

## 6 INLAND

### 6.1 OVERVIEW

This chapter examines six statistical divisions which cover inland New South Wales (Map 1). They are Northern, Central West, Murrumbidgee, North Western, Murray and the Far West. Most divisions contain one major urban area and two to three rural/remote subdivisions. The six divisions have a combined population of 743 000.

Northern and Central West have 172 000 and 171 000 people respectively. In Northern, the major urban centre is Tamworth (population 42 500), and in Central West the major urban centres are Bathurst and Orange (population 31 000 and 35 000).

Murrumbidgee (population 147 000) includes the regional city of Wagga Wagga (population 52 500). North Western has 111 000 people and the main urban centre is Dubbo (population 34 000).

Murray is adjacent to the Victorian border. It has a number of small towns, but the major regional centre is Albury (population 50 000). The Far West statistical division has 22 000 people, but 88 per cent are in Broken Hill, which we treat as an urban subdivision.

#### 6.1 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, INLAND NEW SOUTH WALES

	Urban subdivisions	Rural subdivisions	Total
Number	1330	2337	3667
Rate	50	50	50

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

Table 6.1 shows that there were 3667 homeless people in inland New South Wales, and the rate was 50 per 10 000 in both the urban and rural subdivisions.

### 6.2 URBAN

There were 1330 homeless people in the six urban subdivisions (Table 6.2). The rate was highest in Albury (69 per 10 000) and lowest in Orange

(27 per 10 000). However, the numbers were modest in most cities. There were 94 homeless people in Orange, 111 in Broken Hill, 150 in Tamworth, and 164 in Bathurst. The numbers were higher in Albury and Wagga Wagga where there were 344 and 251 homeless people respectively.

### 6.2 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, URBAN SUBDIVISIONS, INLAND NEW SOUTH WALES

	Tamworth	Dubbo	Bathurst	Orange	Wagga Wagga	Albury	Broken Hill	Total
Number	150	216	164	94	251	344	111	1330
Rate	35	63	53	27	48	69	57	50

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

We can make three generalisations about the urban subdivisions. First, in most communities between 29 and 41 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP and the overall figure was 37 per cent (Table 6.3). Second, 34 per cent of the homeless were staying temporarily with other households, although the percentages varied in different communities. Third, there were smaller numbers of people in boarding houses and few people in the 'improvised dwellings' category.

### 6.3 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, URBAN AREAS, INLAND NEW SOUTH WALES

#### Percentage

	Tamworth	Dubbo	Bathurst	Orange	Wagga Wagga	Albury	Broken Hill	Total
Boarding house	15	38	19	13	15	22	34	22
SAAP	33	29	57	34	38	41	12	37
Friends/relatives	47	19	24	53	33	32	51	34
Improvised dwellings	5	14	0	0	14	5	3	7
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

#### Number

	Tamworth	Dubbo	Bathurst	Orange	Wagga Wagga	Albury	Broken Hill	Total
Boarding house	22	82	32	12	37	76	38	299
SAAP	50	63	93	32	96	142	13	489
Friends/relatives	71	40	39	50	82	111	57	450
Improvised dwellings	7	31	0	0	36	15	3	92
	150	216	164	94	251	344	111	1330

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

The urban subdivision with the largest homeless population was Albury with 344 homeless people, including 142 in SAAP. Local service providers reported a significant increase in SAAP accommodation in recent years. A number of services provide accommodation for women who sometimes have large families with them. There were 111 people staying with friends or relatives and service providers reported that caravans are used as emergency accommodation. There were 15 people in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough and local informants confirmed this figure.

### 6.3 RURAL

Six out of the 13 rural subdivisions in inland New South Wales had less than 30 000 people, two had between 40 000 and 43 000, and five had between 50 000 and 63 000 people. The rate of homelessness varied from 21 per 10 000 in Central Macquarie to 120 per 10 000 in Macquarie-Barwon.

#### 6.4 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, RURAL SUBDIVISIONS, INLAND NEW SOUTH WALES

	<b>Northern</b>			<b>North Western</b>		
	Northern Slopes	Northern Tablelands	North Central Plain	Central Macquarie	Macquarie-Barwon	Upper Darling
Number	267	367	218	107	201	86
Rate	67	59	80	21	120	86

  

	<b>Central West</b>		<b>Murrumbidgee</b>		<b>Murray</b>		
	Central Tablelands	Lachlan	Central	Lower	Upper	Central	Murray-Darling
Number	166	201	121	229	77	113	108
Rate	32	38	24	53	35	38	117

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

There were two subdivisions with about 80 homeless people: Upper Murray and Upper Darling (Table 6.4). Another nine had between 100 and 230 homeless people: Central Macquarie (107), Murray Central (113), Central Murrumbidgee (121), Central Tablelands (166), Lachlan (201), Macquarie-Barwon (201), North Central Plain (218), and Lower Murrumbidgee (229). There were two subdivisions with more than 250 homeless people: the Northern Slopes had 267 and the Northern Tablelands had 367.

