

ANZRSAI Newsletter

An interdisciplinary international association of researchers and practitioners on the growth and development of urban, regional and international systems

December 2009

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Introducing the President

At our Annual General Meeting held at the PRSCO conference in July 2009, Paul Dalziel was elected as President for 2009/10, following the successful completion of David Fuller's extended term. In this article Paul introduces himself to readers of the newsletter.



Kia ora koutou katoa.

Greetings to you all.

I stumbled into regional science at a relatively late stage in my career. I

received my first permanent academic position at the University of Otago in 1984, just as New Zealand was launching its extensive economic reforms. Consequently, my early research interests focused on the big picture of macroeconomics, paying particular attention to monetary disinflation and the impacts of the reforms on vulnerable sections of the community.

After working at the Universities of Otago, Canterbury and Lincoln, I was appointed Professor of Economics at Lincoln University in 2002. Professor Caroline Saunders, one of my colleagues at Lincoln, was commissioned to review New Zealand's regional partnerships programme set up in 1999. Caroline invited me to join her in the research, and on the strength of that research I attended the 2003 ANZRSAI conference in Fremantle.

The rest, as they say, is history. I was elected onto the Council as the New Zealand representative at the Wollongong conference in 2004, and took over from James Rowe as New Zealand Vice President in 2007. This year I was a member of the PRSCO2009 conference organising committee, and was convenor of its contributed papers committee.

At Lincoln University I work full-time in its AERU Research Centre, of which Caroline Saunders is the Director. Saunders and Dalziel have now produced more than 40 joint publications, focusing on the statutory duty of local governments 'to promote the social, economic, environmental and cultural well-being of communities, in the present and for the future'. One of our studies received the award for

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best paper at the 2006 ANZRSAI conference.

Outside university, I have been heavily involved in soccer refereeing at the provincial level for the last ten years. Having reached the tender age of 50 at the beginning of 2009, I have decided to step down from refereeing at that level. To mark the transition I ran my first (and last) marathon in September (4 hours 29 minutes around the Otago Harbour), and am ready now to slip into a life of somnolent ease.

I am honoured to be elected as your President. My priority is to build on the achievements of David Fuller over the last four years, especially the successful hosting of the PRSCO 2009 conference. The ANZRSAI Committee has already begun planning for our 2010 conference (convened by Paul Collits), which we are aiming to make a major regional science event in December next year.

ANZRSAI Council Notes

Professor John Martin, Head Centre for Sustainable Regional Communities, Latrobe University, Bendigo has agreed to return to ANZRSAI Council until the December 2010 ANZRSAI Conference in Melbourne.

ANZRSAI has altered its membership year from the financial year ended 30 June to the calendar year ended 31 December. Members who have renewed after 30 June 2009 are financial until 31 December 2010.

In future, invoices will be sent to remind members to renew.

Growing membership is a priority of Council.

A group of universities is preparing an ARC Centre of Excellence in socio-spatial science with the purpose of

providing an evidence base for regional policy.

ANZRSAI Council Member

Shelby Canterford
Council Member (ACT)

I am a researcher with Geoscience Australia, specialising in the social impact of hazards. I completed a BSc (Computer Science) from the ANU in 2006 while working for what is now the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics. Obviously I don't use my degree much anymore. Regional was not officially part of the Bureau when I joined, (the "I" has been added since I left) so I started working in maritime and aviation statistics, and moved into the Regional Research team at a later stage. It was there I got a taste for regional issues, an understanding of the importance of the relationship between people and space, and research generally. The Bureau must take a lot of the credit for shaping the researcher that I am today.

Born in what is now suburban Melbourne (but then considered a long way out), I grew up in regional areas of Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and eventually Queensland, where my computer engineering Dad finally got a job with a company that wasn't going to go bust and shut factories – the Qld Government! In that time I have been through several severe storms, a few major dust storms, many bushfires and 3 cyclones. I now live in a semi-rural village outside of Canberra with my 40 fruit trees, a dozen chooks, a cat, a husband, a toddler, and very shortly a newborn. Between the village bushfire brigade and scout group, we don't have time for much else.

