



**Local Jobs
Program**

Local Jobs Plan
Murray and South East
South Australia
October 2020

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The Department of Education, Skills and Employment acknowledges the traditional owners and custodians across the different lands of the Murray and South East Employment Region. We pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures, and Elders past, present and emerging.

Introduction

The Local Jobs Program (LJP) brings together expertise, resources and access to funding at the local level to focus on the reskilling, upskilling and employment pathways for job seekers in 25 Employment Regions, as part of supporting Australia's economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic.

This plan identifies the key priorities for the Murray and South East Region SA, with a focus on **creating employment opportunities**, meeting local **employer demands** and **better skilling** local job seekers. The plan identifies the direction, strategies and actions of the Employment Facilitator.

This plan will be reviewed when the Employment Facilitator and the Murray and South East Local Jobs and Skills Taskforce is in place, and whenever the priorities change (or every six months).

Local Jobs Program Key Priorities: Murray and South East Region

1. Maximising the opportunity for local positions to be filled by local job seekers, ensuring local job seekers are adequately skilled to take up employment opportunities through entry level positions including, traineeships and apprenticeships.
2. Maximising opportunities for partnerships between Local, State and Federal governments to create pathways into growth industries, including within the Health Care, Food Processing, Horticulture, Forestry, Agriculture, Dairy and Construction sectors.
3. Work closely with industry and Indigenous organisations to provide upskilling and employment opportunities to Indigenous Australians in the region including through maximising opportunities for youth who form a relatively high proportion of the Indigenous population.
4. Leverage existing programs within the region and local activities to better support young job seekers to gain employment, addressing specific barriers to employment in the region, such as licences and transportation and other non-vocational barriers.
5. Supporting employers and industry in upskilling existing employees to increase capacity and to open opportunities for entry-level jobs for jobseekers.

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

Murray and South East Region Snapshot

Murraylands

Riverland

Limestone Coast



2019 Population
72,768

Murray and
Mallee (SA3)



67,092

Limestone
Coast (SA3)

\$1,260.2m

Murraylands and
Riverland

\$1,577.1m

Limestone Coast

Estimated value of Agriculture, Forestry
and Fishing Exports in 2019



Industries
in Demand

- ✓ Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
- ✓ Construction
- ✓ Health Care and Social Assistance

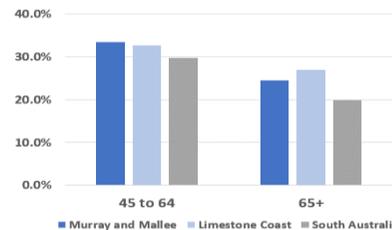
Youth Disengagement

Drought and
Ecosystem Impacts

Skilled Trades
Shortages

7.2%

Unemployment
Rate



Older Population



Declining VET Program
Enrolments

22.6%

Murray and South East

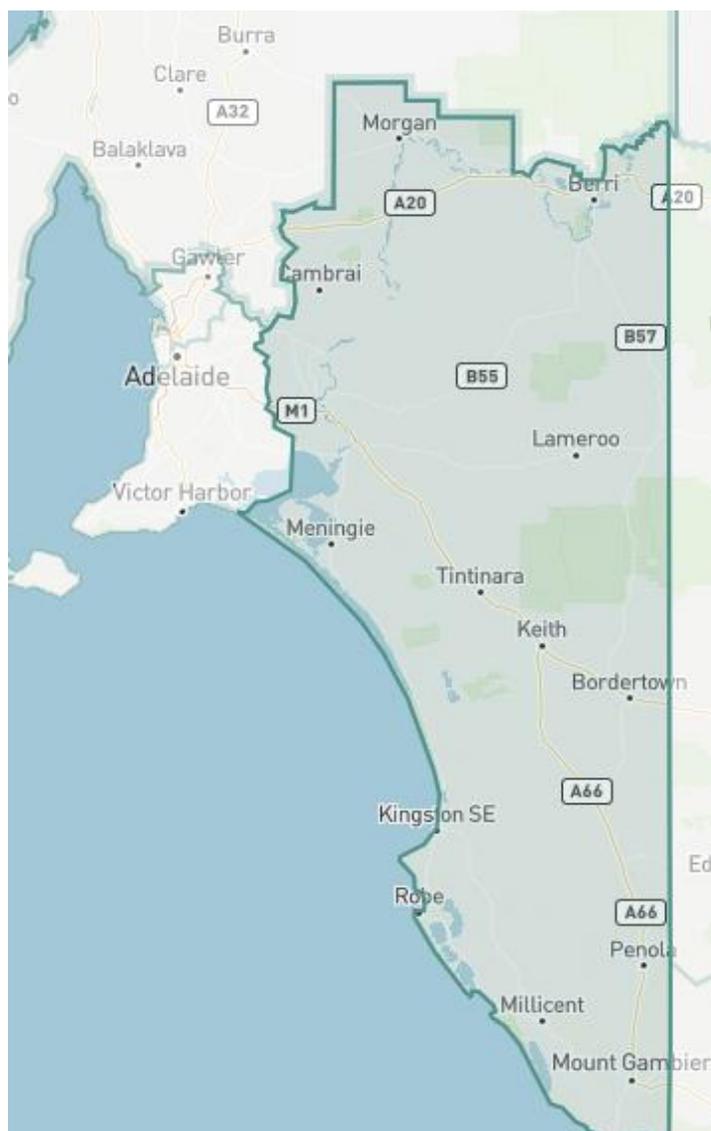
19.2%

South Australia

High Levels of Income
Support

Murray and South East Region Overview

The Murray and South East Employment Region stretches from the Riverland with Renmark in the far northeast of the region, across to Truro and down to Murray Bridge. Murray Bridge is approximately 60 minutes from Adelaide CBD. The region continues down the coast starting at the Coorong, continuing south towards Robe, Millicent and Mount Gambier, and ending at the Victorian border. Towards east of the region and towards the Victorian boarder are rural towns of Lameroo and Bordertown. The total area of the region is approximately 58,119km². The two largest rural cities in the region are Mount Gambier (27,275) and Murray Bridge (22,495).



The Murray and South East Employment Region comprises three sub regions: the Murraylands; Riverland; and Limestone Coast. In total, there are 15 Local Councils and two Regional Development Boards operating within the region.

Riverland

The Riverland is in the far north of the region and commences where the Murray River flows into South Australia from New South Wales and Victoria. The major town centres in the Riverland sub region are Renmark, Berri, Waikerie, Barmera, Blanchetown and Loxton. The Riverland has three

Local Government Areas (LGAs); Berri Barmera Council, Renmark Paringa Council and Loxton Waikerie Council. The Riverland sub region is part of the Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland Board. Key industries within the Riverland include agriculture, horticulture, and wine, almond and fruit production.

Murraylands

The Murraylands is in the centre of the Region and borders the Adelaide Hills boundary. The major town centres in the Murraylands sub region are Morgan, Truro, Swan Reach, Mannum, Murray Bridge, Meningie, Karoonda, Lameroo and Pinnaroo. The Murraylands has five Local Government Areas; Rural City of Murray Bridge, Mid Murray Council, Coorong District Council, District Council of Karoonda and East Murray and Southern Mallee District Council and is a part of the Regional Development Australia Murraylands and Riverland Board. Key industries within the Murraylands include tourism, irrigated horticulture, dry-land farming, food and animal production and processing, and transport and logistics.

Limestone Coast

The Limestone Coast is in the far south of the region. The major city being Mount Gambier and regional centres located at Bordertown, Keith, Millicent, Naracoorte, Penola and Robe. The Limestone Coast includes seven Local Government Areas; City of Mount Gambier, District Council of Grant, District Council of Kingston, District Council of Robe, District Council of Tatiara, District Council of Naracoorte Lucindale, and Wattle Range council. The Limestone Coast is a part of the Regional Development Australia Limestone Coast Board. Key industries within the Limestone Coast include agriculture, forestry, tourism, horticulture, viticulture, aquaculture, and transport and logistics.

Key challenges in the Murray and South East region

The region has undergone significant economic shifts in the last ten years. A key challenge was the Millennium Drought, from 2001 to 2009, which had devastating effects on communities, industries and the environment across the region. Pipelines were built to deliver drinking water to the Lower Lakes communities to sustain horticultural industries, and water supplies to nearly 4,000 South Australian irrigators were severely restricted. This placed immense pressure on the agricultural and horticultural industries which are the key industries to the region's economy. Ecosystems were also impacted with wetlands temporarily disconnected and parts of the Coorong became too salty for native plants and animals to survive. At the peak of the drought, low water levels caused riverbanks to collapse, water levels in Lake Alexandrina plummeted, and record low water levels damaged ecosystems and threatened waters supplies for people and livestock. The long-term effects of the drought have had direct and indirect effects on job losses in the region, and unemployment increased well above the national benchmark. Since the drought, there has been some stabilisation in the economy as the region continues to rebuild.

