

**DROPPING
OFF
THE
EDGE
2015**

**Persistent
communal
disadvantage
in Australia**

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Margot Rawsthorne

With Adrian Beavis
and Matthew Ericson



SUMMARY

THE AUTHORS

Professor Tony Vinson (University of Sydney) has a background in sociology and social work with extensive involvement in criminology and social statistics. His professional work has involved the headship of national and state level inquiries, and his administrative appointments have included the foundation directorship of the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, and headship of the NSW Department of Corrective Services during a period of intense prison reform. He was foundation professor of behavioural science in medicine in the Newcastle Medical School, and Professor of Social Work and Dean of the Faculty of Professional Studies at the University of New South Wales. Since 1999 Tony has been a research consultant to Jesuit Social Services and has authored several reports on the geographic distribution of social disadvantage. He is currently an Honorary Professor in the Faculty of Education and Social Work at Sydney University and an Emeritus Professor of the University of New South Wales.

Associate Professor Margot Rawsthorne's (University of Sydney) initial qualification was in sociology at Macquarie University. Following her completion of a PhD at Sydney University, Margot worked for state and local governments, as well as the non-government sector. She spent over a decade working in south-western Sydney, a region of both considerable social disadvantage and community dynamism. She has published extensively within the human services sector and academia. In 2013 she collaborated with Tony Vinson in the production of *Lifting Our Gaze: The community appraisal and strengthening framework*. At present Margot teaches in the Social Work and Policy Studies program (Faculty of Education and Social Work) at the University of Sydney.

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Dr Matthew Ericson (University of Sydney) has a background in socioeconomic research and has worked in teaching and administrative roles within government, academia and the non-profit sector in Australia and Asia. He spent a period as a staff researcher at Brosnan Youth Service, a Jesuit Social Services program providing support and advocacy services for young people. Matthew made a valuable foundational technical contribution to the present project

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PHILANTHROPY



SUMMARY

OVERVIEW

In 2007 Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia sponsored an Australia-wide study of the geographic distribution of social disadvantage. Called *Dropping off the Edge*, the research followed earlier similar projects that focused on Victoria and New South Wales, and employed 25 indicators (or 'signposts') of established relevance to this type of inquiry. The report demonstrated on a national level that the manifestations of social disadvantage were markedly concentrated thereby constituting a localised environment that limits the beneficial impact of standard social services.

The findings from the *Dropping off the Edge* report were widely discussed by government, the community and researchers. The findings influenced the shaping, if not the core principles, of a range of government policies at local, state and federal levels.

Following repeated requests over the past seven years for the findings to be updated, Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia agreed to sponsor this study revisiting the extent and distribution of social disadvantage across Australia again with a view to:

- (i) keeping the reality of geographic concentrations of disadvantage before the Australian community;
- (ii) identifying any shifts in the relative fortunes of some localities;
- (iii) contributing to strategic thinking about effective remedial policies through refined analyses of the patterns of interconnections between the indicator variables; and
- (iv) furnishing community service partners and organisations with up-to-date information to guide and assist their endeavours.

This project builds on the foundation of national and international research documenting disadvantages that limit people's life opportunities.

Additional data supplementary to the information contained in this publication can be accessed online at: www.dote.org.au

The information at the website includes maps showing the distribution of disadvantage within Australian states.

Purpose of the report

The concept of 'social disadvantage' that informs the present study refers to a range of difficulties that reduce a person's opportunities in life and prevent people from participating fully in society. The present study, covering all Australian states and territories, is based on indicators or 'signposts' which, taken in combination, help to identify areas of concentrated disadvantage. The primary purpose is not to reveal causal patterns. Instead, by over-laying the spatial distributions of varied but conceptually-related characteristics, the intention is to bring into focus areas of concentrated disadvantage.

Accordingly the study:

- **provides a first picture of where disadvantage is concentrated** – by means of simple counts of the number of times localities within each state or territory rated highly on the indicators;
- **presents a snapshot of what attributes dispose an area to be highly disadvantaged** – by developing profiles of the highly disadvantaged areas and noting the indicators that appear to be recurring features of markedly depressed localities;
- **looks beneath the surface for patterns of connectedness between the indicators** – using correlation analysis to illuminate the ways in which different strands of disadvantage are woven into a web that constrains the life opportunities of residents;

- **uses a statistical tool to uncover what the indicators share in common and on that basis calculates a single social disadvantage score for each locality within each jurisdiction** – enabling the localities to be ranked from the most, to the least, disadvantaged. Where for technical reasons it is necessary, a locality's Rank Average on the indicators is substituted as the measure of overall vulnerability; and
- **combines the rank orders within the states and territories to identify highly disadvantaged localities warranting national as well as state and territory attention.**

Methodology

Indicators

The present project, conducted throughout 2014, has used a total of 22 indicators to study the geographic distribution of disadvantage throughout six Australian states and two territories. The rationale for choosing particular indicators is presented in some detail in Chapter 2 of the main report.

Two criteria have especially been emphasised, namely, that each indicator has:

1. an established research provenance; and
2. a bearing on the limiting of life opportunities.

Some data has been derived from sources like the Australian Bureau of Statistics, National Assessment Program – Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN), and Australian Early Development Index (AEDI), but considerable trouble has been taken to systematically secure additional information about important aspects of social disadvantage (for example, confirmed child maltreatment and psychiatric admissions) from state and territory government human service agencies.

Always dependent on the capacity of different jurisdictions to supply the required information, 12 of the current 22 indicators have been chosen to calculate the 'susceptibility to disadvantage' scores in 2015 and compare the results with those obtained in 2007 and earlier comparable studies over a 15 year period. Where possible, the analysis has been cast in terms of postcodes (New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory). Use of a similar unit, Statistical Local Areas (SLAs), has been necessary in South Australia and the Northern Territory, and Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Western Australia and Tasmania.

Key findings

Consistent entrenched place-based disadvantage

A major theme is the consistency with which localities identified as extremely disadvantaged in 2015 resemble those similarly ranked in earlier studies. This is especially true of the localities comprising the two top 'bands' (12 most disadvantaged places) derived by a statistical tool that captures what the indicators share in common. That tool (*principal components analysis*) has been used on four occasions since 1999 as one of two main ways of summarising the overall vulnerability of communities to cumulative disadvantage. The consistency with which the most disadvantaged places remain so is shown in each of the accounts of the state and territory results. However, to illustrate the general pattern we cite at this point the findings for New South Wales. Fifteen years ago, nine of the 12 names in the top two bands were the same as in the 2015 listing.

The second way of gaining an overall picture is to identify the places filling the top rank positions on the indicators. The two methods produced similar results but with some variations reflecting diverse political, demographic, economic and social landscapes across the different jurisdictions. Nevertheless, the data permits some significant messages to be read on a jurisdiction by jurisdiction basis.

In every jurisdiction there is a marked degree of spatial concentration of disadvantage. As part of the study of that concentration the number of times each locality featured in the top rank positions on each indicator – around 5% according to circumstances – was calculated.

- In Queensland, 6% of statistical local areas (SLAs) accounted for roughly half of all top ranks;
- In South Australia, 5.6% of SLAs accounted for 57% of top ranks;
- In NSW, Victoria and Western Australia, 1.5% of postcodes accounted for 12-14% of top ranks;
- In Tasmania, the 5 most disadvantaged local government areas (out of 29) accounted for 64% of the top ranks; and
- In Northern Territory, 6% of the SLAs accounted for 50% of top ranks.

In each jurisdiction, the profiles of localities based on the number of their top rank positions as *Most* or *Next Most* disadvantaged, were examined to discern whether there were recurring

characteristics. Some variations were found, such as the relative importance of rent assistance in Victoria and this indicator's virtual absence in New South Wales. However, the latter state's profile serves as a useful template for identifying core characteristics of Australia's disadvantaged communities. In two-thirds of those localities in New South Wales *criminal convictions* were a dominant characteristic, and *adult imprisonment* and *juvenile offending* were at significantly high rates within communities additionally burdened by *long and short unemployment, disabilities, lack of formal qualifications, deficient education generally, low family incomes, domestic violence and mental health problems*. With one exception, *criminal justice* indicators were also prominent in the profile of Victoria's disadvantaged areas, the exception being the lower frequency with which *juvenile offending* was to the fore. *Young adults, no full-time work or education/training*, were also less prominent. The *overall level of education* and deficiencies with respect to *post-school qualifications* were elements of the Victorian profile but NAPLAN results were less of a distinguishing characteristic.

In South Australia *unemployment, overall level of education, criminal convictions and unengaged young adults* were the prominent features, a pattern similar to that of Queensland, South Australia, and Northern Territory and with a small number of LGAs involved, Tasmania. The high frequency indicators in Western Australia's disadvantaged areas placed more emphasis on *NAPLAN deficiencies, internet access, unengaged young adults, overall education, prison and psychiatric admissions*.

The concentration of disadvantage can be illustrated clearly when we compare the rate of occurrence of various indicators within the 3% most disadvantaged localities versus the remaining 97% in each jurisdiction (see the appendix for the results for all states). These comparisons serve to underline the human significance and opportunity-stunting consequences of the statistical patterns revealed by the research. Their main features are summarised at the end of the separate sections that follow concerning the different jurisdictions. However, a few examples at this point should serve to illustrate the social and individual significance of the comparisons. Normally we would regard a doubling of the rate of an occurrence as being a matter of note. That is what we find to be the case with *criminal convictions* in all states except Tasmania. However, in the case of *juvenile offending* in Victoria, a state with an acknowledged overall modest rate, the ratio favouring the general community was almost three-and-a-half times less than the 3% most disadvantaged group. These differences were by no means extreme in comparison with some of the other jurisdictions. For example, in Western

Australia, the proportion of *prison admissions* was eight times greater in the top 3% localities, and approximately five to six times higher with respect to both *unemployment* indicators, and also *young people not engaged in work or study* and *low overall level of education*.

This information actually offers some reassurance to governments and finance controllers: to concentrate on the most cumulatively disadvantaged localities throughout Australia is not to 'open Pandora's box' but offers an opportunity to commit to a manageable number of highly disadvantaged communities.

State-by-state analysis

The following pages provide a short state-by-state analysis identifying disadvantaged areas in each state and comparing results across reports where possible. There are variations in presentation given the differing geographic areas used for the analysis outlined above and the availability of data types at the state level.

It should be noted that this state level overview presents highlight data only. The main report provides a rich resource of information to assist government and communities to better understand the problems faced by disadvantaged communities and to plan for the future.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Dropping off the Edge 2015 examines 621 postcodes in New South Wales across 21 different indicators of disadvantage. The indicators, based on statistics collected from a number of government agencies, reflect factors that may limit life opportunities in the broad areas of social distress, health, community safety, economic factors and education.

