



# **Local Jobs Plan**

## **Townsville (including Mt Isa)**

### **Queensland**

May 2022

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The Department of Education, Skills and Employment acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians of country throughout Australia and acknowledges their continuing connection to land, water, and community. We pay our respects to the people, the cultures and the elders past, present and emerging.

## The Local Jobs Program

As part of supporting Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic, the Australian Government's Local Jobs Program (LJP) brings together expertise, resources and access to funding at the local level to accelerate reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways in 51 Employment Regions.

Recognising the importance of local knowledge in getting people back into jobs quickly, the LJP includes the following key elements in each region:

- a local Employment Facilitator
- a Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce
- a Local Jobs Plan
- a Local Recovery Fund to support small scale activities
- access to the National Priority Funding Pool.

The Taskforces, each chaired by the respective region's Employment Facilitator, develop and update a Local Jobs Plan for their region that identifies key employment and training priorities and provides a framework for driving employment outcomes in the context of the local labour market.

This Local Jobs Plan for the Townsville Employment Region identifies the key LJP priorities with a focus on creating employment opportunities, actively upskilling or reskilling local job seekers and meeting local employer demands. It is anticipated that this document will be updated in July/August 2022 upon release of current census data.

## Key Employment and Training Priorities

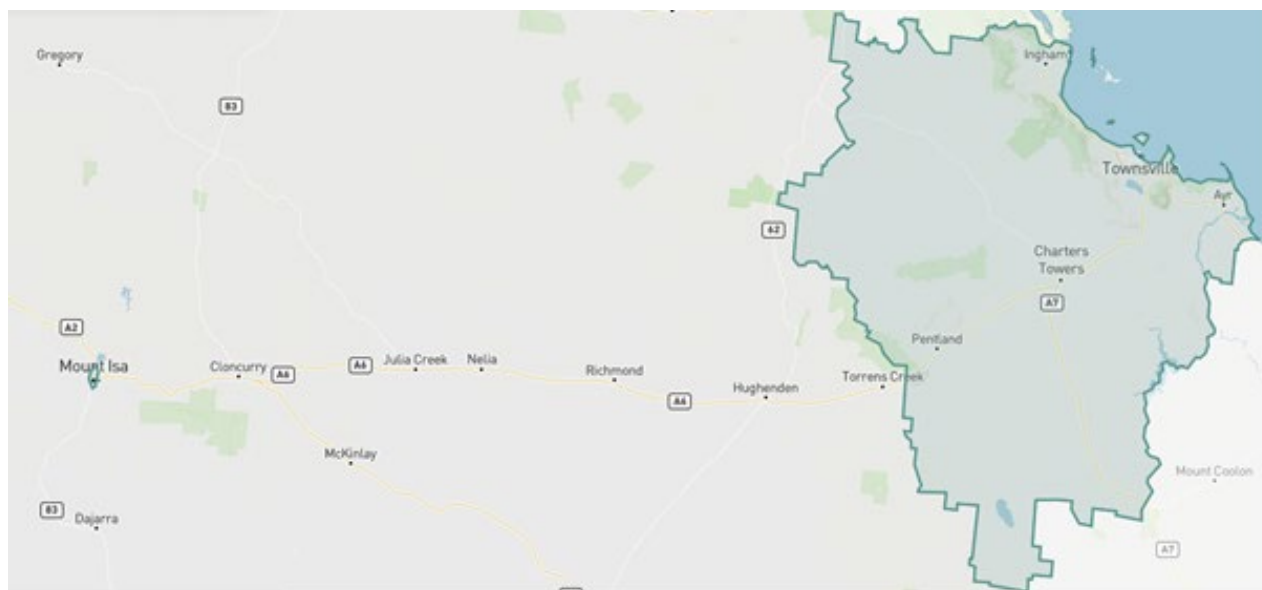
The Taskforce has considered the training and employment challenges of the Townsville Employment Region and supports the development of strategies that will drive the design and implementation of projects and connect jobseekers and employers to address gaps in the labour force and address the following key priorities:

1. Maximising the benefits of existing Australian Government, Queensland Government, local council and community driven employment and skills initiatives and funding to address current labour shortages and skills gaps.
2. Create pathways into major and growth industries within the employment region.
3. Generating opportunities for Indigenous youth skill development aligned to local employer and industry needs, including through training, apprenticeships, traineeships, and improved digital literacy.
4. Identifying pathways for young people to develop skills and be supported to access labour market opportunities, particularly through apprenticeships and traineeships.
5. Brokering employment opportunities for mature age job seekers through collaboration with local community support services, employers, and training organisations.

A full description of these key priorities, the strategies to address them and a list of key stakeholders can be found at Attachment A.

# Employment Region overview

The Townsville Employment Region (ER) is located on the east coast of North Queensland, 1,335 kilometres north of Brisbane, and includes the North West Queensland town of Mount Isa, which is separated from the rest of the Townsville ER by extensive remote areas serviced by the Community Development Program.



