

---

# Regional Development Australia Far North

**Map of Regional Development Australia Far North**



Source: Department of Planning and Local Government of South Australia.

## Local government areas

- Cober Pedy
- Flinders Ranges
- Port Augusta
- Roxby Downs

## Unincorporated areas

- Unincorporated Far North
- Unincorporated Flinders Ranges
- Unincorporated Lincoln
- Unincorporated Pirie
- Unincorporated Whyalla

## Aboriginal Lands

- Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY Lands)

---

# Overview

## ***Geography***

- RDA Far North is the largest region covering an area of 696,986 square kilometres or 71 per cent of the State's land mass.

## ***Population***

- As at 30<sup>th</sup> June 2010 the region had a population of 28,726 persons accounting for 1.5 per cent of the State's population. Population growth due to expansion of Roxby Downs is projected to exceed the State average. Port Augusta is the region's largest city with a population of 14,784 persons (ABS, 2010, preliminary estimate) comprising major commercial, retail and educational facilities. Other major commercial and service centres include Leigh Creek, Coober Pedy and Roxby Downs. The Indigenous population was 4,700 persons or 16.7 per cent of the region's population.
- Approximately one fifth of South Australia's Indigenous population live in the Far North.

## ***Economy and Labour force***

- The region contributed \$2,495 million to the State economy in 2006/07 or 3.7 per cent of gross state product.
- The economy relies principally on mining; the region is rich in uranium, copper, gold and iron ore, producing 70 per cent of the states mining output. Olympic Dam located near Roxby Downs has the world's largest known reserves of uranium and fourth largest reserve of copper potentially providing employment to over 4,000 workers.
- The three largest employing industries in the Far North region for 2006/07 were mining (19.6 per cent), health and community services (10.9 per cent) and retail trade (10.6 per cent). Other important industries include tourism, agriculture and defence, containing aerospace and defence facilities of strategic importance to the state.
- As at June 2011 there were 11,416 employed persons in the region.
- The Far North has an unemployment rate of 7.0 per cent in June 2011, above the State average rate of 5.5 per cent.
- Full-time participation in secondary school was 19 percentage points below the State average although the region has a much higher participation rate in VET courses.

## ***Opportunities for growth***

- Mining will spur economic growth in the region. The region contains 72 per cent of South Australia's mineral resources projects; as of August 2011 there were a total of 46 mineral projects in South Australia, seventeen approved and twenty nine developing projects; of the seventeen approved projects fourteen are located in the Far North region and of the twenty nine developing projects nineteen are located in the Far North region.
- The proposed BHP expansion of Olympic Dam will create the world's largest open pit mine, creating 6,000 jobs during construction.
- The region is home to other major mining companies such as OZ Minerals (Prominent Hill), Santos (Cooper Basin) and Uranium One (Honeymoon Project).
- The demand for further investment and development of ports, road, rail, energy and water infrastructure will require greater cooperation between mining companies and government for infrastructure sharing and greater investment in public infrastructure.

## ***Education and Skills***

- Schools in the Far North region, in terms of NAPLAN results and secondary school completion rates are well below the State average and ultimately it is investment in education and social capital that is the engine of growth. Far greater attention to early childhood learning, primary and secondary school assistance, completion and performance is required to ensure gradual and consistent improvement in literacy, numeracy and post-secondary studies. The average reading result for the Far North (NAPLAN) in year 3 was 81.1 per cent relative to State average (set to 100) and by year 7 had improved to 88.6 per cent. Similar comparisons for spelling and numeracy were evident across the region.

# Indicators

	RDA Far North	South Australia
<b>Geography</b>		
Land area - square kilometres (includes unincorporated areas) <sup>1</sup>	696,986	985,292
Land area as a percentage of the state - per cent	70.7	100
Area of agricultural land (2006) - hectares '000	41,783	55,408
<b>Demographics</b>		
Total population (2010) - all persons (includes unincorporated areas)	28,726	1,640,638
Males (2010) - all males	15,315	810,264
Females (2010) - all females	13,411	830,374
Change in population (2005-2010) - per cent change	3.7	6.0
Population as a percentage of state population (2010) - per cent	1.5	100.0
Population projection 2016	31,778	1,770,644
Population as a percentage of state population (2010) - per cent	1.5	100.0
<b>Industry employment (2006)</b>		
Mining	1,492	0.9%
Retail Trade	1,446	14.7%
Health and Community Services	1,403	12.7%
Education	953	7.4%
<b>Trade<sup>2</sup></b>		
Exports (2006/07) - \$ billions	2.8	27.4
Imports, (2006/07) - \$ billions	2.4	30.8
<b>Labour force (includes unincorporated areas)</b>		
Labour force (June 2011)	14,246	861,537
Total employed (June 2011)	13,287	814,507
Total unemployed (June 2011)	959	47,030
Participation rate (2009) (excludes unincorporated areas)	64.7	63.1
Unemployment rate (June 2011) - per cent	6.7	5.5
<b>Education</b>		
Full-time participation in secondary school education at age 16 (2006) - per cent	59.7	78.4
Participation in VET courses (2009) - per 1,000 persons	112.7	73.5

Note: <sup>1</sup> All indicators exclude unincorporated areas of South Australia unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>2</sup> The value of exports and imports at the regional level includes intrastate, interstate and international trade.

- Mining developments will require significant investment in new infrastructure to support mining production the accommodation of workers families and in response to household consumption expenditure.
- Skilled workers in construction and plant operation need to be attracted to the region to live either permanently or on a temporary basis as fly-in fly-out workers. Opportunities exist to up-skill or re-skill long-term unemployed and disadvantaged workers for employment in mining and related industries.
- A focus on improving education outcomes for Indigenous and non-indigenous students is needed to increase secondary school retention rates. Approximately 20 per cent of the state's Indigenous population live in the Far North and there is a need to provide more workforce opportunities.
- Workforce opportunities are needed for residents aged 15-19 years with 28.9 per cent not in full-time education of employment compared with the state average of 21.6 per cent.

Source: Skills for jobs, The Training and Skills Commission's five year plan for skills and workforce development, 2011.