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*Better information and statistics
for better health and wellbeing*

Counting the homeless 2006

New South Wales

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Chris Chamberlain

Director

Centre for Applied Social Research

RMIT University

David MacKenzie

Associate Professor

Institute for Social Research

Swinburne University

Australian Institute of Health and Welfare

Canberra

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Inquiries

Chris Chamberlain: 03 9925 2956 or chris.chamberlain@rmit.edu.au

David MacKenzie: 03 9386 2909 or djmack@optusnet.com.au

PREFACE

Counting the Homeless began as a research project with the Australian Bureau of Statistics, producing one report on the national homeless population in 1996. It has since developed into a cooperatively produced national data collection, involving the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), and RMIT and Swinburne Universities. A national report was published by the ABS in September 2008, and for the first time the state and territory reports are published by the AIHW.

Funding for *Counting the Homeless 2006* was provided by the Community and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council and the Housing Ministerial Advisory Committee and coordinated by the Australian Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA). We are grateful to senior officers in FaHCSIA and the various state and territory departments which have facilitated this large and complex project at all stages.

The ABS has been a key partner from the outset and provided excellent in-kind support under its Australian Census Analytic Program. We thank our colleagues in the ABS for their continuing commitment to the project and for their generous advice and assistance, as well as their dedicated work in response to our many data requests.

Important supplementary information for the analysis comes from the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) National Data Collection at the AIHW. The AIHW team responded quickly to our inquiries. We have greatly appreciated their interest and support.

Hundreds of people in schools, local council services and homeless agencies have assisted us during the school census, especially during the extensive national local area fieldwork. Their local knowledge has been an invaluable input to this report.

The Council to Homeless Persons (CHP), Homelessness Australia, the National Youth Coalition for Housing (NYCH) and the Women's Services Network (WESNET) have been strong supporters of the project from the beginning and we have greatly appreciated their encouragement. Finally, we thank our editor, Estelle Tang, who provided invaluable editorial assistance.

Chris Chamberlain
David MacKenzie

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1 DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) uses the cultural definition of homelessness to enumerate the homeless population on census night (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 1992). This definition distinguishes between people in primary, secondary and tertiary homelessness.

Primary homelessness describes the situation of all people without conventional accommodation, such as people living on the streets, sleeping in parks, squatting in derelict buildings, living in improvised dwellings (such as sheds, garages or cabins), and using cars or railway carriages for temporary shelter.

Secondary homelessness describes the situation of people who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another. On census night, all people staying in emergency or transitional accommodation provided under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) are considered part of this category. Secondary homelessness also includes people residing temporarily with other households because they have no accommodation of their own, and people staying in boarding houses on a short-term basis, operationally defined as 12 weeks or less.

Tertiary homelessness describes the situation of people who live in boarding houses on a medium to long-term basis, operationally defined as 13 weeks or longer. Residents of private boarding houses are homeless because their accommodation does not have the characteristics identified in the minimum community standard (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 1992): they do not have a separate bedroom and living room; they do not have kitchen and bathroom facilities of their own; their accommodation is not self-contained; and they do not have security of tenure provided by a lease.

2 OVERCOUNTING AND UNDERCOUNTING

Chapter 2 summarises how the national homeless count enumerated the homeless population using census and other data sets. It contains a discussion of how there can be both overcounting and undercounting of homeless people. Undercounting is most likely in the census category 'improvised homes, tents and sleepers out', and overcounting is more likely

in boarding houses because of misclassification.

The problem of establishing reliable figures is compounded by the fact that the homeless population changes over time. There will always be people who are entering and leaving homelessness, as well as people moving between different locations. The challenge is to identify patterns in the population data that might inform the policy process.

3 ACCOMMODATION ON CENSUS NIGHT

Across Australia, 20 per cent of the homeless were in boarding houses on census night but in New South Wales the figure was 28 per cent (Table 1), the highest proportion in any state. Nationally, 19 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP accommodation, and in New South Wales it was also 19 per cent. There were fewer people staying temporarily with other households in New South Wales than there were nationally (40 per cent compared with 45 per cent), and there were fewer people in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out (13 per cent compared with 16 per cent). The census was carried out in August, when people sleeping rough are likely to hide away to escape the cold, so there could be undercounting in this category.

TABLE 1: PERSONS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION

	Australia		New South Wales	
	N	%	N	%
Boarding houses	21 596	20	7626	28
SAAP accommodation	19 849	19	5110	19
Friends and relatives	46 856	45	10 923	40
Improvised dwellings, sleepers out	16 375	16	3715	13
	104 676	100	27 374	100

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

4 AGE DISTRIBUTION

In New South Wales, the age profile of the homeless population was older than the national profile. Forty-five per cent of the homeless in New South Wales were aged 35 or older, compared with the national figure of 42 per cent (Table 2). Thirty per cent of the homeless in New South Wales were aged 45 or older, up from 25 per cent in 2001 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2004a, p. 27).

Nonetheless, a majority (55 per cent) of homeless people in New South Wales were in the younger age groups. Eighteen per cent of the homeless were teenagers aged 12 to 18 (mainly on their own). Eleven per

cent of the homeless were children under 12 who were with one or both parents. Another 10 per cent were young adults aged 19 to 24, and 16 per cent were adults aged 25 to 34.

TABLE 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOMELESS POPULATION

	Australia			New South Wales		
	N	%		N	%	
Under 12	12 133	12	58	2915	11	55
12–18	21 940	21		4987	18	
19–24	10 504	10		2685	10	
25–34	15 804	15		4337	16	
35–44	13 981	13	42	4111	15	45
45–54	12 206	12		3490	13	
55–64	10 708	10		2640	9	
65 or older	7400	7		2209	8	
	104 676	100		27 374	100	

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

5 MALES AND FEMALES

In 2006, men outnumbered women in the national homeless population, 56 to 44 per cent (Table 3), and in New South Wales men outnumbered women, 59 to 41 per cent. In New South Wales, there were more females in the 12-to-18 age group (56 to 44 per cent) and roughly equal numbers of males and females in the 19-to-24 and under-12 age groups. However, from age 25 onwards men typically outnumbered women, about 65 to 35 per cent.

TABLE 3: PERCENTAGE OF MALES AND FEMALES BY AGE GROUP

Australia									
	Under 12	12–18	19–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	52	46	53	57	63	64	61	64	56
Female	48	54	47	43	37	36	39	36	44
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

New South Wales									
	Under 12	12–18	19–24	25–34	35–44	45–54	55–64	65+	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	51	44	53	59	67	69	68	66	59
Female	49	56	47	41	33	31	32	34	41
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

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

6 INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS

In New South Wales, 2.2 per cent of people identified as Indigenous at the 2006 Census. Table 4 shows that Indigenous people were 2.7 per cent of the boarding house population, 4.3 per cent of those staying with other households, 7.4 per cent of people in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping rough, and 20.3 per cent of persons in SAAP. Indigenous people were overrepresented in all sections of the homeless population in New South Wales.

TABLE 4: PERCENTAGE OF INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, NEW SOUTH WALES

	Boarding house (N=7622)	Friends or relatives (N=10 923)	SAAP (N=4942)	Improvised dwellings (N=3709)	All* (N=27 196)
	%	%	%	%	%
Non-Indigenous	97.3	95.7	79.7	92.6	92.8
Indigenous	2.7	4.3	20.3	7.4	7.2
	100	100	100	100	100

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

* Figures have been adjusted for missing data on Indigenous status, except in 178 cases where there was inadequate information to make the adjustment.

7 SYDNEY

The Sydney statistical division comprises 14 subdivisions. This analysis groups them into four areas which are referred to as the 'City Core', the 'Inner City Ring', the 'Outer City Ring' and the 'Growth Corridors'.

The City Core is the subdivision of Inner Sydney. It has a population of 313 000 and includes the City of Sydney, Leichhardt, Marrickville and South Sydney. It shares a boundary with Sydney Harbour.

The Inner City Ring includes the other four subdivisions which adjoin Sydney Harbour. They are Lower Northern Sydney, Eastern Suburbs, Inner Western Sydney and Central Western Sydney. The Inner City Ring has a population of 991 000.

The Outer City Ring includes six subdivisions with a population of 1.98 million. They are: St George-Sutherland in the south, Blacktown in the west, Canterbury-Bankstown and Fairfield-Liverpool in the south-west, Central Northern Sydney and Northern Beaches (Manly, Pittwater and Warringah).

The Growth Corridors comprise: Outer Western Sydney (which contains Penrith and the Blue Mountains); Outer South Western Sydney, which contains Campbelltown; and the Gosford-Wyong Growth Corridor. Their combined population is 838 000.

TABLE 5: NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, SYDNEY

	City Core	Inner City Ring	Outer City Ring	Growth Corridors	Total
Number	4163	5221	4277	2295	15 956
Rate	133	53	22	27	39

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

Table 5 shows that there were 4163 homeless people in the City Core and the rate of homelessness was 133 per 10 000, down from 164 per 10 000 in 2001. The City Core had eight per cent of Sydney's population, but 26 per cent of its homeless people. It is usual to find a higher rate of homelessness in the inner suburbs of capital cities. This is the case in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart and Brisbane. People often gravitate to the inner city, where services for homeless people have traditionally been located.

In the Inner City Ring, there were 5221 homeless people and the rate was 53 per 10 000. There were 4277 homeless people in the Outer City Ring, where the rate was 22 per 10 000. The rate was 27 per 10 000 in the Growth Corridors, where there were 2295 homeless people.

Altogether, there were 11 793 homeless people in suburban Sydney, compared with 4163 in the City Core. The provision of services in suburban areas assists people in the early stages of homelessness, including those at risk, and reduces the move to the inner city.

8 HUNTER AND ILLAWARRA

Table 6 shows that the census identified 1981 homeless people in Hunter and 1338 in Illawarra. The rate of homelessness was 34 per 10 000 in both statistical divisions.

TABLE 6: NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 IN HUNTER AND ILLAWARRA

	Hunter			Illawarra			
	Newcastle	Hunter SD Balance	Total	Wollongong	Nowra- Bomaderry	Illawarra SD Balance	Total
Number	1574	407	1981	941	145	252	1338
Rate	32	42	34	36	47	25	34

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

In Hunter, about 80 per cent of homeless people (1574 people) were in Newcastle where the rate was 32 per 10 000. In Illawarra, 70 per cent of homeless people (941 people) were in Wollongong where the rate was 36 per 10 000. The rate of homelessness was higher in Hunter SD Balance (42 per 10 000) and Nowra-Bomaderry (47 per 10 000), but the number of homeless people in these subdivisions was 407 and 145 respectively. When policy makers allocate resources, they should consider the number of homeless people in a community, as well as the rate of homelessness.

9 INLAND

Chapter 6 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.

TABLE 7: 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 7 shows that there were 3667 homeless people in inland New South Wales, and that the rate was 50 per 10 000 in the urban and rural subdivisions.

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.

10 COASTAL

There are three statistical divisions on the New South Wales coast, in addition to Sydney, Hunter and Illawarra. They are Richmond-Tweed, Mid-North Coast and South Eastern ('coastal new South Wales'). There were 4428 homeless people in coastal New South Wales, where the rate of homelessness was 63 per 10 000 (Table 8).

Table 8 shows that there were 1342 homeless people in five urban subdivisions, where the rate of homelessness was 61 per 10 000. There were 396 homeless people in Tweed Heads, 241 in Lismore, 247 in Coffs harbour, 170 in Port Macquarie and 288 in Queanbeyan. There were 3086 homeless people in the six rural subdivisions, where the rate was 64 per 10 000.

TABLE 8: NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

	Urban subdivisions	Rural subdivisions	Total
Number	1342	3086	4428
Rate	61	64	63

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

INTRODUCTION

This is one of eight state and territory reports from the national project, *Counting the Homeless 2006* (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2008). Chapters 1 and 2 include material from the national report on the definition of homelessness, methodological issues, and a summary of how the homeless enumeration was undertaken. This report introduces new information on the social characteristics of the homeless population in New South Wales and the geographical distribution of homeless people. The report also includes new information on marginal caravan park dwellers and Indigenous homelessness.

The main data source for the analysis was the *ABS Census of Population and Housing 2006*. However, this data was supplemented by information from the *SAAP National Data Collection* and the third *National Census of Homeless School Students*. This data enabled us to make various technical corrections to the raw census figures and to produce the overall population estimates.

This report uses some qualitative data from telephone interviews with service providers and public officials. Local informants were selected purposively, in order to check the reliability of census data in particular communities and to understand more about what is happening on the ground. In most places, three to four people were interviewed. The report also uses qualitative data from questionnaires filled out by census collectors who enumerated the primary population in New South Wales.

Each state and territory report is set out in the same way and contains a discussion of ‘undercounting’ and ‘overcounting’. Counting errors are always an issue when enumerating the homeless population. Chapter 2 explains why some homeless people are not counted on census night (‘undercounting’) and why others may be counted more than once (‘overcounting’). A careful consideration of such errors is important when attempting to establish the number of homeless people in particular communities.

Discrepancies due to undercounting and overcounting of homeless people tend to be masked when data is aggregated at the state or national level, but these discrepancies are more obvious in small-area analyses. Thus, it is possible that people with local knowledge may think that there are more (or less) homeless people in a particular community than the number identified by the census.

The problem of establishing reliable figures in local communities is compounded by the fact that the homeless population changes over time. First, there will always be some people entering and leaving the homeless population. Second, homeless people are more mobile than the general population. It is common for homeless people to move from one form of temporary shelter to another. It is also common for homeless people to move both within and between states. This means that the number of homeless people in a particular community may not be the same as the number on census night. The challenge is to identify patterns in the homeless population that might inform the policy process.

Chapter 1 outlines the cultural definition of homelessness which underpinned the ABS project. Chapter 2 summarises how the national report established the homeless count, as well as discussing overcounting and undercounting. Chapter 3 outlines the social characteristics of the homeless population in New South Wales. Chapter 4 discusses different ways of approaching a geographical analysis, before focusing on the homeless population in Sydney. Chapters 5 to 7 describe the homeless population in regional New South Wales. Chapter 8 comments on Indigenous and non-Indigenous homelessness. Chapter 9 discusses policy issues.

1 DEFINITION OF HOMELESSNESS

The ABS uses the cultural definition to enumerate the homeless population. The cultural definition contends that ‘homelessness’ and ‘inadequate housing’ are cultural concepts that only make sense in a particular community at a given historical period (Chamberlain and Mackenzie 1992). In a society where the vast majority of people live in mud huts, the community standard will be that these dwellings constitute adequate accommodation (Watson 1986, p. 10). Once this principle is recognised, then it is possible to define ‘homelessness’.

First, the cultural definition identifies shared community standards about the minimum housing that people have the right to expect in order to live according to the conventions and expectations of a particular culture. Then, the definition identifies groups that fall below the minimum community standard.

Cultural standards are not usually stated in official documents, but are embedded in the housing practices of a society. These standards identify the conventions and cultural expectations of a community in an objective sense, and are recognised by most people because they accord with what they see around them. As Townsend (1979, p. 51) puts it:

A population comes to expect to live in particular types of homes ... Their environment ... create(s) their needs in an objective as well as a subjective sense.

The vast majority of Australians live in suburban houses or self-contained flats, and 70 per cent of all households either own or are purchasing their home (ABS 2006a, Ch. 8). There is a widespread view that home ownership is the most desirable form of tenure (Kemeny 1983, p. 1; Hayward 1992, p. 1; Badcock and Beer 2000, p. 96). Eighty-eight per cent of private dwellings in Australia are houses and 75 per cent of flats have two or more bedrooms (ABS 2006a, Ch. 8).

The minimum community standard is a small rental flat—with a bedroom, living room, kitchen, bathroom and an element of security of tenure—because that is the minimum that most people achieve in the private rental market. However, the minimum is significantly below the culturally desired option of an owner-occupied house.

The minimum community standard provides a cultural benchmark for assessing ‘homelessness’ and ‘inadequate housing’ in the contemporary context. However, as Chamberlain and MacKenzie (1992) point out, there are a number of institutional settings where people do not have the minimal level of accommodation identified by the community standard, but in cultural terms they are not considered part of the homeless population. They include, *inter alia*, people living in seminaries, elderly people in nursing homes, students in university halls of residence and prisoners.

1.1 A MODEL OF HOMELESSNESS BASED ON SHARED COMMUNITY STANDARDS EMBODIED IN CURRENT HOUSING PRACTICES

Minimum community standard: equivalent to a small rented flat with a bedroom, living room, kitchen and bathroom

<p>Culturally recognised exceptions: where it is inappropriate to apply the minimum standard, e.g. seminaries, gaols, student halls of residence</p>	<p>Marginally housed: people in housing situations close to the minimum standard</p> <p>Tertiary homelessness: people living in single rooms in private boarding houses without their own bathroom, kitchen or security of tenure</p> <p>Secondary homelessness: people moving between various forms of temporary shelter including friends and relatives, emergency accommodation, youth refuges, hostels and boarding houses</p> <p>Primary homelessness: people without conventional accommodation (living on the streets, in deserted buildings, improvised dwellings, under bridges, in parks, etc.)</p>
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Source: Chamberlain and MacKenzie 1992, p. 291.

While it is true that the concepts of ‘housed’ and ‘homeless’ constitute a continuum of circumstances, there are three situations that fall below the minimum community standard. This leads to the identification of ‘primary’, ‘secondary’ and ‘tertiary’ homelessness. The model (shown in Figure 1.1) also includes the concept of the ‘marginally housed’.

Primary homelessness accords with the common assumption that homelessness is the same as ‘rooflessness’. The category includes people living on the streets, sleeping in parks, squatting in derelict buildings, living in improvised dwellings (such as sheds, garages or cabins), and using cars or railway carriages for temporary shelter. Primary homelessness is operationalised using the census category ‘improvised homes, tents and sleepers out’.