The Northern Tablelands includes Armidale, Glen Innes and Tenterfield. In the Northern Tablelands, there were 128 people staying with friends and relatives, 107 in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough, 83 in SAAP and 49 in boarding houses. Local service providers knew of several

boarding houses which together ‘could have accommodated 49 people’, and they also corroborated the number in SAAP. However, locals reported that ‘sleeping out is rare’. Most people in the primary population were in improvised dwellings such as sheds and shacks, often on the outskirts of towns or ‘out in the bush’. Some people were probably hoping to build houses but many were on low incomes and this dream had not been realised. One service provider said, ‘perhaps people want to build houses, but I’ve never seen one go up’.

#### 6.5 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, RURAL AND URBAN SUBDIVISIONS, INLAND NEW SOUTH WALES

##### Percentage

	Urban subdivisions	Rural subdivisions	Total
Boarding house	22	11	15
SAAP	37	14	23
Friends/relatives	34	42	39
Improvised dwellings	7	33	23
	100	100	100

##### Number

	Urban subdivisions	Rural subdivisions	Total
Boarding house	299	256	555
SAAP	489	333	822
Friends/relatives	450	986	1 436
Improvised dwellings	92	762	854
	1330	2337	3667

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

Overall, 42 per cent of people in the rural subdivisions were staying with other households, compared with 34 per cent in the cities (Table 6.5). Homeless people in rural communities were also less likely to be in boarding houses (11 per cent compared with 22 per cent in the cities) and much less likely to be in SAAP (14 per cent compared with 37 per cent). However, 33 per cent of those in the country were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough, compared with seven per cent in the cities. There are some people who sleep rough in rural communities, but the majority were living in sheds on land that was either owned or being purchased.

#### 6.4 MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS

There were 5104 marginal residents of caravan parks in New South Wales and 705 were in inland New South Wales. Table 6.6 shows that there were 146 marginal caravan park dwellers in the six urban centres, but this was down from 356 in 2001. There were less than 30 marginal residents in all subdivisions except Albury where there were 52.

#### 6.6 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, URBAN SUBDIVISIONS, INLAND NEW SOUTH WALES

	Tamworth	Dubbo	Bathurst	Orange	Wagga Wagga	Albury	Broken Hill	Total
Homeless	150	216	164	94	251	344	111	1330
Rate per 10 000	35	63	53	27	48	69	57	50
Caravan	22	30	6	16	17	52	3	146
Total	172	246	170	110	268	396	114	1476
Rate per 10 000	40	72	55	31	51	80	59	56

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

There were 559 marginal caravan park dwellers in the rural subdivisions (Table 6.7), compared with 752 in 2001. There were 10 subdivisions which had less than 50 marginal caravan park dwellers. Only three subdivisions had more than 50. They were Central Murray (52), Northern Tablelands (88) and Central Macquarie (129).

### 6.7 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, RURAL SUBDIVISIONS, INLAND NEW SOUTH WALES

	<b>Northern</b>			<b>North Western</b>			<b>Far West*</b>
	Northern Slopes	Northern Tablelands	North Central Plain	Central Macquarie	Macquarie-Barwon	Upper Darling	
Number	267	367	218	107	201	86	76
Rate per 10 000	67	59	80	21	120	86	285
Caravan	16	88	31	129	38	15	0
Total	283	455	249	236	239	101	76
Rate per 10 000	71	73	92	47	142	101	285

	<b>Central West</b>		<b>Murrumbidgee</b>		<b>Murray</b>			<b>Total</b>
	Central Tablelands	Lachlan	Central	Lower	Upper	Central	Murray-Darling	
Number	166	201	121	229	77	113	108	2337
Rate per 10 000	32	38	24	53	35	38	117	50
Caravan	29	44	22	24	37	52	34	559
Total	195	245	143	253	114	165	142	2896
Rate per 10 000	37	47	28	58	52	56	154	62

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

\* Excluding Broken Hill.

If marginal residents of caravan parks are included in the homeless population, then the rate of homelessness increases from 50 to 56 per 10 000 in the six urban centres (Table 6.6) and from 50 to 62 per 10 000 in the 13 rural subdivisions (Table 6.7).