Townsville North Queensland is a thriving precinct positioned strategically in North Queensland. It is well positioned among five dynamic regions and is recognised as the central hub for business and investment. Land availability for business, living and leisure, abundant water, transport links to Asia-Pacific and Papua New Guinea, superfast communication technology such as the National Broadband Network (NBN) and a superb tropical lifestyle mean that the Region offers investment potential like no other.

Home to 254,707, Townsville North Queensland supports 103,546 jobs and has an annual economic output of \$33.813 billion.

The region comprises the five local government areas of Burdekin, Charters Towers, Hinchinbrook, Mount Isa and Townsville. The region has a total land area of 123,684.3 km<sup>2</sup>, with an average daily temperature range of 17.3°C to 30.4°C and an average annual rainfall of 633 mm.

**Table 1 Estimated resident population by LGA, Custom region and Queensland**

Custom region / LGA / State	As at 30 June			Average annual growth rate	
	2010	2015	2020p	2010–2020p	2015–2020p
	— number —			— % —	
<b>Custom region</b>	<b>240,268</b>	<b>251,579</b>	<b>254,707</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>0.2</b>
Burdekin (S)	17,786	17,566	16,953	-0.5	-0.7
Charters Towers (R)	12,316	12,235	11,731	-0.5	-0.8
Hinchinbrook (S)	11,808	11,181	10,645	-1.0	-1.0
Mount Isa (C)	21,830	20,586	18,578	-1.6	-2.0
Townsville (C)	176,528	190,011	196,800	1.1	0.7
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>4,404,744</b>	<b>4,777,692</b>	<b>5,176,186</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.6</b>

Source: ABS 3218.0, *Regional Population Growth, Australia*, various editions

**Table 6 Indigenous status by LGA, Custom region and Queensland, 2016**

Custom region / LGA / State	Indigenous persons					Non-Indigenous persons		Total persons <sup>(b)</sup>
	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Both <sup>(a)</sup>	Total				
	— number —			number	%	number	%	number
Custom region	14,723	2,183	1,946	18,856	7.7	207,924	84.8	245,263
Burdekin (S)	730	95	148	974	5.7	14,888	87.2	17,074
Charters Towers (R)	912	43	73	1,033	8.7	9,699	81.7	11,876
Hinchinbrook (S)	539	68	54	660	6.1	9,413	86.5	10,885
Mount Isa (C)	2,951	84	122	3,149	16.9	13,385	71.7	18,671
Townsville (C)	9,591	1,893	1,549	13,040	7.0	160,539	86.0	186,757
Queensland	148,943	21,053	16,493	186,482	4.0	4,211,020	89.5	4,703,193

(a) Applicable to persons who are of 'both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander origin'.

(b) Includes Indigenous status not stated.

Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples Profile - 102

## Unemployment Rate

The Townsville ER saw an unemployment rate of 5.3% at the September quarter 2021, the below table provides detail of the distinct variation between the Local Government Areas within the Townsville ER.

**Table 36 Unemployment and labour force<sup>(a)</sup> by LGA, Custom region and Queensland, September quarter 2021**

Custom region / LGA / State	Unemployed	Labour force	Unemployment rate
	— number —		%
<b>Custom region</b>	<b>7,104</b>	<b>133,309</b>	<b>5.3</b>
Burdekin (S)	392	8,513	4.6
Charters Towers (R)	293	5,381	5.4
Hinchinbrook (S)	257	4,942	5.2
Mount Isa (C)	913	11,077	8.2
Townsville (C)	5,249	103,396	5.1
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>169,924</b>	<b>2,784,150</b>	<b>6.1</b>

Refer to explanatory notes for additional information.

(a) Based on a 4-quarter smoothed series.

Source: Australian Government, National Skills Commission, Small Area Labour Markets Australia, various editions

## Largest employing industries

- 13.8% of employed persons work within the health care and social assistance industry.
- 11.8% of employed persons worked in Public Administration and safety industry

## Registered businesses by employment size as of 30 June 2021

**Table 44 Registered businesses by employment size and LGA, Custom region and Queensland, 30 June 2021**

Custom region / LGA / State	Non-employing		1–4 employees		5–19 employees		20–199 employees		200+ employees		Total
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	
<b>Custom region</b>	<b>9,677</b>	<b>55.4</b>	<b>5,022</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>2,212</b>	<b>12.7</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>17,452</b>
Burdekin (S)	1,258	59.6	581	27.5	218	10.3	52	2.5	3	0.1	2,111
Charters Towers (R)	725	63.2	285	24.8	117	10.2	27	2.4	0	0.0	1,147
Hinchinbrook (S)	819	61.6	369	27.8	123	9.3	12	0.9	0	0.0	1,329
Mount Isa (C)	444	49.6	260	29.0	149	16.6	43	4.8	3	0.3	896
Townsville (C)	6,431	53.7	3,527	29.5	1,605	13.4	390	3.3	17	0.1	11,969
<b>Queensland</b>	<b>270,917</b>	<b>58.8</b>	<b>133,589</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>44,443</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>11,129</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>727</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>460,807</b>

Refer to explanatory notes for additional information.