The previously mentioned two methods of analysis were employed but the major emphasis reported in this summary is on the assessment of each location's general susceptibility to the problems covered by the indicators using *principal components analysis*. Postcodes were ranked on each indicator, with high rankings indicating the postcode area was significantly affected by the particular limiting factor (e.g. *unemployment* or *disability*). Note that in each instance rates were calculated – for example, the number of *child maltreatment* cases as a proportion of resident children under age 15 years – rather than simply adding the number of reported instances of a problem.

The data shows clearly that disadvantage is concentrated in a small number of communities within New South Wales. For example, 37 postcodes (6% of the total) yielded just under half (49.5%) of the most disadvantaged rank positions on the various indicators. This is an eight-fold over-representation.

The study examined the 37 postcodes which had appeared in the top 5% (most disadvantaged) on more than five indicators, and found that these multiply-disadvantaged postcodes had a number of dominant features:

- **Interaction with the criminal justice system** – more than two-thirds recorded *criminal convictions* at the highest level. *Adult imprisonment* and *juvenile offending* were also at significantly high rates;
- **Lack of internet access** – more than 6 in 10 recorded low levels of *internet accessibility*;
- **Domestic violence** – *family violence* was also a feature of 6 in 10;
- **Youth disengagement** – approximately half had high rankings on *young adults not fully engaged in work or study*; and
- **Low education and training levels** – in half the 37 areas, *lack of qualifications* was high, and *low overall education* was nearly as widespread. More than a third occupied the highest (negative) ranks on *Year 3 reading*, *Year 9 numeracy* and *Year 9 reading* in NAPLAN tests.

Interconnections between indicators

The New South Wales findings afford support for the linkages between different forms of disadvantage commonly summarised in the saying 'caught in a web of disadvantage'. The study revealed that 13 indicators showed a high degree of correlation with others. They were: *long-term unemployment*, *unemployment*, *criminal convictions* and *unengaged young adults*, *Year 9 reading*, *internet access*, *low family income*, *local overall education*, *disability support*, and *post-schooling qualifications*, *Year 3 reading*, *prison admissions* and *domestic violence*.

As previously mentioned, a significant number of postcodes have remained depressed for long periods demonstrating the persistent, entrenched nature of the disadvantage experienced by these communities (note the ranking tables that follow). No fewer than 24 of the state's 40 most disadvantaged postcodes in *Dropping off the Edge 2015* were also found to be 'most disadvantaged' in the 2007 study, and many have been in a depressed state since the early studies were undertaken in 1999 and 2004. There is an immense social and economic cost to society as a result of this sustained social deprivation. For present purposes we concentrate on the first two bands, within which the relevant locations are listed alphabetically. A ✓ in the middle column of the table that follows indicates that the locality was among the state's 40 highest ranking postcode areas in 2007. An asterisk signifies that the location occupied a top 10% ranking in 2007.

Comparison of most disadvantaged postcodes in New South Wales

	2015 listed alphabetically	2007	Estimated population (2011)
	2839 Brewarrina	✓	1,254
	2559 Claymore	✓	3,308
BAND 1	2834 Lightning Ridge	✓	4,500
	2832 Walgett	✓	2,300
	2836 Wilcannia	✓	604
	2306 Windale	✓	3,095
	2840 Bourke	✓	2,047
	2449 Bowraville	✓	1,208
BAND 2	2717 Dareton	*	567
	2466 Iluka	✓	1,739
	2469 Northern Rivers	✓	n.a.
	2163 Villawood	*	5,304

*Full list of 40 most disadvantaged areas available in the appendix

The disproportionate distribution of disadvantage within the state is highlighted when the incidence of particular factors such as *unemployment* and *contact with the justice system* among those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes is compared with the rest of the state. Those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes in the state are:

- 3.6 times as likely to have spent time in *prison*;
- 3.3 times as likely to be experiencing *long term unemployment*;
- nearly 3 times more likely to have a *low level of education* and/or have suffered *domestic violence*; and
- twice as likely to have a *disability* or significant *mental health problem*.

VICTORIA

Although there has been some movement in the identity of Victoria's most disadvantaged postcodes, the message from the data remains consistent with previous reports: a limited number of postcodes account for a disproportionate level of disadvantage. This disadvantage presents across a range of indicators, amounting to a 'web' of limiting factors that constrain individual life opportunities. This locational disadvantage is persistent and entrenched.

Dropping off the Edge 2015 examines 667 postcodes in Victoria across 22 different indicators of disadvantage. The study ranked postcodes on the various individual indicators, with a ranking in the 'top' 5% being considered a high level of disadvantage on that factor. The locational weighting of disadvantage is clear from the following findings:

- 11 Victorian postcodes (1.6% of total) accounted for more than 13.7% of the state's most disadvantaged rank positions. This is a nine-fold over-representation and consistent with the findings in 2007;
- 27 postcodes (4% of total) yielded more than a quarter (28.2%) of the most disadvantaged rank positions. This is a seven-fold over-representation; and
- 44 postcodes (6.6% of total) account for 35.3% of top rankings. This is a five-fold over-representation.

The report then examined postcodes which appeared in the top 5% on more than five indicators, and found that these 27 multiply-disadvantaged postcodes had a number of dominant features:

- **High unemployment** – approximately 7 in 10 recorded *unemployment* levels in the highest band;
- **Interaction with the criminal justice system** – 3 in 5 of the localities showed *criminal convictions* in the highest band;
- Just under half of these multiply-disadvantaged postcodes had a population with an **overall level of education that was rated low** and recorded **significant levels of disability**; and
- More than a third of the localities recorded high levels of **child maltreatment, family violence** and **mental health problems**.

When all of the rankings on the indicators were combined to yield an overall vulnerability score for each locality, just under half of the places were among Victoria's highest ranking postcode areas on the equivalent measure in 2007. For present purposes we concentrate on the first two bands, within which the relevant locations are listed alphabetically. A ✓ in the middle column of the table that follows indicates that the locality was among the state's 40 highest ranking postcode areas in 2007. An asterisk signifies that the location occupied a top 10% ranking in 2007. So far as the first two bands are concerned, the postcodes involved in these two extreme categories have been quite consistent over the past 15 years. In 1999, eight of the 12 names in the top two bands were the same as for 2015; the same was true in 2004. Moreover, the following table shows that 10 of the present 12 highest ranking places according to the *principal components analysis* were in the top 10% rankings on the 2007 indicators.

Comparison of most disadvantaged postcodes in Victoria

	2015 listed alphabetically	2007	Estimated population (2011)
	3047 Broadmeadows	✓	10, 578
	3214 Corio	✓	15,072
BAND 1	3177 Doveton	✓	8,404
	3200 Frankston North	*	5,626
	3464 Maryborough	✓	7630
	3840 Morwell	-	13,691
	3022 Ardeer	-	2,823
	3019 Braybrook	✓	8,180
BAND 2	3048 Coolaroo	*	3,261
	3061 Campbellfield	✓	5,467
	3940 Rosebud West	✓	4,579
	3355 Wendouree	*	9,766

*Full list of 40 most disadvantaged areas available in the appendix

The disproportionate distribution of disadvantage, and the multi-faceted nature of that disadvantage, is thrown into particularly sharp relief when the circumstances of those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes are compared with the rest of the state. The study reveals that those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes in the state are:

- 3 times more likely to be experiencing *long term unemployment* or have been exposed to *child maltreatment*;
- 2.6 times more likely to have experienced *domestic violence*;
- 2.4 times more likely to be on *disability support*; and
- Twice as likely to have *criminal convictions* as the rest of the population.

The disadvantage, then, is geographically concentrated, multi-layered and persistent.

QUEENSLAND

Dropping off the Edge 2015 examines 475 Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) in Queensland across 21 different indicators of disadvantage. The data suggests that extreme forms of disadvantage are being experienced by 11 SLAs across Queensland, eight of which are classified as 'very remote', highlighting the particular challenges facing remote communities. The majority of these small communities are located in remote Far North Queensland on the Cape York Peninsula.

Since 2007, there is a significant increase in the number of communities in the Torres Strait Islands (as well as Northern Peninsula areas) that appear on the most disadvantaged list. However this may be a reflection of improved data collection rather than deterioration of conditions.

While the identity of the most disadvantaged areas has changed in the past seven years, the key message from previous reports remains consistent: A limited number of areas account for a disproportionate number of 'top ranked' (i.e. most disadvantaged) positions on the 21 indicators assessed:

- 2.3% (i.e. the 11 most disadvantaged SLAs) account for 26% of the top rankings;
- 6% of SLAs account for nearly half of the 'top rankings' across the range of indicators.

The data highlights the inter-connectedness of experiences of disadvantage and their cumulative impact. The study examined postcodes which had appeared in the top 5% (most disadvantaged) on more than 10 indicators, and found that every one of these 11 multiply-disadvantaged postcodes had high levels of:

- **Youth disengagement** (*young adults not fully engaged in work or study*);
- **Long-term unemployment**; and
- **Prison Admissions.**

In addition, the following were common features of more than nine out of 10 of the areas:

- **Low family income**; and
- **Low levels of internet access.**

Poor numeracy performance of school-aged children (years 3 and 9) was also marked.

The data suggests strong correlations between economic variables including income and *unemployment* and adverse social outcomes (*criminal convictions* and *prison admissions*) in the most disadvantaged communities. On the positive side, there were modestly hopeful signs on *Year 3 reading*.

As with other states, the life-limiting factors are particularly overwhelming for those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes. Those people are:

- more than 8 times as likely to have *criminal convictions* and more than 6 times more likely to have *juvenile convictions*;
- nearly 5 times more likely to be *disengaged from education or employment as young adults*;
- over 4 times as likely to have suffered *domestic violence, child maltreatment* or to have a *low level of education*; and
- more than twice as likely to have a *disability* or have been *unemployed for a lengthy period*, compared with the rest of the Queensland population.

The most disadvantaged SLAs in Queensland

For present purposes we again concentrate on the first two bands, within which the relevant locations are listed alphabetically. So far as the first two bands are concerned, the Statistical Local Areas involved in these two extreme categories have

been less consistent between 2007 and 2015 than was found to be the case in New South Wales and Victoria – a difference seemingly due to the more adequate statistical coverage of remote areas on this occasion.

The authenticity of the present findings is suggested by the strong convergence in the results yielded by the two basic methods employed in the study.

The ranking in the second column is done using the *principle components analysis*, while the information in the fifth column reflects a simple analysis of which localities ranked highly on a number of individual indicators. A # in the right hand column of the table indicates that the locality recorded a

high ranking (top 5%) on between 10 and 15 different indicators while a ## signifies that the location recorded a high ranking (top 5%) between five and nine times.

The conclusion to be drawn from the present data is that remote communities on the Cape York Peninsula and the Torres Strait Islands experience the severest disadvantage in Queensland. Population data in the report reveals the small size of many of these remote communities. There were strong correlations between economic (*unemployment, long-term unemployment and income*) and adverse social outcomes (*criminal convictions, prison admissions*) among the most disadvantaged communities.