Secondary homelessness includes people who move frequently from one form of temporary shelter to another. On census night, it includes all people staying in emergency or transitional accommodation provided under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP). The starting point

for identifying this group is the census category 'hostels for the homeless, night shelters and refuges'. Secondary homelessness also includes people residing temporarily with other households because they have no accommodation of their own. They report 'no usual address' on their census form. Secondary homelessness also includes people staying in boarding houses on a short-term basis, operationally defined as 12 weeks or less.

Tertiary homelessness refers to people who live in boarding houses on a medium- to long-term basis, operationally defined as 13 weeks or longer. Residents of private boarding houses do not have separate bedrooms and living rooms; they do not have kitchen and bathroom facilities of their own; their accommodation is not self-contained; and they do not have security of tenure provided by a lease. They are homeless because their accommodation does not have the characteristics identified in the minimum community standard.

The terms primary, secondary and tertiary homelessness are widely used, particularly when talking about census counts. However, the profile of the homeless population looks different if you classify people on the basis of their housing histories, rather than on the basis of their accommodation on census night. In a study of 4291 homeless people in Melbourne, Chamberlain, Johnson and Theobald (2007) found that 92 per cent of their sample had moved regularly from one form of temporary accommodation to another. Nearly everyone had stayed with friends or relatives, but 85 per cent had also stayed in a boarding house, 60 per cent had been in SAAP/THM accommodation, and 50 per cent had slept rough. People show up in particular places on census night but many homeless people will be somewhere else a few weeks later. Transience is the typical pattern. Primary, secondary and tertiary homelessness are useful categories to describe people's housing situations on census night, but there are not three distinct groups of homeless people.

In *Counting the Homeless 2001*, we also identified 'marginal residents of caravan parks'. These people were defined as renting caravans, at their usual address, with no one in the household having full-time work. Like boarding house tenants, these households have one room for eating and sleeping, and communal bathroom facilities. The 2001 research found that two-thirds (67 per cent) of boarding house residents were in the capital cities whereas three-quarters (78 per cent) of marginal residents of caravan parks were in regional centres and country towns (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2003, Ch. 7). In some communities, there are no boarding houses and SAAP workers send people to the local caravan park if there is no emergency accommodation available.

There is some disagreement as to whether marginal residents of caravan parks constitute a separate category. Reid, Griffin and Murdoch (2005) have examined this analysis carefully. They conclude that marginal residents of caravan parks are really part of the tertiary population. Giovanetti, Reid, Murdoch and Edwards (2007, p. 275) take a similar position:

Marginal residents of caravan parks were categorised as belonging to the tertiary homelessness category ...

We have two reservations about this approach. First, it is difficult for the wider community to accept that some people living in caravans are part of the tertiary homeless population when most caravan dwellers are on holiday or own their own caravan. The 2006 Census found that 56 per cent of individuals in caravan parks were on holiday. The census was held in winter and this figure would have been much higher in the summer months. Another 25 per cent owned their caravan and many had made a lifestyle choice to live in a caravan, typically following retirement. Only 14 per cent were marginal residents on census night and this figure would be significantly below 10 per cent in the summer months.

Second, it is now common to find that cabins are the main type of accommodation in caravan parks, and cabins often have better facilities than caravans. A cabin usually has a separate kitchen and bathroom and often has one or more bedrooms. The census cannot distinguish between households in caravans and cabins with certainty, but in 2006 we estimated that somewhere between one-quarter and one-half of marginal residents of caravan parks were living in cabins (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2008, Ch. 7). This finding undermines the argument that marginal residents of caravan parks should be considered part of the tertiary population. It also means that our 'marginal residents' category is broader than indicated in *Counting the Homeless 2001*.

2 OVERCOUNTING AND UNDERCOUNTING

This chapter summarises how the national project enumerated the homeless population using the census and other data sets. It also contains a discussion of how there can be both overcounting and undercounting of homeless people. This is relevant to understanding why there can be anomalies when we examine the number of homeless people in particular communities.

2.1 IMPROVISED HOMES, TENTS AND SLEEPERS OUT

The operational category for primary homelessness is ‘improvised homes, tents and sleepers out’. This category includes:

Sheds, tents, humpies, and other improvised dwellings, occupied on Census Night ... It also includes people sleeping on park benches or in other ‘rough accommodation’. (ABS 2006b, p. 182)

First, we explain how the count was carried out. Then we estimate the number of persons in improvised dwellings (sheds, garages and cabins) and the number of persons sleeping rough (public places, derelict buildings, tents, cars etc). Finally, we point out that rough sleepers are a very mobile population and therefore the numbers identified on census night may not accord with what people ‘know’ on the ground.

The efficacy of the local count depends on census collectors having good local knowledge. They have to know, for example, whether there are people squatting in empty buildings in their local community, or whether there might be families living in their cars, or whether there could be people camping in the bush.

In 2006, there was a special effort to count the primary population in all states and territories. People without conventional accommodation are particularly difficult to count because they usually hide away at night to escape the cold. The 2006 Census was carried out in winter in the southern states, where night-time temperatures were generally cold. In addition, some homeless people were hostile to the idea of providing information to the government and did not want to fill out official forms. Other homeless people were hidden away in derelict buildings and census collectors were unaware of their presence. Counting the primary population is a major practical challenge.

There were a number of components to the ABS strategy. Field staff were encouraged to work closely with local service providers who might know if people were squatting in derelict buildings or sleeping rough in their community. In all states, local services provided intelligence on where people might be found sleeping rough. In some cases, census forms were handed out at these agencies. It was also widely reported that mobile food vans were a good place to hand out census forms. This strategy was used in capital cities and in some regional centres, but implementation varied across the states.

The ABS also had short census forms that could be filled out by ABS staff where personal forms were judged inappropriate. The short forms were less intimidating than the longer personal forms.

In addition, there was a procedure for filling out a substitute form when a homeless person was observed by a census collector but was not able to be interviewed. Observation is an accepted method for counting people sleeping rough. Collectors were asked to record sex, estimated age and location.

The category 'improvised homes, tents and sleepers out' also included overseas visitors and Australian residents who were on camping holidays. International visitors can be identified because they report a usual address overseas, and Australian holidaymakers can be identified because they report a usual address 'elsewhere in Australia'. Once both groups were removed, this left 16 375 individuals nationally in 'improvised dwellings, tents and sleepers out', including 3715 people in this category in New South Wales.

Next, we estimate the number of persons in improvised dwellings (sheds, garages and cabins) and the number of persons sleeping rough (public places, derelict buildings, tents, cars etc). In public discussions about homelessness, it is sometimes assumed that there are 16 375 rough sleepers. However, the category 'improvised homes, tents and sleepers out' includes a wide range of situations from someone sleeping in a park, to someone sheltering in a derelict building, to someone living in a shed of some kind. Sheds can vary from broken-down buildings to assembled colour-bond farm sheds and garages.

There were 16 375 people in the 'improvised homes, tents and sleepers out' category, made up of 9414 households. It is not possible to quantify with certainty the number of people in improvised dwellings (sheds, garages and cabins) and the number of rough sleepers, but if we make two assumptions we can make some estimates.

First, we examined the responses of people in the ‘improvised homes’ category to the census question about dwelling tenure. We found that that 10 per cent were in rented dwellings and 39 per cent of households were in dwellings that were owned or being purchased. After talking with building inspectors and town planners across the country, we made the judgment that the ‘owner, purchaser, renter’ reply indicated that these households were usually living in improvised dwellings such as sheds, garages and shacks. In the case of owners and purchasers, this was their own property. It is also probable that people living in cars would have reported ‘owning’ their dwellings and this is more likely to be the case in the cities.

Second, 51 per cent of households did not answer the question about dwelling tenure and we took this to indicate that they were sleeping rough, squatting in derelict buildings, or living in other forms of temporary shelter. This assumption was in accord with other information from service providers and council staff in local areas. If both assumptions are reasonable, then we can estimate the numbers in improvised dwellings and sleeping rough, but we cannot quantify this exactly.

In the capital cities, about 75 per cent of households in the primary homelessness category were sleeping rough or squatting in derelict buildings and in Sydney it was about 77 per cent. However, in regional Australia about 60 per cent of these households were living in sheds, garages and shacks and in regional New South Wales it was about 65 per cent. Most of these dwellings were on land that was ‘owned or being purchased’, but about 20 per cent of the dwellings were rented. Both owners and renters were living in rural poverty.

Building inspectors and town planners across the country reported that most people living in sheds were not building houses. In many cases, the householder had laid a concrete slab and then erected a metal shed, assembled from a prefabricated kit. We were told that people in improvised dwellings had often moved into communities where it was possible to purchase cheap blocks of land and they had probably dreamed of building houses on their blocks. However, these were also communities where unemployment was high and the newcomers remained unemployed or marginally attached to the labour force. These families may have dreamed of building a house, but the dream had not been realised and they were living in rural poverty.

In the capital cities, people in the category ‘improvised homes, tents and sleepers out’ are usually transient and without conventional shelter. In regional and remote Australia, about 40 per cent of households in this category were transient but 60 per cent were living in improvised dwellings

which they owned, rented or were purchasing. These dwellings were below the community standard, but these households were not ‘rough sleepers’ and they were not transient.

In the cities, people sleeping rough, squatting in derelict buildings or using vehicles for shelter are likely to move from place to place. Twenty people may show up in a particular subdivision on census night, but a week later they may be somewhere else. When we carry out a local analysis there is a risk that it will not accord with what people ‘know’ on the ground, because the population may have changed since the time of the census. However, in inland Australia, people in improvised dwellings are more stable.

2.2 SAAP SERVICES

The starting point for counting people in accommodation provided under the Supported Accommodation Assistance Program (SAAP) was the census category ‘hostels for the homeless, night shelters and refuges’. However, we knew that many of these dwellings were misclassified at previous censuses (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2003, pp. 23–24). Youth refuges and women’s refuges often look like suburban houses and sometimes census collectors did not realise they were SAAP accommodation. These dwellings were mistakenly classified as ‘private dwellings’. The ABS convention is to replace census figures with information from the SAAP National Data Collection if the SAAP figures are higher.

In 2006, the ABS had two strategies to count people accommodated in refuges, hostels and other forms of emergency accommodation. The ‘list strategy’ required the Census Management Unit (CMU) in each state/territory to consult with the relevant government department to see if the department could supply a list of all their SAAP properties. The ABS guaranteed the confidentiality of these lists. The lists were passed on to specified ABS officers to assist with confidential data processing. The lists enabled ABS staff to identify SAAP properties that had been classified as private dwellings.

All states provided lists but they were of uneven quality. Some states provided a comprehensive list of their supported accommodation. Other states provided a list but excluded women’s refuges (for security reasons), while other states provided only partial lists of their SAAP properties.

The second component of the ABS approach was the ‘green sticker’

strategy which was first used in 2001. This involved the distribution of information to service providers offering them an alternative way to return their census forms. Service providers were advised that they could request a mail-back envelope from the census collector to ensure confidentiality. Service providers were asked to return the census forms directly to the Data Processing Centre and to attach a green sticker which facilitated the identification of SAAP accommodation.

Overall, the census strategy worked better than in 2001, but in all states (except Victoria) the census count was lower than the SAAP count. The Victorian Department provided the ABS with a full list of its SAAP addresses as well as a full list of its Transitional Housing Management (THM) properties. We followed the established convention and replaced the census data with National SAAP Data for all states and territories except Victoria. There were 19 849 people in SAAP across Australia and 5110 in New South Wales.¹

2.3 FRIENDS AND RELATIVES

Homeless people staying temporarily with friends or relatives were identified at the question: 'What is the person's usual address?' There was an instruction on the census form that people with no usual address should write 'none' in the suburb/locality box. In 2006, the number of people staying temporarily with other households was 32 200.

The census underestimates the number of homeless young people aged 12 to 18 who are staying temporarily with friends or relatives, because people filling out the census forms often record that these teenagers have a usual address elsewhere (MacKenzie and Chamberlain 2008, Ch. 3). We corrected for undercounting in this age group using information from the third National Census of Homeless School Students.

The count of homeless school students was carried out in the same week that the ABS undertook the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. Welfare staff in secondary schools identified 7035 homeless students using the cultural definition of homelessness. This figure was used in conjunction with SAAP data on the proportion of school students accommodated in SAAP to estimate the overall homeless population aged 12 to 18. The final correction for undercounting was 14 656. The number of homeless people staying temporarily with friends and relatives was 46 856, including 10 923

¹ This figure does not include homeless people receiving assistance from the Housing New South Wales Temporary Accommodation (TA) program. The TA program provides short-term accommodation for homeless people in motels, hotels and other similar accommodation. On census night around 165 TA assistances were provided.

people in New South Wales.

There was no information on how the missing 14 656 young people were distributed geographically within each state and territory. An assumption was made that they were distributed in the same way as other persons staying temporarily with friends and relatives. This assumption cannot be corroborated independently, and it could mean that homeless people in this category were overestimated in some geographical areas and underestimated in others.

The method of estimating the number of persons staying temporarily with other households also depends on how people interpret the census question that asks for each person's usual address. For example, an Indigenous household may be unwilling to record that a relative escaping domestic violence has 'no usual address'. We have a method for estimating the undercount for those aged 12 to 18, but there is no method for estimating the undercount in other age groups or for Indigenous people.

Finally, it is important to remember that the number of people staying temporarily with friends and relatives also goes up and down, because most people stay temporarily with other households on a short-term basis.

2.4 BOARDING HOUSES

The final category is people living in boarding houses. This was the most complicated part of the count and it is explained fully in Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2008). Here the main points are summarised in three steps: a discussion of the 'basic rules', the '2001 conventions' and the '2006 conventions'.

Basic rules

The 2006 Census used 20 categories for coding non-private dwellings. The categories included 'hotel, motel, bed and breakfast' and 'boarding house, private hotel'. This distinction draws attention to the fact that there are major differences between conventional hotels that many travellers use and boarding houses (often called 'private hotels').

The 2006 Census identified 16 273 people in 'boarding houses and private hotels'. However, three groups had to be excluded: owners and staff members who were sleeping over on census night; guests who reported a usual address 'elsewhere in Australia'; and backpackers who reported a usual address overseas.

In addition, there are four ABS conventions to correct for the fact that census collectors sometimes misclassify 'boarding houses', 'hotels' and 'staff quarters'. After applying the 'basic rules', the number in boarding houses was 14 490 in 2006 compared with 17 972 in 2001.

2001 conventions

There was an important change in ABS procedures in 2001 which impacted on the boarding house count. Following the 1996 Census, ABS staff telephoned those dwellings where there was insufficient information to identify dwelling type. Where additional information could be obtained a more accurate classification was entered. In 2001, these follow-up telephone calls were discontinued and the number of dwellings in the 'other' category increased from 536 to 2784. The number of persons in those dwellings jumped from 12 938 to 54 636 and it remained at 54 000 in 2006.

The '2001 conventions' involve the application of five rules to identify boarding houses in the 'other' category (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2003, Ch. 3). When these rules were applied in 2006, they produced a correction of 3763.

2006 conventions

Boarding houses have been closing down in the inner suburbs of the capital cities, but new boarding houses have been opening up in some outer suburbs. These dwellings often look like suburban houses and rarely have a sign outside. Census collectors could have misclassified these boarding houses as 'private dwellings'.

In 2006, an investigation was undertaken to see whether it was possible to identify boarding houses in the 'private dwellings' category. The final stage of the investigation focused on 9000 private dwellings that had five or more unrelated adults. A small boarding house or a share household could have five or more unrelated tenants. Five criteria were devised to exclude working households, student households, housing for disabled people and dwellings that were too small to be boarding houses. After the rules were applied, there were 705 dwellings remaining with 3343 residents. These were boarding houses that had been misclassified as private dwellings.

In 2006, the total number of persons in boarding houses was 21 596 ($14\,490 + 3763 + 3343 = 21\,596$), compared with 22 877 in 2001. The number of boarding house residents in New South Wales was 7626 in 2006, compared with 7815 in 2001.

The ABS conventions for identifying boarding houses are complicated and it is possible that some dwellings could have been misclassified at all three stages of the analysis. Undercounting could have occurred in some communities and overcounting in others because of misclassification. This can lead to anomalies when we examine the number of people in boarding houses in particular subdivisions.

2.5 CONCLUSION

The census provides the best data that we have on the homeless population at a point in time, but as we have seen there can be ‘undercounting’ and ‘overcounting’ of homeless people on census night. Undercounting is most likely in the census category ‘improvised homes, tents and sleepers out’, and overcounting is more likely in the boarding house category because of misclassification.

The problem of establishing reliable census figures for policy purposes is compounded by the fact that the homeless population changes over time. New people become homeless and some homeless people return to secure accommodation, so the number of homeless people goes up and down.

It is also common for homeless people to move between different forms of temporary accommodation within the same city, and to move both within and between states. The census data was collected in August 2006, and it is unrealistic to expect the same number of homeless people in particular areas at the current time. The challenge is to identify patterns in the population data that might inform the policy process.

3 SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter describes the social characteristics of the homeless population in New South Wales. First, we compare the rate of homelessness and the number of homeless people in each state and territory. Then we investigate where homeless people were staying on census night. After that we describe the age and gender characteristics of the population. Finally, we comment on the number of Indigenous people.

3.1 HOW MANY?

There are two ways of approaching the geographical spread of the homeless population and both are important. First, there is the number of homeless people in each state and territory on census night. Second, homelessness can be expressed as a rate per 10 000 of the population. This statistic is required for comparing states and territories of different sizes.

Table 3.1 shows that the rates of homelessness in each state and territory did not change much between 2001 and 2006. In New South Wales, Victoria and the Australian Capital Territory, there were 42 homeless people per 10 000 in 2006, similar to the rates recorded in those states in 2001. South Australia and Tasmania had a rate of 53 per 10 000 in 2006, again similar to their rates in 2001. The rates of homelessness in the other states were higher. In Western Australia and Queensland, there were between 64 and 70 per 10 000 at both censuses. In the Northern Territory there were 248 homeless people per 10 000 in 2006.