Youth disengagement is another challenge for the region, with 18.0 per cent of young people aged 18-24 disengaged, compared with 13.8 per cent for South Australia. The region has a relatively high level of trade and vocational education certification (18.6 per cent); this is reflective of industry needs. Intergenerational unemployment and low expectations have affected educational attainment levels for young people and lower rates of participation in the workforce.

A key requirement for some employers in the region is the ability to pass a *fitness for work* test. The inability for job seekers to pass a drug test is a major barrier for even entry level jobs. Industries and

employers who require drug and alcohol testing have observed a decline in the number of interested job seekers, creating recruitment difficulties in industries such as manufacturing and construction.

The Limestone Coast and Riverland areas find it difficult to attract skilled labour. Traditionally, Murray Bridge does not have this problem as a high number of white-collar workers commute due to Murray Bridge being relatively close to Adelaide, linked by dual-lane freeway.

The Limestone Coast and Riverland areas have significant barriers to attracting and retaining qualified trades people, such as Fitter and Turners and Diesel Mechanics. This has direct impacts on employers being able to create and recruit to entry-level positions.

The Riverland area has a high level of seasonal work and relies heavily on visa holders to undertake seasonal worker roles. Traditionally, local job seekers have not wanted to work in seasonal or food production industries due to role demands and relatively low wage remuneration.

Public transport within major cities and between towns is limited. The distance between towns, means job seekers are reliant on having access to private transport. Limited access to public transport is a barrier for job seekers looking to gain employment.

According to jobactive caseload data as at 5 October 2020, the total caseload for the region was 9,044. Twenty-three per cent of the total caseload identified as people living with disability and 9.7 per cent of the total caseload identified as Indigenous.

Impacts of COVID-19

The Murray and South East Region has been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Labour market conditions in the region have deteriorated significantly since March 2020, the month in which Australia recorded its 100th case of COVID-19 and just prior to the shutdown of non-essential services when trading restrictions took effect.

The COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in large declines in employment, and subsequent rises in unemployment. Between March and August 2020, in the Murray and South East region:

- Employment decreased by 2.1 per cent between March to August 2020 (down 1,800 people).
- Unemployment rate stood at 7.2 per cent in August 2020, above the 7.1 per cent recorded in March, but below the 7.9 per cent recorded for South Australia.
- Industry projections indicate a decline in the Manufacturing and Transport, Postal and Warehousing industries. Specifically, a decrease in South East Timber exports has affected the Transport Industry.
- Accommodation and food services industry was steady until a decrease following COVID-19.

Building on Industry Strengths – a qualitative review

The region has many significant strengths, from which this Local Jobs Plan will be based, from high-end food and viticulture production capabilities, hubs of health care services, to a growing horticulture, food processing and distribution sector, and a diverse tourism industry. All of these will be crucial to the region's future economic prosperity.

By leveraging areas of opportunity and existing competitive advantage and strength, this Plan highlights the industries and enabling sectors that will be pivotal to the region's future and how they will be supported to achieve the most significant impact.

Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing – This industry has been a key driver for the region's economy, accounting for more than 14,000 jobs. The strength of the agriculture business sector has been

reflected nationally with significant specialisations, with the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Grant and Mount Gambier in the top 10 LGAs across the country in wood manufacturing. The Murraylands and Riverland have a focus on food production and processing. This includes seasonal work which presents several supply challenges with overseas and cross state travel bans.

Construction – The region is experiencing significant investment in public and private projects, which will generate jobs. Investment includes upgrades to existing schools and the establishment of a new Catholic secondary school in the Riverland. Upgrades to food manufacturing and timber processing plants are being planned. A \$87.5 million to upgrade the Sturt Highway from Renmark to Gawler is also starting this year and is expected to finish in 2023. Some areas are experiencing high demand for housing and aged care facilities which will generate construction jobs in the future.

Health Care and Social Assistance – South Australia’s ageing population poses both challenges and opportunities for the Murray and South East Region. The region is undergoing a structural change, moving away from traditional industries and towards more service-based jobs like health care and social assistance. Further, the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) has resulted in a doubling of the size of the workforce in the disability sector creating approximately 6,000 new jobs in South Australia. Both the NDIS and Aged Care industries are linked by a common focus on Consumer Directed Care (CDC) that places the choice of service with the consumer, therefore creating new service and business demand and opportunity. This industry is expected to continue to grow post COVID-19 with the increasing demand for services generated by an ageing population.

Food Production, Manufacturing and Transport – South Australia’s food production and manufacturing industry is a major growth area for the State. In 2018-19, the value of finished foods, which includes value-adding such as packing, cleaning, cold-chain management and food manufacturing reached \$6.8 billion.

Tourism – The region has a diverse tourism industry based on the different geographic areas. The impact of COVID-19 saw high levels of job loss in the region immediately after restrictions were introduced. A challenge for the region will be supporting displaced workers as well as investing in the industry once domestic borders open. Given the limitations on international travel, the industry will need to harness opportunities to attract domestic visitors and develop more experiences in partnership with the food and wine industries, and natural attractions.

Targeting Education and Skills Development to Future Demand

There is a recognised connection between disadvantage in the workforce and educational achievement. Unemployment rates are often higher for those people with lower levels of qualifications. Increasing engagement in education with a focus on successful transitions to further education and training will play a key role in supporting regional social and economic transformation. This must span early childhood education, primary and secondary schooling, Vocational Education and Training (VET) through to Tertiary and Higher Education. Education and training aligned to industry and employer needs will also be key to supporting this plan in the Murray and South East. The region currently has one university campus at Mount Gambier and is served by the Murray River Study Hub.

Selected Major Projects

There were a number of major work projects for the Murray and South East Employment region slated before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, however, it should be noted that it remains

unclear whether all these projects will continue or have been furloughed. This snapshot should be viewed as a document to be updated on a monthly basis.

INDUSTRY	INITIATIVE
Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Almond Co. at Renmark – major upgrade, work in final stages, expected completion December 2020 (\$25M). • Beston’s Global Food expansion – Murraylands, new production line to incorporate Baby Formula products. • Private Business – Timber processing project, Wattle Range District Council (\$35.3M).
Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Australian and South Australian Governments have committed \$87.5 million to upgrade the Sturt Highway from Renmark to Gawler. • Renmark High upgrade – \$3.5M, work underway, expected completion December 2020. • New Catholic Secondary School opening 2022, total cost of construction \$19.5 million across several stages. • Renmark Splash Park – work underway, expected completion December 2020 (\$2M). • Bridgeport Hotel redevelopment – Murray Bridge, expected completion December 2020. • TFI new Abattoir construction – Murraylands, commencement early 2021. • New ‘Glossop High School’ at Berri – construction commenced, expected completion mid to end 2021 (\$12.8M). • Boandik – Development of a 48-bed dementia village, City of Mount Gambier District Council (\$12M). • Altus Renewables – Wood pellet construction plant, City of Mount Gambier District Council (\$125M). • Borg – Expansion of wood products manufacturing plant, City of Mount Gambier District Council (\$50M). • Timberlink – new CLT plant development, District Council of Grant (\$60M). • Roundwood Solutions – Timber processing plant expansion and relocation, Wattle Range District Council (\$6M). • Mondelez, Plant updates, City of Mount Gambier District Council (\$7M).
Retail trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peregrine Group – service station and Krispy Kreme factory, City of Mount Gambier District Council (\$5M).

Large Employers

Key, high profile large employers in the region are in the areas of forestry, transport, tourism, agriculture, horticulture including wine, citrus, stone fruit, almonds, food production, dairy and fishing. There is seasonal impact to many of these areas, with employers requiring more workers that are seasonal, Vintage (December to March), Citrus (May to August), Small Stone Fruit Production (September to November) and Almonds (February to April).