Hazards do not affect the landscape evenly, our alpine regions are not prone to tsunamis for example, but

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they do not impact on the population evenly either. Social vulnerability assessments at Geoscience Australia are focussed around understanding how the human and community aspects of a region interact with the physical landscape. My most recent work has focussed on the number of deaths due to cyclones and cold snaps. However on a more positive note, a new project hopes to highlight the local support mechanisms that aids personal and community recovery post disaster.

I see social vulnerability to disasters as an increasingly important problem, especially in the context of climate change where disasters such as cyclones, severe storms and bushfires are predicted to increase and become more severe. Communities that never faced these disasters before will need to deal with them. It is not possible to physically stop these disasters, but we can try to mitigate the human cost. The Black Saturday bushfires killed more than twice the number of people than the Ash Wednesday fires, even though the same number of houses was lost. We need to understand why.

ANZRSAI is an amazingly diverse organisation with multi-disciplinary researchers and practitioners the norm, not an exception as in many organisations. This is its greatest asset, and needs to be encouraged. With greater sharing between people of different roles and skills, we will all benefit.

What's New at www.anzrsai.org

Australasian Journal of Regional Studies: Abstracts
2009 Vol 15 No 2

TELECOMMUNICATIONS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT
[Geoff Bamberly](#), School of Business,

Charles Sturt University and [Peter Dale](#), Regional Development Australia - Riverina

While modern telecommunications infrastructure and services have been recognised as important in stimulating regional economic development, significant disparities in their provision have been observed between metropolitan and regional areas. Some of the identified advantages of telecommunications services include the diversification of economic and social opportunities, improved efficiencies for regional businesses, and the potential for population growth. Recognising this, regional communities have been putting increasing pressure on governments to improve options for public and private provision of telecommunications services. Some regional communities have taken a more direct role in this process. This article includes a case study of an example in the Riverina Region of New South Wales where the Riverina Regional Development Board instituted a program with Telstra Country Wide to improve the region's telecommunications infrastructure.

AN ANALYSIS OF THE RELATIVE EFFICIENCY OF WASTEWATER UTILITIES IN NON-METROPOLITAN NEW SOUTH WALES AND VICTORIA

[Joel Byrnes](#), Centre for Local Government, University of New England, Armidale; [Lin Crase](#), School of Business, La Trobe University, Wodonga; [Brian Dollery](#), Centre for Local Government, University of New England, Armidale, and [Renato Villano](#), School of Business, Economics and Public Policy, University of New England, Armidale.

A recent policy issue in Australian local government has centred on a so-

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called 'skills shortage' in the sector, particularly in regional jurisdictions. In this paper, we estimate the relative efficiency of non-metropolitan water utilities in New South and Victoria and consider the role of divergent governance structures in order to measure the impact of unique managerial factors upon relative efficiency in wastewater service delivery. We find that larger utilities, governed by skills based boards, are relatively more technically efficient than those operating as a business unit of local government. We argue that this is partly explained by the ability of those utilities to attract and retain relatively more skilled staff. A number of policy recommendations are advanced.

REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT: THREE GENERATIONS OF FEDERAL INTERVENTION

[Andrew H. Kelly](#), Faculty of Law and Institute for Conservation Biology and Law, University of Wollongong;

[Brian Dollery](#) and [Bligh Grant](#), Centre for Local Government, University of New England, Armidale.

Contemporary Australian local government faces several daunting problems, not least escalating financial un-sustainability and local infrastructure depletion. The main response of the various state and territory governments has taken the form of a series structural reform programs, with a strong emphasis on forced amalgamation. However, widespread dissatisfaction with the consequences of these compulsory consolidation programs has led to a search for alternative policy solutions based largely on shared services and various types of regional co-operation between local councils. This paper seeks to place proposed 'regional'

solutions to contemporary problems in historical perspective by providing a comparative account of three distinct federal government initiatives of 'region-directed' policy in the post-World Two era: the 'nation-building' of the 1940s; the 'paternalism' of the 1970s; and 'self-sufficiency' of the 1990s. We argue that, notwithstanding the complex relationship between historical circumstances and changing state-federal relations, important lessons for current local government policy making can be learnt from a critical assessment of these episodes of federal intervention at the regional level.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION OF CHILDREN: THE REGIONAL DIMENSION

[Philip E.T. Lewis](#) and [Michael C.T. Corliss](#), Centre for Labour Market Research, University of Canberra.