3.1 RATE OF HOMELESSNESS PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	Aust
2006	42	42	69	68	53	53	248	42	53
2001	42	44	70	64	52	52	288	40	53

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001, 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2001, 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2001, 2006.

Table 3.2 shows the number of homeless people in each state and territory in 2001 and 2006. In New South Wales, it was 26 676 in 2001 and 27 374 in 2006. We know that the number of homeless people goes up and down, but in New South Wales a typical point in time figure is probably about 27 350, up from about 26 650 in 2001.

3.2 NUMBER OF HOMELESS BY STATE AND TERRITORY

	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	Aust
2006	27 374	20 511	26 782	13 391	7962	2507	4785	1364	104 676
2001	26 676	20 305	24 569	11 697	7586	2415	5423	1229	99 900

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001, 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2001, 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2001, 2006.

3.2 ACCOMMODATION ON CENSUS NIGHT

Across Australia, 20 per cent of the homeless were in boarding houses on census night but in New South Wales it was 28 per cent (Table 3.3), the highest proportion in any state. Nationally, 19 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP accommodation, and in New South Wales it was also 19 per cent. There were fewer people staying temporarily with other households in New South Wales (40 per cent compared with 45 per cent nationally), and there were fewer people in 'improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping out' (13 per cent compared with 16 per cent). The census was carried out in August when people sleeping rough are likely to hide away to escape the cold, so there could be undercounting in this category.

3.3 PERSONS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION

	Australia		New South Wales	
	N	%	N	%
Boarding houses	21 596	20	7626	28
SAAP accommodation	19 849	19	5110	19
Friends and relatives	46 856	45	10 923	40
Improvised dwellings, sleepers out	16 375	16	3715	13
	104 676	100	27 374	100

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

In New South Wales, the homeless population was distributed somewhat differently in 2006 compared to 2001 (Table 3.4). The largest group on census night was people staying with other households (40 per cent in 2006 compared with 45 per cent in 2001). Boarding house residents accounted for 28 per cent of the homeless in 2006, down from 29 per cent in 2001. The number in SAAP was up from 15 per cent to 19 per cent, and the number of people in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough increased from 11 per cent to 13 per cent (2820 to 3715 people).

3.4 PERSONS IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, NEW SOUTH WALES, 2001 AND 2006

	2001		2006	
	N	%	N	%
Boarding houses	7815	29	7626	28
SAAP accommodation	3918	15	5110	19
Friends and relatives	12 123	45	10 923	40
Improvised dwellings, sleepers out	2820	11	3715	13
	26 676	100	27 374	100

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001, 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2001, 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2001, 2006.

The census takes a ‘snapshot’ of where homeless people are staying on census night, but it is important to remember that homeless people often move from one form of temporary accommodation to another. There is a high degree of permeability between the four operational categories used to count the homeless population on census night. There would have been some people living in boarding houses on a long-term basis (tertiary homelessness) and some people living permanently in improvised dwellings (primary homelessness). However, most homeless people would have been moving between different forms of temporary accommodation, including friends and relatives, SAAP accommodation, boarding houses and improvised dwellings. Transience is the typical pattern.

3.3 AGE DISTRIBUTION

In the 1950s and 1960s, it was thought that the homeless population was disproportionately made up of middle-aged and older men (de Hoog 1972; Jordan 1973, 1994). For example, Jordan (1994, p. 21) reported that there were few teenagers in the population and that 80 per cent of the men in his sample were aged 35 or older. De Hoog (1972) gives a similar impression in his ethnographic account of life on Sydney’s skid row at the end of the 1960s.

Table 3.5 shows that the age profile of the population is now very different. First, we examine the national figures, then we look at the figures for New South Wales.

In 2006, 58 per cent of the homeless across Australia were in the younger age groups and only 42 per cent were aged 35 or older. Twelve per cent of the homeless were children under 12. These young people were with parents on census night. Another 21 per cent of the homeless were teenagers aged 12 to 18 (mainly on their own) and 10 per cent were young adults aged 19 to 24. The age profile of the population is now much younger than 40 to 50 years ago.

3.5 AGE DISTRIBUTION OF HOMELESS POPULATION

	Australia			New South Wales		
	N	%		N	%	
Under 12	12 133	12	58	2915	11	55
12–18	21 940	21		4987	18	
19–24	10 504	10		2685	10	
25–34	15 804	15		4337	16	
35–44	13 981	13	42	4111	15	45
45–54	12 206	12		3490	13	
55–64	10 708	10		2640	9	
65 or older	7400	7		2209	8	
	104 676	100		27 374	100	

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

In New South Wales, the age profile of the homeless population was older than the national profile. Forty-five per cent of the homeless in New South Wales were aged 35 or older, compared with the national figure of 42 per cent. Thirty per cent of the homeless in New South Wales were aged 45 or older, up from 25 per cent in 2001 (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2004a, p. 27).

Nonetheless, a majority (55 per cent) of homeless people in New South Wales were in the younger age groups. Eighteen per cent of the homeless were teenagers aged 12 to 18 (mainly on their own). Eleven per cent of the homeless were children under 12 who were with one or both parents. Another 10 per cent were young adults aged 19 to 24, and 16 per cent were adults aged 25 to 34.

3.4 MALES AND FEMALES

In 2006, men outnumbered women in the national homeless population, 56 to 44 per cent (Table 3.6), and in New South Wales men outnumbered women, 59 to 41 per cent. There were more females in the 12 to 18 age group (56 to 44 per cent) and roughly equal numbers of males and females in the 19-to-24 and under-12 age groups. However, from age 25 onwards men typically outnumbered women, about 65 per cent to 35 per cent.

3.6 PERCENTAGE OF MALES AND FEMALES BY AGE GROUP

Australia

	Under 12	12-18	19-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	52	46	53	57	63	64	61	64	56
Female	48	54	47	43	37	36	39	36	44
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

New South Wales

	Under 12	12-18	19-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+	All
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Male	51	44	53	59	67	69	68	66	59
Female	49	56	47	41	33	31	32	34	41
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

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

Table 3.7 shows the proportion of males and females in different segments on census night. Nationally, 72 per cent of boarding house residents were male, and in New South Wales the proportion was also 72 per cent. Amongst people in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough, men outnumbered women 63 to 37 per cent in New South Wales. There were slightly more women in SAAP than men (52 per cent female and 48 per cent male), and slightly more males than females staying with other households (52 to 48 per cent).

3.7 PERCENTAGE OF MALES AND FEMALES IN DIFFERENT SEGMENTS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION

Australia

	Boarding house (N=21 596)	Friends or relatives (N=46 856)	SAAP (N=19 849)	Improvised dwellings (N=16 375)	All (N=104 676)
	%	%	%	%	%
Male	72	52	47	60	56
Female	28	48	53	40	44
	100	100	100	100	100

New South Wales

	Boarding house (N=7626)	Friends or relatives (N=10 923)	SAAP (N=5110)	Improvised dwellings (N=3715)	All (N=27 374)
	%	%	%	%	%
Male	72	52	48	63	59
Female	28	48	52	37	41
	100	100	100	100	100

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

3.5 INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS

In New South Wales, 2.2 per cent of people identified as Indigenous at the 2006 Census. Table 3.8 shows that Indigenous people were 2.7 per cent of the boardinghouse population, 4.3 per cent of those staying with other households, 7.4 per cent of people in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough, and 20.3 per cent of persons in SAAP. Indigenous people were overrepresented in all sections of the homeless population in New South Wales.

3.8 PERCENTAGE OF INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, NEW SOUTH WALES

	Boarding house (N=7622)	Friends or relatives (N=10 923)	SAAP (N=4942)	Improvised dwellings (N=3709)	All* (N=27 196)
	%	%	%	%	%
Non-Indigenous	97.3	95.7	79.7	92.6	92.8
Indigenous	2.7	4.3	20.3	7.4	7.2
	100	100	100	100	100

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

* Figures have been adjusted for missing data on Indigenous status, except in 178 cases where there was inadequate information to make the adjustment.

There is a risk that Indigenous people staying temporarily with other households were undercounted. The census asked for each person's usual address, and people with no usual address were asked to write this in. Indigenous people interpret this question within a different cultural frame of reference.

Often, Indigenous people do not think of 'home' as a particular dwelling, because they are attached to their traditional land. Indigenous people also have extended kinship networks and they move between dwellings belonging to extended family members. When Indigenous people leave home to escape domestic violence or other family problems, they usually move in with households that are related to them. In these circumstances, it is not culturally appropriate to record 'no usual address' on census night, because 'home' is understood in a different way.

3.6 SUMMARY

The number of homeless people fluctuates because people move in and out of homelessness. In New South Wales, we estimate that a typical point-in-time figure is about 27 350, up from about 26 650 in 2001.

In New South Wales, 40 per cent of the homeless were staying temporarily with other households on census night and 28 per cent were in boarding houses. The proportion in SAAP was up from 15 per cent in 2001 to 19 per cent in 2006. The number of people in improvised dwellings and sleeping rough increased from 11 per cent to 13 per cent (from 2820 to 3715 people).

Nationally, 56 per cent of homeless people were male and 44 per cent were female. In New South Wales, men outnumbered women, 59 to 41 per cent. The homeless population in New South Wales was slightly older than the national population, with 45 per cent of the homeless aged 35 or older, compared with 42 per cent nationally. In New South Wales, Indigenous people were overrepresented in all sectors of the population, but particularly in SAAP.

4 SYDNEY

This chapter discusses different ways of approaching a geographical analysis. Then it focuses on the distribution of the homeless population in Sydney.

4.1 NUMBERS AND RATES

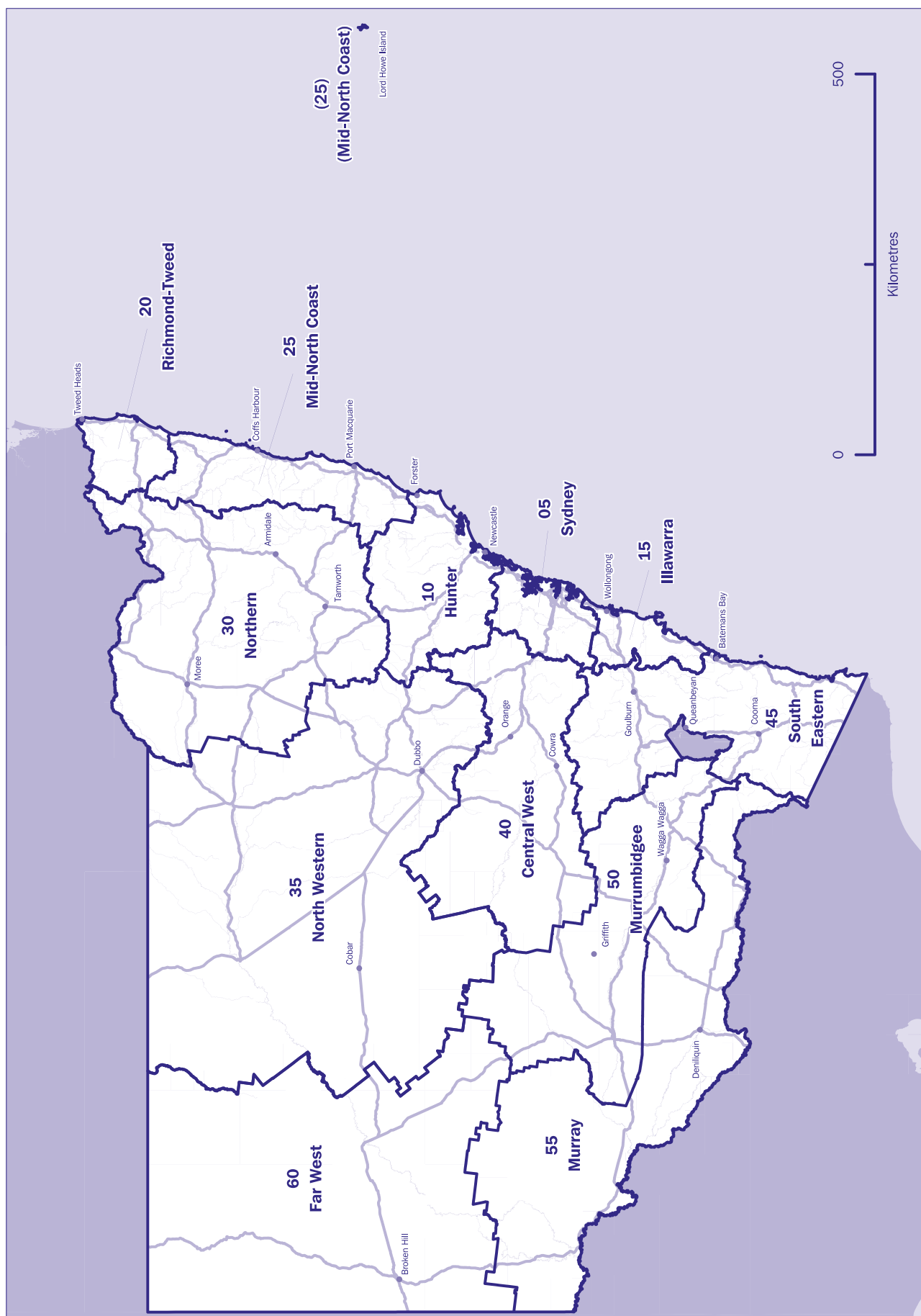
There are two ways of approaching the geographical spread of the homeless population and both are important. First, there is the number of homeless people in particular communities on census night. This is the 'raw' count and policy makers always need to be aware of these figures.

Second, homelessness can be expressed as a rate per 10 000 of the population. This statistic is required for comparing communities of different sizes. For example, the number of homeless people will always be greater in Sydney than in a regional centre because of the difference in population size, but the rate of homelessness may be the same in both communities.

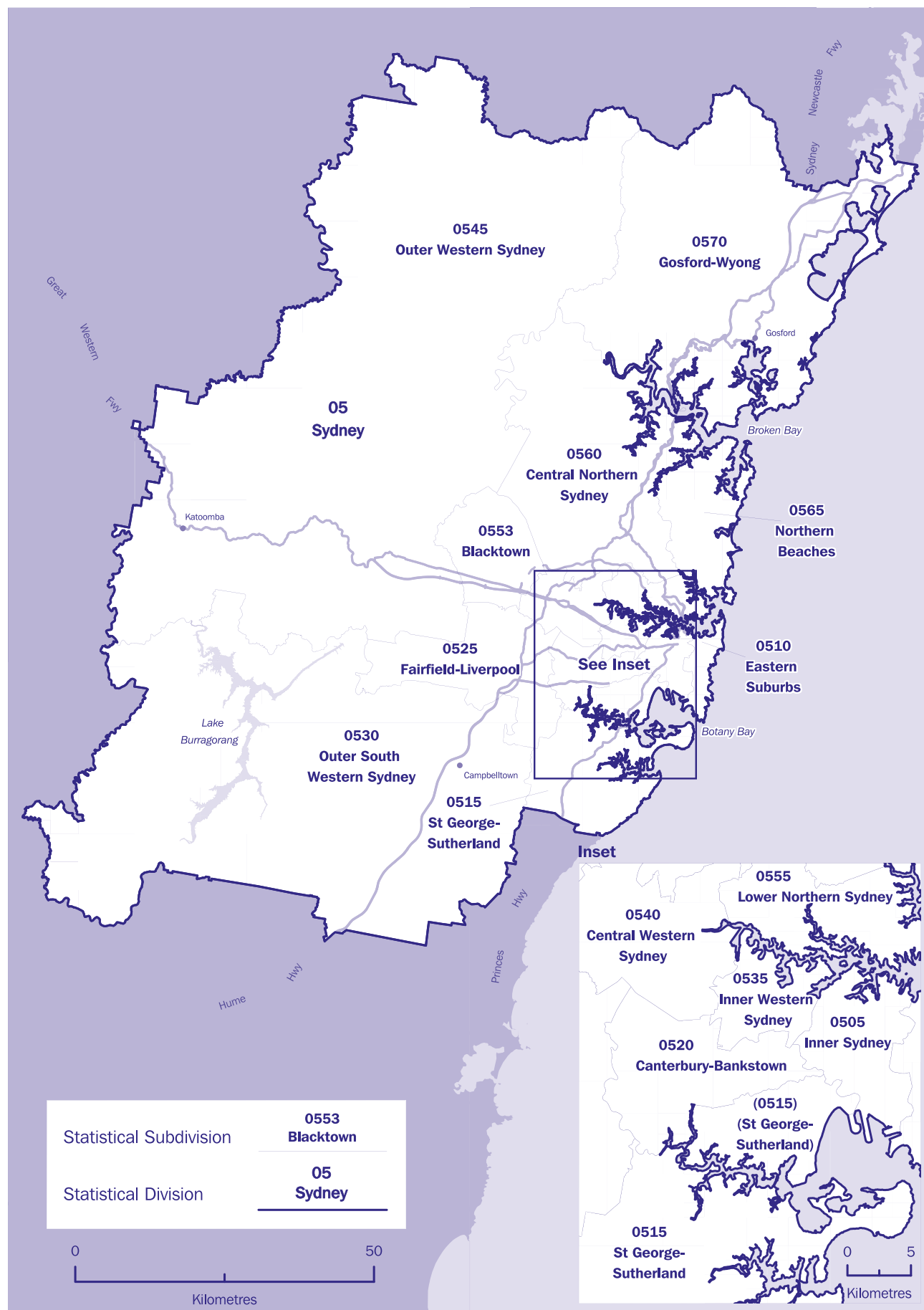
However, it is important to be cautious when interpreting rates for two reasons. First, the rate of homelessness in a particular area does not tell us how many in that community became homeless. For example, the rate of homelessness in Lismore quantifies the number of homeless people in relation to the Lismore population, but it does not tell us whether those people came from Lismore, other parts of New South Wales or from interstate. Homeless people move around and the numbers in particular areas partly reflect the services that are available.