Source: ABS 8165.0, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, various editions

# Breakdown of Local Government Areas within the Townsville Employment Region

## Townsville



Townsville is a city located on the north-eastern coast of Queensland.

Townsville is Australia's largest urban centre north of the Sunshine Coast, with an official population count of 196,800 covering 3,736 square km (Australian Bureau of Statistics Estimated Resident Population, 30 June 2020). It is estimated that by 2041, we will have a population of approximately 282,281 people (Queensland Population Projections, 2018 edition). The growth rate is very consistent and strong ranging from 1.27% to 2.37%, adding around 2,220 to 3,977 people each year to the overall population.

Our local government area covers 3,736 square kilometres (0.2% of the total area of the State of Queensland) and is currently experiencing rapid residential development through the Northern Beaches growth corridor. Townsville has a diverse economy in which significant industries include retail trade, health and education services, government administration and defence, construction, mining, manufacturing, and property and business services. Together, Queensland Rail and the Port of Townsville provide a transport hub for the region's mining and agricultural industries. The city is a major industrial centre and has 77 multi-million dollar projects either underway, committed or planned including a \$2 billion lithium-ion battery manufacturing facility developed by the Imperium3 consortium in partnership with Siemens.

For more information visit <https://www.townsville.qld.gov.au/>

## Unemployment Rate

Townsville LGA unemployment rate and labour force at September Quarter 2021: **5.1%**

LGA / State	Unemployed		Labour force		Unemployment rate	
	— number —				%	
Townsville (C)	5,249		103,396		5.1	
Queensland	169,924		2,784,150		6.1	

## Largest employing industries

- 14.6% of employed persons worked within the Health Care and Social Assistance industry.
- 13.7% of employed persons worked in Public Administration and Safety industry

## Registered businesses by employment size as of 30 June 2021

LGA / State	Non-employing		1–4 employees		5–19 employees		20–199 employees		200+ employees		Total
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	
Townsville (C)	6,431	53.7	3,527	29.5	1,605	13.4	390	3.3	17	0.1	11,969
Queensland	270,917	58.8	133,589	29.0	44,443	9.6	11,129	2.4	727	0.2	460,807

## Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Persons with the Townsville LGA

LGA / State	Indigenous persons					Non-Indigenous persons		Total persons <sup>(b)</sup>
	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Both <sup>(a)</sup>	Total		number	%	number
	— number —			number %		number	%	number
Townsville (C)	9,591	1,893	1,549	13,040 7.0		160,539	86.0	186,757
Queensland	148,943	21,053	16,493	186,482 4.0		4,211,020	89.5	4,703,193

## Charters Towers



Charters Towers is a 90-minute drive inland from Townsville and has a long history beginning with the Gold Rush in the 1800's and was the aircraft fuel and chemical storage bank during the second World War. The shire has a land area of 68,382 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 11,731 as of 30 June 2020, with an average growth rate of -0.8% between 2015 and 2021.

It is in the middle of the mining areas with Thalanga's lead and zinc mine nearby. The region is home to the Burdekin Falls Dam on Lake Dalrymple and is the largest dam in Queensland (at full capacity holds 4 times the volume of Sydney Harbour). Beef is the major agricultural industry. The Federal Government has committed \$60 million towards Phase One of the Big Rocks Weir Project which includes \$30 million each from State and Federal Governments.

For more information visit [www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au](http://www.charterstowers.qld.gov.au).

## Unemployment Rate:

Charters Towers LGA unemployment rate and labour force at September Quarter 2021: **5.4%**

LGA / State	Unemployed	Labour force	Unemployment rate
	— number —		%
Charters Towers (R)	293	5,381	5.4
Queensland	169,924	2,784,150	6.1

## Largest employing industries

- 13.6% of employed persons worked within the Education and Training industry.
- 12.4% of employed persons worked in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry.

## Registered Businesses by employment size in the Charters Towers LGA as of 30 June 2021

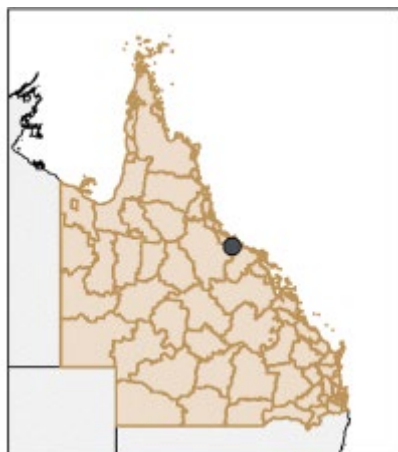
LGA / State	Non-employing		1–4 employees		5–19 employees		20–199 employees		200+ employees		Total
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	
Charters Towers (R)	725	63.2	285	24.8	117	10.2	27	2.4	0	0.0	1,147
Queensland	270,917	58.8	133,589	29.0	44,443	9.6	11,129	2.4	727	0.2	460,807



## Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Persons within the Charters Towers LGA

LGA / State	Indigenous persons					Non-Indigenous persons		Total persons <sup>(b)</sup>
	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Both <sup>(a)</sup>	Total				
	— number —			number	%	number	%	number
Charters Towers (R)	912	43	73	1,033	8.7	9,699	81.7	11,876
Queensland	148,943	21,053	16,493	186,482	4.0	4,211,020	89.5	4,703,193