The ABS Count of Business within Local Government Areas for the Murray and South East Employment region is outlined in the below table:

Table 1: Size of businesses in the Murray and South East Region

	Non employing	1-19 Employees	20-199 Employees	200+ Employees	Total
Berri and Barmera (DC)	648	348	26	0	1,016
Grant (DC)	706	309	22	0	1,038
Karoonda East Murray (DC)	118	77	0	0	198
Kingston (DC) (SA)	186	135	6	0	330
Loxton Waikerie (DC)	741	482	32	0	1,246
Mid Murray (DC)	445	278	18	0	738
Mount Gambier (C)	1,215	821	65	0	2,096
Murray Bridge (RC)	859	438	37	0	1,335
Naracoorte and Lucindale (DC)	818	543	20	0	1,378
Renmark Paringa (DC)	622	339	28	0	991
Robe (DC)	180	106	3	0	291
Southern Mallee (DC)	252	100	6	0	353
Tatiara (DC)	651	425	22	0	1,093
The Coorong (DC)	429	277	3	0	710
Wattle Range (DC)	851	503	36	0	1,390
Total	8,721	5,181	324	0	14,203

Source: ABS, Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, June 2015 to June 2019

Key Priorities for the Murray and South East Region

Priority One: Maximising the opportunity for local positions to be filled by local job seekers and ensuring local job seekers are adequately skilled to take up employment opportunities through entry level positions including, traineeships and apprenticeships.

Description of activity: Engage with Employers and Industry to identify skill needs and gaps in order to facilitate and support entry-level position training and development opportunities for local job seekers.

Flexible, responsive, place-based programs to address acute issues of labour market disadvantage, capitalising on opportunities for collaboration with other agencies.

Targeted Industries: Health and Community Services, Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Manufacturing and Tourism.

Cohort Groups: Young people aged 15-24, People with a Disability, Indigenous and Mature Aged.

Intended outcomes from this activity:

- Meet the skill need of local employers and industry
- Generate Employment Outcomes for local job seekers in the region.

Strategies	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific industry pathway programs of skills in demand. • Work with employers to identify specific skill set needs. • Broker training programs that represent best value for dollar and for industry. • Develop industry specific strategies that are collaborative and meet specific needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC by Taskforce

Priority Two: Maximising opportunities for partnerships and leverage funding to create pathways into Health Care, Food Processing, Horticulture, Forestry, Agriculture, Dairy and Construction growth industries.

Description of activity: Engage and increase participation of Employers, training providers and job seekers to create pathways into growth industries.

Targeted Industries: Health Care, Food Processing, Horticulture, Forestry, Agriculture, Dairy and Construction

Intended outcomes from this activity include;

- Increase participation of employers, Training organisations and job seekers.
- Meet the skill need of industry and create pathways.
- Generate Employment Outcomes for the region.

Strategies - short and long term	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work directly with employers to increase participation and determine required skill sets • Broker training programs that represent best value for dollar and for industry • Develop industry specific strategies that are collaborative and meet specific needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC by Taskforce

Priority Three: Work closely with Industry and Indigenous Organisations to create upskilling and employment opportunities for Indigenous job seekers and maximising opportunities for youth who form a high proportion of the Indigenous population in the region.

Description of activity: Develop pathways to employment and upskilling opportunities for Indigenous job seekers in the region. Develop and/or support engagement programs that build aspirations and capacity for young Indigenous job seekers (aged 15 -25) to undertake first time employment.

Targeted Cohort: Indigenous job seekers and youth Indigenous job seekers (aged 15 – 25)

Intended outcomes from this activity:

- Work with industry to facilitate employment outcomes and upskilling opportunities for Indigenous job seekers.
- Building capacity of this cohort group in job search and soft skills such as interviews and general confidence.

Strategies - short and long term	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work directly with Industry to determine upskilling and employment opportunities and identify gaps in skill need areas. • Work directly with Indigenous organisations to assist with creating employment opportunities and provide support to employers to create cultural safe workplaces for Indigenous job seekers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC by Taskforce

Priority Four: Leverage off existing programs within the region and develop local activities to better support young job seekers to gain employment, addressing specific barriers to employment in the region.

Description of activity: Develop local activities to better support young job seekers to gain employment, leveraging off existing programs to address specific barriers to employment, such as licences and transportation. Develop support programs to build capacity and provide pathways to learning, training and employment, with a focus on gaining license.

Description of activity: Develop and/or support engagement programs that build aspirations and capacity of first-time unemployed workers of prime age workers (aged 25-44), providing them with pathways to learning, training and employment through provision of training supports.

Targeted Cohort: young job seekers (aged 15 -25) and young people experiencing unemployment for the first time

Intended outcomes from this activity:

- Develop programs and leverage off existing programs to facilitate employment outcomes for young job seekers.
- Develop activities to address barriers of transportation and licensing.
- Building capacity of this cohort group in job search and soft skills such as interviewing and general confidence.

Strategies - short and long term	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with employers and industry to determine required skills in the region. • Work with youth specialised organisations to develop programs that address barriers to gain employment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC by Taskforce

Priority Five: Supporting employers and industry to attract skilled workers to the region or upskill existing employees to increase capacity to provide more entry-level jobs opportunities for local job seekers.

Description of activity: This activity intends to support employers to promote employment opportunities to attract skilled workers or develop programs to upskill existing employees in order to increase an Employers capacity to provide more entry-level opportunities for local job seekers.

Targeted Cohort:

- Employers interested in promoting employment opportunities to attracted skilled workers.
- Employers who are looking to build further capacity to create more entry level opportunities.
- Skilled workers who are interested in relocating to the region.

Intended outcomes from this activity:

- Work with Local Councils and Regional Development Boards to promote employment in the region.
- Attract skilled workers to the region to meet the needs of employer.
- Engage with employers who are looking to build their capacity to take on more entry level positions.
- Develop Industry specific activities or pre-employment programs to assist employers attract and recruit entry-level workers.

Strategies - short and long term	Stakeholders
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with Local Councils and Regional Development Boards to promote employment in the region. • Engage employer and Industry representatives to identity skill gaps in the region. • Work with Taskforce to develop a plan on how to attract Skilled Workers to the region. • Identity employers looking to build their capacity and take on more entry level positions. • Develop industry or employer specific pre-employment programs to assist Employers to recruit entry-level positions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBC by Taskforce

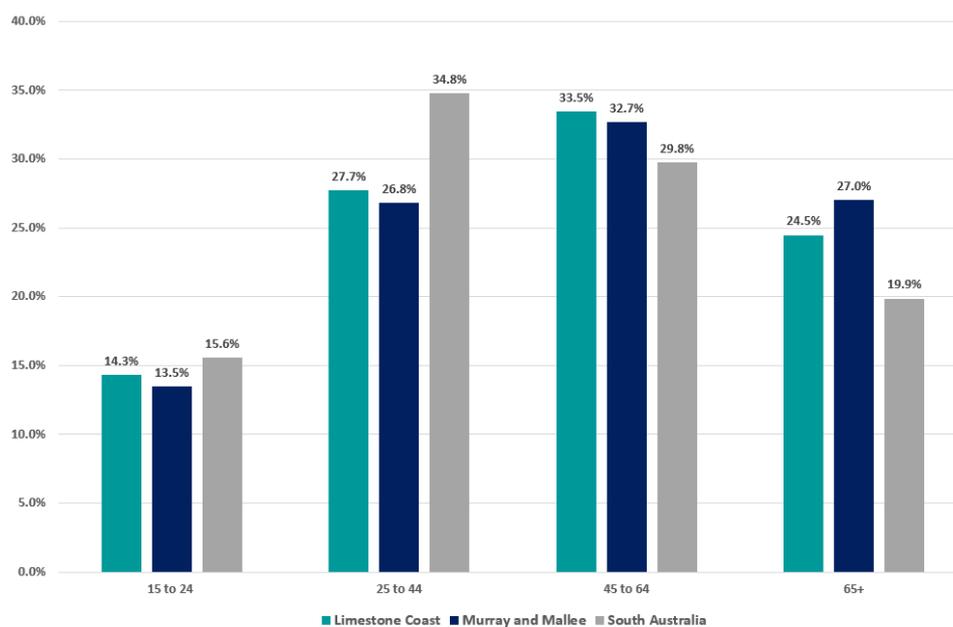
Profile of the Murray and South East Employment Region

Population profile

According to ABS Resident Population Estimates for 2019, there were 139,860 people living in the Murray and South East Employment Region (8.0 per cent of SA's total population). Of this, 67,092 people lived in the Limestone Coast and 72,768 lived in the Murray and Mallee SA3s.

Compared to all of South Australia, there was a higher proportion of older people in the Limestone Coast and the Murray and Mallee SA3's. There was also a lower proportion of people aged 25 to 44 years old, compared to South Australia (see Graph 1).