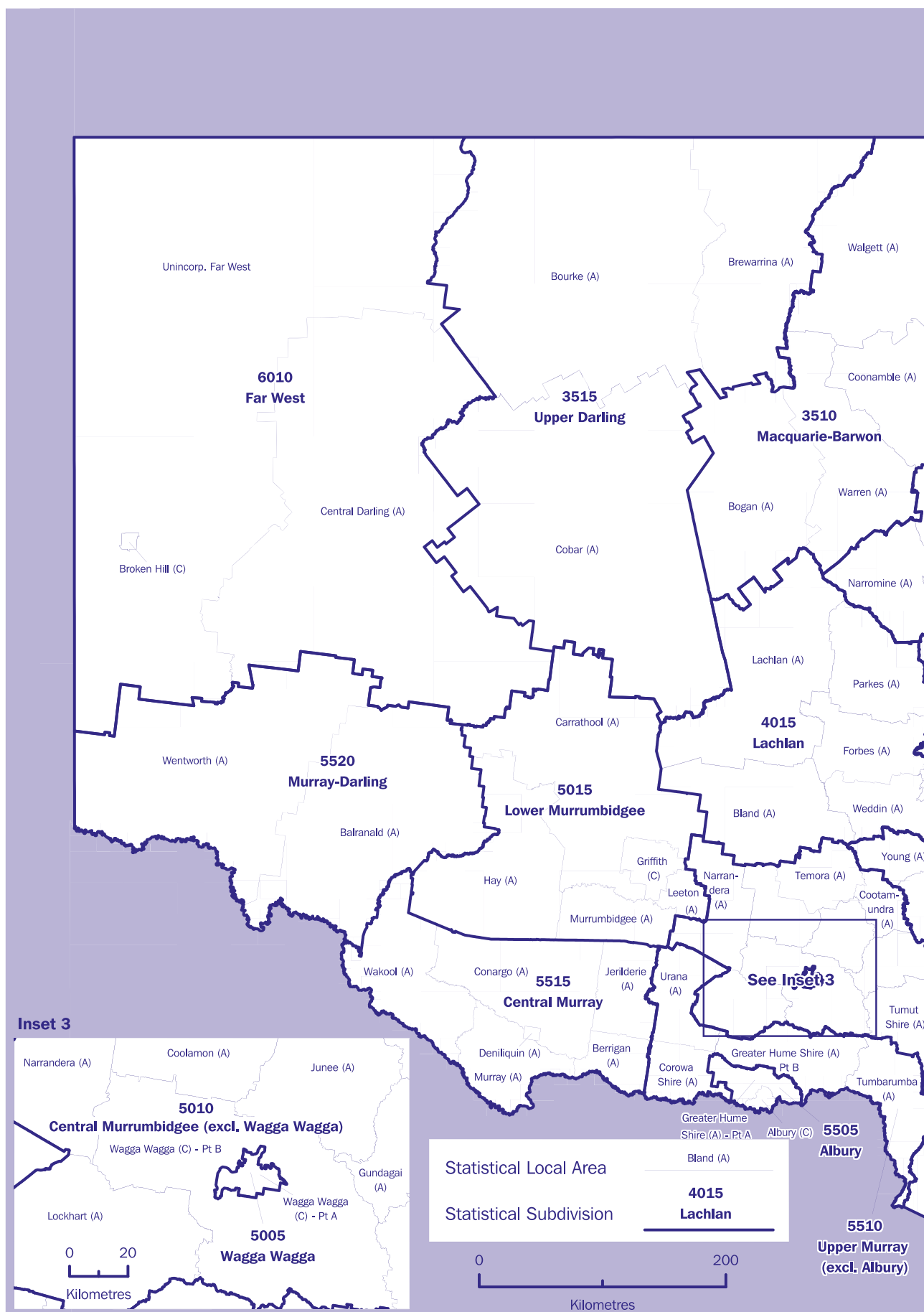
Second, it is important to be cautious when interpreting rates for geographical areas with small populations. Suppose that policy makers have the resources to fund one new SAAP service and they are evaluating the competing claims of two communities. In a small town of 2000 people the rate of homelessness was 100 per 10 000, whereas in a regional city of 30 000 it was 30 per 10 000. Should the resources go to the rural community or to the regional city?

In the rural community, there would have been 20 homeless people ($20 \times 10\,000 / 2000 = 100$ per 10 000), whereas in the regional city there would have been 90 homeless people ($90 \times 10\,000 / 30\,000 = 30$ per 10 000). When policy makers allocate resources, they have to consider both the number of homeless people in a community and the rate of homelessness, as well as local intelligence about what is happening 'on the ground' in order to match services with expressed need.

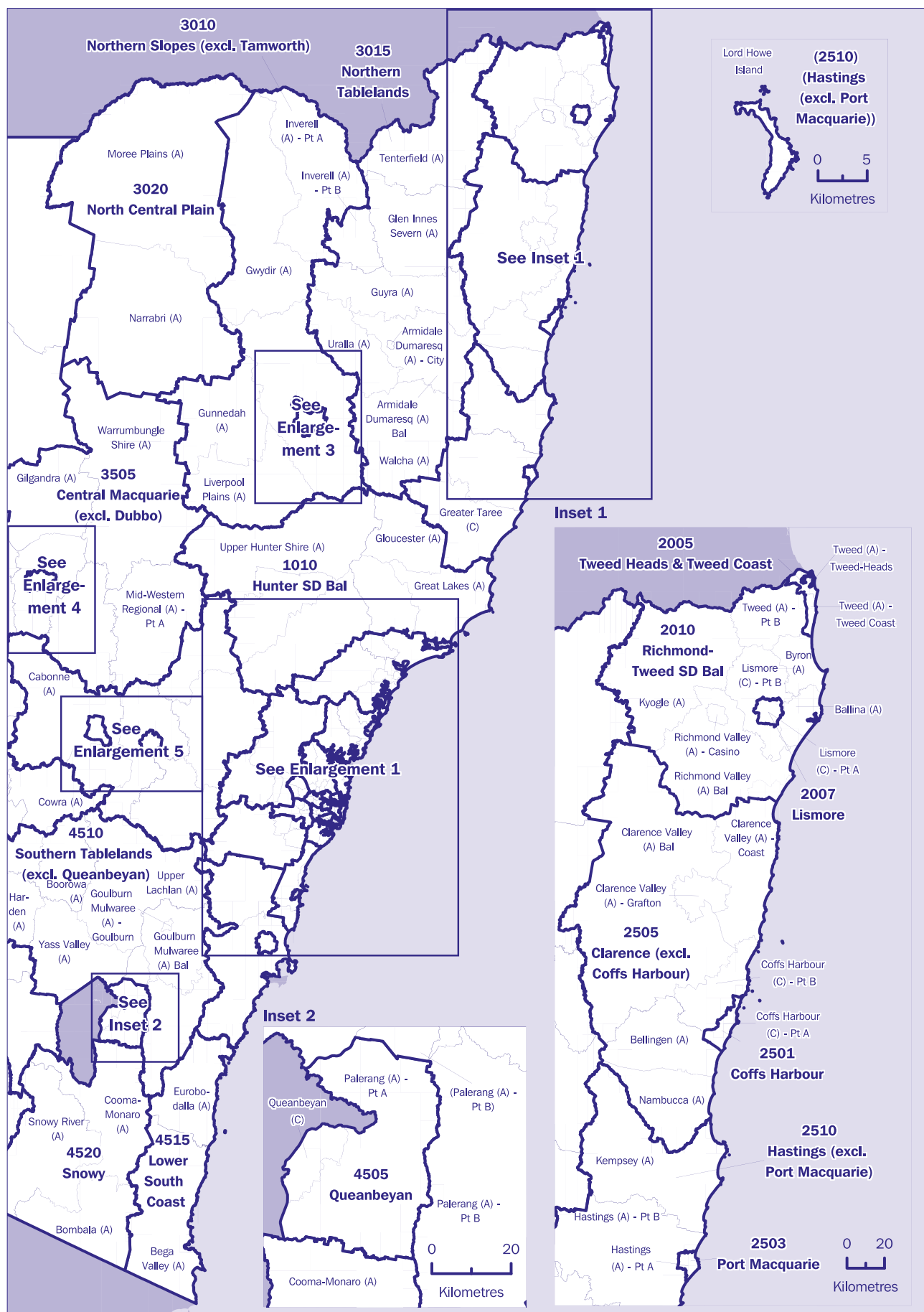
MAP 1: NEW SOUTH WALES, Statistical Divisions

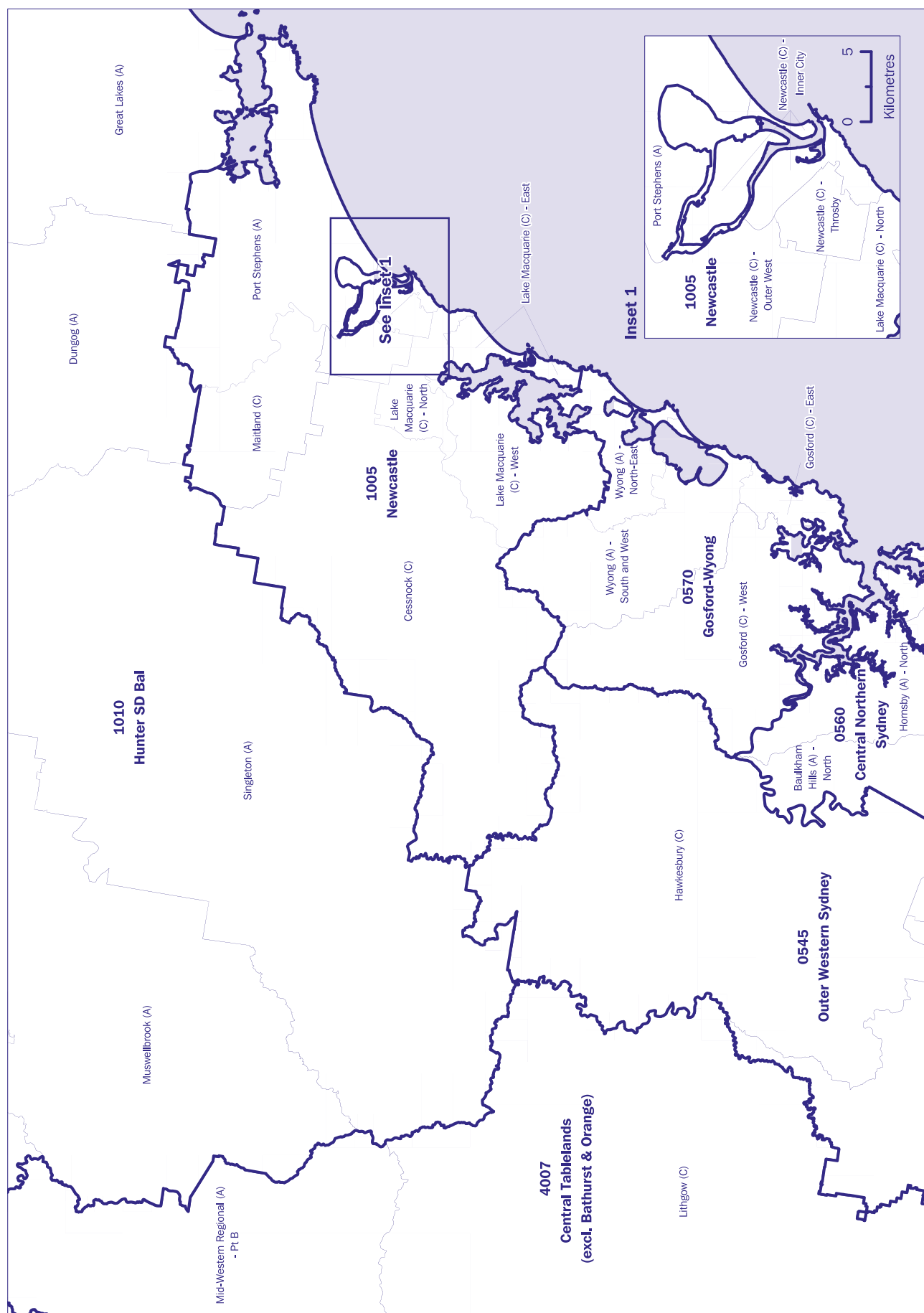
MAP 2: NEW SOUTH WALES, Sydney Statistical Division

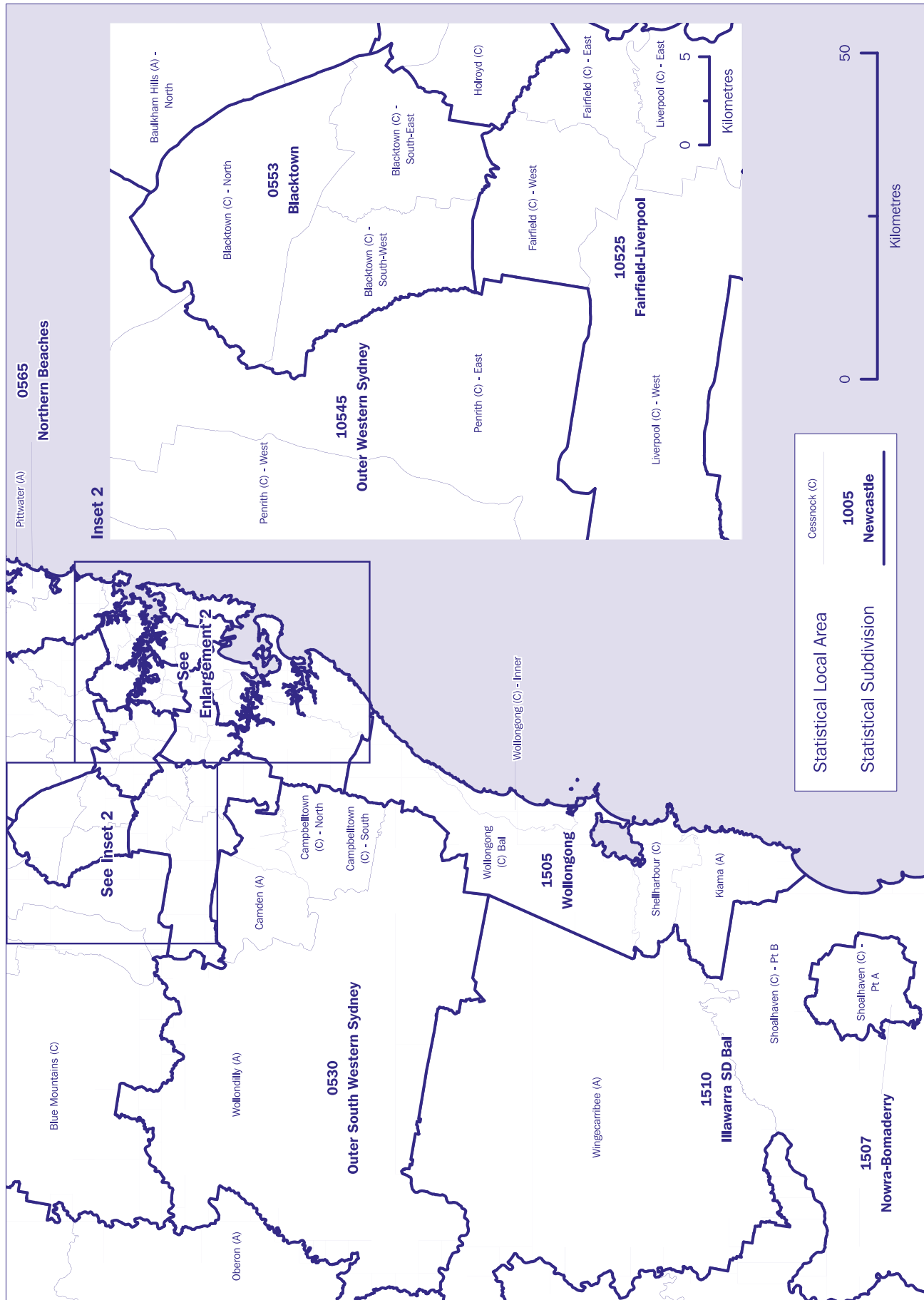


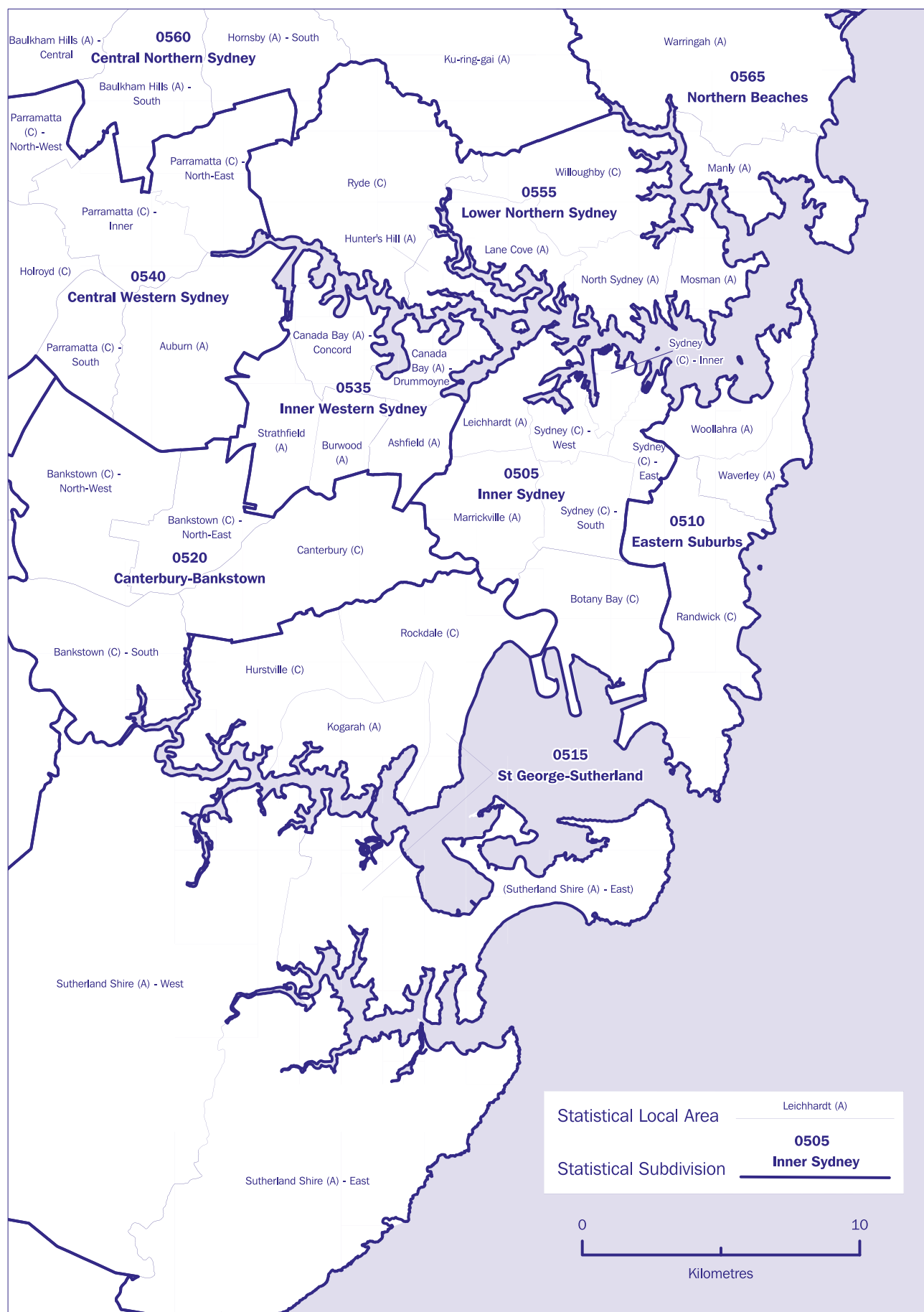
MAP 3: NEW SOUTH WALES, Statistical Subdivisions and Statistical Local Areas