## Burdekin Shire (Home Hill and Ayr)



Burdekin Shire has a land mass of 5,043.9 km<sup>2</sup> with a population of 16,953 as of 30 June 2020. The area's main town is Ayr with its famous sculpture Gubulla Munda, the giant carpet snake and protective spirit for the Birri Gubba people. The area's main asset is water in the form of the Burdekin River, The Burdekin Dam and a large underground water aquifer to supply irrigation areas. It is home to over 1000 sugar cane and produce farmers who employ 20% of the local population. The district produces 9 million tonnes of sugar cane annually from which 1.3 million tonnes of raw sugar is produced at one of the 4 large scale sugar mills. It is a fisherman's paradise attracting \$250,000 of tourism income during the peak season.

Burdekin Shire has strong horticulture, aquaculture and Manufacturing Industries and is recognised as having high levels of solar irradiation with two solar farms located in the area. Burdekin Residents make up one quarter of the Ravenswood Gold workforce. QGSO- 49.6% of businesses registered in the area are in the agricultural, forestry and fishing industry.

For more information visit [www.burdekin.qld.gov.au](http://www.burdekin.qld.gov.au).

## Unemployment Rate

Burdekin LGA unemployment rate at September Quarter 2021: **4.6%**

LGA / State	Unemployed	Labour force	Unemployment rate
	— number —		%
Burdekin (S)	392	8,513	4.6
Queensland	169,924	2,784,150	6.1

## Largest employing industries

- 21.3% of employed persons worked within the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry.
- 12.1% of employed persons worked in the Manufacturing industry.



## Registered Businesses by employment size in the Burdekin LGA as of 30 June 2021

LGA / State	Non-employing		1–4 employees		5–19 employees		20–199 employees		200+ employees		Total
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number
Burdekin (S)	1,258	59.6	581	27.5	218	10.3	52	2.5	3	0.1	2,111
Queensland	270,917	58.8	133,589	29.0	44,443	9.6	11,129	2.4	727	0.2	460,807

## Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Persons within the Burdekin LGA

LGA / State	Indigenous persons					Non-Indigenous persons		Total persons <sup>(b)</sup>
	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Both <sup>(a)</sup>	Total				
	— number —			number	%	number	%	number
Burdekin (S)	730	95	148	974	5.7	14,888	87.2	17,074
Queensland	148,943	21,053	16,493	186,482	4.0	4,211,020	89.5	4,703,193

## Hinchinbrook Shire (Ingham)



Hinchinbrook is the southern gateway to the wet tropics with major attractions including Wallaman Falls, Halifax Bay Wetlands, and Orpheus Island (Hinchinbrook Island belongs to Cassowary Coast). It is located north of Townsville and is predominantly rural area of cattle, sugar cane, fruit, vegetables and crops with the main township being Ingham. There are 1329 local businesses, 4870 local jobs, a population of 10,645 and a land area of 2,807.2 km<sup>2</sup>. The Herbert district is looking into agricultural diversification with industrial hemp for the food and fibre industries and the emerging medicinal industry.

For more information visit [www.hinchinbrook.qld.gov.au](http://www.hinchinbrook.qld.gov.au)

## Unemployment Rate

Hinchinbrook LGA unemployment rate at September Quarter 2021: **4.6%**

LGA / State	Unemployed	Labour force	Unemployment rate
	— number —		%
Hinchinbrook (S)	257	4,942	5.2
Queensland	169,924	2,784,150	6.1

## Largest employing industries

- 16.9% of employed persons worked within the Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing industry.
- 12.4% of employed persons worked in the Manufacturing industry.

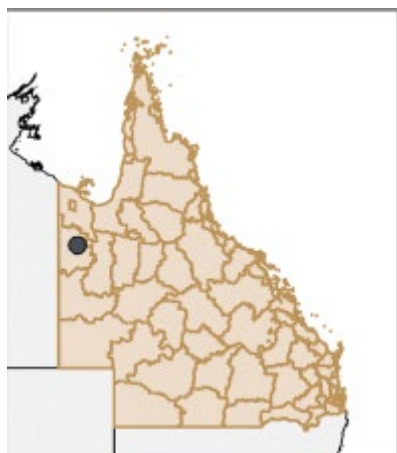
## Registered Businesses by employment size in LGA as of 30 June 2021

LGA / State	Non-employing		1–4 employees		5–19 employees		20–199 employees		200+ employees		Total
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number
Hinchinbrook (S)	819	61.6	369	27.8	123	9.3	12	0.9	0	0.0	1,329
Queensland	270,917	58.8	133,589	29.0	44,443	9.6	11,129	2.4	727	0.2	460,807

## Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Persons within the Hinchinbrook LGA

LGA / State	Indigenous persons				Non-Indigenous persons		Total persons <sup>(b)</sup>
	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Both <sup>(a)</sup>	Total			
	— number —	— number —	— number —	number %	number %	number	number
Hinchinbrook (S)	539	68	54	660 6.1	9,413 86.5	10,885	10,885
Queensland	148,943	21,053	16,493	186,482 4.0	4,211,020 89.5	4,703,193	4,703,193

## Mount Isa



The town of Mount Isa is situated on the Leichhardt River with a population of 18,578. It serves as the primary administrative, commercial, industrial and service centre for North West Queensland as well as parts of the Northern Territory, and acts as the region's hub for delivery of a variety of health, community service, education and training programs and connections to industry skilling programs.