Comparison of most disadvantaged SLAs in Queensland

	Localities arranged alphabetically within each band	Estimated population (2011)	Band in 2007 ¹	Top 5% 2015 (✓) and Top 10% 2015 (*)
	Aurukun	1,200		✓
	Doomadgee	1,404		✓
BAND 1	Kowanyama	1,198		✓
	Mornington	1,100	2	✓
	Wooranbinda	970		✓
	Yarrabah	3,000		✓
	Cherbourg	1,241		✓
	Inala	13,796	2	*
BAND 2	Lockhart River	642		*
	Napranum	900		*
	Palm Island	5,000		✓
	Pormpuraaw	698		✓

Full list of 40 most disadvantaged areas available in the appendix

¹Left blank when no data was available for this location in 2007. Boundary and name changes affect direct comparison.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Social disadvantage in South Australia is concentrated in a small number of communities, with disadvantage entrenched in some instances. The collected data covers 20 indicators across 125 SLAs.

- Around 6% of SLAs account for 57% of the 'top rankings' across the range of disadvantage indicators.

Very similar groups of SLAs are identified by the data as disadvantaged in both 2007 and 2015. Of the state's 40 most disadvantaged postcodes in *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, 31 were also found to be in the top six bands of disadvantage in the

2007 study. The inclusion of new data for remote communities also highlights the severity of disadvantage experienced in those localities.

The study examined postcodes which had appeared in the top (most disadvantaged) 5% on more than five indicators, and found that these multiply-disadvantaged postcodes showed a number of recurring features:

- **Unemployment and long-term unemployment** were being experienced in 4 out of 5, and 7 out of 10 of the localities respectively;
- **Overall level of education** was poor in nearly 7 out of 10 of these multiply-disadvantaged areas; and

• **Criminal convictions** were high and **youth disengagement** (*young adults not fully engaged in work or study*) was an issue in three-fifths of the localities.

There were also distinct locational differences. In the remote regions, *internet access* was an issue, while the more urbanised regions experienced greater *housing stress*.

The data highlights the inter-connectedness of experiences of disadvantage and their cumulative impact. There is strong correlation, for example, between *internet access, low family income, overall education, young adults not engaged in work or study, receipt of disability support, long-term unemployment* and *criminal convictions*.

Again, this 'web' of disadvantage is particularly oppressive for those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes in the state, who are:

- 10 times as likely to have spent time in *prison*;
- more than 5 times as likely to be *unemployed* or have a *low level of education*; and
- more than twice as likely to have a *disability* and 3.5 times as likely to be dealing with *mental health problems*.

Comparison of most disadvantaged SLAs in South Australia

The following overview of the geographic distribution of disadvantage in South Australia is based on the previously described method called *principal components analysis*. Again we focus upon the two bands adjudged to be most severely disadvantaged. Interestingly, all of the SLAs so identified were in the top 10% of places based on occupancy of at least five extreme rankings on the indicators. Furthermore, there were eight SLAs in the first two bands of the following table that drew attention in 2007; all were included among the 12 'most' or 'next most' disadvantaged in 2007. Indeed, without exception, every one of the 31 localities in bands 1-6 (the 40 most disadvantaged places) generated by the present project, and for which comparable data was available in 2007, re-appeared in bands 1-6 on this occasion.

Band	Statistical Local Area arranged alphabetically	Estimated population	Top 5% 2015 (✓) and Top 10% 2015 (*)	Band in 2007 ²
	Anangu Pitjantjatjara	2,440	✓	
	Coober Pedy	1,695	✓	1
1	Maralinga Tjarutja	73	✓	
	Peterborough	1,731	✓	1
	Playford – Elizabeth	25,243	✓	1
	Unincorporated Whyalla	211	*	
	Ceduna	2,642	✓	3
	Playford – West Central	16,294	✓	2
2	Port Adelaide – Enfield – Park	382	*	2
	Port Augusta	7,336	*	2
	Port Pirie City Districts – City	17,333	*	2
	Unincorporated West Coast	635	*	

¹Full list of 40 most disadvantaged areas available in the appendix
²No comparative data available if left blank

In considering the table above it must be remembered that data from the Aboriginal Councils of Anangu Pitjantjatjara and Maralinga Tjarutja is included for the first time. Data was also not available in 2007 for Unincorporated West Coast or Unincorporated Whyalla. This means that of the six areas included in the top band of disadvantage in 2015, three also occupied that position in 2007, while the other three were not included in the earlier study.

TASMANIA

Dropping off the Edge 2015 examines 29 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Tasmania across 21 different indicators of disadvantage. The extent to which social disadvantage in Tasmania is geographically concentrated is shown by the fact that a limited number of LGAs occupy a disproportionate number of the 'top' (most disadvantaged) rank positions on each of the 21 indicators. Of the 29 LGAs, six LGAs accounted for approximately 80% of the top ranks on the indicators (i.e. 17 of the top spots on the 21 indicators). These six LGAs, accounting for just over 20% of the areas studied, were over-represented in the frequency of

social disadvantages reflected by all indicators apart from: *readiness for school*, *Year 3 numeracy*, *unskilled workers*, and *Year 9 reading*.

When we look closely at the most disadvantaged LGAs in Tasmania we find they share a vulnerability to specific indicators of social disadvantage that are likely to compound each other's negative effects. For example, the data identified the following dominant features:

- **Disengaged young adults** – 3 of the 5 most disadvantaged LGAs rank highly on *young adults not participating in full time work, education or training*;
- **Unemployment, disability and low family income** were serious issues in 3 of the 5 most disadvantaged LGAs; and
- **Contact with the criminal justice system** – 3 of the 5 ranked highly on *juvenile offending and criminal convictions*, emphasising that lack of engagement often goes hand in hand with contact with the criminal justice system.

Despite the commonalities, there was also considerable diversity regarding the prevalence of other indicators. This variability suggests the need to be sensitive to specific local contexts. There were also hopeful signs regarding educational engagement, with indicators reflecting *readiness for school*, *Year 3 numeracy*, *unskilled workers*, and *Year 9 reading* not as prevalent as other markers of disadvantage.

Tasmania's most disadvantaged regions

For technical reasons to do with the limited number of counting units, the *principal components analysis* could not be used to compile an overall picture of the distribution of disadvantage in Tasmania. Instead, we employed an allied concept, the average ranking of each locality across all of the indicators. In fact, generally across the different Australian jurisdictions, we found that the average ranking results correlated highly with those produced by the principal components method. The following table presents the rank averages for the 29 LGAs - the smaller that average the more susceptible the locality is to the problems represented by the indicators. From that perspective, Brighton, Central Highlands, Derwent Valley, George Town and Glenorchy are among the most cumulatively disadvantaged places. Data in the report also shows that two LGAs, Brighton and George Town, experienced significant deterioration of their social situation between 2007 and 2015.

LGA	Rank average	Estimated population (2011)
Break O'Day	11.7	6,194
Brighton	6.05	15,460
Burnie	13.7	19,329
Central Coast	17	21,355
Central Highlands	6.52	2,262
Circular Head	17.6	7,977
Clarence	20	51,852
Derwent Valley	7.57	9,704
Devonport	13.2	24,615
Dorset	13.9	6,827
George Town	7.71	6,636
Glenorchy	7.9	44,656
Flinders	18.3	776
Glamorgan/Spring Bay	13.5	4,190
Hobart	23.7	48,703
Huon Valley	13.8	15,140
Kentish	15	6,086
King Island	20.3	1,566
Kingborough	24.6	33,893
Latrobe	20	9,833
Launceston	15.5	64,193
Meander Valley	21.8	18,888
Northern Midlands	17.8	12,228
Sorell	15	13,194
Southern Midlands	10.4	6,049
Tasman	9.79	2,355
Waratah/Wynyard	14.8	13,708
West Coast	13.4	4,678
West Tamar	22.1	21,817

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Dropping off the Edge 2015 examines 140 Local Government Areas (LGAs) in Western Australia across 19 different indicators of disadvantage. LGAs were ranked on each indicator, with high rankings indicating the LGA was significantly affected by the particular limiting factor. These simple rankings were then used in a more comprehensive analysis known as 'rank average', which takes account of each LGA's relative rankings on all indicators, to produce an overall ranking of disadvantage.

The extent to which social disadvantage in Western Australia is geographically concentrated is shown by the fact that a limited number of postcodes occupy a disproportionate number of the 'top' (most disadvantaged) rank positions on each of the 19 indicators. Pragmatically, and to facilitate

comparisons, we have defined 'top' as the 10% (or 14/140) most disadvantaged rank positions, the same approach as the one used in 2007 for Western Australia. The pattern of concentration was as follows:

- 2 localities (1.4% of LGAs) accounted for 12% of 'top 14' positions (over-representation 8.6 times compared with equivalent result of 5.6 times in 2007);
- 6 localities (4.3 % of LGAs) accounted for 28.6% of 'top 14' positions (over-representation 6.7 times compared with 4.3 times in 2007); and
- 13 localities (9.3% of LGAs) accounted for 47.7% of 'top 14' positions (over-representation 5.1 times compared with 3.3 times in 2007).

The foregoing degree of concentration of disadvantage in Western Australia resembles counterpart trends in the other Australian jurisdictions.

The disproportionate distribution of disadvantage within the state is highlighted when the incidence of particular factors such as *unemployment* and *contact with the justice system* among those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes is compared with the rest of the state. Those living in the 3% most disadvantaged postcodes in the state are:

- approximately 8 times as likely to have spent time in *prison*;
- 6 times as likely to have been *unemployed for a lengthy period*;
- around 5 times more likely to have a *low overall level of education*, or to be *disengaged from education or employment* as young adults;
- more than 3 times as likely to have a *disability*; and
- 2.5 times as likely to have suffered *child maltreatment*.

The study examined 17 LGAs which had appeared in the top (most disadvantaged) 10% on more than five indicators, and found that these multiply-disadvantaged areas had a number of dominant features:

- **Low internet access** – 3 out of 4 of the multiply disadvantaged localities had this characteristic;
- **Disengaged young adults** – approximately two-thirds of the 17 areas under review had high numbers of *young adults who were not engaged in employment or further education* and also the

same number were characterised by *low overall education levels* and *low Year 3 reading results*; and

- **Contact with the criminal justice system** – two-thirds of these multiply-disadvantaged areas showed rates of *prison admission* at the highest level. This aspect of the analysis of the distribution of disadvantage in Western Australia was compromised by the unavailability of juvenile and adult offending data.

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Due to the small number of geographic units in the Northern Territory our analysis will focus on the top 10% or those SLAs ranked first or second on one of the 21 indicators. The four 'most disadvantaged' SLAs account for 20 first or second ranks (20/42 or 47%).