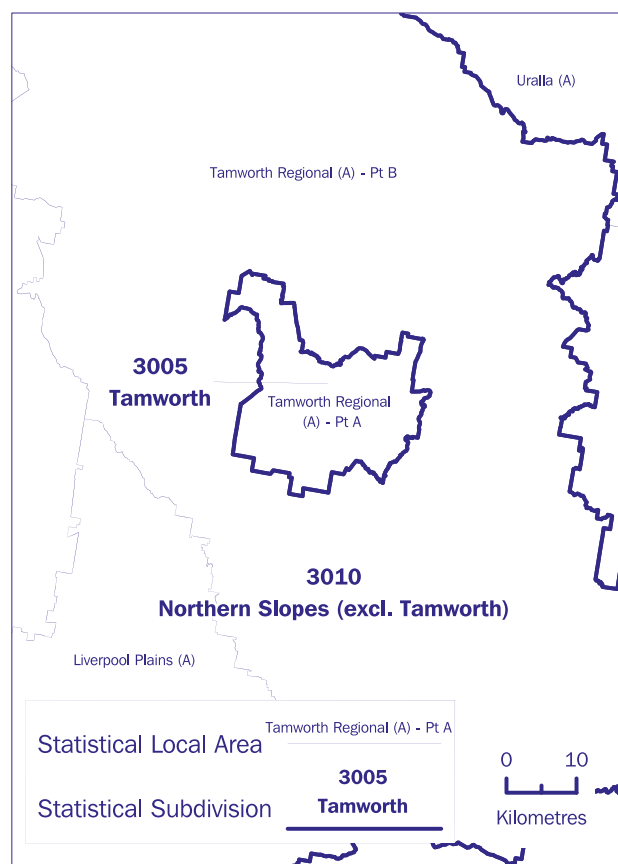
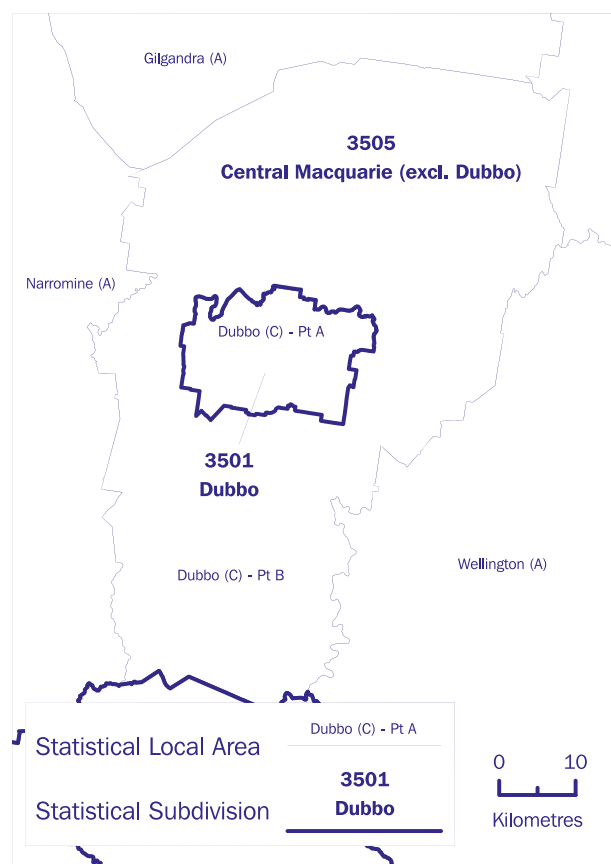
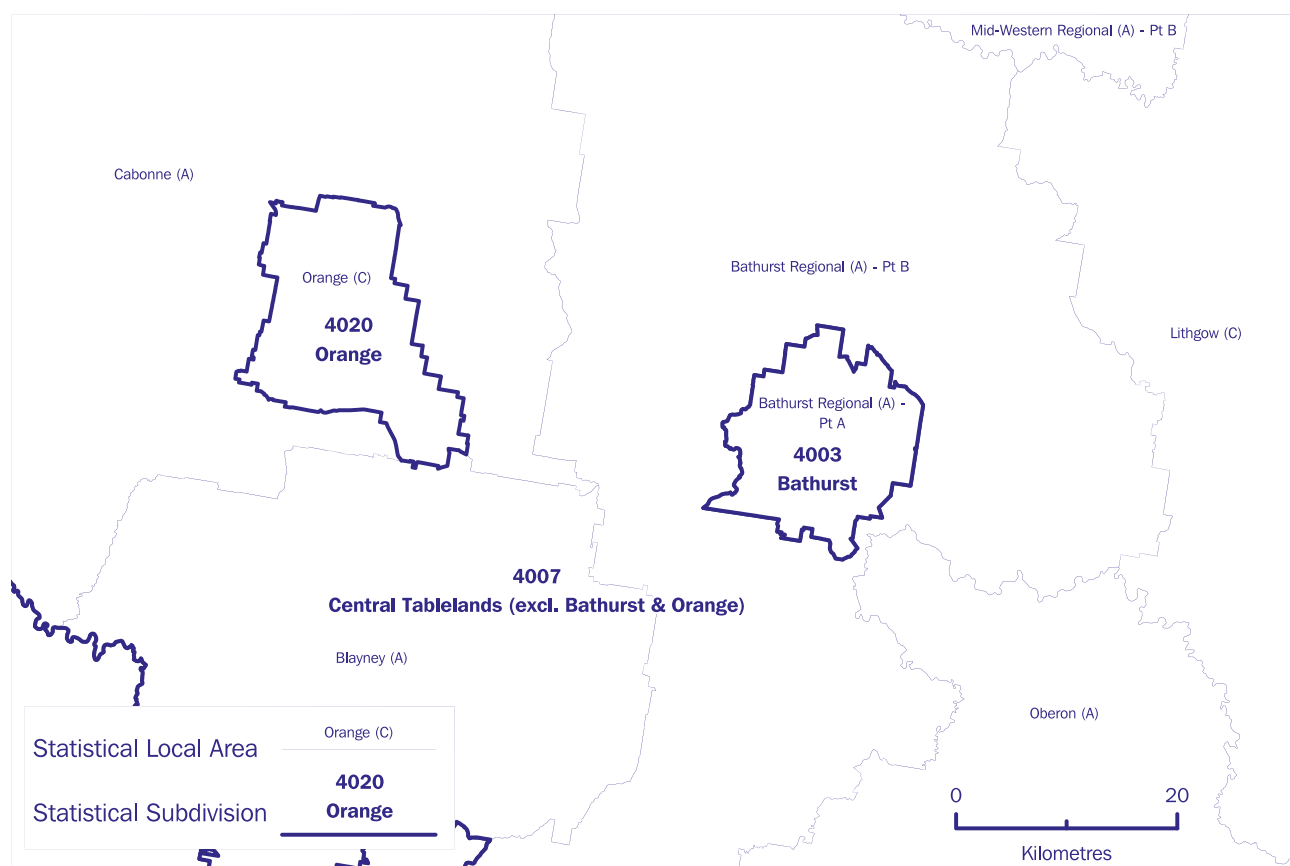
MAP 3: NEW SOUTH WALES, Statistical Subdivisions and Statistical Local Areas



MAP 4: NEW SOUTH WALES, Statistical Subdivisions and Statistical Local Areas: Enlargement 1

MAP 4: NEW SOUTH WALES, Statistical Subdivisions and Statistical Local Areas: Enlargement 1

MAP 5: NEW SOUTH WALES, Statistical Subdivisions and Statistical Local Areas: Enlargement 2

MAP 6: NEW SOUTH WALES, Statistical Subdivisions and Statistical Local Areas: Enlargements**Enlargement 3****Enlargement 5****Enlargement 4**

4.2 GEOGRAPHICAL CATEGORIES

There are a number of ways of approaching a geographical analysis. The Australian Bureau of Statistics uses the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) for the collection and dissemination of geographically organised statistics (ABS 2006c). The ASGC provides seven interrelated classification structures which are designed for different practical purposes. This report uses the 'Main Structure' which covers the whole of Australia without gaps or overlaps. The Main Structure comprises five hierarchical levels: census districts, statistical local areas, statistical subdivisions, statistical divisions, and states and territories. This analysis uses statistical divisions and statistical subdivisions as the main geographical categories, because patterns can be identified more easily if larger geographical categories are used.

In each state and territory, the capital city is treated as a statistical division which includes the greater metropolitan area and any anticipated growth corridors for the next 20 years. The statistical division 'represents the city in a wider sense' (ABS 2006c, p. 15). Statistical divisions outside of the capital cities are 'relatively homogeneous region(s) characterised by identifiable ... links between the inhabitants and between the economic units within the region, under the unifying influence of one or more major towns or cities' (ABS 2006c, p. 15).

New South Wales is divided into 12 statistical divisions, as shown in Map 1 (excluding off-shore and migratory). They are Sydney, Hunter, Illawarra, Richmond-Tweed, Mid-North Coast, Northern, North Western, Central West, South Eastern, Murrumbidgee, Murray and Far West.

Statistical subdivisions are defined as 'socially and economically homogeneous regions characterised by identifiable links between the inhabitants' (ABS 2006c, p. 14). Sydney is divided into 14 statistical subdivisions. There are also statistical subdivisions which correspond to major regional population centres. There are 44 of these across the country, including 14 in New South Wales. They are Newcastle, Wollongong, Nowra-Bomaderry, Tweed Heads and Tweed Coast, Lismore, Coffs Harbour, Port Macquarie, Tamworth, Dubbo, Bathurst, Orange, Queanbeyan, Wagga Wagga and Albury.

In other cases, statistical subdivisions cover non-urban areas. These are defined as rural areas which do not include cities with populations of 25 000 or above. These non-urban areas are said to have 'identifiable links between economic units within the region' and there may be the 'unifying influence' (ABS 2006c, p.14) of one or more country towns. These rural/remote subdivisions often have small populations, and sometimes they have high rates of homelessness but few homeless people.

4.3 OVERVIEW: NEW SOUTH WALES

Two-thirds (63 per cent) of the population of New South Wales lives in Greater Sydney and this is where we find the largest concentration of homeless people. Table 4.1 shows that the census identified 15 956 homeless people in Sydney where the rate of homelessness was 39 per 10 000. This was similar to the rate of homelessness in Melbourne (41 per 10 000) and Canberra (42 per 10 000), but lower than the rates in the other state capitals.

There were 11 414 homeless people in regional New South Wales where the rate was 47 per 10 000, similar to the rate in regional Victoria (44 per 10 000).

4.1 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, SYDNEY AND REGIONAL NEW SOUTH WALES

	Sydney	Regional	New South Wales
Number	15 956	11 414	27 374*
Rate	39	47	42

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

* No geographical information on 4 people

This chapter focuses on the distribution of the homeless population in Sydney. Chapter 5 discusses the Hunter and the Illawarra. Chapters 6 and 7 examine 'inland' and 'coastal' New South Wales.

4.4 SYDNEY

The Sydney statistical division comprises 14 subdivisions (Maps 2 & 5). This analysis groups them into four areas which we refer to as the 'City Core', the 'Inner City Ring', the 'Outer City Ring' and the 'Growth Corridors'.

The City Core is the subdivision of Inner Sydney. It has a population of 313 000 and includes the City of Sydney, Leichhardt, Marrickville and South Sydney. It has a boundary with Sydney Harbour.

The Inner City Ring includes the other four subdivisions which adjoin Sydney Harbour. They are Lower Northern Sydney, Eastern Suburbs, Inner Western Sydney and Central Western Sydney. The Inner City Ring has a population of 991 000.

The Outer City Ring includes six subdivisions with a population of 1.98 million. They are: St George-Sutherland in the south, Blacktown in the west, Canterbury-Bankstown and Fairfield-Liverpool in the south-west, Central Northern Sydney and Northern Beaches (Manly, Pittwater and Warringah).

The Growth Corridors comprise: Outer Western Sydney (Penrith and the Blue Mountains); Outer South Western Sydney including Campbelltown; and the Gosford-Wyong Growth Corridor. Their combined population is 838 000.

4.2 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, SYDNEY

	City Core	Inner City Ring	Outer City Ring	Growth Corridors	Total
Number	4163	5221	4277	2295	15 956
Rate	133	53	22	27	39

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

Table 4.2 shows that there were 4163 homeless people in the City Core and the rate of homelessness was 133 per 10 000, down from 164 per 10 000 in 2001. The City Core had eight per cent of Sydney's population, but 26 per cent of its homeless people. It is usual to find a higher rate of homelessness in the inner suburbs of capital cities. This is the case in Melbourne, Adelaide, Perth, Hobart and Brisbane. People often gravitate to the inner city, where services for homeless people have traditionally been located.

In the Inner City Ring, there were 5221 homeless people and the rate was 53 per 10 000. There were 4277 homeless people in the Outer City Ring where the rate was 22 per 10 000. The rate was 27 per 10 000 in the Growth Corridors where there were 2295 homeless people.

Altogether, there were 11 793 homeless people in suburban Sydney, compared with 4163 in the City Core. The provision of services in suburban areas assists people in the early stages of homelessness, including those at risk, and reduces the move to the inner city.

Table 4.3 shows the distribution of people in different sectors of the homeless population. In the City Core, 52 per cent of homeless people were in boarding houses, 23 per cent were in SAAP accommodation, and 16 per cent were staying temporarily with other households. Another nine per cent (388 people) were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough.

A census collector in the inner city counted homeless people under a bridge: 'They had blankets and bags with them and had found their spot for the night'. Another collector counted homeless people 'outside Paddington Town Hall'. A third collector counted people in a park and a fourth found people 'huddled in doorways and sleeping under awnings'.

4.3 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, SYDNEY

Percentage

	City Core	Inner City Ring	Outer City Ring	Growth Corridor	Total
Boarding house	52	53	21	11	38
SAAP	23	12	16	24	18
Friends and relatives	16	31	56	52	37
Improvised dwellings	9	4	7	13	7
	100	100	100	100	100

Number

	City Core	Inner City Ring	Outer City Ring	Growth Corridor	Total
Boarding house	2164	2765	882	259	6070
SAAP	944	643	676	558	2821
Friends and relatives	667	1604	2417	1195	5883
Improvised dwellings	388	209	302	283	1182
	4163	5221	4277	2295	15 956

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

In the Inner City Ring, 53 per cent of homeless people were staying in boarding houses, 31 per cent were with other households and 12 per cent were in SAAP. There were 209 people sleeping rough, including 103 in Central Western Sydney. A census collector in Parramatta reported, 'Some people were squatting ... others were sleeping in doorways'.

In the Outer City Ring, 56 per cent of the homeless were staying with friends or relatives, 21 per cent were in boarding houses and 16 per cent were in SAAP.

In the Growth Corridors, 52 per cent of the homeless were with other households and service providers reported 'lots of couch surfing'. Another 24 per cent were in SAAP and 13 per cent (283 people) were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough. In Outer Western Sydney, the figure for 'improvised dwellings and sleeping rough' was 182, but 53 young people were mistakenly included in the count, leaving 129 in the primary population.

Local service providers talked about 'young people sleeping rough ... near the train station ... along the river bank and sleeping in cars'. Another referred to 'kids bedding down in garages ... squatting also happens'. A third talked of 'young Aboriginal kids living under a bridge'. Another knew of people 'living in garages and sheds further out of town'.

Overall, 38 per cent of the homeless in Sydney were staying in boarding houses (6070 people), mainly in the inner suburbs and central city. Thirty-seven per cent of the homeless (5883 people) were staying with other households, mainly in suburban Sydney. There were 2821 people in SAAP and 1182 people sleeping rough or living in improvised dwellings, of whom one-third were in the City Core.

4.5 MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS

The national report pointed out that boarding houses are more common in capital cities and less common in regional centres and country towns. In these communities, SAAP workers sometimes refer homeless people to local caravan parks if there is no emergency accommodation available. Marginal residents of caravan parks were defined as people who were renting caravans or cabins, living at their usual address, and with no one in the dwelling having full-time employment.

