

Mackay Isaac Whitsunday ► 2021

# REGIONAL ECONOMIC PROFILE



**GW3** ►

GREATER WHITSUNDAY ALLIANCE  
MACKAY ► ISAAC ► WHITSUNDAY

[www.greaterwhitsundayalliance.com.au](http://www.greaterwhitsundayalliance.com.au)

# FAST FACTS

## MIW Region



**Current population** of 174,816, conservatively **expected to grow** to over 187,398 by 2030

\$42,298 billion **total output**

Nearly \$40 **billion in projects** listed for development in the Mackay region

15,552 **local businesses** (June 2020)

**Low unemployment rate** of 4.3% (June 2021)

## Mackay



**Current population** is 117,902 – **increasing** to 137,915 by 2041

9,917 **local businesses** (June 2020)

\$17,164 billion **total output**

**Low unemployment rate** of 5.4% (March 2021)

\$370,000 **median house price** VS QLD **median house price** of \$490,000 (Dec 2020)

**World class mining, equipment, technology and services (METS) sector**

**Largest mining region in Queensland**

## Isaac



**Current population** is 20,987, **expected to grow** to 21,446 by 2041

**Non-resident population** of 10,580 at any point in time

1,802 **local businesses** (June 2020)

\$19.356 billion **total Output**

**Low unemployment rate** of 2% (March 2021)

\$250,000 **median house price**, VS QLD **median house price** of \$490,000

**Gateway to the Great Barrier Reef with 74 Whitsunday Islands to explore**

## Whitsunday



**Current population** is 35,927, **expected to grow** to 39,847 by 2041

3,833 **local businesses** (June 2020)

\$5.826 billion in **total output**

**Low unemployment rate** of 5.8% (March 2021)

\$350,000 **median house price** VS QLD **median house price** of \$490,000

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# SNAPSHOT OF THE REGION

# 1. Executive Summary



**\$23.8b**

**Gross Regional Product**

Increase from \$23.6b



**\$42.29b**

**Total Output**

Increase from \$41.99b



**+ 55%**

**Increase in value of Non-Residential Building approvals**



**4.3%**

**Regional Unemployment Rate**

The information from REMPLAN in this report is a representation of the 12-month period from June 2019 to June 2020.

## Greater Whitsunday is a region at the forefront of capitalising on new opportunities relating to our key strengths in mining, METS and agriculture.

In the last 12 months the region has considerably progressed its transformative agenda being named a bio-foods hub for Queensland, with Abbot Point becoming the home base to a new low orbit satellite launch facility, and the implementation of autonomous haulage at several Bowen Basin mining sites.

The region's Gross Regional Product increased by over 7% to \$23.8b to June 2020, led by the mining sector which recorded an impressive \$0.951b increase in GRP to reach \$20.391b. All key industry sectors have maintained or recorded GRP growth with total outputs growing to \$42.29b (up from \$41.9b to June 2019).

The region's per capita Gross Regional Product is \$140.333 (compared to the Queensland per capita Gross State Product of \$76.955) demonstrating that our region's contribution to the State is significant given our size, and reinforces our position as a regional economic powerhouse.

The regional unemployment rate remains low (4.3% June 2021) and well below that of Queensland (5.1% June 2021), indicating the regional economy is performing strongly.

### Covid-19 impacts

No discussion about the economy in 2020 is complete without consideration of the impact of COVID-19. The resources sector largely cushioned the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region from COVID-19 impacts, with jobs marginally up from pre-COVID-19 levels in March 2021.

	Jobs Prior to COVID-19	Jobs March 2021	Net Impact
Isaac	21,462	21,695	+1.1%
Mackay	47,975	48,324	+0.7%
Whitsunday	15,805	15,711	-0.6%

SOURCE: REMPLAN Covid-19 Tool

On a positive note, the real estate sector remained very positive for Mackay and Isaac especially, with both regions reporting solid increases in median house prices. Unit prices have increased in all LGAs, indicating more confidence in the region. This increased real estate activity has also positively flowed through to the number of residential building approvals, particularly in the Isaac Regional Council area.

The rental yield remains strong across the region - greater than 5% across all three LGAs, with many investors capitalising on the significant rental demand.



Transformation underpins all of GW3's projects as we look for better ways to capitalise on our strengths. Our focus on bio-futures is an example of this, leveraging our world-class capabilities in METS and agriculture, as well as our location and infrastructure to create new sustainable economic opportunities for our region.