In 2007, data was only available on six regions across the Northern Territory, making comparison between 2007 and 2015 unrealistic. Data collection processes in the Northern Territory have changed enabling us now to explore data across 16 SLAs. Name changes also add to the difficulty of comparisons across time. In the 2007 publication, two locations were noted for higher levels of disadvantage: Darwin Region Balance and Barkly. Neither of these regions remains in the present data, although Barkly is likely to be captured in data now labelled Central Desert, and Darwin Region Balance is likely to be captured in data now called Belyuen.

Northern Territory disadvantage, as measured by the indicators employed in this project, is more dispersed and less geographically concentrated than in other Australian jurisdictions. It is common for SLAs to experience both high and low ranks on indicators of disadvantage. Four communities – Belyuen, East Arnhem, Katherine and Tiwi Islands – were identified as the most disadvantaged, being ranked 1 or 2 on at least five indicators. However, these four most disadvantaged localities show quite different patterns of disadvantage:

- In the Tiwi Islands, disadvantage is felt in the lack of *internet access*, *low family incomes* and *young adults not engaged in work or study* (ranked first on all of these indicators). Economic indicators showed disadvantage while social indicators (*criminal convictions*, *prison admissions*) were less prominent;
- East Arnhem ranked second on *unemployment* and *long-term unemployment*, *young adults not engaged in work or study*, *unskilled workers*, and the level of *post-school qualifications*. Again, the issue is around income and skills; and

- In Katherine, disadvantage is reflected in the rankings for *criminal convictions*, *domestic violence* and *prison admissions* (ranked first on each of these). On the other hand, skills appear to be at a higher level than in many other locations.

Comparison of disadvantaged SLAs in the Northern Territory

For technical reasons to do with the limited number of counting units, the *principal components analysis* could not be used to compile an overall picture of the distribution of disadvantage in the Northern Territory. Instead, we employed an allied concept, the average ranking of each locality across all of the indicators. In fact, generally across the different Australian jurisdictions, we found that the average ranking results correlated highly with those produced by the principal components method. The following table presents the rank averages for the NT's 16 SLAs - the smaller that average the more susceptible the locality is to the problems represented by the indicators. From that perspective, Tiwi Islands, MacDonnell, Barkly, Victoria-Daly, Central Desert, Roper Gulf and Belyuen are among the most cumulatively disadvantaged places.

Average ranks across all indicators for the Northern Territory SLAs (in alphabetical order)

SLAs	Rank average	Estimated population (2011)
Alice Springs (T)	10.1	36,066
Barkly (S)	6.4	5,722
Belyuen (S)	6.6	181
Central Desert (S)	6.5	3,720
Coomalie (S)	7.8	1,106
Darwin	12.8	120,586
East Arnhem (S)	7.5	9,098
Katherine (T)	8.2	17,823
Litchfield	13.7	18,620
MacDonnell (S)	6.3	5,829
Palmerston	13.0	27,618
Roper Gulf (S)	6.5	6,121
Tiwi Islands (S)	6.1	2,580
Victoria-Daly (S)	6.4	5,925
Wagait (S)	7.9	368
West Arnhem (S)	7.9	6,228
Unincorporated NT	13.2	n.a.

AUSTRALIAN CAPITAL TERRITORY

This exercise was limited by the unavailability of relevant data. *Dropping off the Edge 2015* examines 26 postcode areas in the ACT across 13 different indicators of disadvantage. The study confirmed that a limited number of postcodes account for a disproportionate level of disadvantage across the territory. The data suggests that:

- Just 2 postcodes (or 7.7% of the total number of localities) account for a quarter of 'most disadvantaged' ranks; and
- 5 postcodes (19%) account for 49% of the 'most disadvantaged' ranks.

Disadvantage also appears entrenched. The same two postcodes that recorded the greatest disadvantage in 2015 also occupied these positions in 2007, while the concentration of disadvantage was similar. (In 2007 they accounted for 26% of the highest rankings, compared with 25% in 2015).

One distinctive feature of disadvantaged postcodes was the recurring evidence of rental accommodation pressures:

- In 2007, 6 of the 9 places assessed as disadvantaged ranked in the top 8 on *rental stress*; in 2015 5 of the 8 postcodes assessed as disadvantaged ranked in the top 8 on *rental stress*; and
- In 2007, 5 of the 9 places assessed as disadvantaged ranked in the top 8 on several education/training related attributes, namely, *Year 12 incomplete*, *no internet access*, *low work skills* and *limited qualifications*. This time, *limited qualifications* attained the same prominence in the profile of 5 of the 8 disadvantaged areas, in company with *long-term unemployment*. Only slightly less prominent were *low family income*, *no internet access*, *limited work skills*, *disability benefit*, and *unemployment*, all of which appeared 4 times in the top 8 rankings of the currently disadvantaged postcodes.

Missing from the comparisons are the *criminal conviction* and *domestic violence* results, due to the unavailability of the relevant data. These missing indicators were conspicuous elements of the profiles of disadvantaged localities in 2007.

ACT postcodes with the most disadvantaged rank average scores in 2015 and risk factor scores in 2007

2015 disadvantage rank average	2007 disadvantage factor rankings
<i>Most disadvantaged</i>	<i>Most disadvantaged</i>
2609 Fyshwick, Pialligo, Symonston	2602 Ainslie, Dickson, Downer
2615 Charnwood, Dunlop, Florey, Flynn, Fraser	2604 Kingston, Narrabundah
2620 Oaks Estate, Majura, Tuggeranong (Bal), Hume	2609 Fyshwick, Pialligo, Symonston
2905 Bonython, Chisholm	2620 Oaks Estate, Tuggeranong (Bal), Majura, Hume
<i>Next most disadvantaged</i>	<i>Next most disadvantaged</i>
2602 Ainslie, Dickson, Downer	2603 Griffith, Forrest
2606 Chifley, Lyons	2606 Lyons, Chifley, Phillip
2612 Braddon, Campbell, Reid, Turner	2612 Braddon, Campbell, Reid, Turner
2902 Kambah	2614 Cook, Page, Scullin

Notwithstanding the less than optimum data available on this occasion, there is a considerable degree of convergence in the 2015 and 2007 ACT summary rankings. Five of the eight localities identified by the rank averages as being most vulnerable to disadvantage in 2015, were among the eight so identified in 2007.

CONCLUSIONS

Four waves of research over a 15 year period (1999 – 2015) have served to confirm the enduring cumulative social disadvantage of a relatively small number of localities across Australia.

The conclusion to be drawn from the series of studies is clear. As long as research focuses on indicators of disadvantage with an established research provenance, an underlying commonality is manifested in the:

- disadvantage profiles of localities that rank highly across multiple indicators of disadvantage;
- inter-connecting or correlative variables that play a significant role in constituting web-like, localised systems of disadvantage; and
- rank positions of localities when account is taken of their relative position on a complete set of disadvantage indicators.

After allowing for the introduction of new counting areas, the same localities quite consistently emerge as being most vulnerable to disadvantage; the same disadvantageous attributes generally characterise the areas in question, and the dominant characteristics also figure prominently among the highly inter-correlating indicators.

The cohesive structure of disadvantage that has persisted in a comparatively small number of localities over the life of four studies, constitutes fertile ground for the development of an attitude of resignation to seemingly insurmountable deprivations.

To speak of community strengthening is not to deny the continuing importance of investment in markedly disadvantaged localities. There have been occasions on which the help proffered has been rather more symbolic than practical, or in the nature of an attempted short-cut 'solution' by authorities.

We can acknowledge some sensitive, skilled community projects across Australia, however, in our present state of knowledge, it is doubtful whether a single community, marked by extreme cumulative disadvantage, has been 'turned around' in the sense of experiencing a sustainable and generalised improvement in life opportunities.

It is a matter of fundamental morality that as a nation we are obliged to find an answer to this question. The alternative is to continue to turn away and allow our institutions and charity queues for the unemployed and homeless to be filled to overflowing by successive generations of the time

honoured 'top 40' sites, presented in chapters 3-10 of the full report.

Firm political and administrative decisions are required to stay the distance with a manageable number of highly disadvantaged communities in order to 'turn around' the life prospects of those who live in them. That objective calls for more than an expression of concern and brief refurbishment. The cycle of extreme disadvantage needs to be tackled at the community level, employing strategies that cultivate a willingness to work for the benefit of the community, developing cohesion and mutual trust – an authentic effort to strengthen community in terms of key functions, such as those outlined in the report, and to consolidate collective efficacy.

Here we are discussing localities whose degree and duration of deprivation, and the inter-locking nature of the social impediments experienced, necessitates something more than 'old wine in new bottles'. The additional costs entailed need to be weighed against the bill incurred by present arrangements that often amount to cleaning up the aftermath of neglect, rather than introducing positive measures. For example, when we consider the rate of occurrence of the problems represented by our indicators within the most disadvantaged 3% of localities in each jurisdiction, and compare that rate with the one prevailing in the remaining 97%, the differences can be compellingly stark.

What we recommend is a firm political and administrative commitment to stay the distance with a manageable number of highly disadvantaged communities. The fundamental principle is this: in order for services and infrastructure interventions to be effective in the long run, they must not only be useful in their own right but simultaneously serve the end of strengthening the overall community in functional areas identified as crucial in evolving self-sustaining effective communities. These essential competencies are described in the body of the project report but they have in common a focus upon the community as an entity whose core problem solving and effort-sustaining capacities can be developed in their own right.

Recommendations

To identify and assist Australian communities with high social needs and concentrated disadvantage, a small scale Centre for Community Strengthening and Program Evaluation should be established within the Commonwealth Government with counterpart units in each state and territory administration. The emphasis should be upon the ability to second the services for a period of relevant officers rather than establishing another bureaucracy. The Commonwealth and State/

Territory units should facilitate the coordination of community service initiatives by government and non-government organisations, and undertake rigorous collaborative evaluations of community strengthening projects. The units should be established on a basis that enables them to gather full statistical information on local populations while adhering to existing data confidentiality guidelines. The Centre should continue to develop and refine the data gathering and dissemination of community wellbeing information pioneered by a number of non-government agencies over recent decades, including the sponsors of the present project. The units should act as repositories of international and national research and practice insights. The Commonwealth Centre should have particular responsibility for auspicing and participating in an exemplary project in each Australian jurisdiction, chosen jointly with the respective governments.

APPENDIX

The following tables present some of the data demonstrating disadvantage across Australia.

Tables in Part A demonstrate the rate of occurrence of each indicator in the 3% most disadvantaged areas of a state versus the remaining 97% of that state.

Tables in Part B set out the Top 40 most disadvantaged localities in various states using the *principal components analysis*, expanding on the top two bands presented earlier in this summary.