Figure 1 Age structure of population 15 + years old - Limestone Coast, Murray and Mallee and SA - 2019 ERP

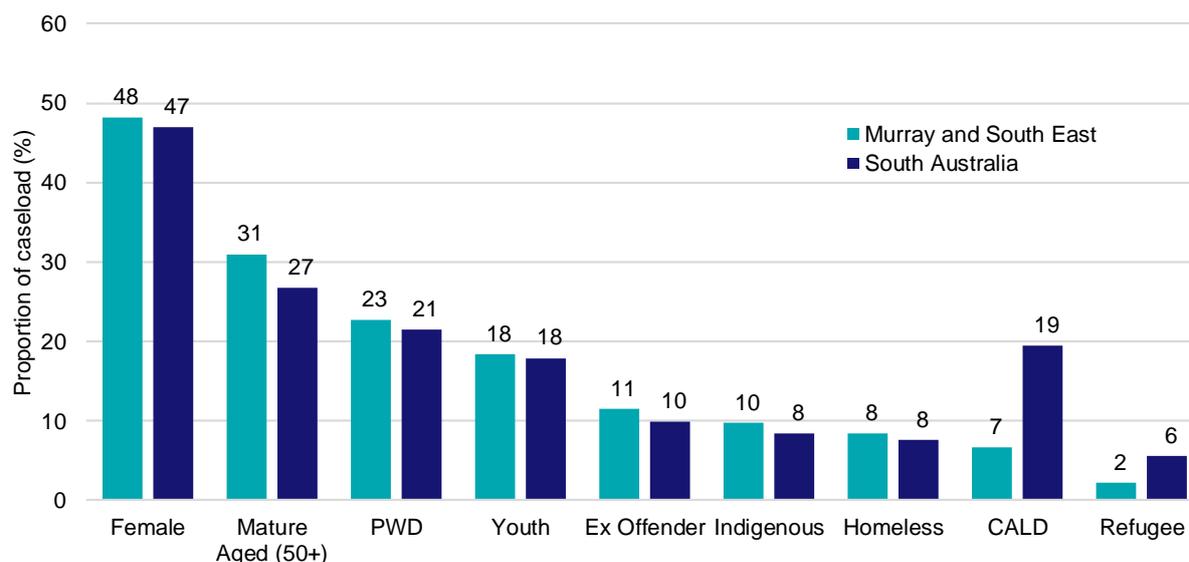


Source: ABS, Estimated Resident Population, 2019

Employment services caseload characteristics

Graph 2 shows as at 30 September 2020,

- The caseload in the Murray and South East Employment Region increased from 5,255 people in March 2020 to 9,016 in September 2020, a rise of 72 per cent.
- This compares with an increase of 79 per cent for South Australia and 97 per cent for Australia.
- The caseload in the region has broadly similar characteristics to South Australia, however it has substantially fewer culturally and linguistically diverse people compared with the state.

Figure 2 Employment services caseload for selected cohorts (September 2020)

Source: Department of Education, Skills and Employment, administrative data, September 2020.

PWD = Persons with disability. CALD = Culturally and Linguistically Diverse. Note that data for SA excludes participants in the New Employment Services Trial (NEST) in the Adelaide South Employment Region.

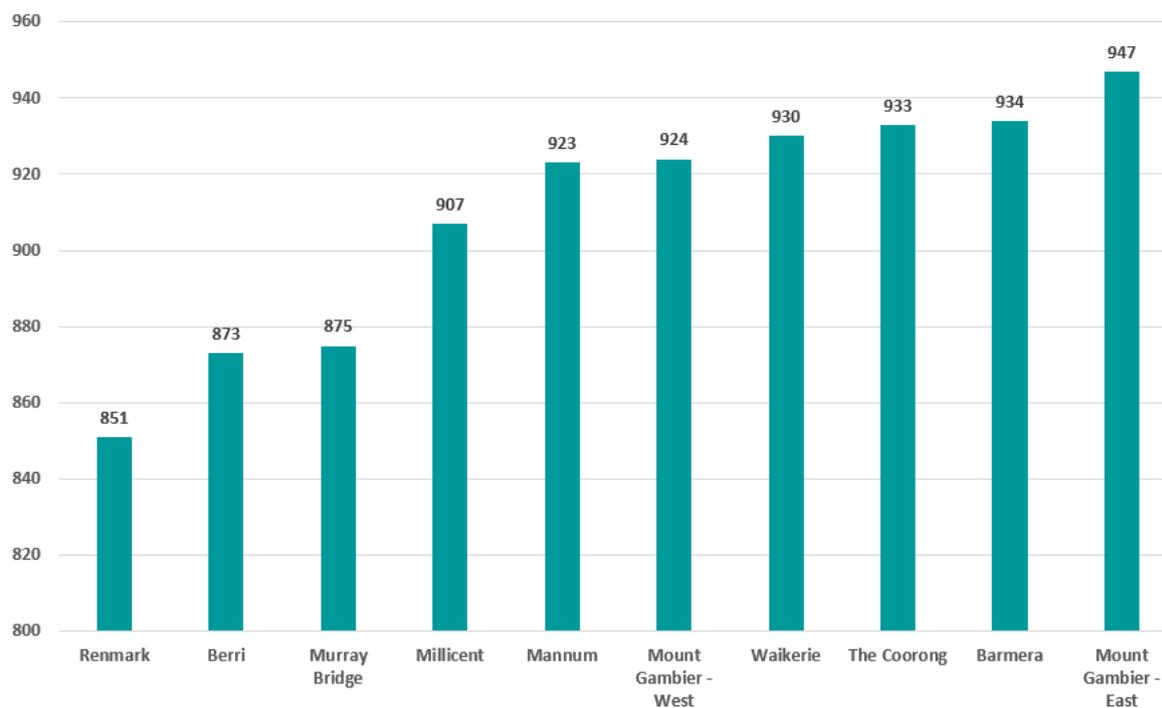
Income Support

In August 2020, the proportion of the working age (15-64 years) population on income support in the region stood at 22.6 per cent, above the 19.2 per cent recorded in South Australia and the 16.3 per cent recorded nationally.

Socio-economic profile

Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) ranks areas in Australia according to relative socio-economic advantage and disadvantage. The indexes are based on information from the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing. For the Index of Relative Disadvantage, a low score indicates a higher level of disadvantage, and a high score indicates a lack of disadvantage. In reviewing South Australia's most disadvantaged SA2s, Renmark ranked ninth. Within the region, Renmark is considered the most disadvantaged, followed by Berri, Murray Bridge and Millicent. In comparison, Mount Gambier and the Limestone Coast SA2s have indicatively less disadvantage compared to the Riverland and Murraylands SA2s.

Figure 3 ABS 2016 Census - Index of Relative Socio-economic Disadvantage 10 lowest scores Murray and South East Region (Statistical Area 2 level)



Source: ABS Census 2016 – Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (SEIFA)

Youth

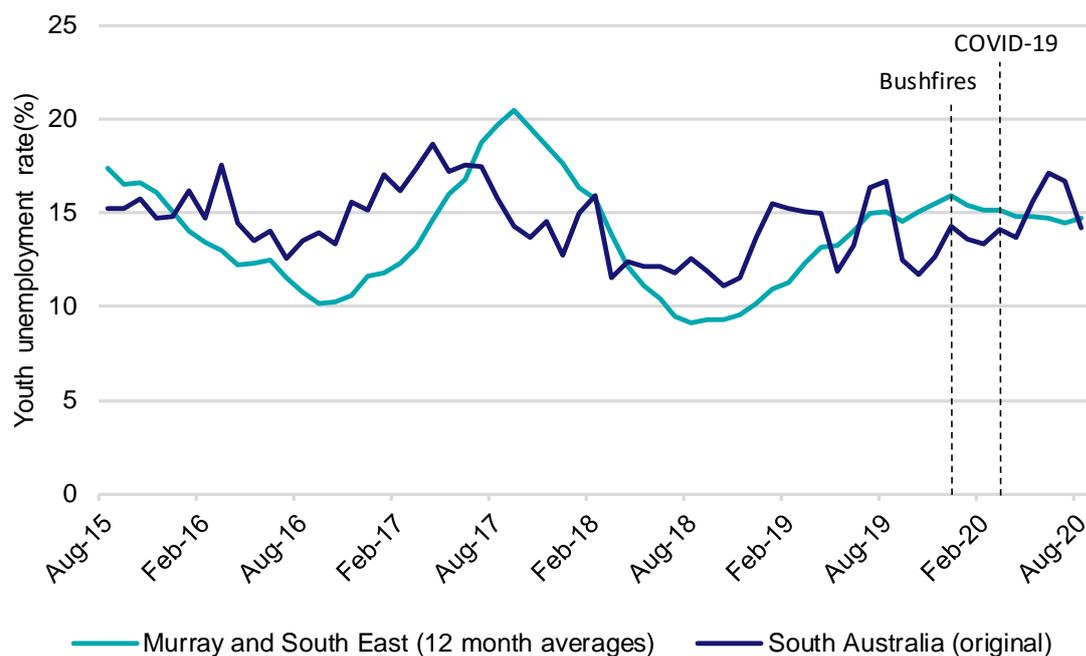
In 2020, youth represented 14.3 per cent of the Limestone Coast SA3 and 13.5 percent of the population 15 years and older. As at September 2020, the youth jobactive caseload (15-24) for the region was 1,670 people.