4.4 SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS IN BOARDING HOUSES AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, NEW SOUTH WALES

	Boarding house (N=7626)	Caravan (N=5104)
	%	%
Sydney	80	23
Remainder of NSW	20	77
	100	100

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

Seventy per cent of boarding house residents across the country were in capital cities, and in New South Wales 80 per cent of boarding house residents were in Sydney (Table 4.4). Most regional centres had a small number of boarding house residents.

Nationally, 71 per cent of marginal caravan park residents were outside of the capital cities and in New South Wales this figure was 77 per (Table 4.4). In some communities, local SAAP workers send homeless people to the local caravan park if there is no alternative accommodation available. Caravan parks may also house some people on a longer-term basis who are unable to re-enter the private rental market.

4.5 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND NUMBER OF MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, SYDNEY

	City Core	Inner City Ring	Outer City Ring	Growth Corridors	Total
Homeless	4163	5221	4277	2295	15 956
Rate per 10 000	133	53	22	27	39
Caravan	0	15	524	634	1173
Total	4163	5236	4801	2929	17 129
Rate per 10 000	133	53	24	35	42

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

Table 4.5 shows that there were 1173 marginal residents of caravan parks in Sydney, and 99 per cent were in the Outer Ring or Growth Corridors. There were 383 people in Gosford-Wyong, 184 in Blacktown and 137 in Outer Western Sydney.

In general, caravan parks in Sydney fall into two groups. First, there are caravan parks which are used by tourists in the summer, as well as people who own their caravans. In the winter, permanent residents remain, but the number of tourists declines. Some of these parks attempt to exclude homeless people, but others accept all prospective tenants. Before summer, however, rents are increased and marginal tenants are forced to move on.

Second, there are a small number of caravan parks which are used as permanent accommodation for poor people and as emergency accommodation. Local informants in Gosford-Wyong described one park as a 'dumping ground for Department of Housing clients'. Another referred to a park where 'the vans are in really poor condition'.

For some policy purposes, marginal residents of caravan parks might be thought of as part of the tertiary population. If this is the case, then the rate of homelessness was 42 per 10 000 in Sydney, compared with 39 per 10 000 using the ABS definition (Table 4.5). In the Growth Corridors the rate of homelessness increased from 27 to 35 per 10 000.

5 HUNTER AND ILLAWARRA

5.1 OVERVIEW

The statistical division of Hunter has a population of 589 000. The Newcastle subdivision covers the Greater Newcastle Metropolitan area including Cessnock, Lake Macquarie, Maitland and Port Stephens. The subdivision of Hunter SD Balance includes surrounding rural communities and small towns such as Singleton and Muswellbrook.

Illawarra has a population of 394 000 and includes three subdivisions: Wollongong (including Kiama and Shellharbour); Nowra-Bomaderry (including Shoalhaven); and Illawarra SD Balance which covers surrounding rural areas and country towns.

Table 5.1 shows that the census identified 1981 homeless people in Hunter and 1338 in the Illawarra. The rate of homelessness was 34 per 10 000 in both statistical divisions.

5.1 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 IN HUNTER AND ILLAWARRA

	Hunter			Illawarra			
	Newcastle	Hunter SD Balance	Total	Wollongong	Nowra-Bomaderry	Illawarra SD Balance	Total
Number	1574	407	1981	941	145	252	1338
Rate	32	42	34	36	47	25	34

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

In Hunter, about 80 per cent of homeless people were in Newcastle where the rate was 32 per 10 000. In Illawarra about 70 per cent of homeless people were in Wollongong where the rate was 36 per 10 000. The rate of homelessness was higher in Hunter SD Balance (42 per 10 000) and Nowra-Bomaderry (47 per 10 000), but the number of homeless people in these subdivisions was 407 and 145 respectively. When policy makers allocate resources, they should consider the number of homeless people in a community, as well as the rate of homelessness.

5.2 HUNTER AND ILLAWARRA

Table 5.2 shows that 53 per cent of the homeless in Newcastle were staying with friends or relatives, as were 43 per cent of the homeless in Hunter SD Balance. In Newcastle, 19 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP, compared with 15 per cent of homeless in Hunter SD Balance. Newcastle also had a higher proportion of homeless people in boarding houses (20 per cent compared with six per cent), but a much lower proportion in improvised dwellings and sleepers rough (eight per cent compared with 36 per cent). In both Newcastle and Hunter SD Balance, the majority of improvised dwellings were either owned or being purchased.

5.2 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, HUNTER

	Newcastle		Hunter SD balance	
	N	%	N	%
Boarding house	313	20	22	6
SAAP	299	19	62	15
Friends and relatives	829	53	175	43
Improvised dwellings	133	8	148	36
	1574	100	407	100

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

In Wollongong, 40 per cent of the homeless were in SAAP, 34 per cent were staying temporarily with other households, and 21 per cent were in boarding houses (Table 5.3). In Nowra-Bomaderry, half (52 per cent) of the homeless were in SAAP and one-third (35 per cent) were with friends and relatives. Illawarra SD Balance was the only subdivision that had a majority of people staying with other households (63 per cent) and it also had more people in the primary population (26 per cent compared with five per cent in Wollongong). Most people in Illawarra's primary population were in improvised dwellings that were owned or being purchased.

5.3 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, ILLAWARRA

	Wollongong		Nowra-Bomaderry		Illawarra SD Balance	
	N	%	N	%	N	%
Boarding house	202	21	10	7	19	7
SAAP	376	40	76	52	10	4
Friends and relatives	315	34	51	35	158	63
Improvised dwellings	48	5	8	6	65	26
	941	100	145	100	252	100

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

Overall, the census identified about 1981 homeless people in Hunter and 1338 in Illawarra. The rate of homelessness was 36 per 10 000 in Wollongong and 32 per 10 000 in Newcastle. The homeless population was also distributed differently in the two cities with Wollongong having twice as many people in SAAP (40 per cent compared with 19 per cent) and fewer people staying temporarily with friends and relatives (34 per cent compared with 53 per cent).

5.3 MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS

There were 636 marginal residents of caravan parks in Hunter and 472 in Illawarra (Table 5.4). This was approximately double the number of people in boarding houses in these communities (335 and 231 respectively). In Hunter and Illawarra, caravans are used as an alternative to boarding houses.

5.4 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, HUNTER AND ILLAWARRA

	Hunter			Illawarra			
	Newcastle	Hunter SD Balance	Total	Wollongong	Nowra-Bomaderry	Illawarra SD Bal	Total
Number	1574	407	1981	941	145	252	1338
Rate per 10 000	32	42	34	36	47	25	34
Caravan	474	162	636	279	69	124	472
Total	2048	569	2617	1220	214	376	1810
Rate per 10 000	42	59	44	46	69	38	46

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

For some policy purposes, marginal residents of caravan parks might be thought of as part of the tertiary population. If this is the case, then the rate of homelessness increases from 34 to 44 per 10 000 in Hunter (2617 people) and from 34 to 46 per 10 000 in Illawarra (1810 people).

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
Improvise 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
Improvise 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

	Northern			North Western		
	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

	Central West		Murrumbidgee		Murray	
	Central Tablelands	Lachlan	Central	Lower	Upper	Murray-Darling
Number	166	201	121	229	77	113
Rate	32	38	24	53	35	38

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

	Northern			North Western			Far West*
	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

	Central West		Murrumbidgee		Murray			Total
	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).

7 COASTAL

7.1 OVERVIEW

There are three statistical divisions on the New South Wales Coast, in addition to Sydney, Hunter and Illawarra. They are Richmond-Tweed, Mid-North Coast and South Eastern ('coastal New South Wales') (Map 1). All three are popular tourist destinations. They have a combined population of 702 000 and 11 per cent of the New South Wales population lives in these areas.

Richmond-Tweed (population 219 000) has a border with Queensland. There are two major urban areas and one rural subdivision. The urban subdivisions are Tweed Heads and Tweed Coast (population 59 000) and Lismore (population 30 000). The rural subdivision is Richmond-Tweed SD Balance (population 130 000) which includes Ballina, Casino and Byron Bay.

Mid-North Coast (population 285 000) has two regional centres: Coffs Harbour (population 48 000) and Port Macquarie (population 39 500). There are two rural subdivisions. One is Clarence (population 95 600) which covers the rural hinterland behind Coffs Harbour and includes Grafton. The other is Hastings (population 101 800) which covers the rural area surrounding Port Macquarie and includes Taree and Kempsey.

South Eastern stretches from Illawarra to the Victorian border, and as far inland as the Southern Tablelands. There are four subdivisions. Queanbeyan is the main urban centre with a population of 45 000. The Southern Tablelands (population 67 000) is a predominantly rural subdivision which includes Goulburn. Snowy is an Alpine subdivision with 19 500 people. The Lower South Coast (population 66 000) includes Merimbula, Bega and Batemans Bay.

7.1 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, NEW SOUTH WALES

	Sydney	Hunter and Illawarra	Inland	Coastal	Total*
Number	15 956	3319	3667	4428	27 374
Rate	39	34	50	63	42

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

* No geographical information on 4 people.

There were 4428 homeless people in coastal New South Wales, where the rate of homelessness was 63 per 10 000 (Table 7.1). This was higher than the rate in Hunter and Illawarra (34 per 10 000) and in inland New South Wales (50 per 10 000).

7.2 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

	Urban subdivisions	Rural subdivisions	Total
Number	1342	3086	4428
Rate	61	64	63

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

Table 7.2 shows that there were 1342 homeless people in the five urban subdivisions, where the rate of homelessness was 61 per 10 000. There were 3086 homeless people in the six rural subdivisions where the rate was 64 per 10 000.

7.2 URBAN

There were some important differences between the urban communities. The rate of homelessness was lower in Port Macquarie (43 per 10 000) and Coffs Harbour (52 per 10 000) (Table 7.3), but higher in Queanbeyan (64 per 10 000), Tweed Heads (67 per 10 000) and Lismore (80 per 10 000). Tweed Heads had 396 homeless people and Queanbeyan had 288.

7.3 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, URBAN SUBDIVISIONS, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

	Tweed Heads	Lismore	Coffs Harbour	Port Macquarie	Queanbeyan	Total
Number	396	241	247	170	288	1342
Rate	67	80	52	43	64	61

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

In these subdivisions, there was variation in the proportions of people in different sectors of the homeless population (Table 7.4). Overall, 49 per cent of the homeless were staying with friends and relatives, but in Lismore and Queanbeyan, about 34 per cent were with other households, whereas in Tweed Heads and Port Macquarie it was 61 per cent.

Twenty per cent of the homeless were in SAAP, but this proportion ranged from 10 per cent in Tweed Heads to 32 per cent in Port Macquarie. In all subdivisions except Lismore, the proportion in boarding houses was between five and 10 per cent.

Another 20 per cent of the homeless were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough, but this proportion ranged from zero in Port Macquarie to 24 per cent in Tweed Heads and 34 per cent in Queanbeyan. In Tweed Heads and Queanbeyan, most of these people were in sheds or garages that were owned or being purchased and some people were probably 'blockies' (people building houses). There were few people sleeping rough or renting improvised dwellings. However, this pattern was reversed in Coffs Harbour and Lismore, where most people were sleeping out. In Lismore, a census collector reported 'people sleeping in tents, under bridges, in squats and in cars' and in Coffs Harbour about four-fifths were sleeping rough.

7.4 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, URBAN AREAS, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Percentage

	Tweed Heads	Lismore	Coffs Harbour	Port Macquarie	Queanbeyan	Total
Boarding house	5	26	10	7	7	10
SAAP	10	31	16	32	24	21
Friends/relatives	61	33	54	61	35	49
Improvised dwellings	24	10	20	0	34	20
	100	100	100	100	100	100

Number

	Tweed Heads	Lismore	Coffs Harbour	Port Macquarie	Queanbeyan	Total
Boarding house	22	63	23	12	20	140
SAAP	38	74	40	55	68	275
Friends/relatives	240	80	134	103	101	658
Improvised dwellings	96	24	50	0	99	269
	396	241	247	170	288	1342

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

Overall, half (49 per cent) of the homeless in the urban subdivisions were staying with friends and relatives, one-fifth (21 per cent) were in SAAP, and one-fifth (20 per cent) were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough.

7.3 RURAL

There were some important differences between rural communities (Table 7.5). The rate of homelessness was between 43 and 49 per 10 000 in three subdivisions: Tablelands, Hastings and Clarence. It was higher in South Coast (78 per 10 000) and Richmond-Tweed SD balance (87 per 10 000). The rate was highest in Snowy (102 per 10 000) where there were 198 homeless people.

7.5 NUMBER OF HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATE PER 10 000 OF THE POPULATION, RURAL SUBDIVISIONS, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

	Richmond-Tweed	Mid-North Coast		South Eastern			Total
	SD Balance	Clarence	Hastings	Tablelands	South Coast	Snowy	
Number	1129	466	488	290	515	198	3086
Rate	87	49	48	43	78	102	64

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

About half (46 per cent) of the homeless were staying with friends or relatives, but this proportion ranged from 27 per cent in South Coast to 65 per cent in Snowy (Table 7.6). Another 12 per cent were in SAAP, but this varied from six per cent in Richmond-Tweed SD Balance to 24 per cent in South Coast. The number of people in boarding houses was modest, with an overall figure of nine per cent. One-third of the homeless were in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough, including 396 people in Richmond-Tweed SD Balance and 201 in South Coast (Table 7.6).

7.6 PEOPLE IN DIFFERENT SECTORS OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION, RURAL SUBDIVISIONS, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

Percentage

	Richmond-Tweed SD Balance	Mid-North Coast		South Eastern			Total
		Clarence	Hastings	Tablelands	South Coast	Snowy	
Boarding house	9	7	5	17	10	17	9
SAAP	6	10	12	18	24	8	12
Friends/relatives	50	52	47	41	27	65	46
Improvised dwellings	35	31	36	24	39	10	33
	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

Number

	Richmond-Tweed SD Balance	Mid-North Coast		South Eastern			Total
		Clarence	Hastings	Tablelands	South Coast	Snowy	
Boarding house	101	30	26	51	50	33	291
SAAP	73	47	56	52	124	17	369
Friends/relatives	559	243	230	118	140	128	1418
Improvised dwellings	396	146	176	69	201	20	1008
	1129	466	488	290	515	198	3086

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

In South Coast, local service providers reported that people sleep rough but the numbers were modest. One service provider said, 'yes, we have people sleeping rough. Sometimes they have mental health issues'. Another service provider said that, 'Some homeless people are transient and move up and down the coast'. The census data indicated that about 85 per cent of people in the 'improvised dwellings' category were in dwellings that were either owned or being purchased. Local informants talked about 'makeshift cabins and metal sheds' and people buying blocks of land, but being 'unable to build a house because they could not find work'. There were few households with someone in full-time work and a household income of \$1000 or more. The number of blockies was low.

There were 396 people in the primary population in Richmond-Tweed SD Balance. Just over one-third were in dwellings that were either owned or being purchased and another 15 per cent were in dwellings that were rented. A minority may have been building conventional houses, but many were in poor quality dwellings. One informant talked about 'unapproved sheds out in the backblocks'. Another talked about 'dongas (shipping containers), tepees

and shacks' and another talked about 'people in substandard dwellings, such as a caravan with a lean-to and a decrepit old shed'.

In Richmond-Tweed SD Balance, about half of the primary population were rough sleepers. A census collector recorded 'people in tents at the football ground, a man living in a car, and another living in a shed'. A local informant described 'people with drug and alcohol issues ... who float around the community'. A third described 'people camping in the sand dunes ... and sheltering under awnings'. Sleeping rough was a significant issue in this community.

7.4 MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS

There were 140 boarding house residents in the five urban subdivisions (Table 7.4) but 828 marginal residents of caravan parks (Table 7.7). In the six rural subdivisions, there were 291 boarding house residents (Table 7.6), but 1290 marginal residents of caravan parks (Table 7.8). In these communities, caravans are used as an alternative to boarding houses.

7.7 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, URBAN SUBDIVISIONS, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

	Tweed Heads	Lismore	Coffs Harbour	Port Macquarie	Queanbeyan	Total
Homeless	396	241	247	170	288	1342
Rate per 10 000	67	80	52	43	64	61
Caravan	343	136	179	142	28	828
Total	739	377	426	312	316	2170
Rate per 10 000	125	125	89	79	70	98

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

Table 7.7 shows that if marginal residents of caravan parks are included in the tertiary population, then the rate of homelessness in the five urban subdivisions increases from 61 to 98 per 10 000. In Tweed Heads, the rate increases from 67 to 125 per 10 000 and in Lismore, it increases from 80 to 125 per 10 000.

7.8 HOMELESS PEOPLE AND MARGINAL RESIDENTS OF CARAVAN PARKS, RURAL SUBDIVISIONS, COASTAL NEW SOUTH WALES

	Richmond-Tweed	Mid-North Coast		South Eastern			Total
	SD Balance	Clarence	Hastings	Tablelands	South Coast	Snowy	
Homeless	1129	466	488	290	515	198	3086
Rate per 10 000	87	49	48	43	78	102	64
Caravan	469	328	315	49	112	17	1290
Total	1598	794	803	339	627	215	4376
Rate per 10 000	123	83	79	50	95	111	91

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

There were 1290 marginal caravan park dwellers in the six rural subdivisions (Table 7.8), and 86 per cent were in three subdivisions: Richmond-Tweed SD Balance (469), Clarence (328) and Hastings (315). Table 7.8 shows that if marginal residents of caravan parks are included in the tertiary population, then the rate of homelessness in the rural subdivisions increases from 64 to 91 per 10 000. In Clarence, the rate increases from 49 to 83 per 10 000 and in Richmond-Tweed SD Balance, it increases from 87 to 123.

Coastal New South Wales is one of a number of areas across the country where the inclusion of marginal residents of caravan parks makes a significant difference to the count of homeless people.

8 INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS

In New South Wales, 94 per cent of people answered the census question: 'Is the person of Aboriginal or Torres Strait islander origin?' and two per cent identified as Indigenous. However, there was no information on the Indigenous status of the homeless young people staying temporarily with friends or relatives, who were not counted in the census. We use census data on homeless people staying with other households (the 'usual address' question) to estimate how many Indigenous young people were missed by the census.