PART A: RELATIVE DISADVANTAGE

Ratio of 3% and 97% in Western Australia

WESTERN AUSTRALIA	Proportion top 3%	Proportion 97% (the rest)	Ratio 97% to 3%
Overall low level of education	10.6	2.2	4.8
Absence of post-school qualifications	49.5	41.8	1.2
Unskilled workers	24.0	15.5	1.5
Young people not engaged	33.8	6.8	5.0
Disability support	14.4	4.4	3.3
Long term unemployed	12.0	2.0	6.0
Rent assistance	0.9	5.7	0.2
Unemployed	20.3	3.5	5.8
Child maltreatment	3.9	1.5	2.6
Prison admissions	5.8	0.7	8.1
Psychiatric admissions	3.0	1.4	2.1

Ratio of 3% and 97% in Victoria

VICTORIA	Proportion top 3%	Proportion 97% (the rest)	Ratio 97% to 3%
Overall low level of education	9.7	3.6	2.7
Absence of post-school qualifications	54.6	41.0	1.3
Unskilled workers	24.0	15.6	1.5
Young adults not engaged	11.8	5.5	2.2
Disability support	13.0	5.5	2.4
Long term unemployed	5.5	1.9	2.9
Rent assistance	10.9	6.2	1.8
Unemployed	8.0	3.2	2.5
Child maltreatment	5.4	1.8	3.1
Criminal convictions	12.9	6.6	2.0
Juvenile convictions	1.2	0.4	3.4
Domestic violence	6.2	2.4	2.6
Prison admissions	1.4	0.5	2.8
Psychiatric admissions	1.5	0.9	1.8

Having illustrated our approach with the two foregoing examples, rather than proceed individually with each of the remaining four states it serves our purpose to summarise their ratios in a single table:

Ratio of 3% and 97% in various States

REMAINING FOUR STATES	Ratio 97% to 3% NSW	Ratio 97% to 3% STH. AUST	Ratio 97% to 3% TAS	Ratio 97% to 3% QLD
Overall low level of education	2.9	5.3	1.4	4.1
Absence of post school qualifications	1.4	1.4	1.2	1.5
Unskilled workers	1.5	1.3	1.3	1.0
Young adults not engaged	2.2	5.2	2.0	4.7
Disability support	2.0	2.3	1.5	2.4
Long term unemployed	3.3	5.1	1.4	2.3
Rent assistance	1.7	0.7	0.9	1.1
Unemployed	2.9	5.2	1.3	1.7
Child maltreatment	---	---	---	4.2
Criminal convictions	2.3	4.1	1.5	8.5
Juvenile convictions	2.3	2.4	1.8	6.1
Domestic violence	2.8	---	2.3	4.2
Prison admissions	3.6	10.0	1.6	5.2
Psychiatric admissions	1.8	3.5	1.1	---

**PART B: 40 HIGHEST RANKING AREAS ON THE DISADVANTAGE FACTOR
(LISTED ALPHABETICALLY IN BANDS)**

NSW

Band 2015	Localities arranged alphabetically	Estimated population (2011)	Top 5% (✓) / Top 10% (*) in 2007
1	2839 Brewarrina	1,254	✓
	2559 Claymore	3,308	✓
	2834 Lightning Ridge	4,500	✓
	2832 Walgett	2,300	✓
	2836 Wilcannia	604	✓
	2306 Windale	3,095	✓
2	2840 Bourke	2,047	✓
	2449 Bowraville	1,208	✓
	2717 Dareton	567	*
	2466 Iluka	1,739	✓
	2469 Northern Rivers	n.a	✓
	2163 Villawood	5,304	*
3	2166 Cabramatta	20,780	-
	2829 Coonamble	2,998	*
	2440 Kempsey	28,134	✓
	2346 Manilla	2,550	-
	2502 Warrawong	4,770	✓
	2341 Werris Creek	1,437	-
4	2471 Coraki	1,478	✓
	2165 Fairfield	17,032	-
	2443 Laurieton	1,931	✓
	2770 Mount Druitt	15,794	✓
	2448 Nambucca Heads	6,137	✓
	2462 Ulmarra	446	*
5	2470 Casino	11,000	✓
	2551 Eden	3,043	-
	2827 Gilgandra	2,700	*
	2427 Harrington	2,259	✓
	2505 Port Kembla	4,400	*
	2824 Warren	1,523	-
6	2506 Berkeley	7,427	-
	2880 Broken Hill	18,517	✓
	2453 Dorrigo	1,072	-
	2473 Evans Head	2,722	-
	2428 Forster	13,116	✓
	2360 Inverell	9,347	✓
	2400 Moree	9,346	-
	2430 Taree	20,000	✓
	2455 Urunga	3,020	✓
	2829 Wellington	4,540	✓

VICTORIA

Band 2015	Localities arranged alphabetically	Estimated population (2011)	Top 5% (✓)/ Top 10% (*) in 2007
1	3047 Broadmeadows	10,578	✓
	3214 Corio	15,072	✓
	3177 Doveton	8,404	✓
	3200 Frankston North	5,626	*
	3465 Maryborough	7,630	✓
	3840 Morwell	13,691	-
	Supplementary: Special case	3520 Korong Vale	248
2	3022 Andeer	2,823	-
	3019 Braybrook	8,180	✓
	3048 Coolaroo	3,261	*
	3061 Campbellfield	5,467	✓
	3940 Rosebud West	4,579	✓
	3355 Wendouree	9,766	*
	3	3523 Heathcote	2,776
3825 Moe		15,292	-
3556 Eaglehawk		4,811	✓
3075 Lalor		19,873	-
3021 St Albans		35,091	-
3478 St Arnaud		2,619	*
4		3175 Dandenong	24,919
	3505 Merbein	2,671	*
	3500 Mildura	30,650	-
	3549 Robinvale	2,134	✓
	3660 Seymour	6,360	-
	3074 Thomastown	20,331	-
	Supplementary: Special case	3594 Nyah	483
5	3915 Hastings	8,685	✓
	3909 Lakes Entrance	5,250	✓
	3629 Mooroopna	7,813	-
	3335 Rockbank	1,349	-
	3630 Shepparton	29,553	-
	3995 Wonthaggi	4,354	✓
	6	3020 Albion	4,337
3377 Arrarat		8,076	-
3672 Benalla		9,328	✓
3888 Orbost		2,900	✓
3842 Churchill		5,000	-
3984 Corinella		630	✓
3356 Delacombe		4,932	*
3496 Red Cliffs		4,600	-
3939 Rosebud		12,502	✓
3380 Stawell		6,150	✓
Supplementary: Special case		3081 Heidelberg West	5,327
Supplementary: Special case	3373 Beaufort	1,004	✓

More information about Supplementary/Special case locations is available in the full report.

QUEENSLAND

Band 2015	Localities arranged alphabetically within each band	Estimated population (2011)	Band in 2007 (top 6 bands) ³	Top 5% 2015 (✓) and Top 10% 2015 (*)
1	Aurukun	1,200	2	✓
	Doomadgee	1,404		✓
	Kowanyama	1,198		✓
	Mornington	1,100		✓
	Woorabinda	970		✓
	Yarrabah	3,000		✓
2	Cherbourg	1,241	2	✓
	Inala	13,796		*
	Lockhart River	642		*
	Napranum	900		*
	Palm Island	5,000		✓
	Pormpuraaw	698		✓
3	Bundaberg – Kolan	4,563	2	✓
	Carpentaria	2,200	5	
	Rockhampton – Mount Morgan	2,447	1	
	South Burnett – Wondai	4,375	6	
	South Burnett – Murgon	2,092	1	
	Woodridge	12,787	1	
4	Cairns – Central Suburbs	22,196	6	
	Cook	3,976		
	Fraser Coast – Hervey Bay B	4,321	1	
	Paroo	1,951	3	
	Redland – Balance	8,360	3	
	South Burnett – Nanango	9,695		
5	Acacia Ridge	6,951	4	
	Beenleigh	8,244		
	Eagleby	11,972	4	
	Garbutt	2,482		
	North Burnett – Gayndah	2,751	6	
	North Burnett – Biggenden	1,506	1	
6	Bundaberg – Bundaberg	47,946	4	
	Caboolture Central	23,814	2	
	Deception Bay	21,761	6	
	Fraser Coast – Maryborough	26,231	6	
	Gladstone – Miriam Vale	5,533		
	Gympie – Kilkivan	3,735		
	Rocklea	1,248	4	
	Southern Downs – Warwick	11,802	6	
	Tablelands - Mareeba	20,020		
Waterford West	6,160			

³Left blank when no data was available for this location in 2007. Boundary and name changes affect direct comparison.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Band 2015	Statistical Local Areas arranged alphabetically	Estimated population (2011)	Band in 2007 ⁴	Top 5% 2015 (✓) and Top 10% 2015 (*)
1	Anangu Pitjantjatjara	2,440		✓
	Cooper Pedy	1,695	1	✓
	Maralinga Tjarutja	73		✓
	Peterborough	1,731	1	✓
	Playford – Elizabeth	25,243	1	✓
	Unincorporated Whyalla	211		*
2	Ceduna	2,642	3	✓
	Playford – West Central	16,294	2	✓
	Port Adelaide - Enfield – Park	382	2	*
	Port Augusta	7,336	2	*
	Port Pirie City Districts – City	17,333	2	*
	Unincorporated West Coast	635		*
3	Berri & Barmera – Berri	4,103	4	
	Copper Coast	12,949	2	
	Murray Bridge (RC)	13,892	1	
	Onkaparinga - North Coast	2,534	1	
	Renmark Paringa - Renmark	7,491	3	
	Salisbury – Central	28,485	3	
4	Berri & Barmera – Barmera	4,103	2	
	Port Adelaide Enfield Inner	539	3	
	Port Adelaide Enfield (C) – Port	355	2	
	Salisbury – Inner North	9,277	4	
	Whyalla	3,733	3	
	Yorke Peninsula (DC)- North	7,049	5	
5	The Coorong	5,525	5	
	Goyder	4,162	4	
	Loxton Waikerie West	4,332	6	
	Mid Murray	8,136	2	
	Onkaparinga Hackham	14,093	4	
	Yorke Peninsula South	7,049	4	
6	Barunga West	2,457	6	
	East Murray Karoonda	1,032		
	Mount Gambier	25,247	6	
	Port Lincoln	14,088	5	
	Port Pirie City Districts - Balance	3,511	6	
	Wakefield	6,662	5	

⁴No comparative data available if left blank.

