

## DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2015

**Dropping off the Edge 2015** examines 475 Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) in Queensland 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 wellbeing, health, community safety, access to housing, education and employment.

SLAs were ranked on each indicator, with high rankings indicating the SLA was significantly affected by the particular limiting factor (eg unemployment or disability). These simple rankings were then used in a more comprehensive analysis (incorporating performance on all indicators, whether positive or negative), to produce an overall ranking of disadvantage.

**Dropping off the Edge 2015** builds on similar reports released in 2007, 2004 and 1999, although Queensland did not feature in the earlier two reports.

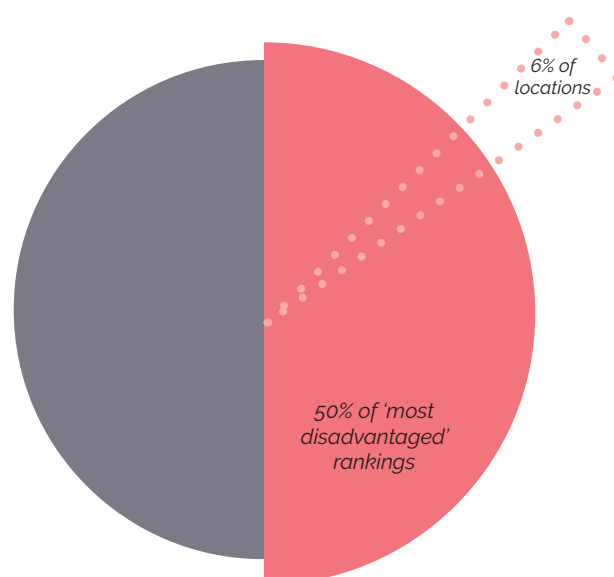
### Key findings

- Disadvantage is concentrated in a small number of communities within Queensland.
- These communities experience a complex web of disadvantage and bear a disproportionately high level of disadvantage within the state.
- The data suggests that extreme forms of disadvantage are being experienced by 11 SLAs across Queensland, and highlights the particular challenges facing remote communities.
- A significant number of SLAs have remained depressed for long periods demonstrating the persistent, entrenched nature of the disadvantage experienced by these communities.

### Locational disadvantage is concentrated

A limited number of SLAs account for a disproportionate number of 'top ranked' (ie most disadvantaged) positions:

- **6% of SLAs account for nearly 50% of the 'top rankings' across the range of indicators.**
- **2.3% (ie the 11 most disadvantaged SLAs) account for 26% of the top rankings.** Eight of these 11 are considered 'very remote'.



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 SLAs is compared with the rest of the state. Those living in the 3% most disadvantaged SLAs in the state 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 or child maltreatment, and to have a low level of education
- more than twice as likely to have a disability or have been unemployed for a lengthy period.

### A complex web of disadvantage

The study examined SLAs which ranked in the 'most disadvantaged' group on more than 10 indicators, and found that these multiply-disadvantaged SLAs had a number of dominant features. Indeed, every one of these areas had high levels of:

- **Youth disengagement ('young adults not fully engaged in work or study')**
- **Long-term unemployment**
- **Prison admissions**

In addition, the following were common features of more than 90% of multiply-disadvantaged areas:

- **Low family income**
- **Low levels of internet access**

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

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

### Locational disadvantage is entrenched

Disadvantage is entrenched in a number of the state's most challenging communities. The persistent nature of the disadvantage is demonstrated when we compare findings of this 2015 study with the previous study undertaken in 2007. More than half of the state's 40 most disadvantaged SLAs in **Dropping off the Edge 2015** were also in the top six bands of disadvantage in the 2007 study (see table opposite). It can also be seen that disadvantage is prominent in many remote communities.

It is also worth noting that some of the communities appearing amongst the 'most disadvantaged' for the first time in this study were not noted in the previous study due to lack of available data. This is the most likely explanation for the significant increase in the number of Torres Strait Islands (as well as Northern Peninsula areas) that now appear on the most disadvantaged list.