**Kylie Porter, CEO, Greater Whitsunday Alliance (GW3)**

## 2. Region Overview



Our region is diverse and large – more than four times the size of South East Queensland with only 5% the population. We contribute more GRP per capita to the Queensland Government than any other region in the State.

**Greg Williamson, Mayor, Mackay Regional Council**

The Isaac region is one of the largest coal and beef producing regions in Australia. Our industries are diverse and resilient, from our seams of coal, which help forge steel and generate electricity, to our top-class beef, grains, cane, and aquaculture; We embrace innovation as a transformational region through mining rehabilitation, bio-economies and exporting Isaac's knowledge and skills. Our enabled infrastructure sets the foundation for future growth and prosperity.

**Anne Baker, Mayor, Isaac Regional Council**

The Whitsunday region is a diverse and unique part of the world with tourism, agriculture and mining forming our three economic pillars. Post COVID-19, we can boast a growing tourism sector, a booming mining industry and Australia's largest winter growing crop which puts the Whitsundays in pole position for future economic growth and success.

**Andrew Willcox, Mayor, Whitsunday Regional Council**

### A. Map

Greater Whitsunday region spans  
**90,354 km<sup>2</sup>**



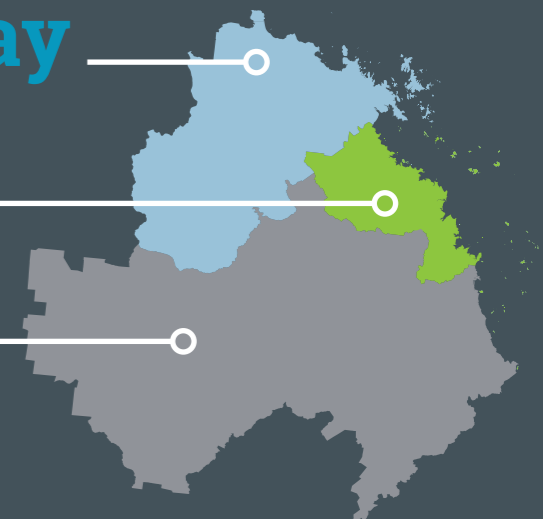
### B. Area (km<sup>2</sup>)

The Greater Whitsunday region spans an area of 90,354 km<sup>2</sup> from St Lawrence in the south, to Bowen in the north and beyond Clermont in the west.

**23,863km<sup>2</sup> Whitsunday**

**7,622km<sup>2</sup> Mackay**

**58,869km<sup>2</sup> Isaac**



## C. LGAs

### Mackay

The Mackay region is home to a diverse and vibrant community with rural and coastal living opportunities in 30 townships, small rural settlements and rural residential areas. **The Mackay regional local government area is one of the fastest growing in Queensland, with a population of over 117,902 people. The region's prosperous economy is expected to continue to drive strong population growth over the next 20 years.**

Only an hour's flight from Brisbane, the Mackay region boasts an enviable lifestyle and a buoyant economy with the benefits of a fast-growing coastal city. Its coastal location is complemented by its spectacular natural environment. This includes 31 beautiful beaches, a picturesque blue river and a pristine rainforest hinterland.



**117,902+**  
population



**31 beautiful**  
beaches

### Isaac

The Isaac local government spans an area of 58,869 km<sup>2</sup> in Central Queensland, from the coast area to the coalfields. **Located 1,000km north-west of Brisbane and 900km south of Cairns, with access to world class export infrastructure, the area is strategically placed to capitalise on the economic opportunities associated with the rise of Asia.**

The estimated resident population is 20,987, although with an additional 10,580 resource sector workers housed in temporary accommodation at any one time, the full-time equivalent population is estimated at 31,567. The Isaac LGA hosts 31 operating coal mines and an additional 15 in either care and maintenance, construction or advanced stages of approval. Agriculture is also another key industry for the region, with a thriving beef industry.



**31,567 estimated**  
full-time equivalent  
population



**31 operating**  
coal mines

### Whitsunday

The Whitsunday region encompasses a total land area of 23,863 km<sup>2</sup> and includes the major townships of Airlie Beach, Bowen, Cannonvale, Collinsville and Proserpine and is home to approximately 35,927 permanent residents. **As the gateway to the Great Barrier Reef and the magnificent 74 Whitsunday Islands, the Whitsunday region has one of the fastest growing populations in Queensland.** Boasting a strong and diverse economy driven by the agriculture, construction, mining and tourism industries; the Whitsunday region is on track to becoming an economic powerhouse in Queensland.