Centred around Mount Isa and Cloncurry, the North West Minerals Province is one of the world's richest mineral-producing regions. The region has delivered significant economic benefits to Queensland for decades. Mount Isa is home to the Province's largest mines, supporting industries and critical infrastructure.

Agriculture, forestry and fishing and service industries are also important, with the shire boasting a land area of 43,715.2 km<sup>2</sup> with the primary agricultural industry being beef. It is also a regional transport hub that is serviced by rail, road and commercial air networks providing transport services locally as well as interstate, and forms part of the minerals corridor that transports mined resources from the Province to the Port of Townsville for export.

The regional population has some unique features compared with the rest of Queensland and other regional and remote areas. Overall, it is a young population, made up largely of families. Unemployment rates, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and youth, are high for the region and the wider

Queensland Outback statistical division of which it is a component. Mt Isa is listed in the top 10 world producers of the most in-demand minerals.

For more information visit <https://www.mountisa.qld.gov.au/>

## Unemployment rate

Mt Isa LGA unemployment rate at September Quarter 2021: **8.2%**

LGA / State	Unemployed	Labour force	Unemployment rate
	— number —		%
Mount Isa (C)	913	11,077	8.2
Queensland	169,924	2,784,150	6.1

## Largest employing industries

- 30.6% of employed persons worked in the Mining industry.
- 11.1% of employed persons worked in the Health Care and Social Assistance industry.

## Registered Businesses by employment size in the Mt Isa LGA as of 30 June 2021

LGA / State	Non-employing		1–4 employees		5–19 employees		20–199 employees		200+ employees		Total
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number
Mount Isa (C)	444	49.6	260	29.0	149	16.6	43	4.8	3	0.3	896
Queensland	270,917	58.8	133,589	29.0	44,443	9.6	11,129	2.4	727	0.2	460,807

## Percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Persons within the Mt Isa LGA

LGA / State	Indigenous persons					Non-Indigenous persons		Total persons <sup>(b)</sup>
	Aboriginal	Torres Strait Islander	Both <sup>(a)</sup>	Total				
	— number —				number	%	number	%
Mount Isa (C)	2,951	84	122	3,149	16.9	13,385	71.7	18,671
Queensland	148,943	21,053	16,493	186,482	4.0	4,211,020	89.5	4,703,193

# Key challenges in Townsville Employment Region

The Townsville Employment Region has a diverse economy and industry that has continued to recover following on from the 2019 monsoon event and impacts of COVID-19 which has varied across all industries. Impacts as a result of COVID have increased slightly into the start of 2022, with an increase in positive cases causing workers to have to quarantine and employers needing to find replacement/fill in staff to cover, this impact has seen some services have to temporarily suspend at times including childcare services.

## **Access to appropriately skilled and experienced workers**

Access to appropriately skilled and experienced workers continues to be the focus of conversation across many sectors, this could pose a future threat to opportunities for youth and entry level job seekers to access apprenticeship opportunities in cases where supervision requirements are in place.

The Australian Government's Boosting Apprenticeships Commencement has supported an increased number of apprenticeship sign ups across the region since its introduction in October 2020. The program will come to an end 31 March 2022.

## **Housing availability**

Low vacancy rates across the region pose threats to attraction of skilled workers to the region whilst domestic migration rates from larger cities have increased, availability of housing particularly in the rental market is at an all-time low.

## **Access to childcare**

Access to childcare continues to cause challenges across the region with limited spaces available and long wait lists, causing parents and carers barriers when looking to enter or re-enter the workforce. For some centres, skilled workers and those studying towards qualifications are needed to support a higher ratio to allow for additional places to be offered to families.

## **Transport**

The region has many outlying areas which lack (or have very limited) public transport making it difficult for some seeking work to access job opportunities in the major centre. There are no suburban rail services within the Townsville Employment Region and public transport in Mount Isa, Charters Towers, Ingham and Burdekin is limited to taxis only. A greater reliance on private vehicles may act as a barrier, particularly for disadvantaged job seekers who do not have a valid driver license or regular access to a vehicle.

The recent inflation in fuel prices will however present additional barriers for jobseekers and low-income earners in particular to maintain the costs associated with owning a personal vehicle.

Access to driving instructors in the region also presents a major challenge with a limited access to driving schools particularly in the rural and remote areas of the region.

It is estimated that by 2036, Townsville will attract 42,500 more residents. To support this growth, Townsville City Council has adopted the Townsville Integrated Transport Plan: Strategic Directions, on the 24 November 2021. This strategic plan was prepared with one vision, 19 objectives and 25 key initiatives, to guide future planning of transport in Townsville.