The youth unemployment rate in the region stood at 14.7 per cent in August 2020, compared with 14.2 per cent for South Australia (see Graph 4).

Graph 5 shows around 18.0 per cent of young people aged 18-24 in Murray and South East were disengaged, compared with 13.8 per cent for South Australia and 13.2 per cent for Australia.

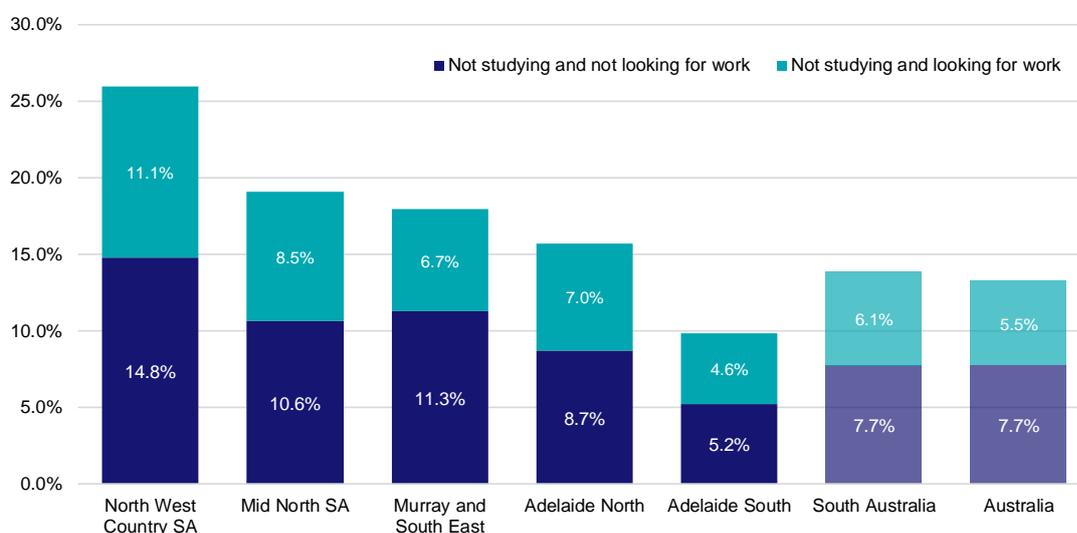
Graph 4: Youth unemployment (five years to August 2020)

Figure 4 Youth unemployment (five years to August 2020)



Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020

Figure 5 Young people not studying nor working (18-24 years old)



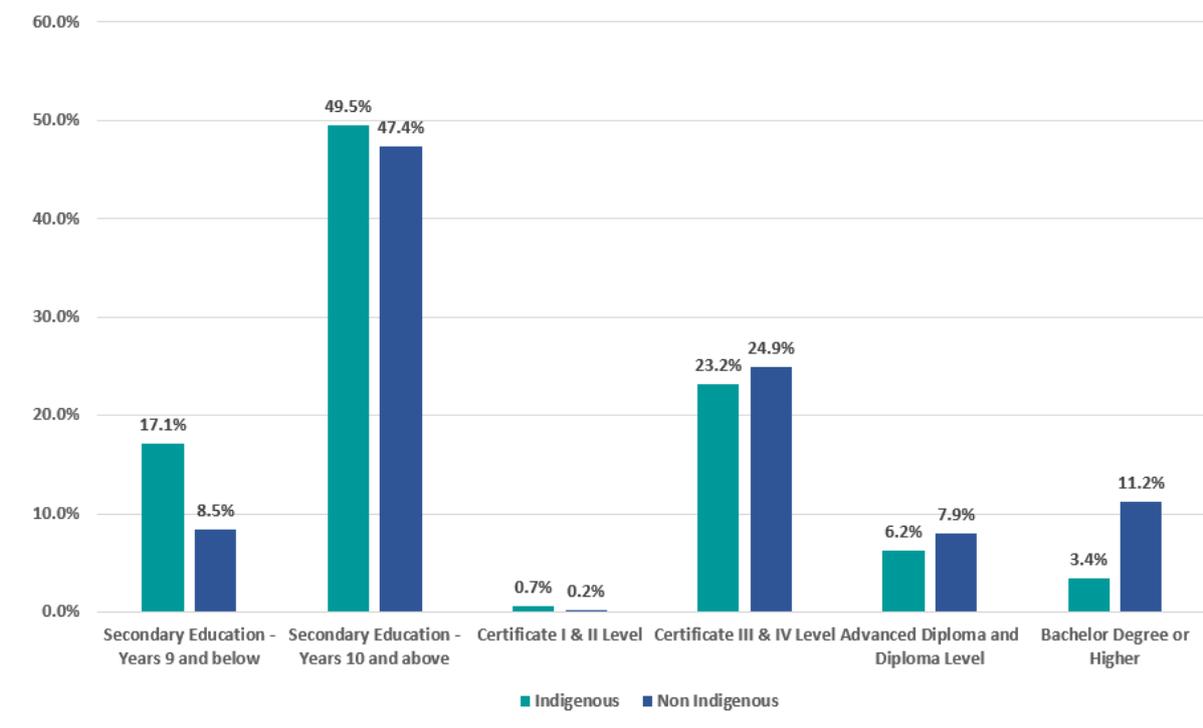
Source: ABS, Census of Population and Housing, 2016

Indigenous People

According to the 2016 Census, 3,791 people identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander descent lived in the Murray and South East Employment Region of which, 2,249 were of working age (15 - 64 years old).

The graph below shows educational attainment for the Indigenous population in the region is lower, in comparison to the Non-Indigenous population residing in the region.

Figure 6 Murray and South East Region - highest educational attainment (where known) for Indigenous people 15 to 64 years old



Source: ABS 2016 Census

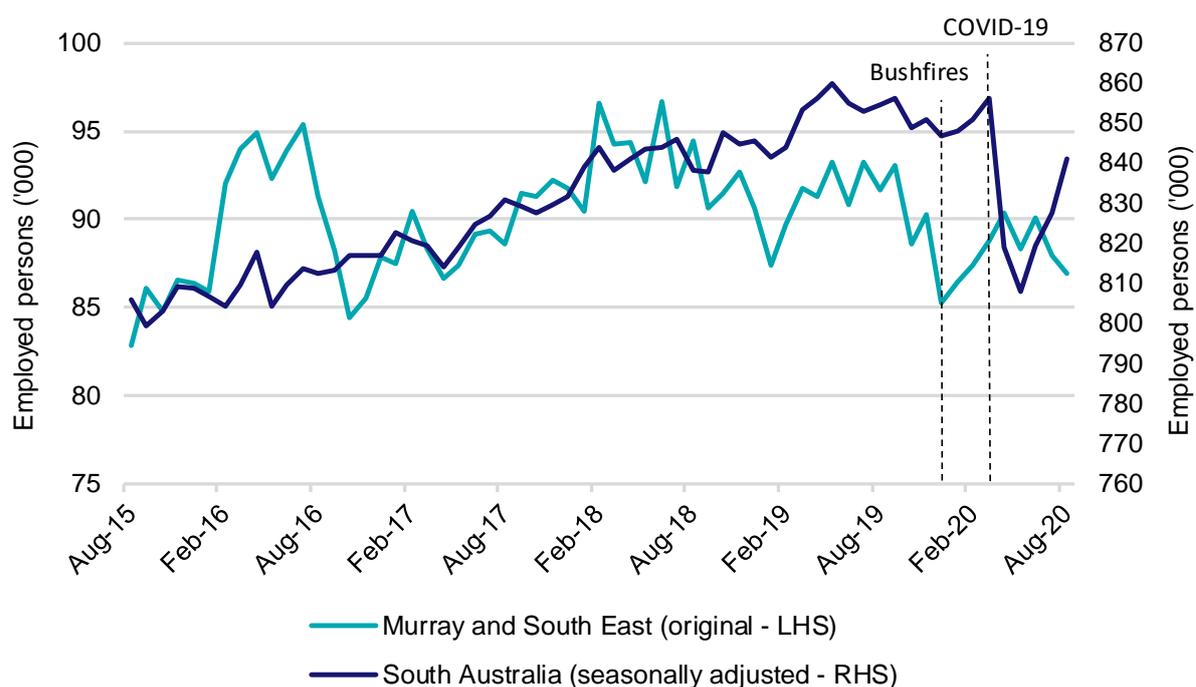
Labour market conditions

ABS Labour Force Survey regional estimates show that labour market conditions have deteriorated in the Murray and South East region due to the impacts of COVID-19. There were 86,900 employed people in the Murray and South East region in August 2020, down 1,800 (or 2.1 per cent) between March and August 2020 (see Table 2).

