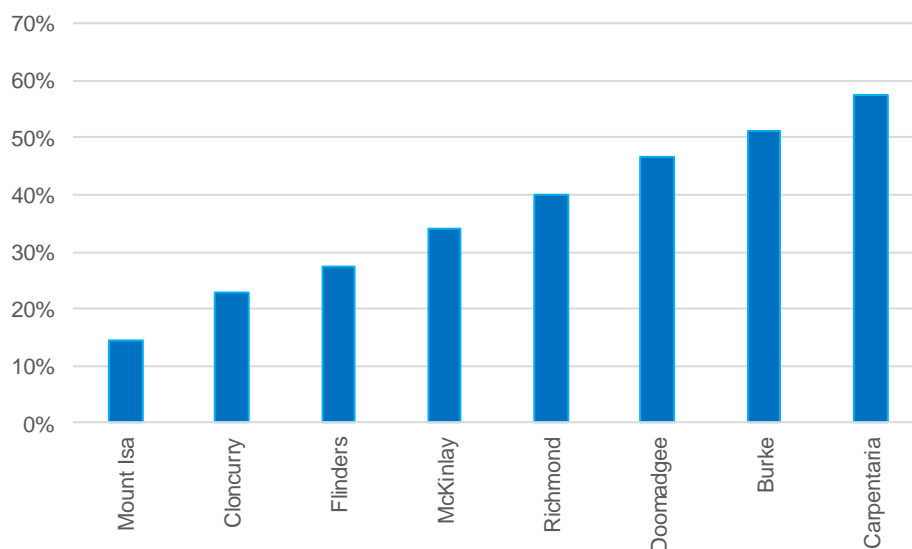
NWQROC region Councils are extremely reliant on external grant funding, with the average reliance between 2011-12 and 2016-17 ranging from 14.3% in Mount Isa to 57.5% in Carpentaria.

Table 4.7: Operating Grants as % of Total Operating Revenue

Council	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16	2016-17	Average
Burke	63.7%	57.3%	19.8%	33.0%	56.1%	77.3%	51.2%
Carpentaria	34.4%	63.3%	52.4%	54.6%	75.2%	65.2%	57.5%
Cloncurry	27.3%	22.5%	15.0%	24.0%	24.2%	24.4%	22.9%
Doomadgee	50.2%	58.1%	54.9%	43.6%	26.3%	n.a.	46.6%
Flinders	30.5%	18.7%	16.8%	28.6%	41.0%	29.7%	27.6%
McKinlay	20.2%	40.0%	18.4%	45.6%	46.8%	32.4%	33.9%
Mount Isa	18.9%	11.4%	7.4%	12.4%	16.6%	19.2%	14.3%
Richmond	45.7%	59.9%	20.2%	41.1%	45.6%	28.0%	40.1%
NWQROC	31.7%	37.5%	27.5%	35.2%	41.2%	38.3%	35.2%

Notes: 2016-17 outcomes have been adjusted by removing the 50% FAG prepayment made to Councils. No adjustments have been made to previous years for any FAG prepayments. Doomadgee 2016-17 audited financial statements not yet available.
Source: Council Annual Reports.

Figure 4.1: Operating Grants as % of Total Operating Revenue, 2011-12 to 2016-17 Average



Source: Council Annual Reports.

Importantly, and in addition to growth in external funding support, greater certainty and predictability in the sources and levels of this funding are required. Strategic infrastructure investment and service provision can only be achieved if there is certainty in long-term funding levels essential to financial sustainability and community development.

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