Recently, new evidence relating to the differences between the states and territories of Australia and their associated risks of child social exclusion has emerged. Daly et al (2008) found children living in Queensland, Tasmania, the Northern Territory, and to a lesser degree, South Australia, are associated with a greater likelihood of living in an area with higher degrees of social exclusion compared to other states and territories. In this study it is concluded that once socioeconomic and demographic factors have been taken into account, coastal regions, Tasmania, and to a lesser extent South Australia, are associated with a lower risk of child social exclusion. The Northern Territory and remote regions however, are associated with a significantly higher incidence of social exclusion. In addition, this study concludes that most of the regional variation in child

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social exclusion is explained by the attributes of the inhabitants.

THE RETURNS TO RESEARCH AND EXTENSION SERVICES IN REGIONS AND ZONES OF SOUTH AUSTRALIAN BROADACRE AGRICULTURE: A COMPARISON OF TWO TOTAL FACTOR PRODUCTIVITY DECOMPOSITION MODELS

[Ian Black](#), South Australian Research and Development Institute and
[Greg Walker](#), Charles Sturt University, Bathurst.

This paper reports total factor productivity decomposition modelling results of the returns to research and extension in zones and constituent regions of broadacre agriculture in SA, with the ultimate objective of providing policy advice on future research and extension (R&E) resource allocation. A traditional TFP decomposition modelling approach provided unacceptable results at the smaller region level, but acceptable results at the larger zone level. Utilising systematic techniques to accommodate volatility in the raw statistics caused by seasonal rainfall and small sample sizes, it was possible to demonstrate that regional differences in productivity growth were due to differences in the level of research and extension resources applied and not differences in seasonal rainfall. When modelling regional activity, the results support the use of systematic techniques to counter data problems related to large inter-year fluctuations that are associated with exogenous factors and small sample sizes.

ADJUSTMENT IN LOCAL LABOUR AND HOUSING MARKETS

[David C Maré](#), [Arthur Grimes](#)

Motu Economic and Public Policy Research and University of Waikato, Wellington, New Zealand, and
[Melanie Morten](#), Department of Economics, Yale University, New Haven.

This paper analyses local labour and housing market adjustment in New Zealand from 1989 to 2006. We use a panel vector autoregression approach to examine the adjustment of employment, employment rate, participation rate, wages, and house prices in response to employment shocks. Migration is a major adjustment response at both a national and regional level, accounting for half of national adjustment and all adjustment regionally. House price responses differ at different spatial scales. Nationally, a one percent employment shock raises long run house prices by six percent, as may be expected with an upward sloping housing supply curve. Surprisingly, this relationship does not hold at the regional level.

Full papers are available at <http://www.anzrsai.org/page/publications/ajrs/2009-vol-15-no-2/>. Please note that the latest issue is only available to current members of ANZRSAI. If you would like to read more and are not a current member please consider joining now so you can enjoy all the benefits. Membership application form is available on our website www.anzrsai.org

While there have a look at “Governance and Economic Development in a Metropolitan Region” by [David Wilson](#), [Carol Neill](#) and [Marie-Renée Lambert](#), in the most recent *Sustaining Regions*. This review article from a report for the Auckland Regional Economic Development Association which aimed to provide an evidence base for submissions to the Royal Commission on Auckland’s governance gives value for all urban regions.

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What region is this?



Photo courtesy of The Australian National University

Mountain bike enthusiasts and astronomers alike will recognise Mount Stromlo. In January 2003 the Canberra bushfires destroyed the historic Mount Stromlo Observatory and the surrounding Stromlo Forest, a favourite for local mountain bikers. The tracks have been rebuilt and new cycling courses created to make Stromlo Forest Park recognised as a world class facility, hosting the 2009 Mountain Bike and Trials World Championships, one of the rare occasions this event has not been held in the northern hemisphere. Unfortunately for local astronomers the majority of the destroyed telescopes will not be replaced. Facing increased competition from Canberra lights, the ANU has relocated its optical instrument operations to Siding Springs near Coonabarabran. The Mount Stromlo Observatory remains the main education, administrative and research centre with much of the Siding Springs' telescopes controlled from Canberra.