Table 1 Selected ABS Labour Force Survey indicators, August 2020

	Employment			Unemployment			Unemployment rate		Participation rate	
	Aug-20	Change since Mar-20		Aug-20	Change since Mar-20		Aug-20	Change since Mar-20	Aug-20	Change since Mar-20
	('000)	('000)	(%)	('000)	('000)	(%)	(%)	(% pts)	(%)	(% pts)
Murray and South East	86.9	-1.8	-2.1	6.7	0.0	-0.1	7.2	0.1	57.7	-1.2
South Australia	841.2	-15.2	-1.8	71.8	14.4	25.1	7.9	1.6	62.8	-0.1
Australia	12,583.4	-413.6	-3.2	921.8	206.0	28.8	6.8	1.6	64.8	-1.1

Source: Data for Murray and South East are from ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020, original estimates. Data for South Australia and Australia are from ABS, Labour Force, Australia, August 2020, seasonally adjusted estimates.

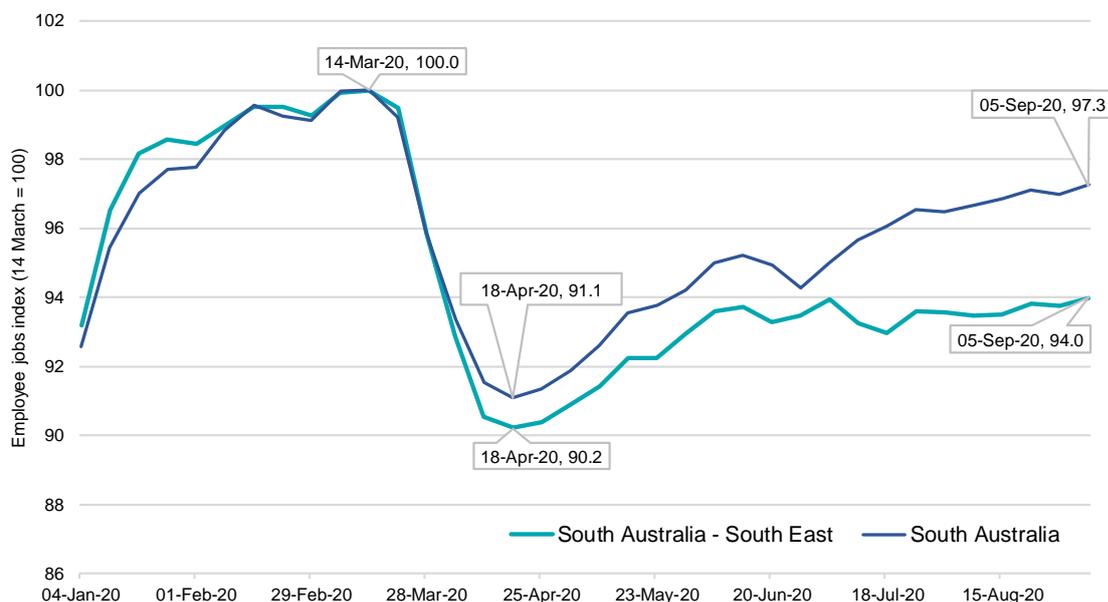
Figure 7 Employed persons aged 15 and over (five years to August 2020)

Source: ABS, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020

ABS weekly payroll data

ABS weekly payroll data, graph 8, show that between 14 March 2020 and 5 September 2020:

- The number of employee jobs in Murray and South East fell by 6.0 per cent, compared with a 2.7 per cent decline for South Australia
- There has been some improvement over the four weeks to 5 September, with employee jobs increasing by 0.5 per cent in Murray and South East, compared with a 0.6 per cent rise in South Australia.

Figure 8 Employee jobs 4 January to 5 September (14 March 2020 = 100)

Source:

ABS, Weekly Payroll Jobs and Wages in Limestone Coast SA3 and Murray and Mallee SA3, Week ending 05 September 2020.

Participation rate

The Murray and South East participation rate decreased by 1.2 percentage points between March and August 2020, to stand at 57.7 per cent, below the 62.8 per cent recorded for South Australia.

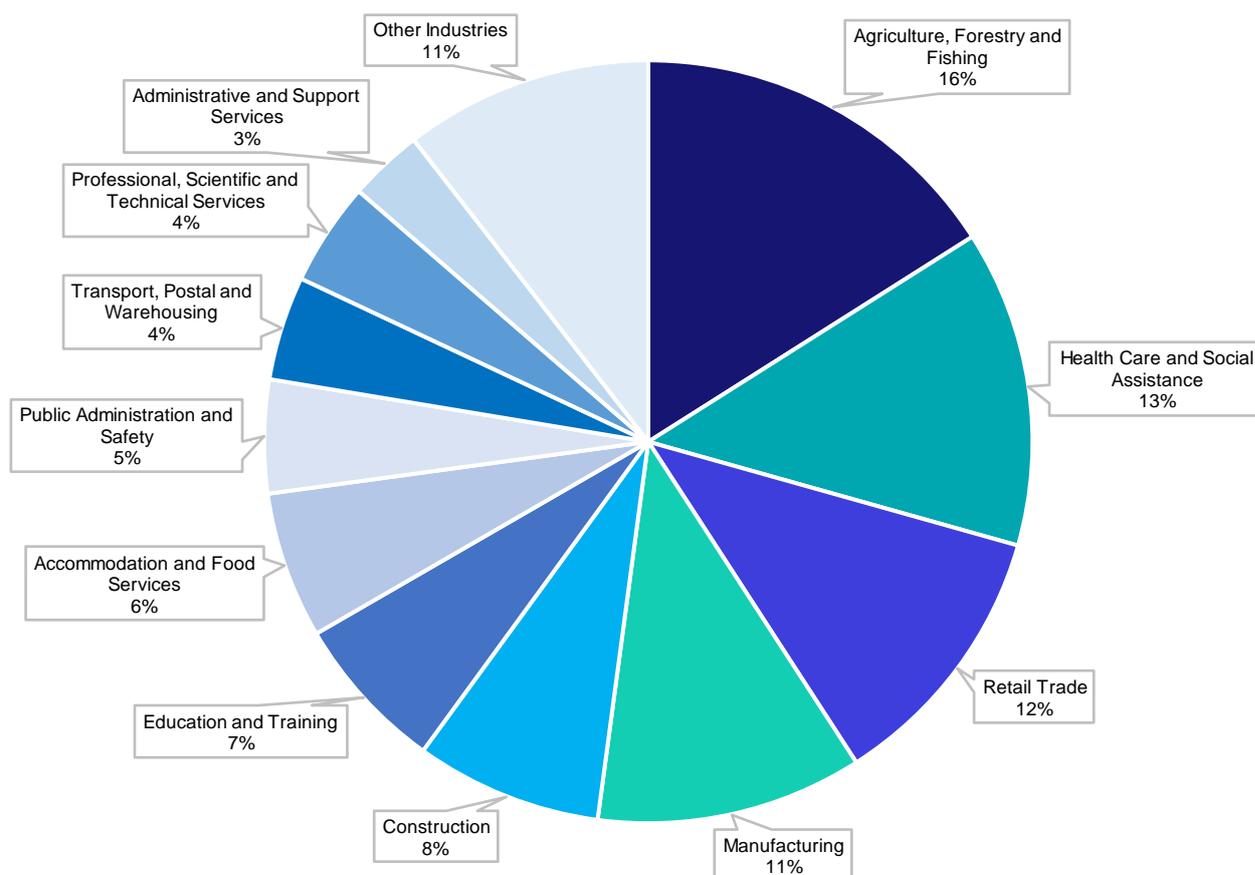
The share of the adult population aged 55 and over is high for the region at 45.6 per cent, compared with 38.4 per cent for South Australia and 34.4 per cent for Australia.