MAPS

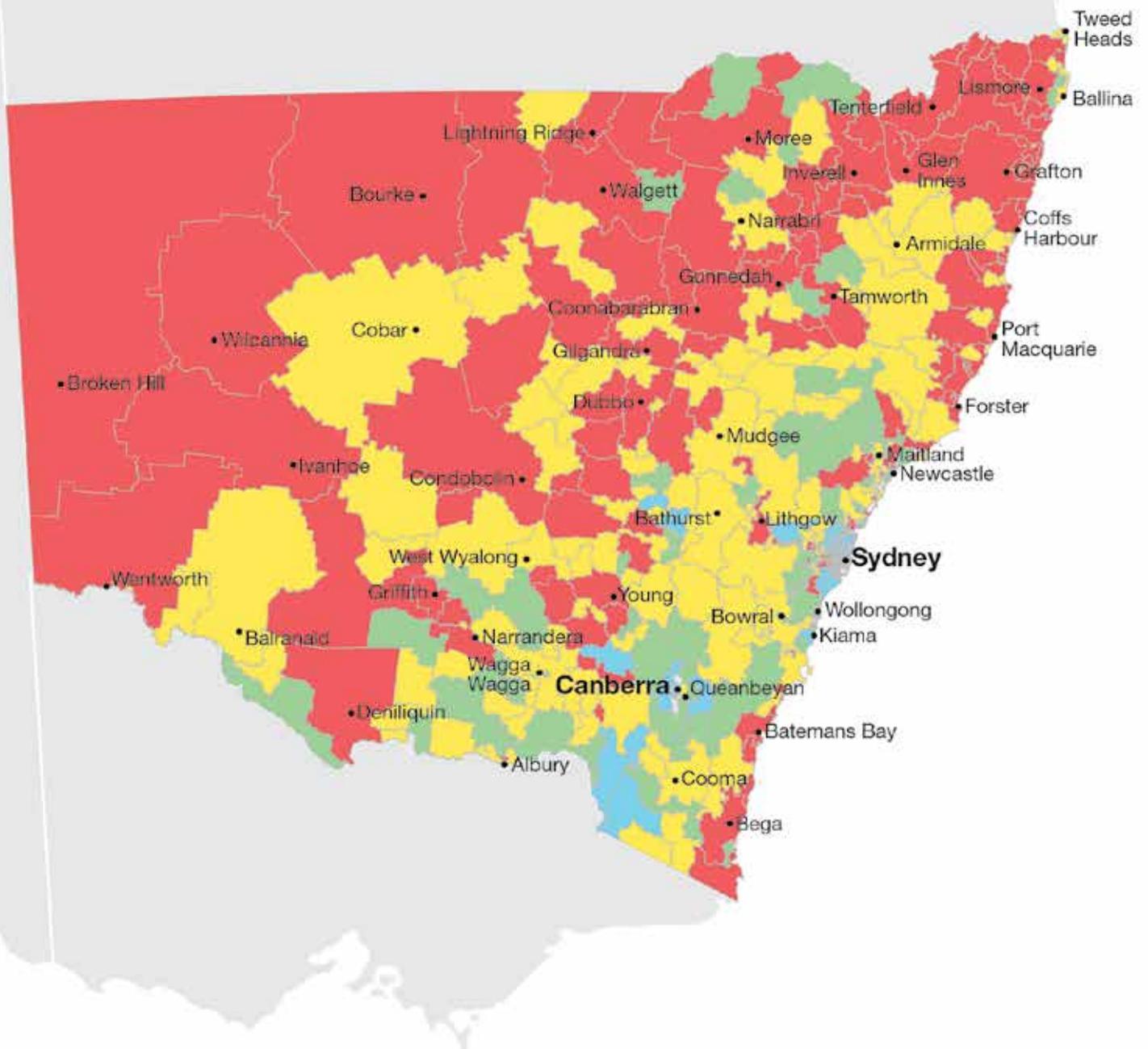
The maps that appear in the publication and on the website, showing the spatial distribution of disadvantage, use four categories of severity. The method used to determine this outcome is one favoured by geographers – the nested mean. The method has the advantage of using the data and their distribution to determine breaks in the distribution of scores. The procedure is simple: the mean of the data is calculated and a two-fold division made at this point. Then the mean for each half is calculated and a further two-fold division made yielding the desired four categories of severity of disadvantage – most disadvantaged, disadvantaged, advantaged, and most advantaged.

New South Wales Postcodes

- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged



0 100 200 300 400 kilometres



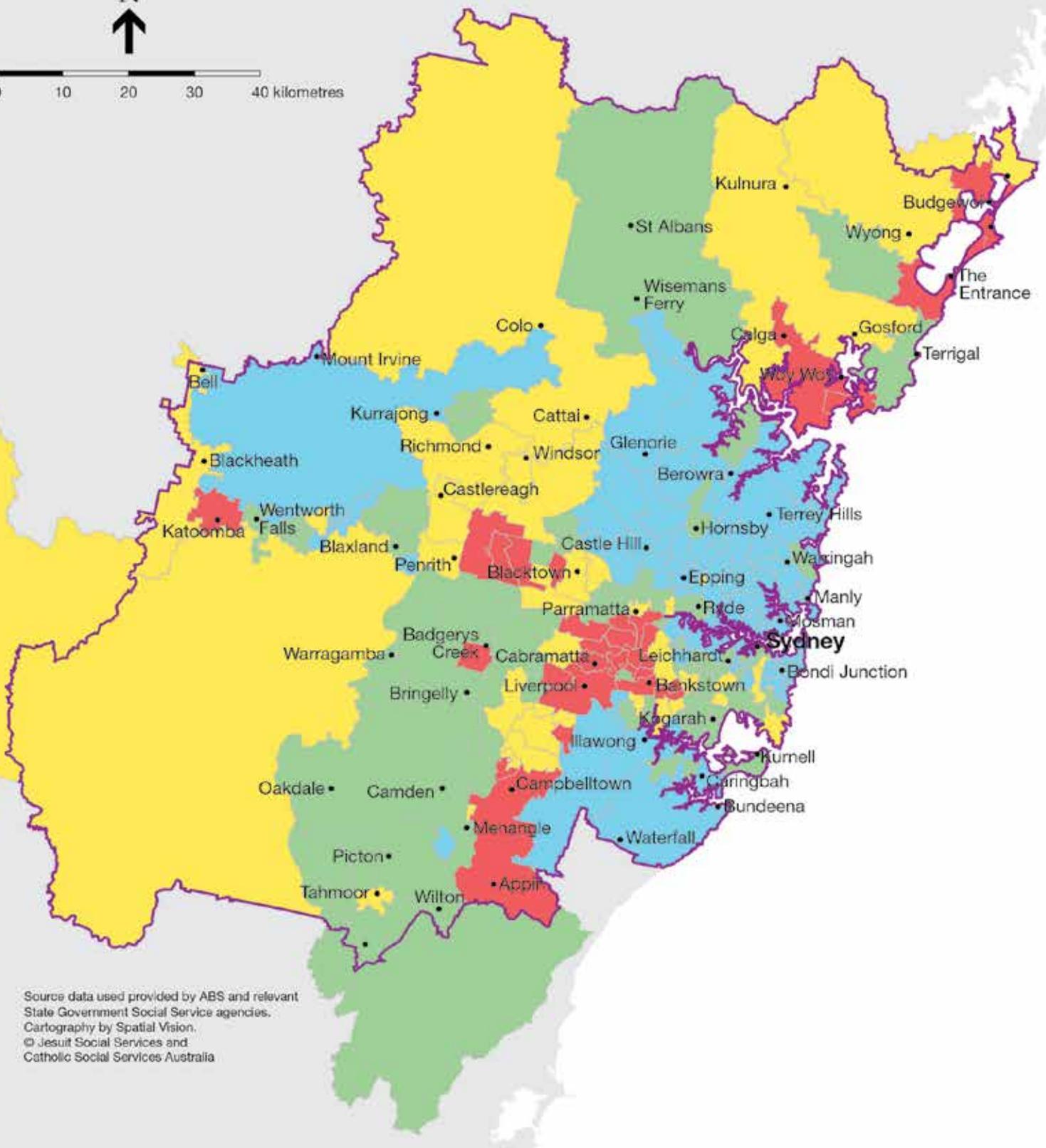
Source data used provided by ABS and relevant State Government Social Service agencies.
 Cartography by Spatial Vision.
 © Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia

Sydney
Postcodes

- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged
- Greater capital city statistical area



0 10 20 30 40 kilometres

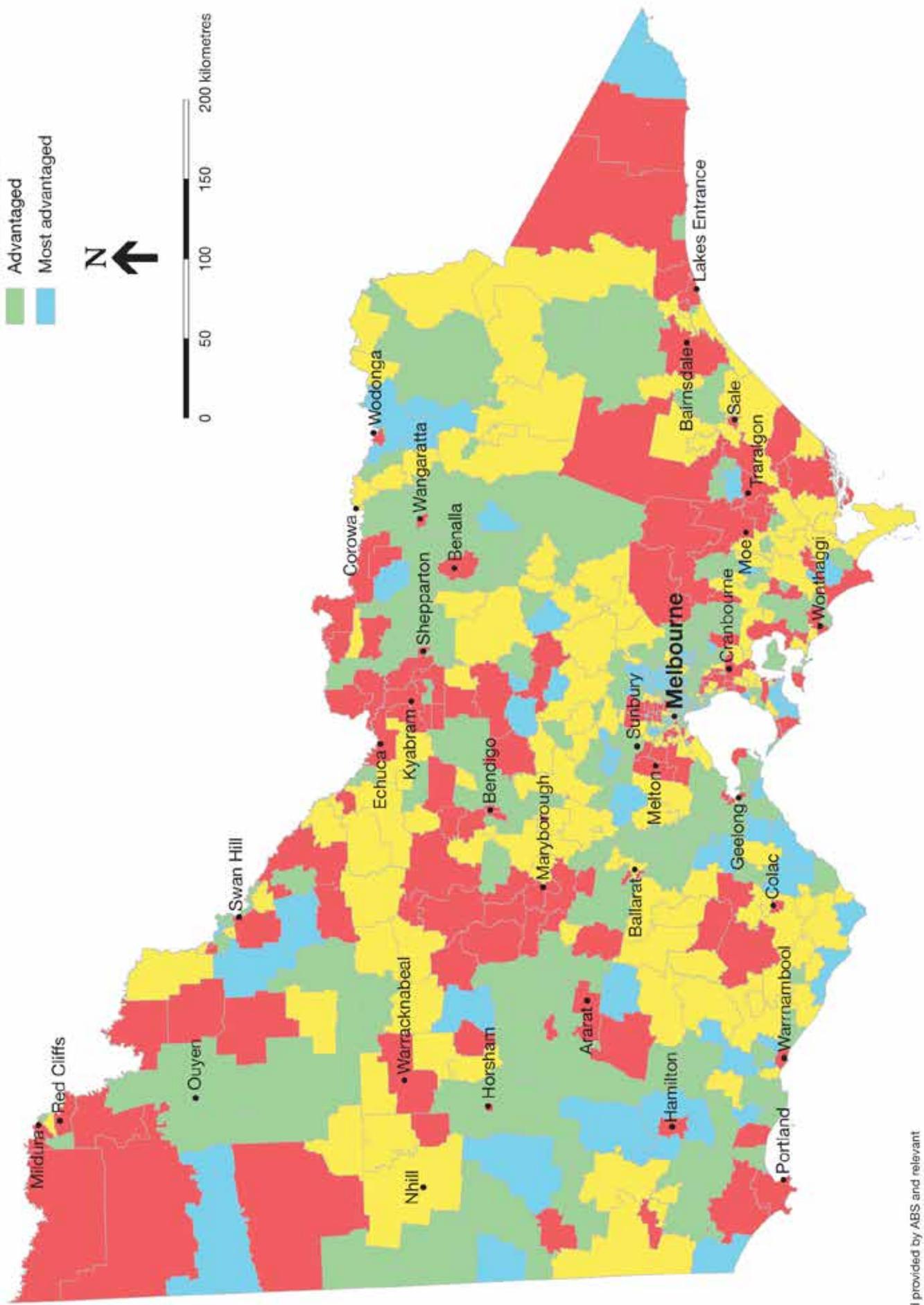


Source data used provided by ABS and relevant State Government Social Service agencies.
Cartography by Spatial Vision.
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Victoria