Contributed by Shelby Canterford. Thanks very much Shelby. Ed.

Current status of Regional Development Australia

In March 2008 Minister Albanese announced that a "... new RDA network will build on the success of its predecessor, but will take on a broader role to develop strategic input into

national programs to improve the coordination of regional development initiatives and ensure that there is effective engagement with local communities."

Regional Development Australia is becoming a network of local committees to act as coordinating bodies with little discretion.

"...Regional Australia is based on building partnerships to ensure the Government is responsive to local priorities and needs, but is underpinned by major new investments in the areas of infrastructure, broadband, housing, health care, education, skills development, innovation and water."

"The message to regional communities is clear – this Government will work with you to make your solutions work. We will bring fresh ideas and a new approach which will harness the potential of our regions and develop them for a better future."

Does today's reality bear this out?

The money, if any, is in agency budgets for infrastructure, broadband, housing, health care, education, skills development, innovation and water.

The creation of Regional Development Australia seems to mark the removal of funding earmarked for regions.

The process has removed some experience and talent engaged in regions. Some RDA local EO's will be paid \$80,000, as formerly paid to Area Consultative Committee CEO's. Many former Regional Development Board members and officers have departed.

Around the States progress varies.

In New South Wales a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 23

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February 2009. The new RDA network in NSW replaces 14 ACCs and 13 State Regional Development Boards to create a network of 14 RDA committees with a total 165 members. Members include six professorial staff from Charles Sturt, Newcastle, Sydney and Western Sydney universities.

In Victoria a Memorandum of Understanding was signed on 26 June 2009. In Victoria, RDA will be supported by State agencies such as Regional Development Victoria (RDV). There will be nine RDA committees generally aligned with Victorian Government administrative boundaries. Four committees will be located in Melbourne and five RDAs will be located in provincial Victoria. They will have a total of 82 members including professorial staff from Deakin and Victoria Universities.

In Western Australia expressions of interest for committee members for the Regional Development Australia (RDA) network of committees closed on 27 September. Applications are under consideration. The agreement provides for the Area Consultative Committee (ACC) network in WA to become eight RDA committees and an advisory body for Perth. The RDA committees will be located in the Goldfields Esperance region; the Great Southern region; the Kimberley; Mid West Gascoyne; Peel; Pilbara; South West; and Wheatbelt regions.

In Queensland, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 14 May 2009. The MoU establishes 12 incorporated RDA Committees based on local government boundaries. The 124 members include a total of three professorial staff from Griffiths University and James Cook University.

In South Australia the Memorandum of Understanding including the Local Government Association was signed on 29 June 2009. Seven newly incorporated RDA boards have been agreed by Governments and will be established based on South Australian Government Regions. In addition, an unincorporated Advisory board will be set up for the Adelaide Metropolitan Region. There are 97 members including a professor from University of South Australia.

In Tasmania a tripartite Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 26 June 2009. Governments have agreed that there will be one RDA Committee with 11 members in Tasmania that will cover all local government boundaries.

In the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) establishing RDA was signed on 25 May 2009. The nine member inaugural committee will manage the transition to RDA and guide the first year of the committee's work, including working with the ACT's surrounding regions. The RDA ACT committee includes members of the Capital Region Area Consultative Committee and the Capital Region Development Board.

In Northern Territory a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed on 26 June 2009. Governments agreed that there will be one RDA Committee of ten people in NT covering all local government boundaries.

Recruitment advertising stated that the RDA boards will represent the broad interests of their region and act as a conduit for local community views to be provided to Local, State and Australian Governments.

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MoU's provide for maintenance of the current level of funding of ACCs and State regional development bodies. Core principles provide for alignment of State and Commonwealth regional operations. The Commonwealth will consult the parties twice a year, report on performance and conduct an annual RDA conference.