## **Access to training**

Access to appropriate training is limited within the rural and remote Local Government Areas of the region with minimal on ground Registered Training Organisations to access and costs for face-to-face training needs excessive to support travel and accommodation in the area. Minimum numbers of requirements set by providers also limit opportunities for access to training.

## **COVID-19**

The Townsville Region has performed strongly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic with impacts varying across Industries. Hospitality and Tourism have felt the pinch with impacts on the workforce and business's ability to trade during lockdowns diminished.

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing has also been impacted with less skilled backpackers available to support seasonal work within the region.

### **Challenges impacting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Persons**

Some 7.86 per cent of the population identify as First Nations compared with 4.0 per cent in Queensland. Educational attainment for the Indigenous population is substantially lower than non-Indigenous adults, with 45 per cent of the Indigenous population aged 25-34 having attained a Certificate III level qualification or above, compared with 67.6 per cent of non-Indigenous adults.

The available evidence suggests that the following approaches are likely to be most effective at increasing Indigenous employment and closing the employment gap: (Biddle, 2016)

- Increasing the skill levels of Indigenous Australians via formal education and training.
- Pre-employment assessment and customised training in order to prepare Indigenous job seekers to become employment ready.
- Recruitment and workplace policies that facilitate an Indigenous-friendly working environment that ensure Indigenous people have an equal opportunity to win jobs (for example, providing cultural leave).
- Cross-cultural training for employers.

### **Challenges impacting Culturally and linguistically diverse Persons**

Some 8.7 per cent of the population in Townsville live in households where a language other than English is spoken. (Census, 2016) This is significantly less than the Queensland state average of 13.5 per cent.

In some instances, jobseekers of this demographic experience difficulties in securing employment in their skilled fields. A number of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse jobseekers enter the country as skilled and educated workers and some even business owners however, they are often under-utilised with these skills and experience not always formally recognised in Australia.

## **Youth**

At the time of the last Census in 2016, 15.9 per cent of youth in Townsville were classified as disengaged and not studying or working. This result is considered mid-range compared to other regions in Queensland. The Queensland youth disengagement rate is 15.7 per cent, above the nationwide rate of 13.2 per cent for Australia.

Based on data provided by the Queensland Government Statistician's Office December 2021, Townsville has shown a decrease in youth unemployment from Nov 2020 to Nov 2021 of nearly 3% which is good, but this statistic is still high and therefore still a focus of the Local Jobs Plan. Having a significant amount of young people out of work can negatively impact a community's economic growth and development. If left unchecked, youth unemployment can have serious social repercussions such as an increase in crime rates and long-term unemployment as they reach adulthood.

The rate of unemployed Indigenous youth is still a major concern. Young Indigenous people experience more difficulty transitioning from education to employment, which negatively impacts their aspirations, confidence, mental health and motivation to engage in further education or to look for work.

# Local stakeholders and opportunities

The Townsville Employment Region represents industry diversity across 19 industry sectors with over 16,000 businesses operating in the region. Mining and agricultural sectors employ approximately 5% and 4% of the workforce respectively and are the largest export sectors.

Health care and social assistance, public administration and safety, and retail trade are the three largest sectors by employment. (Source: 2016 Census)

Key strengths of the region include:

- the largest general cargo and container port in northern Australia. The port is also Australia's leading exporter of zinc, lead, sugar, fertiliser and molasses
- largest Australian defence base located in Townsville
- health and knowledge centre for North Queensland with world leading research centres in tropical health and marine science
- two universities located in Townsville - James Cook University and Central Queensland University
- headquarters for the Australian Institute of Marine Science and Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, and leading research organisation CSIRO
- two world-class refineries based in Townsville with Sun Metals undergoing an expansion
- logistic hub for North Queensland roads and rail
- mining and industry commercial centre for North Queensland
- large agricultural irrigation area producing sugar cane and various agricultural and horticulture products
- large aquaculture industry and expanding
- Six of Wilmar's eight mills are located in the Townsville Employment Region, these mills are major employers and economic contributors in their communities. During the crush factories employ about 2,000 people.
- Mount Isa is one of the world's top ten producers of copper, silver, lead and zinc. Apart from mining, the gulf region's major industry is beef cattle grazing.
- Charters Towers is also a regional centre for the mining and beef industries
- The Burdekin becoming one of the strongest agricultural regions in Australia and is also recognised as one of the leading solar energy producing regions in Australia with two solar farms located in the Shire.