Labour Market Disparity

Considerable labour market disparity exists within the region. Latest available Small Area Labour Markets data show that, in the March quarter 2020 (latest available data), the unemployment rate in Murray and South East ranged from 1.3 per cent in the Statistical Area Level 2 (SA2) of Naracoorte Region, to 12.8 per cent in the SA2 of Berri.

Industry Composition

As at August 2020, the largest employing industries in Murray and South East were Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing, Health Care and Social Assistance and Retail Trade. Manufacturing was also a large industry, with an employment share of 11 per cent.

Figure 9 Share of employment by industry in Murray and South East, August quarter 2020

Source: ABS Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, August 2020. "Other industries" includes: Other Services; Wholesale Trade; Arts & Recreation Services; Financial & Insurance Services; Information Media & Telecommunications; Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services; Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services; and Mining.

Value of exports in the region

Estimates of the total exports by industry sectors for RDA Murraylands and Riverland region in 2018/19 by the National Institute of Economic and Industry Research indicated the three largest industries were:

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (\$1,260 million or 44.5 per cent)
- Manufacturing (\$689 million or 24.3 per cent)
- Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services (\$174 million or 6.1 per cent)

The three industries were estimated as accounting for \$2,124 million in total or 75.0 per cent of the total exports by industry in the RDA Murraylands and Riverland region.

For the Limestone Coast RDA region in 2018/19, the estimated three largest industries were slightly different with Retail Trade coming in third:

- Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing (\$1,577 million or 49 per cent)
- Manufacturing (\$962 million or 29.9 per cent)
- Retail Trade (\$118 million or 3.7 per cent)

The three industries were estimated as accounting for \$2,657 million in total or 82.5 per cent of the total exports by industry in the Limestone Coast region.

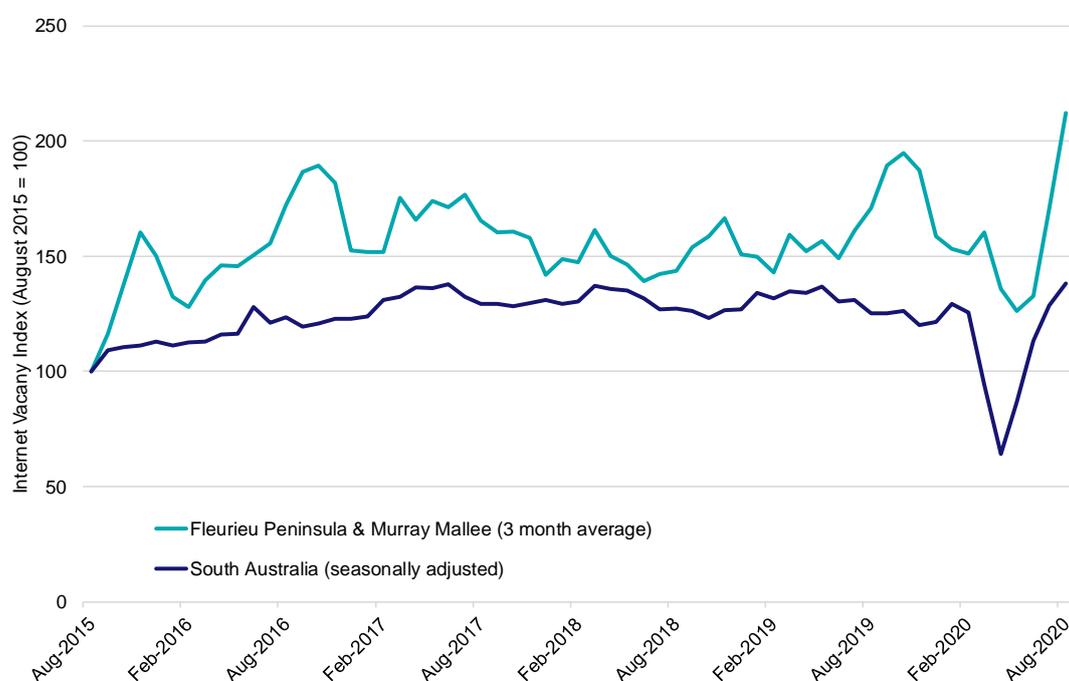
Industry change - longer term trends

Although COVID-19 has affected some industries more than others, it is important to consider longer term employment trends to understand where current and emerging opportunities may be in this region. In recent years, employment

- increased in Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing and Manufacturing; however, both these industries showed some signs of slowing just before COVID-19
- increased in Health Care and Social Assistance
- trended up marginally in Construction following a low point in August 2017
- was relatively steady in Accommodation and Food Services until a decrease following COVID-19.

Job advertisements have increased in recent months with the largest number in sales and clerical roles and social assistance (see Table 3).

Figure 10 Online job advertisement time series (five years to August 2020)



Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index, August 2020. Data for Fleurieu Peninsula and Murray Mallee is a three-month moving average, and data for South Australia is seasonally adjusted; both have been indexed to July 2015.

Figure 11 Top 10 advertised occupations (August 2020)

ANZSCO Occupation
Sales Assistants (General)
General Clerks
Aged and Disabled Carers
Other Miscellaneous Labourers
Crop Farm Workers
Registered Nurses
Commercial Cleaners
Nursing Support and Personal Care Workers
Motor Mechanics
Welfare, Recreation and Community Arts Workers

Source: National Skills Commission, Internet Vacancy Index, August 2020. Raw data are used for analysis. Note: the Fleurieu Peninsula and Murray Mallee IVI region is the best fit from the regions available from the contributing job boards and does not precisely correspond to the Murray and South East Employment Region.

Educational attainment

Schools in the region

Completing Year 12 is often an important step to further education or gaining employment. Engaging with schools and students about post-school education options and employment options would be very beneficial to the future labour market of the region.

There are over 30 secondary schools comprising of 21 government and 9 non-government secondary schools in the Murray and South East region. At the 2016 Census, there was approximately 7,500 secondary school students. Many of these schools offer VET in Schools as part of the school program.

Vocational Education and Training

Table 4 shows in 2019 there was a total of 12,850 program enrolments in the Murray and South East Region. Almost half of these enrolments were from the Limestone Coast. From 2016 to 2019 program enrolments declined for the region by 16.7 per cent.

Table 2 Program enrolments by student residential address - Murray and South East Region

Sub Region	2016	2019	% Change
Riverland	3,691	3,244	-12.1%
Murraylands	4,152	3,520	-15.2%
Limestone Coast	7,589	6,086	-19.8%
Total Murray and South East Region	15,432	12,850	-16.7%

Source: NCVET VOCSTATS

In 2019, there were a total of 83,247 enrolments in nationally recognised vocational education and training programs across Certificate I, II, III, IV and Diploma or higher, down 17 per cent from 2016.

Table 5 shows subject enrolments have reduced overall from 2016 to 2019 with Certificate III subjects the only level increasing in that time.

Key trends in the subject enrolments for the Region include an increasing proportion of Engineering and related technologies subjects and society and culture subjects.

Table 3 Level of Enrolment - Murray and South East Employment Region

Program level of education	2016	2019	% Change
Qualification	1,362	645	-52.6%
Certificate I	3,595	1,957	-45.6%
Certificate II	20,420	18,554	-9.1%
Certificate III	41,281	44,036	6.7%
Certificate IV	13,718	10,786	-21.4%
Diploma or higher	20,454	7267	-64.5%
Total	100,833	83,247	-17.4%

Source: NCVET VOCSTATS

Table 4 Subject enrolments - Murray and South East Employment Region

Subject Categories	2016	2019	% Change
Natural and physical sciences	1,263	1,224	-3.1%
Information technology	1,498	498	-66.8%
Engineering and related technologies	20,040	17,025	-15.0%
Architecture and building	3,861	3,918	1.5%
Agriculture, environmental and related studies	6,306	5,274	-16.4%
Health	34,650	37,195	7.3%
Education	2,235	2,035	-8.9%
Management and commerce	22,382	16,057	-28.3%
Society and culture	16,593	14,552	-12.3%
Creative arts	1,540	1,710	11.0%
Food, hospitality and personal services	10,229	8,130	-20.5%
Mixed field programmes	12,237	12,128	-0.9%
Total	132,840	119,750	-9.9%

Source: NCVET VOCSTATS

University

The Murray and South East Employment Region has university options depending on the location. In the Limestone Coast, University of South Australia have a campus located at Mount Gambier and offer external courses to students.