Within the Commonwealth Government, Regional Development Australia is the responsibility of Marcus James, General Manager Regional Engagement, Regional Development Division, Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government GPO Box 594 CANBERRA ACT 2601 (02) 6274 7234

The general RDA email address is rda@infrastructure.gov.au

The website www.rda.gov.au documents the formation, boundaries and members of RDA committee. This article uses this website.

New Regional Data Sets

BITRE Household Wealth

The Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics has recently released an information paper which presents new statistical information on average household wealth, and its composition, for 1135 Australian Statistical Local Areas.

The paper focuses on household wealth, which is essentially the value of household assets less the liabilities of those households. Wealth is a key element of economic wellbeing, as it can enable increased consumption opportunities, generate income flow, protect against financial hardship and provide economic security.

In 2003-04, Australia's average household wealth was \$467 600.

Higher levels of household wealth were observed in the capital cities (\$503 600), than in regional areas (\$405 100). Capital cities dominate the wealthiest regions in Australia, with seven of the ten areas in which average wealth tops \$1 million being located in Sydney. Outside of capital cities, the wealthiest regions were heavily reliant on agriculture, while the least wealthy were typically mid-sized towns with a declining industry base.

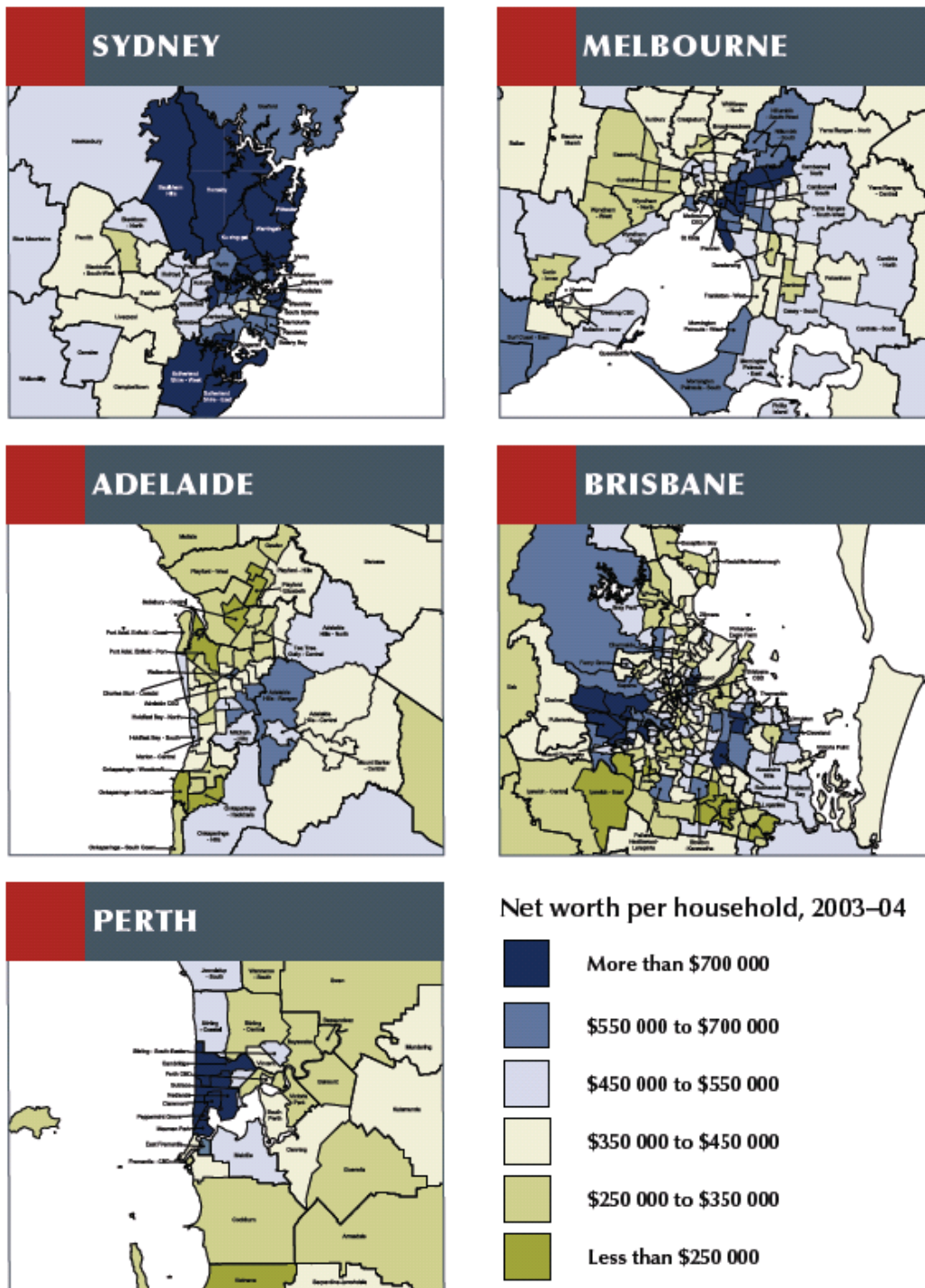
Property assets are by far the most important component of household wealth in Australia, with net owner-occupied property assets contributing to 45 per cent of net worth. Levels of household wealth are lowest among the 15 to 24 year olds, and increase with age until peaking at the 55 to 64 age group. After this, levels of wealth decline as households draw on their assets in retirement.