## Local Stakeholders

- Regional Councils
- Employers particularly those within growth Industries and high needs sectors- Health and Community Services, Construction, Retail, Hospitality, Mining and Manufacturing
- Chamber of Commerce
- Master Builders Qld
- Jobs Townsville North Queensland- Regional Jobs Committee funded by the State Government
- Local Employment Service Providers
- Townsville Enterprise Limited
- MITEZ- Mount Isa to Townsville Economic Development Zone
- Construction Skills Queensland
- North Queensland Manufacturing Hub
- Queensland Government Departments
- Townsville Multicultural Support Group (TMSG)
- Local Aged and Disability Care providers
- Indigenous business owners and support services
- Cleveland Youth Detention Centre
- Canegrowers Association

# Attachment A: Key Priorities for the Townsville Region

**Priority One: Maximising the benefits of existing Australian Government, Queensland Government, local council and community driven employment and skills initiatives and funding to address current labour shortages and skills gaps**

Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with employers and employer groups to create immediate employment opportunities leveraging State and Federal Government funding initiatives.</li> <li>• Coordinate the range of training options (full qualification, short course, skill sets) directly linked to current workforce demand in the region to provide recently displaced job seekers with a single, streamlined pathway to upskilling and reskilling information.</li> <li>• Encourage workers and job seekers with life skills to recognise career paths and other development opportunities. Life skills are particularly relevant to learning within the aged care and disability sectors when working with people across the lifespan.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs and Skills Taskforce</li> <li>• Employer representatives</li> <li>• Townsville Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Peak organisations</li> <li>• Employment Services providers (jobactive, Transition to Work, ParentsNext, NEIS)</li> <li>• Registered training organisations</li> <li>• James Cook University</li> <li>• Central Queensland University</li> <li>• Vocational Education and Training providers</li> <li>• Veteran's organisations (transitional networks)</li> <li>• Refugee and migrant support services</li> </ul>

**Priority two: Create pathways into major and growth industries within the employment region.**

Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with employers and Industry groups to identify areas of growth and demand.</li> <li>• Engage ESP's to link frequently with Industry to understand needs of employers to better prepare jobseekers for future employment.</li> <li>• Identify project opportunities that address current skills gaps</li> <li>• Coordinate the range of training options (full qualification, short course, skill sets) directly linked to current workforce demand in the region to provide recently displaced job seekers with a single, streamlined pathway to upskilling and reskilling information.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jobs and Skills Taskforce</li> <li>• Employer representatives</li> <li>• Townsville Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Peak organisations</li> <li>• Employment Services providers (jobactive, Transition to Work, ParentsNext, NEIS)</li> <li>• Registered training organisations</li> <li>• Councils</li> <li>• Vocational Education and Training providers</li> </ul>



**Priority three: Generating opportunities for Indigenous youth skills development; aligned to local employer and industry needs, including through training, apprenticeships, traineeships, and improved digital literacy**

Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop and implement targeted skills and work experience approaches for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people leading to secure employment outcomes.</li> <li>• Engage with employers who report difficulties recruiting entry level staff and support their efforts to engage with and recruit First Nations job seekers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employers/Industry</li> <li>• Registered training organisations</li> <li>• Employment services providers (jobactive, Transition to Work, ParentsNext, Employability Skills Training, Career Transition Assistance Program)</li> <li>• Vocational Education and Training providers</li> <li>• Indigenous employers and support services</li> </ul>

**Priority four: Identifying pathways for young people to develop skills and be supported to access labour market opportunities, particularly through apprenticeships and traineeships.**

Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design a project to engage young people into trade pathways leading to apprenticeships with high demand industries.</li> <li>• Develop a comprehensive database of locally available youth services, programs and enterprises that will help simplify the design of potential education, training and employment pathways that will address local needs.</li> <li>• Negotiate flexible models to teach job-oriented skills that will lead to engagement by local employers.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Townsville Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>• Australian Apprenticeship Support Network</li> <li>• Employment services providers (jobactive, Transition to Work, ParentsNext, Employability Skills Training, YouthPath)</li> <li>• Vocational Education and Training providers</li> <li>• Registered training organisations</li> <li>• Youth Counselling / Mental Health Services and networks related to disengaged/disengaging youth and early school leavers.</li> </ul>

**Priority five: Brokering employment opportunities for mature age job seekers through collaboration with local community support services, employers, and training organisations.**

Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engage with job seekers serviced via Online Employment Services</li> <li>• Coordinate a range of training options, especially short course and industry specific skill sets that are directly linked to current workforce demand in the region.</li> <li>• Identify skilling and re-skilling pathways to support mature-aged jobseekers into the workforce</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DESE</li> <li>• Centrelink</li> <li>• TAFE and other training providers</li> <li>• jobactive providers, Parents Next, CTA providers.</li> <li>• Employer representatives</li> <li>• Townsville Chamber of Commerce</li> </ul>