### Dominant characteristics of Queensland's multiply-disadvantaged locations

Youth disengagement

Long-term unemployment

Prison admissions

Low family income

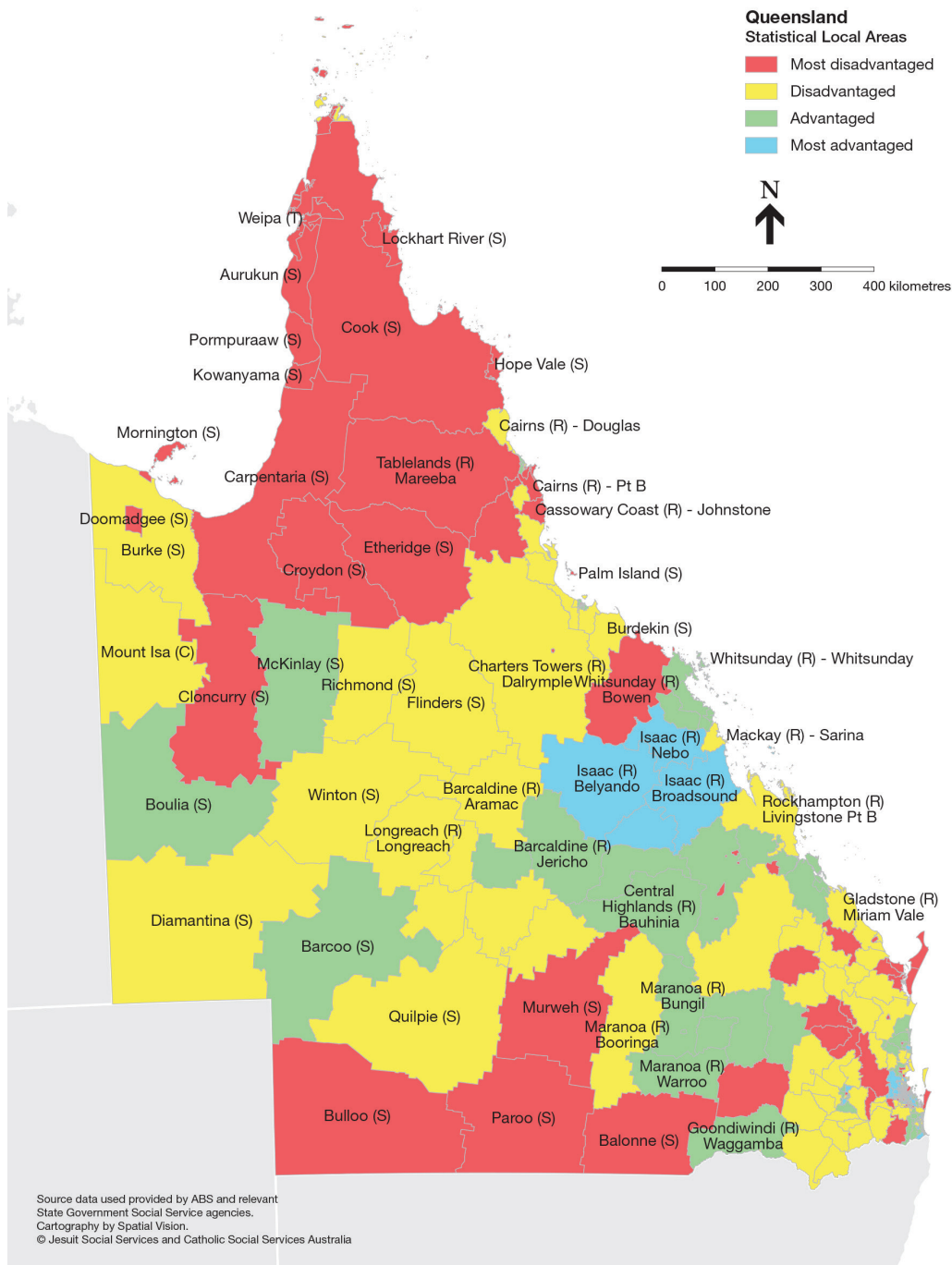
Access to internet

**Most disadvantaged SLAs in QLD – comparison with 2007**

(Bands illustrate the severity of disadvantage experienced by a location with Band 1 being most severe. Locations listed alphabetically within bands.)

Band 2015	Localities arranged alphabetically within each band	Estimated Population (2011)	Band in 2007 (top 6 bands) <sup>1</sup>
<b>BAND 1</b>	Aurukun	1200	
	Doomadgee	1404	
	Kowanyama	1198	
	Mornington	1100	✓ (B2)
	Woorabinda	970	
	Yarrabah	3000	
<b>BAND 2</b>	Cherbourg	1241	
	Inala	13796	✓ (B2)
	Lockhart River	642	
	Napranum	900	
	Palm Island	5000	
	Pormpuraaw	698	
<b>BAND 3</b>	Bundaberg – Kolan	4563	✓ (B2)
	Carpentaria	2200	✓ (B5)
	Rockhampton – Mount Morgan	2447	✓ (B1)
	South Burnett – Wondai	4375	✓ (B6)
	South Burnett – Murgon	2092	✓ (B1)
	Woodridge	12787	✓ (B1)
<b>BAND 4</b>	Cairns – Central Suburbs	22196	✓ (B6)
	Cook	3976	
	Fraser Coast – Hervey Bay B	4321	✓ (B1)
	Paroo	1951	✓ (B3)
	Redland – Balance	8360	✓ (B3)
	South Burnett – Nanango	9695	
<b>BAND 5</b>	Acacia Ridge	6951	✓ (B4)
	Beenleigh	8244	
	Eagleby	11972	✓ (B4)
	Garbutt	2482	
	North Burnett – Gayndah	2751	✓ (B6)
	North Burnett – Biggenden	1506	✓ (B1)
<b>BAND 6</b>	Bundaberg – Bundaberg	47946	✓ (B4)
	Caboolture Central	23814	✓ (B2)
	Deception Bay	21761	✓ (B6)
	Fraser Coast – Maryborough	26231	✓ (B6)
	Gladstone – Miriam Vale	5533	
	Gympie – Kilkivan	3735	
	Rocklea	1248	
	Southern Downs – Warwick	11802	
	Tablelands – Mareeba	20020	✓ (B4)
	Waterford West	6160	✓ (B6)

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



## #DOTE2015

**DROPPING OFF THE EDGE 2015**  
**Persistent communal disadvantage in Australia**

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