There is a risk of underestimation, because many Indigenous people make sense of the 'usual address' question within a different cultural frame of reference. When Indigenous people leave home to escape domestic violence or other family problems, they often move in with members of their extended family. In these circumstances, it is not culturally appropriate to record 'no usual address' on census night, because 'home' is understood in a different way. This creates underreporting in this category.

8.1 NUMBER OF INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS HOMELESS PEOPLE AND RATES PER 10 000, 2001 AND 2006

	2001			2006		
	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Total*	Non-Indigenous	Indigenous	Total**
Number	25 057	1376	26 676	25 235	1961	27 374
Rate	40	110	42	39	134	42

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001, 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2001, 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2001, 2006.

* Figures have been adjusted for missing data on Indigenous status, except in 243 cases where there was inadequate information to make the adjustment.

** Figures have been adjusted for missing data on Indigenous status, except in 178 cases where there was inadequate information to make the adjustment.

The research found 1961 homeless Indigenous people in New South Wales on census night 2006 (Table 8.1). The rate was 134 per 10 000 of the population compared with a rate of 110 in 2001. The rate of homelessness for non-Indigenous people was 39 per 10 000 in 2006, compared with 40 per 10 000 in 2001. Indigenous people were overrepresented in the homeless population in all states and territories in 2006, but the rate of Indigenous homelessness has increased in New South Wales since 2001.

In Sydney, there were 728 homeless Indigenous people (Table 8.2), including 303 in SAAP, 169 with other households, 131 in improvised dwellings or sleeping rough and 125 in boarding houses. Thirty-eight per cent of homeless Indigenous people (276 persons) were in the City Core, including 89 people sleeping rough.

8.2 GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF INDIGENOUS AND NON-INDIGENOUS HOMELESS PEOPLE, 2006

	Non-Indigenous		Indigenous	
	N	%	N	%
Sydney	15 140	60	728	37
Hunter	1776	7	192	10
Mid-North Coast	1215	5	154	8
Northern	850	3	145	7
North Western	470	2	140	7
Illawarra	1197	5	129	7
Richmond-Tweed	1638	6	127	6
South Eastern	1160	5	112	6
Other (4 divisions)	1789	7	234	12
	25 235	100	1961	100

There were another seven statistical divisions which had more than 100 homeless Indigenous people (Table 8.2). There were 192 in Hunter, including 164 in Newcastle. The Mid-North Coast had 154, spread evenly across four subdivisions. Northern had 145 homeless Indigenous people, including 53 in North Central Plain and 49 in the Northern Tablelands. Illawarra had 129, including 89 in Wollongong. Richmond-Tweed had 127 and South Eastern had 112.

9 DISCUSSION

The Australian Government's White Paper on homelessness has proposed two ambitious goals: 'to halve homelessness by 2020' and to provide 'supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it', along with interim targets for 2013. The Commonwealth, state and territory governments will work together to achieve the targets specified in the White Paper. This chapter makes some comments on the White Paper's targets, on the basis of the 2006 statistical data on homelessness.

The White Paper highlights three strategies to achieve its goals. The first strategy is 'turning off the tap,' which relates to the provision of services focusing on early intervention and prevention (Homelessness Taskforce 2008, Ch. 3). The second strategy is 'improving and expanding services to end homelessness', which focuses on providing services that assist people into 'stable long-term housing, employment and training' or other forms of community participation (Homelessness Taskforce 2008, Ch. 4). The third strategy is 'breaking the cycle', whereby homeless people can 'move quickly through the crisis system to stable housing with the support they need so that homelessness does not reoccur' (Homelessness Taskforce 2008, Ch. 5).

The White Paper was accompanied by a significant financial commitment of \$1.2 billion over five years, with \$800 million allocated for prevention and early intervention services, and a further \$400 million to increase the supply of 'affordable and supported housing for people who would otherwise be homeless'. Since the White Paper, the government has announced a further \$6.6 billion to be spent on the construction of 20 000 homes for public housing, the largest expansion of public housing for many years.

The aim of the government is to reduce the number of homeless people from 105 000 in 2006 to 50 000 by 2020. The White Paper is not a detailed plan, but it does provide a policy framework for the national response to homelessness and foreshadows significant funded initiatives to achieve targeted social goals. However, the international economic environment is now far more problematic than it was prior to 2008, and the global economic recession may create additional pressures that exacerbate homelessness.

9.1 HOMELESS STATISTICS

There are three main sources of statistical data that inform policy. The first is the ABS Census of Population and Housing undertaken every five years. The 2001 Census reported 99 900 homeless people and the 2006 census reported 104 676. At both censuses the rate of homelessness was 53 persons per 10 000 of the population. On census night 2006, 16 375 people were counted in improvised dwellings, tents or sleeping rough (primary homelessness), 46 856 people were staying temporarily with other households (secondary homelessness), 19 849 were in SAAP (secondary homelessness), and 21 596 were in boarding houses (tertiary homelessness).

The profile of the homeless population looks different if people are classified on the basis of their housing histories, rather than their accommodation on census night. In a study of 4291 homeless people in Melbourne, Chamberlain, Johnson and Theobald (2007) found that 92 per cent of their sample had moved regularly from one form of temporary accommodation to another. Nearly everyone had stayed with friends or relatives, but 85 per cent had also stayed in boarding houses, 60 per cent had been in SAAP/THM accommodation, and 50 per cent had slept rough. Homeless people show up in particular places on census night, but many of them will be somewhere else a few weeks later.

The second source of data is the National SAAP Data Collection which gathers information on all persons assisted by the SAAP program. The National SAAP Data Collection provides important information on the needs and social characteristics of people who use these services. Between 1 July 2005 and 30 June 2006, 106 500 homeless adults and 54 700 accompanying children were assisted, making a total of 161 200 persons in SAAP (AIHW 2007, p. xi). It would be possible to estimate the annual homeless population if we knew what proportion of homeless people use SAAP services, but we do not have this statistic.

The third source of statistical data is research surveys of different subgroups within the homeless population. These samples are usually drawn from service users. However, findings from this kind of research can be used to make inferences about the homeless population. In 2001, Chamberlain and MacKenzie (2003) contacted all SAAP services in census week and were provided with 812 case studies. The research found that 48 per cent of SAAP clients had been homeless for one year or longer (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2003, p. 42). In a study of 630 SAAP clients, Eardley, Thompson, Cass and Dadich (2008, Ch. 5) found that 65 per cent had been homeless on two or more occasions and one-quarter had received help from SAAP for between one and five years; and in a study of 4291

people, Chamberlain, Johnson and Theobald (2007, p. 25) found that 64 per cent had been homeless for one year or longer. The findings suggest that a significant proportion of the homeless population have long-term housing problems. Making good use of the available statistical data necessarily means making reasoned inferences from the different data sources.

9.2 REDUCING HOMELESSNESS: OVERVIEW

Homelessness is a process including stages of becoming homeless, being homeless and at some point recovering from homelessness. In Australia, thinking about homelessness as a process is well-established and metaphors such as the 'homeless career' (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 1998) and 'homeless pathways' are widely used to refer to these transitions (Clapham 2003; Johnson, Gronda and Coutts 2008). The homeless population consists of diverse groups: single men and women, families with children, and young people on their own. For some people, homelessness is a short-lived experience, while for others homelessness lasts more than one year, and some people experience repeated episodes of homelessness.

People become homeless for diverse reasons. Teenagers typically experience homelessness following a breakdown in their family situation. Some families become homeless as debt mounts and they are evicted from their housing. For other people, it is a breakdown in their conjugal relationship, often involving domestic violence, that results in one partner (usually a woman with children) losing their accommodation. Mental health issues or drug and alcohol abuse may be directly implicated in some people becoming homeless, but other people develop these issues in the homeless population (Chamberlain, Johnson and Theobald 2007).

It is known that some groups are particularly vulnerable to homelessness, such as young people who have been through the care and protection system (Johnson and Chamberlain 2008a). Also, it is known that Indigenous people are more vulnerable to becoming homeless than non-Indigenous Australians.

Reducing the size of the homeless population will require a significant investment in early intervention and applying appropriate intervention models for different subgroups in the population. There will also be a need for improved services to support people who are homeless and follow-up support to ensure that formerly homeless people can maintain their accommodation. Finally, a major investment in affordable housing, including public and community housing, will be needed over the next decade.

9.3 ROUGH SLEEPERS

The White Paper prioritises reducing the number of people sleeping rough and ‘offering supported accommodation to all rough sleepers who need it’ (Homelessness Taskforce 2008, p. 17). This is a commendable priority, but three points need to be borne in mind.

First, providing people with emergency accommodation can be justified on both moral and practical grounds, but moving rough sleepers into supported accommodation will not reduce the overall number of homeless people.

Second, it is important to recognise that most people do not sleep rough on a permanent basis. Chamberlain, Johnson and Theobald (2007) found that only two per cent of their sample was consistently without shelter, but 49 per cent of the sample had slept rough occasionally.

Third, the census identified 16 375 people in the ‘improvised dwellings’ category. However, this category includes a wide range of situations from sleeping in a park and sheltering in a derelict building, to living in a shed or garage of some kind. There is no simple way of disaggregating the category, but in 2006 we conducted further research. We examined census data, then we held many discussions with building inspectors, town planners and service providers across the country. This provided the basis for estimating the number of persons in improvised dwellings (sheds, garages and cabins) and the number of persons sleeping rough (for example, in public places, derelict buildings, cars and tents).

In Chapter 2, we estimated that in the capital cities about 75 per cent of households in the ‘primary homeless’ category were sleeping rough. However, in regional Australia the situation was different. About 60 per cent of households in this category were living in sheds, garages or shacks, most of which were owned or being purchased. Their living arrangements were below the community standard used to define homelessness, and in the main they were low-income households, but they were not transient and some were employed in local communities.

People sleeping rough or squatting in derelict buildings were more likely to be on their own, whereas people in improvised dwellings were more likely to be in families or group households. Overall, we estimate about 9900 persons in improvised dwellings across the country and about 6500 rough sleepers, although the latter group was undercounted.

9.4 YOUNG PEOPLE

Youth homelessness has been a major policy focus since the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission's 1989 report, *Our Homeless Children*, and in 2008 there was a National Youth Commission report, *Australia's Homeless Youth*. Youth refers to young people aged 12 to 24. However, a distinction is often drawn between teenagers aged 12 to 18 and young adults aged 19 to 24.

There have been important initiatives to assist homeless teenagers and their families. The establishment of the Reconnect program in 1999 was a major early intervention initiative by the Australian Government to reduce youth homelessness. Reconnect was implemented in phases and was not fully operational until 2003. Twenty-nine services were funded in December 1999 (DFaCS 2003, p. 22). By 2003, there were 98 Reconnect services across the country. The most recent evaluation of Reconnect (DFaCS 2003, p. 8) found that the program had achieved positive outcomes for young people and their families.

In addition, several states implemented new programs such as the Youth Support Coordinators Program in Queensland and the Family Reconciliation and Mediation Program in Victoria. Some SAAP youth agencies also undertake early intervention with recently homeless young people. Since the late 1990s, several state and territory governments have expended additional funds to increase the number of welfare staff in schools and to improve assistance to young people and families in crisis.

9.1 CHANGES IN THE COMPOSITION OF THE HOMELESS POPULATION

	2001	2006	% change
Families with children	22 944	26 790	+16.8
Youth aged 12 to 18 (alone)	22 600	17 891	-20.8
Adults (singles and couples)	54 356	59 995	+10.4
	99 900	104 676	+4.8

Source: Census of Population and Housing 2001, 2006; SAAP Client Collection 2001, 2006; National Census of Homeless School Students 2001, 2006.

Table 9.1 shows that the number of homeless youth aged 12 to 18 decreased from 22 600 in 2001 to 17 891 in 2006, a decrease of 20.8 per cent. This is compelling evidence that these early intervention initiatives have been effective. There are currently 98 Reconnect services across the country, but it has been estimated that 50 per cent of communities do not have a Reconnect program (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2004b, p. 41–43). At any point in time, there are 15 000 students across the country at risk

of becoming homeless (Chamberlain and MacKenzie 2004b, p. 42). Youth homelessness could be further reduced by expanding Reconnect to have national coverage.

In a study of 1642 homeless adults and young adults, Johnson and Chamberlain (2008a) found that 42 per cent of their sample had been in the state care and protection system. Young people who have been in state care are at greater risk of becoming homeless than most teenagers, and they are at much greater risk of making the transition from youth to adult homelessness. Targeted intervention and a reformed care and protection system are important components of an effective early intervention strategy for youth. In addition, such initiatives will have a flow-on effect by reducing the number of homeless teenagers moving into the adult homeless population.

9.5 FAMILIES

Another group for whom early intervention is a crucial issue is families. The number of persons in family households on census night increased from 22 944 in 2001 to 26 790 in 2006, an increase of 16.8 per cent (Table 9.1). Families make up 28 per cent of SAAP users (AIHW 2007, p. 37). In 2005–06, the number of children accompanying parents in SAAP was 54 700 (AIHW 2007, p. 15).

Most commonly, families become homeless because of a housing crisis or domestic violence. Adults in families experiencing a housing crisis are typically unemployed or outside of the labour force. These families are usually poor and often have accumulated debts. In most cases, the family is facing eviction because of rent arrears.

Early intervention with families experiencing a housing crisis involves providing families with assistance before they lose their accommodation, including family counselling to resolve relationship difficulties, financial advice, some funds to settle debts, and assistance with applications for public housing. There is a small national program providing this kind of response. In 2001, a pilot program of eight services known as the Family Homelessness Prevention Project (FHPP) was launched with a single service in each jurisdiction. From 1 July 2004, the program continued under a new name as the Household Organisational Management Expenses (HOME) Advice Program.

An evaluation of the HOME program found that if families at risk of homelessness were reached with assistance before losing their accommodation, 86 per cent of those families remained in adequate housing or improved their housing situation during the period of support

(MacKenzie, Desmond and Steen 2007). The evaluation highlighted two key success factors: the availability of brokerage funds and a capacity to work through issues on a needs basis. The effects of this assistance were found to be sustainable for a majority of families in the 12 months after support.

The HOME Advice program was a small-scale initiative and had only a small impact on the overall population of at-risk families. Family homelessness could be reduced by expanding the HOME project to have national coverage. Preliminary estimates indicate the need for between 100 and 250 services.

Some families become homeless as a result of family breakdown involving domestic violence. There has been a considerable investment in changing community attitudes towards domestic violence (Carrington and Phillips 2006), but it is not clear to what extent early intervention strategies have been implemented to assist women experiencing domestic violence. One impediment to implementing early intervention is that many women do not request assistance until they have left the family home.

One form of early intervention is family counselling to help couples work through their relationship issues, and another form of intervention is to remove the perpetrator of violence from the family home. Otherwise, 'early intervention' for victims of domestic violence means assisting them to move quickly to alternative, secure accommodation. The number of people using these services may not decrease, but if their time spent in homelessness services is minimised, then the number of families in the point-in-time census count will decrease over time. The current lack of affordable housing affects homeless families escaping domestic violence, by prolonging their homelessness and increasing the number of homeless people on census night.

9.6 ADULTS WITHOUT CHILDREN

There were 59 995 homeless adults without children on census night, up from 54 356 in 2001, an increase of 10.4 per cent (Table 9.1). Two-thirds of these adults were men and one-third were women. Adults without children are the largest group of service users and many have been homeless for extended periods of time or have moved in and out of homelessness. In general, early intervention strategies are not the issue for single adults with a history of homelessness, although over time early intervention for teenagers will stem the flow into the adult homeless population. The lack of affordable and appropriate housing is a major issue for this group.

Some 21 000 people live in boarding houses, and these properties are often in poor condition with issues of health and safety for the residents. Greater regulation to improve the living conditions in boarding houses and legislation to improve security of tenure would be stop-gap measures, but most people in boarding houses want affordable self-contained accommodation.

About one-quarter of the adults without children were aged 55 or older (15 000 people). An appropriate aged-care response could provide more adequate long-term accommodation for people who currently reside in boarding houses or take up places in the homelessness service system.

A significant proportion of the people with a long-term housing problem have substance abuse issues and/or mental health issues, which complicates their exit from homelessness (Johnson and Chamberlain 2008b). Most of the adults who were homeless on census night needed assistance to find appropriate, affordable housing, and long-term support to maintain that accommodation.

The main policy imperatives for this group are the creation of sufficient affordable housing stock, continuing support for individuals with complex housing needs, and sufficient levels of support to assist people who have experienced long-term homelessness to live in the community.

9.7 CONCLUSION

The White Paper proposes a long-term effort to halve homelessness by 2020. Achieving the right mix of interventions is one challenge. About 50 per cent of the homeless population could be assisted directly by the early intervention measures discussed above. The other component of a balanced response is the need for a steep increase in the stock of affordable housing, combined with policies that guarantee access for the most disadvantaged, and sufficient long-term, case-managed support to prevent homelessness reoccurring. At this point, it is unclear whether sufficient resources have been deployed to fund the programs that are needed.

A second challenge is to recognise that it will take several years before an assessment can be made about the effectiveness of the White Paper's initiatives. It takes time to put new services in place and for those services to have their full impact. It will also take time to increase the supply of affordable housing, and other low-income people will be competing for the new housing stock.

The White Paper sets out interim targets for 2013, including an overall reduction in homelessness of 21 000 people (Homelessness Taskforce 2008, p. 18). In 2013, homeless figures from the 2011 census will become available,

but it is unlikely that the impact from the new initiatives will be apparent in 2011. The findings from the 2016 census will be of more relevance for assessing whether the White Paper's targets have been achieved.