# Attachment B: Labour Market Data Dashboard



**Townsville  
Employment Region  
Queensland**

## Labour Market Data Dashboard

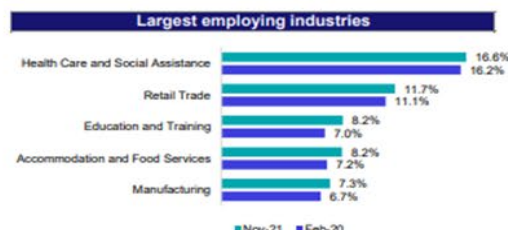
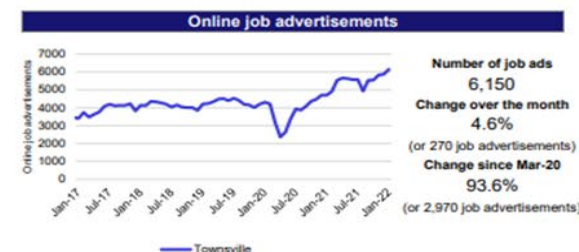
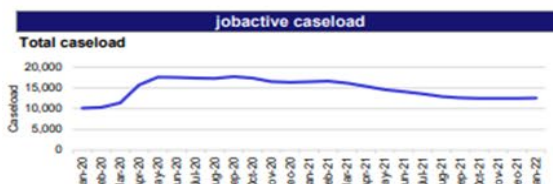
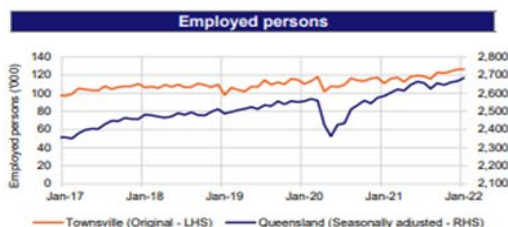
Data current as at 24 February 2022

Refer to source notes for data reference periods

	Employment			Unemployment			Unemployment rate		Participation rate		Youth unemployment rate	
	Jan-22 ('000)	Mar-20 ('000)	Change (%)	Jan-22 ('000)	Mar-20 ('000)	Change (%)	Jan-22 (%)	Mar-20 (%)	Jan-22 (%)	Mar-20 (%)	Jan-22 (%)	Mar-20 (%)
Townsville	126.4	118.3	6.9	5.2	6.3	-18.5	3.9	5.1	69.9	66.7	6.3	16.5
Queensland	2,684.0	2,559.7	4.9	122.2	157.1	-22.2	4.4	5.8	66.4	65.5	10.4	14.6
Australia	13,255.0	12,995.5	2.0	580.0	723.2	-19.8	4.2	5.3	66.2	65.9	9.0	11.6

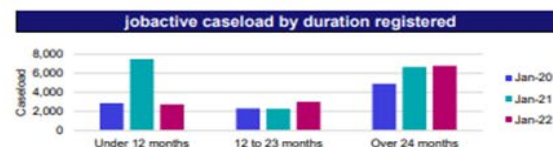
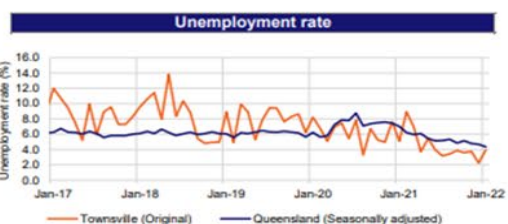
Source: ABS, Labour Force Survey, Jan-22. Employment Region data are original estimates, except for the youth unemployment rate, which is a 12-month average of original estimates. State youth unemployment rates are original estimates. Remaining data are seasonally adjusted.

This Labour Market Data Dashboard provides key indicators for the labour market by Employment Region and is updated monthly.



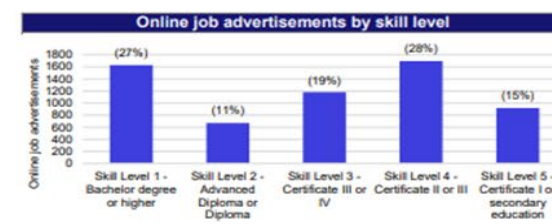
	Townsville	Queensland
Caseload - Feb 2020	10,303	154,263
Caseload - Jan 2022	12,559	201,544
Change from Feb 2020 to Jan 2022	2,256	47,281
	22%	31%

Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index, seasonally adjusted, Jan-22



LGAs with highest unemployment rates (%)		
Local Government Area (LGA)	Sep-21	Sep-20
Mount Isa (C)	8.2	7.5
Charters Towers (R)	5.4	7.5
Hinchinbrook (S)	5.2	7.0
Townsville (C)	5.1	6.5
Burdekin (S)	4.6	5.9

For more insights, access SALM data via [lmp.gov.au](http://lmp.gov.au). Source: National Skills Commission, Small Area Labour Markets, four quarter averages, Sep-21 quarter



Note: Data are not readily available for all sources by Employment Region. ABS Labour Force Survey data are based on the Townsville SA4. The Internet Vacancy Index (IVI) uses a unique geographical approach. For this region, the IVI Far North Queensland region has been used. jobactive caseload reports at the Employment Region level and includes participants receiving both digital and provider servicing (it excludes other programs, such as ParentsNext or Transition to Work (TTW)). For caseload data, the Employment Region is based on (1) the location of the provider for jobactive provider serviced participants; (2) where the participant resides for Online Employment Services (OES) participants; (3) the NEST Employment Regions of Adelaide South or Mid North Coast for NEST participants. jobactive caseload by duration registered is based on the participant's time registered in employment services. Caseload data are based on current methodology which has been retrospectively applied to historical jobactive caseload dates. As such, the data may not align with earlier figures. For any enquiries related to the data in this dashboard, please contact [EmploymentPathwaysAnalysis@skillscommission.gov.au](mailto:EmploymentPathwaysAnalysis@skillscommission.gov.au).