The paper also explores the relationship between wealth and income for Australia's cities and regions. Although there is a positive correlation between these two measures of economic wellbeing they are not interchangeable, as income measures tend to understate the economic wellbeing of rural and sea change areas, and overstate the wellbeing of mining regions, inner city and mortgage-belt suburbs and the major cities of northern Australia.

The Household Wealth Information Paper and BITRE's Household Wealth Database are available at <http://www.bitre.gov.au/Info.aspx?ResourceId=695&NodeId=60> . For more information, please contact Leanne Johnson (02) 6274 7355.

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Estimates of household wealth, 2003–04, by Statistical Local Area (SLA)



Our thanks to the Bureau of Industry, Transport and Regional Economics for the opportunity to present this extract.

Please note other data which is also available from BITRE: Regional air transport services <http://www.bitre.gov.au/Info.aspx?ResourceId=722&NodeId=131> and Changes in industry structure, 2001 to 2006: main cities (includes a detailed regional database from 1996 to 2006) <http://www.bitre.gov.au/info.aspx?ResourceId=709&NodeId=131>

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South Australia

The South Australian Department of Trade and Economic Development has developed EasyData a unique data enquiry tool designed to simplify the gathering of up-to-date economic, social and environmental indicators.

EasyData produces graphical and statistical reports and allows you to export your data selection to other reports, presentations and spreadsheets.

The tool is accessible as a website.

The indicators are available for South Australia at state, region and local-government-area levels. The data on the website comes from a variety of sources, including the ABS and various government departments.

The result of this collaboration is the EasyData website: a highly user-friendly website with over 60 indicators, linked to more detailed specialist datasets/websites to various sources of additional information.

See and play at www.southaustralia.biz/Regional-SA/EasyData.aspx

Western Australia

Australian Bureau of Statistics has launched a new set of regional indicators for Western Australia. www.abs.gov.au

Spotlight on the Pilbara released in September 2009, is the first in a series of community indicator frameworks being developed in partnership between the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), the nine Western Australian Regional Development Commissions, and the Western Australian Department of Regional Development Lands.

The first publication, Spotlight on the Pilbara brings together a wealth of information about the Pilbara region. The full range of information can be accessed through the Spotlight on the Pilbara website <http://www.regionalspotlights.com.au>.

These community indicators will be updated and will continue in a web-based format.

This pilot project is a first step in creating a community indicator framework for the entire state. All Spotlights will contain a core suite of shared indicators, together with region-specific indicators added to reflect the critical issues identified for each region. Work on the core suite of shared indicators and on Spotlights for the Peel and Mid West regions is underway and should be completed in 6 months time, after which additional Spotlights will be developed progressively.

Maybe these two agencies should talk! Ed.

What region is this?