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Appendix 1: Number of homeless people in New South Wales by statistical division and subdivision, 2006

	Group 1 Imp. dwell	Group 2 Friends	Group 3 Board Hse	Group 4 SAAP	Total	Usual Res. Population	Rate per 10 000	Group 5 Caravan	Total (incl. caravan)	Rate (incl. caravan)
Sydney	1182	5883	6070	2821	15 956	4 119 188	39	1173	17 129	42
Inner Sydney	388	667	2164	944	4163	313 154	133	0	4163	133
Eastern Suburbs	41	407	725	111	1284	230 761	56	5	1289	56
St George-Sutherland	24	450	278	98	850	423 836	20	128	978	23
Canterbury-Bankstown	46	373	192	121	732	300 450	24	17	749	25
Fairfield-Liverpool	55	451	91	224	821	344 495	24	136	957	28
Outer South West Sydney	61	305	57	131	554	233 065	24	114	668	29
Inner Western Sydney	41	231	662	186	1120	168 323	67	0	1120	67
Central Western Sydney	103	408	730	287	1528	303 048	50	3	1531	51
Outer Western Sydney	182	399	100	244	925	306 770	30	137	1062	35
Blacktown	38	401	59	80	578	271 713	21	184	762	28
Lower Northern Sydney	24	558	648	59	1289	288 714	45	7	1296	45
Central Northern Sydney	91	420	81	80	672	411 798	16	41	713	17
Northern Beaches	48	322	181	73	624	225 104	28	18	642	29
Gosford Wyong	40	491	102	183	816	297 957	27	383	1199	40
Hunter	281	1004	335	361	1981	589 239	34	636	2617	44
Newcastle	133	829	313	299	1574	493 467	32	474	2048	42
Hunter SD Bal	148	175	22	62	407	95 772	42	162	569	59
Illawarra	121	524	231	462	1338	394 212	34	472	1810	46
Wollongong	48	315	202	376	941	263 535	36	279	1220	46
Nowra-Bomaderry	8	51	10	76	145	30 952	47	69	214	69
Illawarra SD Bal	65	158	19	10	252	99 725	25	124	376	38
Richmond-Tweed	516	879	186	185	1766	219 326	81	948	2714	124
Tweed Heads & Tweed Coast	96	240	22	38	396	59 349	67	343	739	125
Lismore	24	80	63	74	241	30 088	80	136	377	125
Richmond-Tweed SD Bal	396	559	101	73	1129	129 889	87	469	1598	123

Appendix 1 (continued): Number of homeless people in New South Wales by statistical division and subdivision, 2006

	Group 1 Imp. dwell	Group 2 Friends	Group 3 Board Hse	Group 4 SAAP	Total	Usual Res. Population	Rate per 10 000	Group 5 Caravan	Total (incl. caravan)	Rate (incl. caravan)
Mid-North Coast	372	710	91	198	1371	284 676	48	964	2335	82
Coffs Harbour	50	134	23	40	247	47 709	52	179	426	89
Port Macquarie	0	103	12	55	170	39 508	43	142	312	79
Clarence (excl. Coffs Harb.)	146	243	30	47	466	95 656	49	328	794	83
Hastings (excl. Port Mac.)	176	230	26	56	488	101 803	48	315	803	79
Northern	298	354	138	212	1002	172 395	58	157	1159	67
Tamworth	7	71	22	50	150	42 496	35	22	172	40
Northern Slopes (excl Tam)	150	97	20	0	267	40 085	67	16	283	71
Northern Tablelands	107	128	49	83	367	62 723	59	88	455	73
North Central Plain	34	58	47	79	218	27 091	80	31	249	92
North Western	235	179	126	70	610	111 229	55	212	822	74
Dubbo	31	40	82	63	216	34 316	63	30	246	72
Central Macquarie	36	63	8	0	107	50 168	21	129	236	47
Macquarie-Barwon	151	47	0	3	201	16 785	120	38	239	142
Upper Darling	17	29	36	4	86	9 960	86	15	101	101
Central West	106	248	72	199	625	170 896	37	95	720	42
Bathurst	0	39	32	93	164	30 744	53	6	170	55
Central Tablelands	53	82	11	20	166	52 282	32	29	195	37
Lachlan	53	77	17	54	201	52 532	38	44	245	47
Orange	0	50	12	32	94	35 338	27	16	110	31
South Eastern	389	487	154	261	1291	197 944	65	206	1497	76
Queanbeyan	99	101	20	68	288	45 072	64	28	316	70
Southern Tablelands	69	118	51	52	290	67 351	43	49	339	50
Lower South Coast	201	140	50	124	515	66 070	78	112	627	95
Snowy	20	128	33	17	198	19 451	102	17	215	111

Appendix 1 (continued): Number of homeless people in New South Wales by statistical division and subdivision, 2006

	Group 1 Imp. dwell	Group 2 Friends	Group 3 Board Hse	Group 4 SAAP	Total	Usual Res. Population	Rate per 10 000	Group 5 Caravan	Total (incl. caravan)	Rate (incl. caravan)
Murrumbidgee	89	264	71	177	601	147 295	41	63	664	45
Wagga Wagga	36	82	37	96	251	52 490	48	17	268	51
Central Murrumbidgee	5	87	18	11	121	51 189	24	22	143	28
Lower Murrumbidgee	48	95	16	70	229	43 616	53	24	253	58
Murray	97	294	100	151	642	110 524	58	175	817	74
Albury	15	111	76	142	344	49 723	69	52	396	80
Upper Murray	26	47	4	0	77	22 054	35	37	114	52
Central Murray	36	56	12	9	113	29 526	38	52	165	56
Murray-Darling	20	80	8	0	108	9221	117	34	142	154
Far West	29	97	48	13	187	22 031	85	3	190	86
Missing data	0	0	4	0	4	10 224		0	4	
Total	3715	10 923	7626	5110	27 374	6 549 179	41.8	5104	32 478	49.6
SLAs										
	Group 1 Imp. dwell	Group 2 Friends	Group 3 Board Hse	Group 4 SAAP	Total	Usual Res. Population	Rate per 10 000	Group 5 Caravan	Total (incl. caravan)	Rate (incl. caravan)
Queanbeyan	14	89	18	68	189	35 969	53	20	209	58
Broken Hill	3	57	38	13	111	19 364	57	3	114	59

Appendix 2: Estimated number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous homeless people by statistical division and selected subdivisions, 2006*

Sydney	Non-Indig	Indig	Group 1 Imp. dwell	Group 2 Friends	Group 3 Board Hse	Group 4 SAAP	Total	Usual Res. Population	Rate per 10 000	Group 5 Caravan	Total (incl. caravan)	Rate (incl. caravan)
			1051	5714	5945	2430	15 140	4 072 537	37	1117	16 257	40
			131	169	125	303	728	46 651	156	56	784	168
City Core	Non-Indig		299	640	2107	808	3854	308 278	125	0	3854	125
	Indig		89	27	57	103	276	4876	566	0	276	566
Inner City Ring	Non-Indig		189	1570	2739	580	5078	984 982	52	15	5093	52
	Indig		20	34	26	44	124	5864	211	0	124	211
Outer City Ring	Non-Indig		299	2367	862	590	4118	1 960 299	21	505	4623	24
	Indig		3	50	20	56	129	17 097	75	19	148	87
Growth Corridors	Non-Indig		264	1137	237	452	2090	818 978	26	597	2687	33
	Indig		19	58	22	100	199	18 814	106	37	236	125
Hunter	Non-Indig		273	925	329	249	1776	573 196	31	596	2372	41
	Indig		8	79	6	99	192	16 043	120	40	232	145
Newcastle	Non-Indig		130	764	307	196	1397	480 622	29	447	1844	38
	Indig		3	65	6	90	164	12 845	128	27	191	149
Hunter SD Bal	Non-Indig		143	161	22	53	379	92 574	41	149	528	57
	Indig		5	14	0	9	28	3198	88	13	41	128
Illawarra	Non-Indig		121	491	225	360	1197	385 196	31	447	1644	43
	Indig		0	33	6	90	129	9016	143	25	154	171
Wollongong	Non-Indig		48	295	199	300	842	258 555	33	274	1116	43
	Indig		0	20	3	66	89	4980	179	5	94	189
Nowra-Bomaderry	Non-Indig		8	46	7	50	111	29 056	38	56	167	57
	Indig		0	5	3	24	32	1896	169	13	45	237
Illawarra SD Balance	Non-Indig		65	150	19	10	244	97 585	25	117	361	37
	Indig		0	8	0	0	8	2140	37	7	15	70

* Figures have been adjusted for missing data on Indigenous status, except in 178 cases where there was inadequate information to make the adjustment.

Appendix 2 (continued): Estimated number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous homeless people by statistical division and selected subdivisions, 2006

		Group 1 Imp. dwell	Group 2 Friends	Group 3 Board Hse	Group 4 SAAP	Total	Usual Res. Population	Rate per 10 000	Group 5 Caravan	Total (incl. caravan)	Rate (incl. caravan)
Richmond-Tweed	Non-Indig	479	854	176	129	1638	211 786	77	844	2482	117
	Indig	37	25	10	55	127	7540	168	104	231	306
Tweed Heads	Non-Indig	96	230	22	31	379	57 258	66	300	679	119
	Indig	0	10	0	7	17	2091	81	43	60	287
Lismore	Non-Indig	10	80	58	37	185	28 718	64	109	294	102
	Indig	14	0	5	36	55	1370	401	27	82	599
Rich'd-Tweed SD Bal	Non-Indig	373	544	96	61	1074	125 810	85	435	1509	120
	Indig	23	15	5	12	55	4079	135	34	89	218
Mid-North Coast	Non-Indig	341	684	88	102	1215	271 945	45	863	2078	76
	Indig	31	26	3	94	154	12 731	121	101	255	200
Coffs Harbour	Non-Indig	36	128	23	22	209	45 896	46	158	367	80
	Indig	14	6	0	18	38	1813	210	21	59	325
Port Macquarie	Non-Indig	0	103	12	17	132	38 442	34	123	255	66
	Indig	0	0	0	38	38	1066	356	19	57	535
Clarence (excl. Coffs)	Non-Indig	143	230	27	32	432	91 246	47	306	738	81
	Indig	3	13	3	14	33	4410	75	22	55	125
Hastings (excl. Pt M)	Non-Indig	162	223	26	31	442	96 361	46	276	718	75
	Indig	14	7	0	24	45	5442	83	39	84	154
Northern	Non-Indig	284	322	138	106	850	158 140	54	138	988	62
	Indig	14	32	0	99	145	14 255	102	19	164	115
Tamworth	Non-Indig	7	66	22	30	125	39 202	32	16	141	36
	Indig	0	5	0	20	25	3294	76	6	31	94
Northern Slopes	Non-Indig	140	89	20	0	249	37 252	67	16	265	71
	Indig	10	8	0	0	18	2833	64	0	18	64
Northern Tablelands	Non-Indig	103	118	49	42	312	58 764	53	79	391	67
	Indig	4	10	0	35	49	3959	124	9	58	147
North Central Plain	Non-Indig	34	49	47	34	164	22 922	72	27	191	83
	Indig	0	9	0	44	53	4169	127	4	57	137

Appendix 2 (continued): Estimated number of Indigenous and non-Indigenous homeless people by statistical division and selected subdivisions, 2006

		Group 1 Imp. dwell	Group 2 Friends	Group 3 Board Hse	Group 4 SAAP	Total	Usual Res. Population	Rate per 10 000	Group 5 Caravan	Total (incl. caravan)	Rate (incl. caravan)
North Western	Non-Indig	202	157	90	21	470	96 139	49	171	641	67
	Indig	33	22	36	49	140	15 090	93	31	171	113
Dubbo	Non-Indig	25	36	55	17	133	30 233	44	24	157	52
	Indig	6	4	27	46	83	4 083	203	6	89	218
Central Macquarie	Non-Indig	28	63	8	0	99	45 797	22	116	215	47
	Indig	8	0	0	0	8	4 371	18	13	21	48
Macquarie-Barwon	Non-Indig	132	37	0	0	169	12 924	131	26	195	151
	Indig	19	10	0	3	32	3 861	83	12	44	114
Upper Darling	Non-Indig	17	21	27	4	69	7 185	96	5	74	103
	Indig	0	8	9	0	17	2 775	61	0	17	61
Central West	Non-Indig	100	228	66	120	514	162 949	32	86	600	37
	Indig	6	20	6	67	99	7 947	125	9	108	136
South Eastern	Non-Indig	389	472	143	156	1 160	192 655	60	202	1 362	71
	Indig	0	15	11	86	112	5 289	212	4	116	219
Murrumbidgee	Non-Indig	86	243	71	134	534	141 051	38	60	594	42
	Indig	3	21	0	35	59	6 244	94	3	62	99
Murray	Non-Indig	86	275	97	123	581	107 588	54	157	738	69
	Indig	5	19	3	24	51	2 936	174	18	69	235
Far West	Non-Indig	22	83	48	7	160	19 967	80	3	163	82
	Indig	7	14	0	4	25	2 064	121	0	25	121
Total	Non-Indig	3 434	10 448	7 416	3 937	25 235	6 393 149	39	4 684	29 919	47
	Indig	275	475	206	1 005	1 961	145 806	134	410	2 371	163
Missing data		6	0	4	168	178	10 224		10	188	
Total		3 715	10 923	7 626	5 110	27 374	6 549 179	42	5 104	32 478	50

Appendix 3: Percentage of homeless people by statistical division and subdivision, 2006

Sydney	Number	Percentage	Mid-North Coast	Number	Percentage
Inner Sydney	15 956	58.3	Coffs Harbour	1371	5.0
Eastern Suburbs	4163	15.2	Port Macquarie	247	0.9
St George-Sutherland	1284	4.7	Clarence (excl. Coffs)	170	0.6
Canterbury-Bankstown	850	3.1	Hastings (excl. Port M)	466	1.7
Fairfield-Liverpool	732	2.7	Northern	488	1.8
Outer South West Syd.	821	3.0	1002	3.7	
Inner Western Sydney	554	2.0	Tamworth	150	0.6
Central Western Sydney	1120	4.1	Northern Slopes (excl. T)	267	1.0
Outer Western Sydney	1528	5.6	Northern Tablelands	367	1.3
Blacktown	925	3.4	North Central Plain	218	0.8
Lower Northern Sydney	578	2.1	North Western	610	2.2
Central Northern Syd.	1289	4.7	Dubbo	216	0.8
Northern Beaches	672	2.4	Central Macquarie	107	0.4
Gosford Wyong	624	2.3	Macquarie-Barwon	201	0.7
Hunter	816	3.0	Upper Darling	86	0.3
Newcastle	1981	7.2	Central West	625	2.3
Hunter SD Bal	1574	5.7	Bathurst	164	0.6
Illawarra	407	1.5	Central Tablelands	166	0.6
Wollongong	1338	4.9	Lachlan	201	0.7
Nowra-Bomaderry	941	3.5	Orange	94	0.4
Illawarra SD Bal	145	0.5	South Eastern	1291	4.7
Richmond-Tweed	252	0.9	Queanbeyan	288	1.0
Tweed Heads	1766	6.5	Southern Tablelands	290	1.1
Lismore	396	1.5	Lower South Coast	515	1.9
Richm'd-Tweed SD Bal	241	0.9	Snowy	198	0.7
	1129	4.1			

Appendix 3 (continued): Percentage of homeless people by statistical division and subdivision, 2006

	Number	Percentage
Murrumbidgee	601	2.2
Wagga Wagga	251	0.9
Central Murrumbidgee	121	0.5
Lower Murrumbidgee	229	0.8
Murray	642	2.3
Albury	344	1.2
Upper Murray	77	0.3
Central Murray	113	0.4
Murray-Darling	108	0.4
Far West	187	0.7
Missing data	4	0.0
Total	27 374	100.0

Appendix 4: Percentage of homeless people and marginal caravan park residents by statistical division and subdivision, 2006

	Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
Sydney	17 129	52.7	Mid-North Coast	2335	7.2
Inner Sydney	4163	12.8	Coffs Harbour	426	1.3
Eastern Suburbs	1289	4.0	Port Macquarie	312	1.0
St George-Sutherland	978	3.0	Clarence (excl. Coffs)	794	2.4
Canterbury-Bankstown	749	2.3	Hastings (excl. Port M)	803	2.5
Fairfield-Liverpool	957	2.9	Northern	1159	3.6
Outer South West Syd.	668	2.1	Tamworth	172	0.5
Inner Western Sydney	1120	3.4	Northern Slopes (excl T)	283	0.9
Central Western Sydney	1531	4.7	Northern Tablelands	455	1.4
Outer Western Sydney	1062	3.3	North Central Plain	249	0.8
Blacktown	762	2.3	North Western	822	2.5
Lower Northern Sydney	1296	4.0	Dubbo	246	0.8
Central Northern Syd.	713	2.2	Central Macquarie	236	0.7
Northern Beaches	642	2.0	Macquarie-Barwon	239	0.7
Gosford Wyong	1199	3.7	Upper Darling	101	0.3
Hunter	2617	8.1	Central West	720	2.2
Newcastle	2048	6.3	Bathurst	170	0.5
Hunter SD Bal	569	1.8	Central Tablelands	195	0.6
Illawarra	1810	5.6	Lachlan	245	0.8
Wollongong	1220	3.7	Orange	110	0.3
Nowra-Bomaderry	214	0.7	South Eastern	1497	4.6
Illawarra SD Bal	376	1.2	Queanbeyan	316	1.0
Richmond-Tweed	2714	8.4	Southern Tablelands	339	1.0
Tweed Heads	739	2.3	Lower South Coast	627	1.9
Lismore	377	1.2	Snowy	215	0.7
Richm'd-Tweed SD Bal	1598	4.9			

Appendix 4 (continued): Percentage of homeless people and marginal residents of caravan parks by statistical division and subdivision, 2006

	Number	Percentage
Murrumbidgee	664	2.0
Wagga Wagga	268	0.8
Central Murrumbidgee	143	0.4
Lower Murrumbidgee	253	0.8
Murray	817	2.5
Albury	396	1.2
Upper Murray	114	0.4
Central Murray	165	0.5
Murray-Darling	142	0.4
Far West	190	0.6
Missing data	4	0.0
Total	32 478	100.0