postcodes

- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged



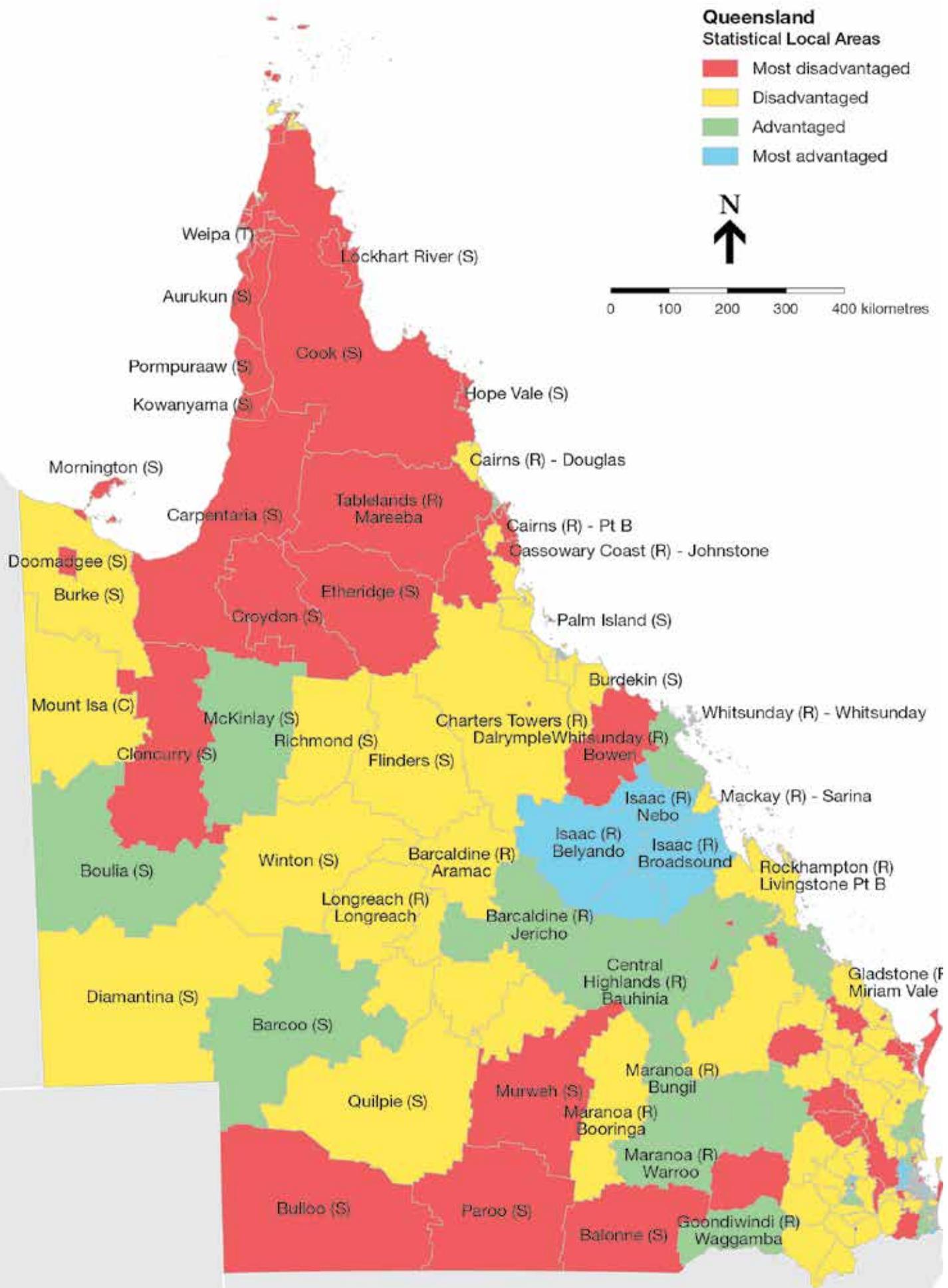
Source data used provided by ABS and relevant State Government Social Service agencies. Cartography by Spatial Vision. © Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia

Melbourne Postcodes

- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged
- Greater capital city statistical area



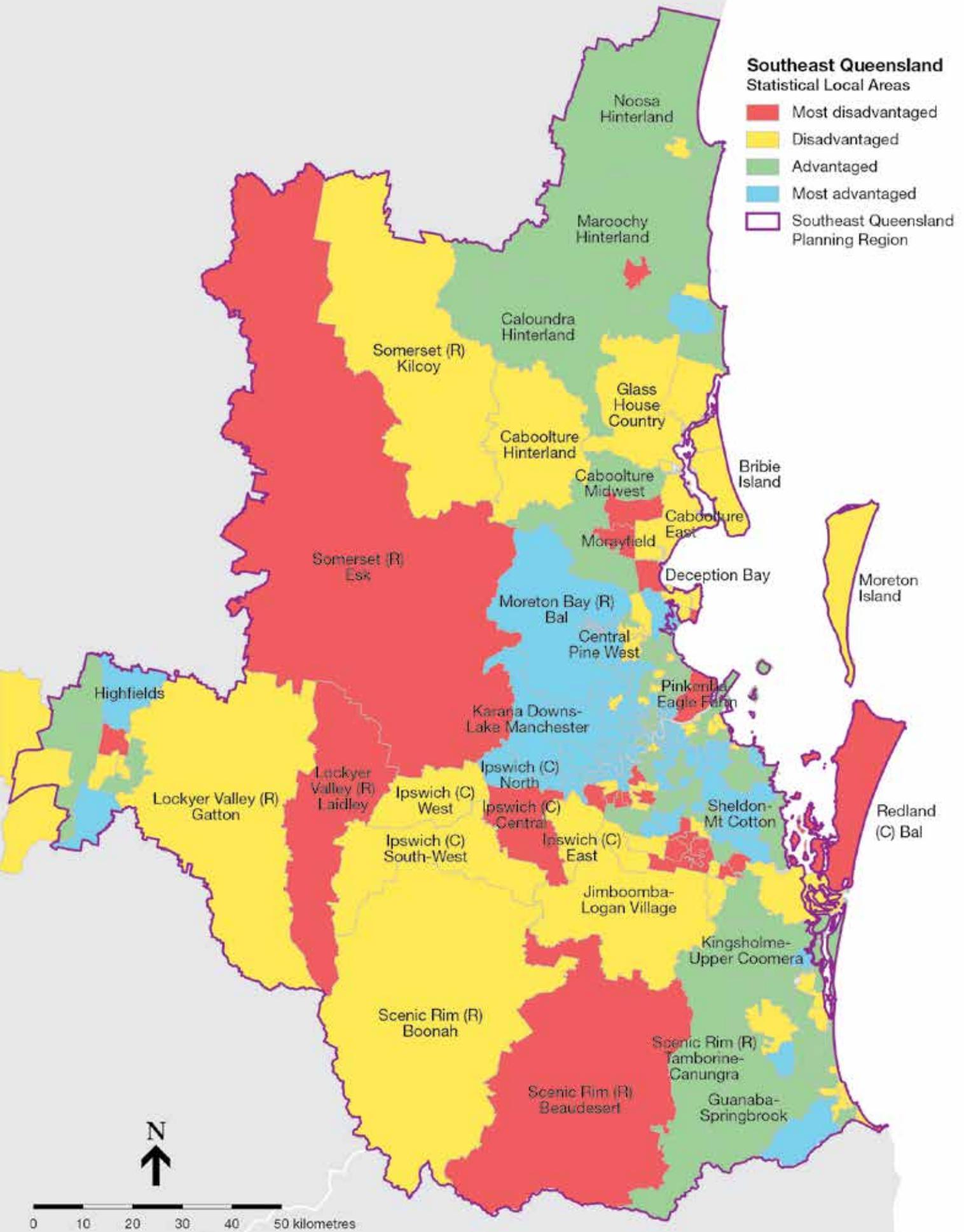
Source data used provided by ABS and relevant State Government Social Service agencies.
 Cartography by Spatial Vision.
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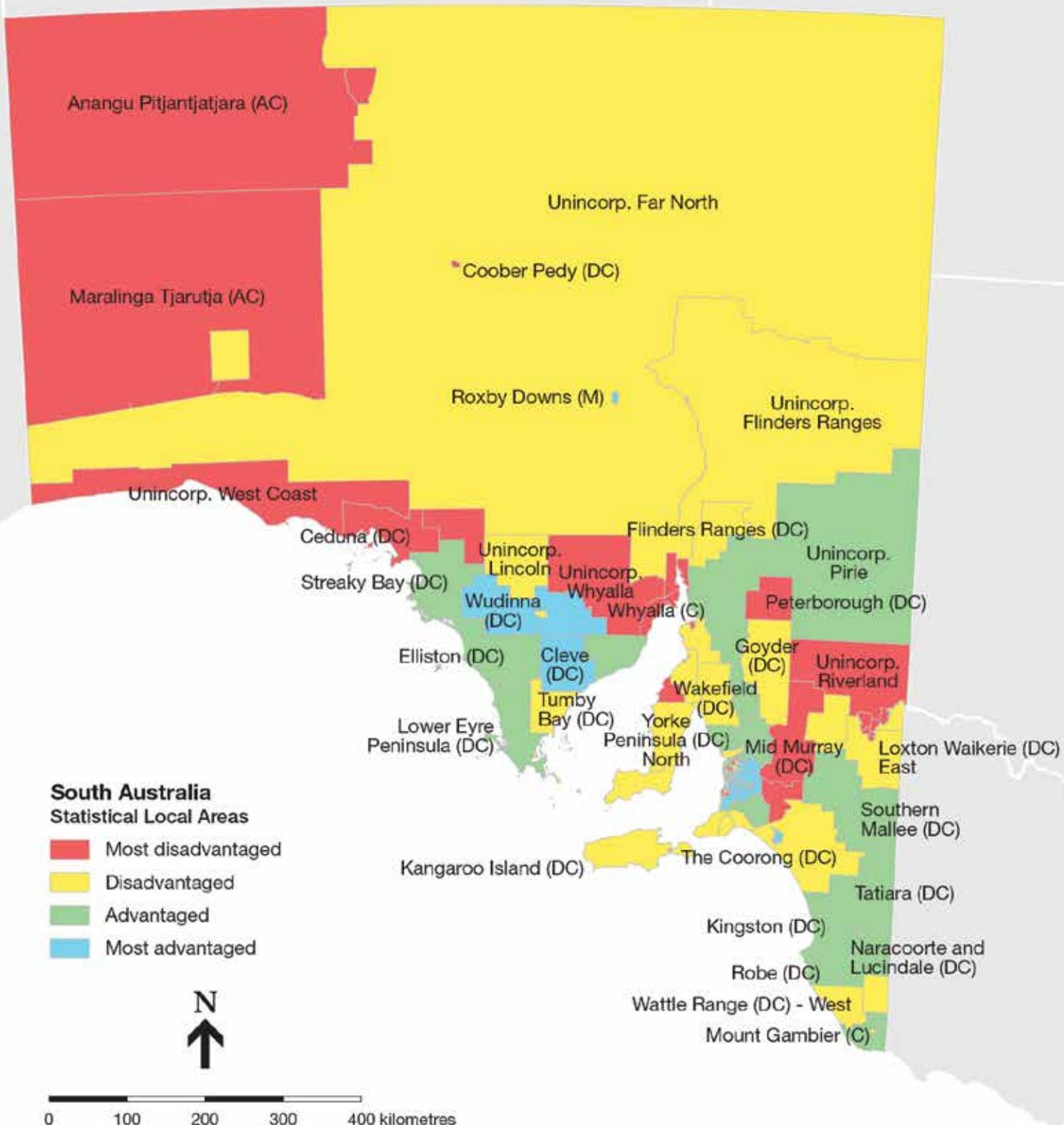
Source data used provided by ABS and relevant State Government Social Service agencies.
 Cartography by Spatial Vision.
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Southeast Queensland Statistical Local Areas

- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged
- Southeast Queensland Planning Region



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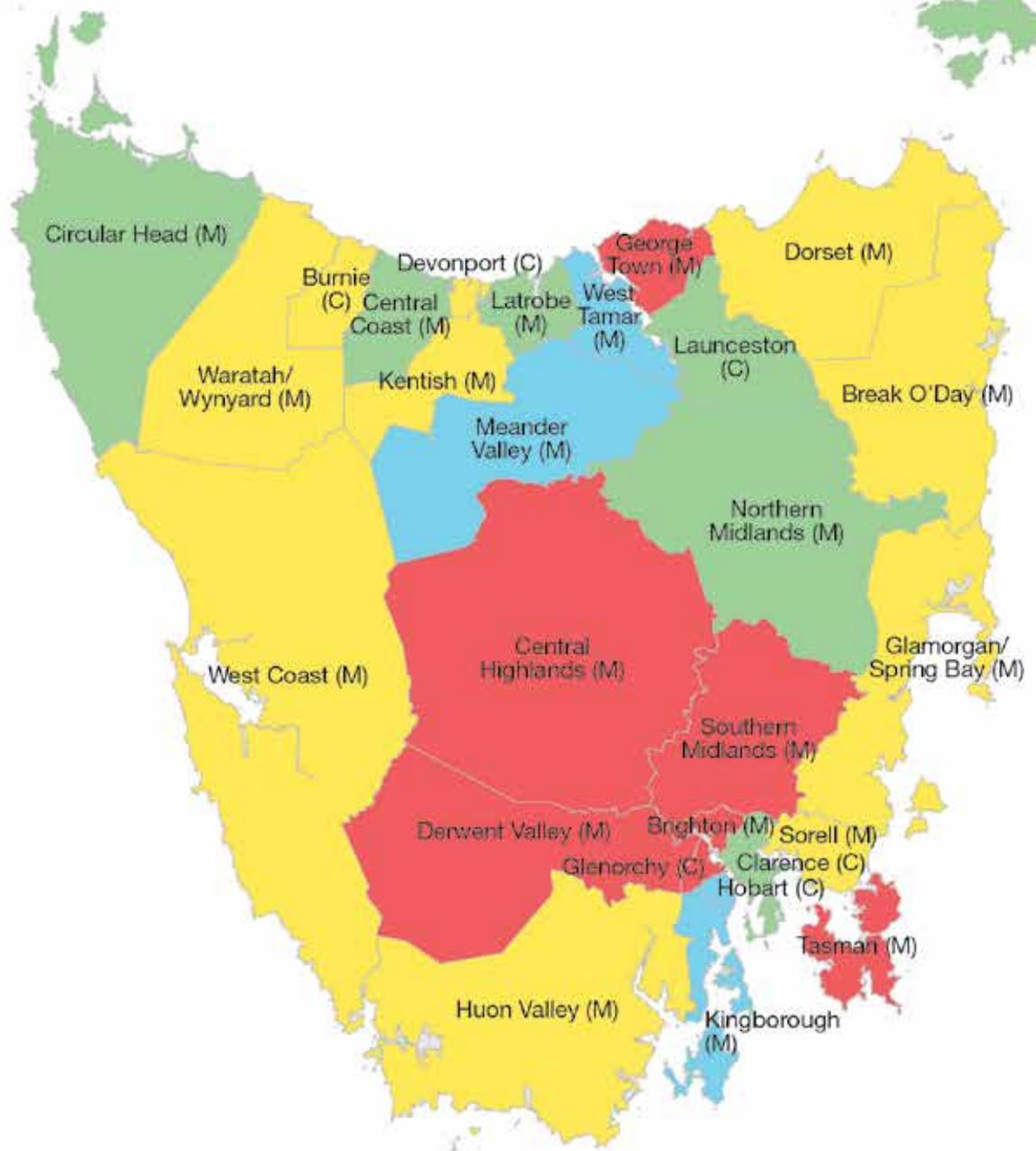


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Tasmania

Local Government Areas

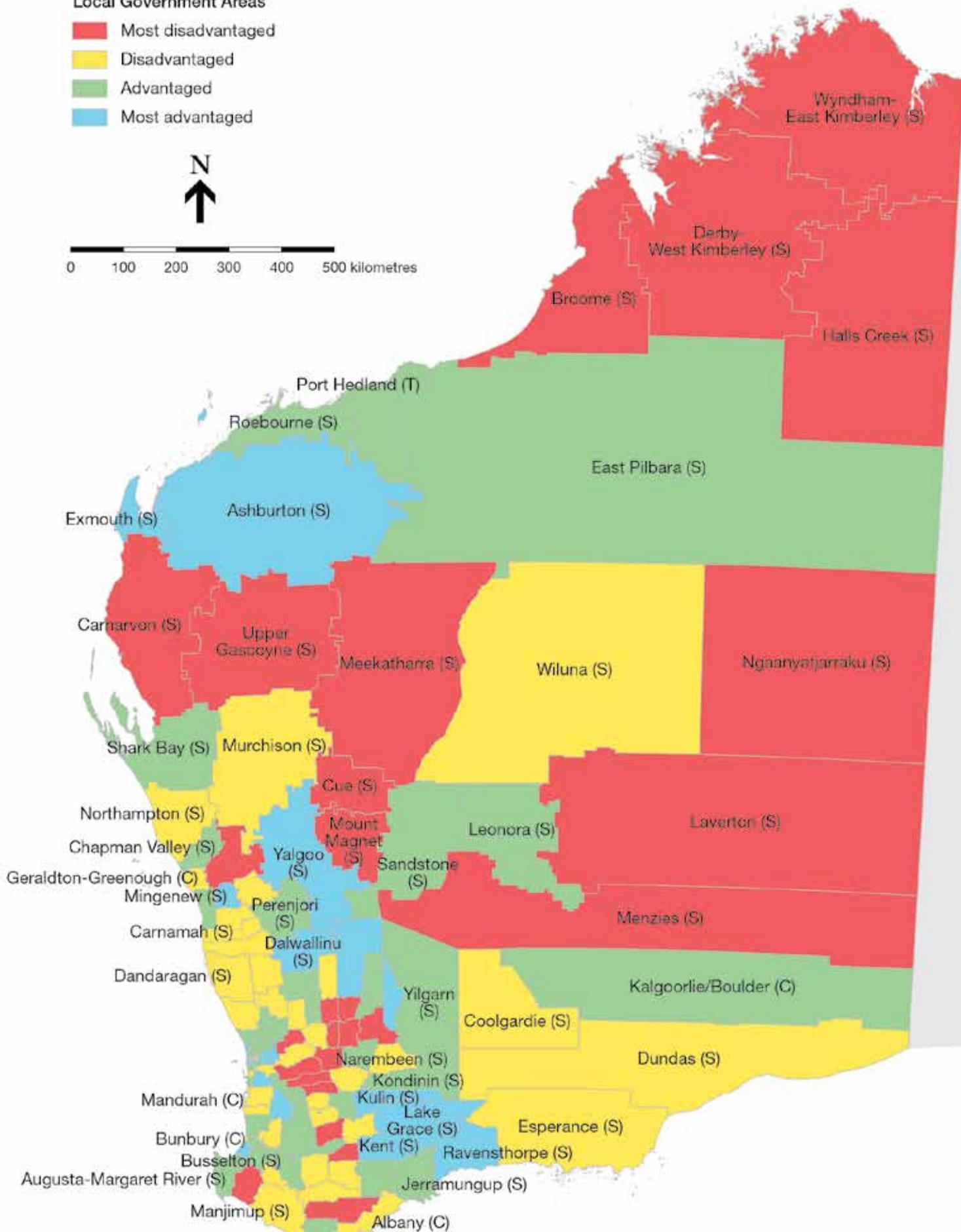
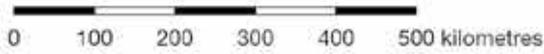
- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged



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Western Australia
Local Government Areas

- Most disadvantaged
- Disadvantaged
- Advantaged
- Most advantaged



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In 2007, Jesuit Social Services and Catholic Social Services Australia commissioned ground-breaking research into place-based disadvantage across the nation. The resulting report, *Dropping off the Edge*, quickly became a critical resource for governments, service providers and communities attempting to address the challenge of entrenched geographical disadvantage.

That report received over 284 scholarly citations and supported the establishment of the Australian Social Inclusion Board – a body charged with identifying long-term strategies to end poverty in Australia. This new report, *Dropping off the Edge 2015*, seeks to build on that work as well as significant national and international research documenting social influences that limit people's opportunities in life.