The crocodile was caught in a crocodile trap off of Yelcherr Beach near Wadeye in the Northern Territory in August 2008. The trap was set by the Thamarrurr Rangers at the request of offshore pipeline contractors working for ENI Australia Limited, who had divers working close to the coast off and on for over a year.

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The Northern Territory Government crocodile management team then came out and removed the crocodile from the trap and transported it to the Darwin Crocodile Farm where it holidayed for about 15 months, until the diving work had been completed. In late October 2009 the crocodile was transported back to Wadeye and released back into the sea.

The photographs were taken by Dan Secombe, the Manager of the Thamarrurr Rangers.

The Thamarrurr Rangers is one of a number of ranger groups across Northern Australia who undertake natural resource management activities in their region. Thamarrurr is the name of the region around Wadeye.

The project is the Blacktip Gas Project, that extracts gas from the Blacktip gas field 110 kilometres off of the coast near Wadeye and brings the gas to shore for treatment at an onshore gas plant. The gas is sold to the Northern Territory Government's Power and Water Corporation for the generation of Darwin's electricity supply.

Contributed by Andrew Eastick, Community Development Coordinator Blacktip Project, Eni Australia Limited

Thank you very much Andrew. It is a great story of a regional enterprise working with a multinational and government. Crocodiles are very significant to this community. Ed.

UpComing Conferences

April 2010

NEW DIRECTIONS FOR HOUSING? HOUSING IN AN ERA OF CHANGE

The 2010 Housing Studies Association conference, 14-16 April 2010, York, UK Conference website:

<http://www.housing-studies-association.org/spring10>

Early Bird deadline 26 February 2010. Abstracts by 31 January 2010 to Ed Ferrari, Department of Town and Regional Planning, University of Sheffield Email: e.t.ferrari@sheffield.ac.uk

This e-mail address is being protected from spam bots, you need JavaScript enabled to view it

July 2010

The Geoinformatics Forum Salzburg (GI_Forum) July 6 -9, 2010, University of Salzburg, Austria.

GI_Forum focuses on Applied Geoinformatics. Themes include Geovisualization, Spatial Data Infrastructure, Mobile GIS and Location Based Services, Digital Terrain Representation and Analysis, Digital Cities and Urban Sustainability, Monitoring and Modelling geospatial change, Spatial Assessment and Analysis of Vulnerability, and Learning with Geoinformation.

First Call for Papers <http://www.gi-forum.org/> Deadline for submission of full papers: February 1, 2010. Late deadline for submission of extended abstracts for poster presentation: June 7, 2010. Online submissions only, from December 2009 at <http://www.gi-forum.org/>

16th APDR Congress, Spaces of hinge, border channels or nodes

University of Madeira, Funchal, Portugal, July 5th to 10th 2010.

Portugal is formed by ports and gates, hinge spaces, border channels and nodes of local and global networks sustained and bordered by sea routes. For Madeira, this territory extends to Venezuela, South Africa, Australia, Channels Islands, Lisbon and Algarve.

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The Congress will consider the role, development, typologies and institutions of hinge spaces and their relevance to globalization.

Abstracts by 10th January 2010

<http://www.apdr.pt/congresso/2010/abstracts.html>

December 2010

Australia New Zealand Academy of Management, **ANZAM 2010, Managing for Unknowable Futures**, Adelaide Convention Centre, Adelaide 6th to 10th December 2010. Papers due by June 2010. www.anzam.org



Closing date for abstracts
29 January 2010

www.bitre.gov.au/atrf2010

Call for Papers: Sustaining Regions Online

Sustaining Regions is not refereed. We welcome articles and case studies from practitioners and academics alike. So your ideas on the regional impacts of climate change policies, the city country divide, environmental challenges in rural regions, the off-shoring of manufacturing, our growing global cities and the role of clusters in economic development will be welcome. Send them to the editor at anzrsai@anzrsai.org

Articles must include your name and professional affiliation

Newsletter contributions welcome.

Please send contributions, notices of events and conferences, and articles of 500 – 1,000 words to the editor at anzrsai@anzrsai.org. Articles must include your name and professional affiliation

ANZRSAI Council 2009-10

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Lincoln University, Canterbury NZ

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