In the Murraylands and Riverland, the Murray River Study Hub provides opportunities for regional students to pursue tertiary education and VET opportunities without having to travel or relocate outside of the region. The Study Hubs are located at Murray Bridge TAFE SA and Berri TAFE SA campuses. Courses are offered online or through mix mode delivery by CQUniversity Australia, Flinders University and TAFE SA. To assist students, onsite student advisors and mentors are available.

Transport

According to the ABS 2016 Census, most people in the Region lived less than 30 km from their place of work. People in the Limestone Coast SA3 tended to travel further (see Graph 11).

Motor vehicles are the main method of travel to work in the region (cars, trucks and motorbikes). There are very few public transport networks outside of metropolitan Adelaide and this is reflected in the method of travel to work reported at the 2016 Census (see Graph 12).

Figure 12 Distance travelled to work (where applicable) 2016 Census – Region SA3s and SA

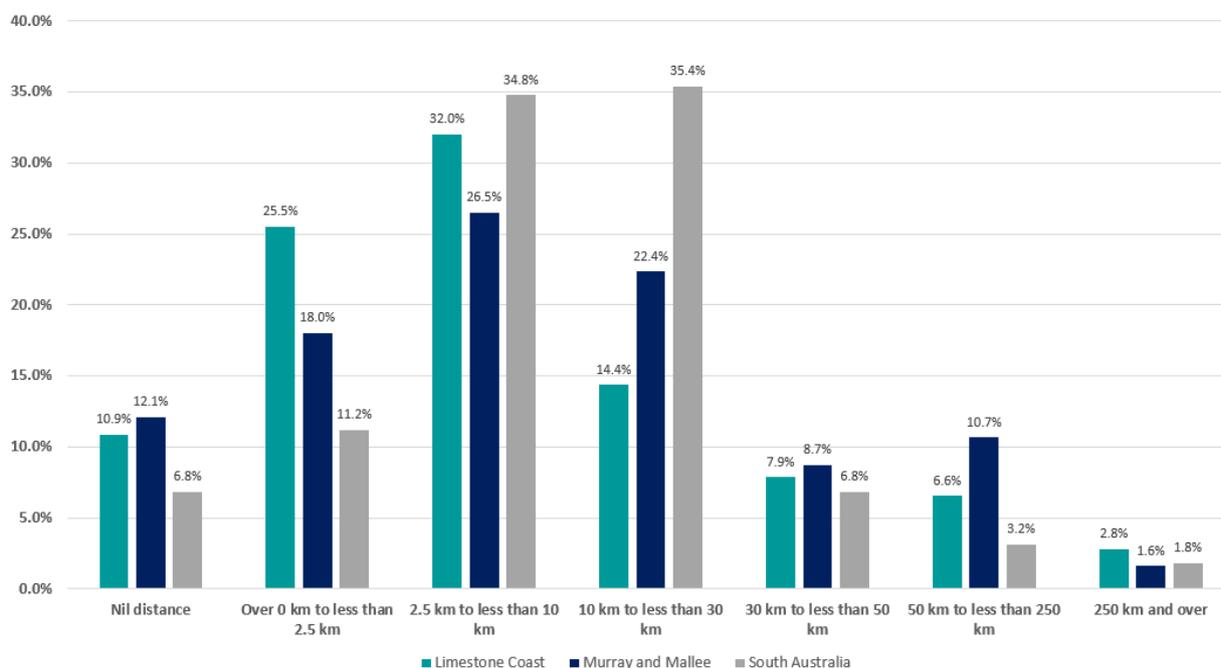
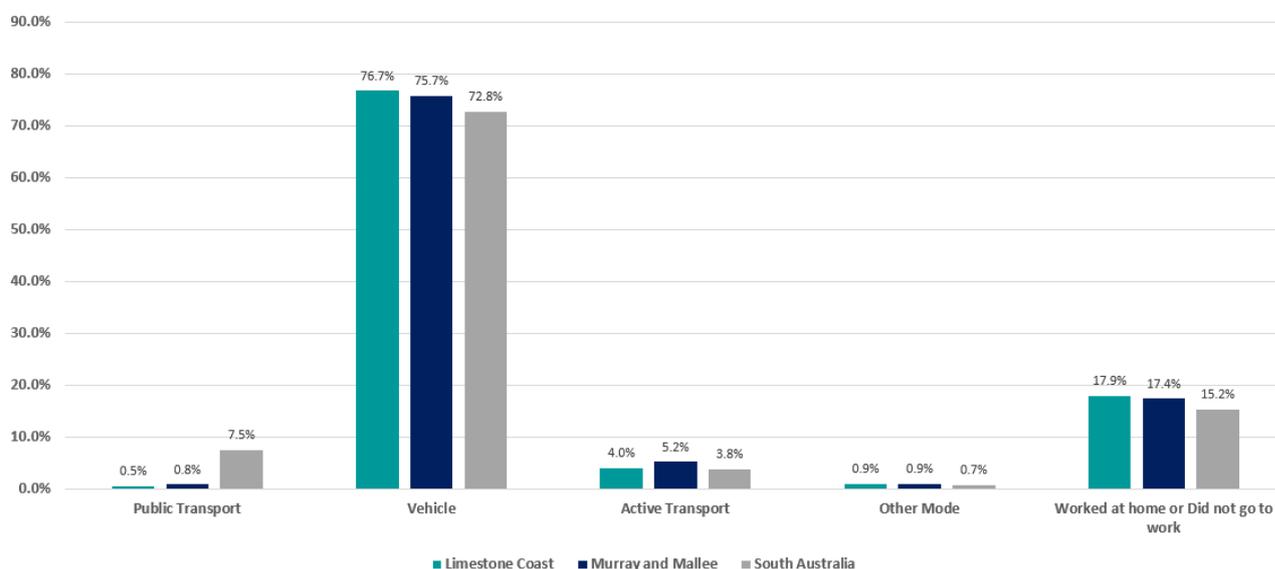


Figure 13 Method of travel to work (where applicable) 2016 Census – Region SA3s and SA



Local Stakeholders and Opportunities

The Murray and South East Region comprises several distinct clusters of socio-economic characteristics, and pockets of concentrated socio-economic disadvantage (Renmark, Berri, Murray Bridge and Millicent). As such, it is important to recognise the artificial nature of the boundary and to approach engagement accordingly.

There are fifteen local councils in the Murray and South East Region: Berri and Barmera, Grant, Karoonda East Murray, Kingston, Loxton Waikerie, Mid Murray, Mount Gambier, Murray Bridge, Naracoorte and Lucindale, Renmark Paringa, Robe, Southern Mallee and Tatiara, The Coorong and Wattle Range. Given the existing local partnerships, leveraging their networks will be a priority.

The Murraylands and Riverland RDA and the Limestone Coast RDA will also have coverage of the region and will be integral to developing stakeholder relationships.

There are seven Australian Government employment programs delivered by service providers in the region. Three providers deliver jobactive in the Murray and South East Employment Region: Job Prospects, MADEC and Sureway Employment and Training. Job Prospects and Mission Australia deliver the Transition to Work (TtW) program supporting young people aged 15-24. UnitingSA and Community Axis deliver the ParentsNext program and work with parents and carers to help build confidence, develop skills and access local support and services to plan for the future. PeoplePlus delivers the Time to Work Employment Service Program that assists adult, sentenced Indigenous prisoners to access the support they need to better prepare them to find employment and reintegrate into the community upon their release from prison. Other employment services in the region include New Enterprise Incentive Scheme (NEIS), Career Transition Assistance (CTA), and Employability Skills Training (EST).

Other Australian Government programs include Vocational Training and Employment Centre (VTEC), DES - Disability Management Service (DES DMS), DES - Employment Support Service (DES ESS), National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), Australian Apprenticeship Support Network and more.

Data Notes

It is important to note that unemployment statistics collected as part of the Labour Force Survey can vary considerably from income support statistics and jobactive caseload numbers.

A person is considered employed by the ABS if they are aged 15 years and over and work for an hour or more during the Labour Force Survey reference week. The ABS also classify someone as employed if they have taken any kind of leave or were paid for some or all the previous four weeks (including via the JobKeeper Payment). In addition, employees who were away from their jobs for less than four weeks without pay but still believed they had a job (i.e. were temporarily stood down) would also be classified as employed.

A person is considered unemployed by the ABS if they are not employed, have actively looked for work at some time in the last four weeks and are currently available for work.

Analysis Regions

For the purposes of analysis, the Murray and South East Employment Region is referred to in total, but also split into an ABS definition called a Statistical Area 2 (SA2s).