Renowned for its relaxed lifestyle, the region boasts beaches, rainforests and large tracts of national parkland. While the region is rural and coastal in its nature, residents and visitors alike enjoy access to contemporary facilities including museums, art galleries, cafes, hotels, restaurants and entertainment facilities.



**35,927 permanent**  
residents



**74 Whitsunday**  
Islands

## D. Population

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has a higher percentage of youth and working aged residents compared to Queensland.

### i. Age

Age Report (2016 Census - Place of Usual Residence - People)

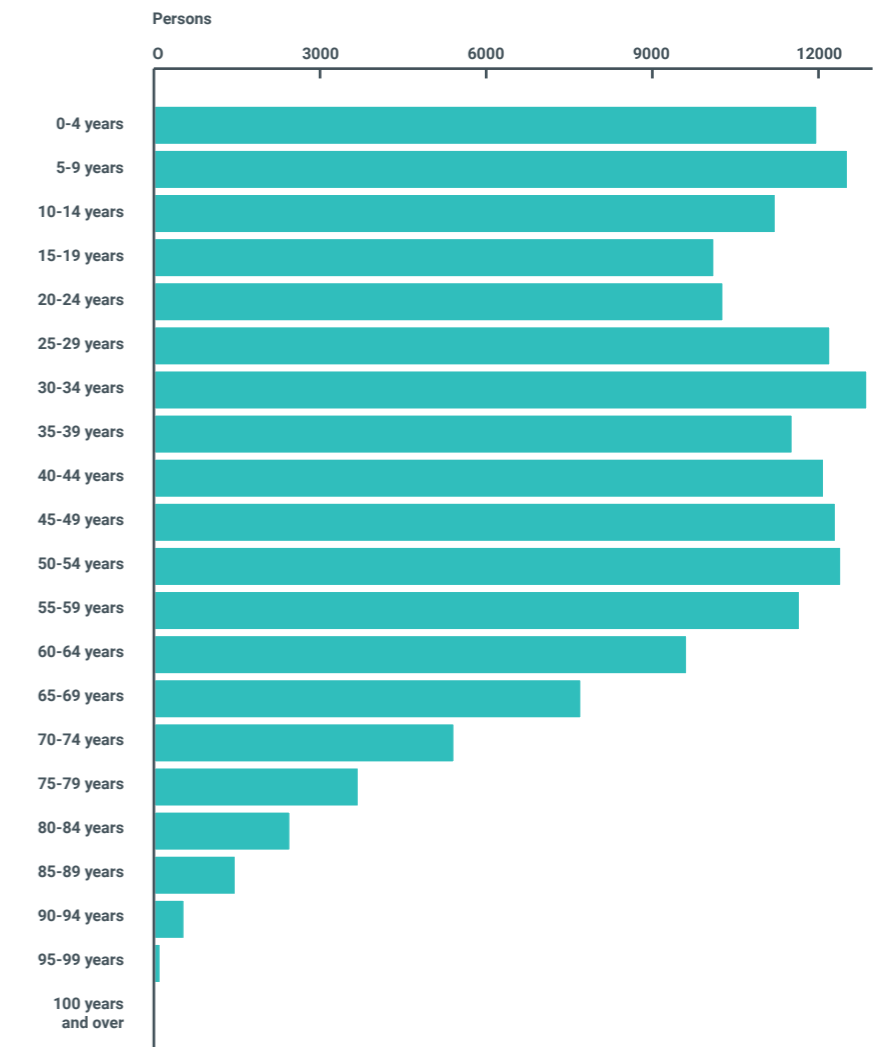


The total number of people usually resident in Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) zones in all Age cohorts on Census Night 2016 was

**169,693**

### Population by Age

Age	Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) (2016) zones	
	Persons	%
0-4 years	11,791	6.95%
5-9 years	12,335	7.27%
10-14 years	11,053	6.51%
15-19 years	9,962	5.87%
20-24 years	10,123	5.97%
25-29 years	12,021	7.08%
30-34 years	12,678	7.47%
35-39 years	11,353	6.69%
40-44 years	11,910	7.02%
45-49 years	12,121	7.14%
50-54 years	12,215	7.20%
55-59 years	11,482	6.77%
60-64 years	9,477	5.58%
65-69 years	7,599	4.48%
70-74 years	5,345	3.15%
75-79 years	3,645	2.15%
80-84 years	2,431	1.43%
85-89 years	1,460	0.86%
90-94 years	550	0.32%
95-99 years	125	0.07%
100 years and over	17	0.01%
<b>Total</b>	<b>169,693</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



SOURCE: REMPLAN

ii. % of Qld

Age Report (2016 Census - Place of Usual Residence - People)

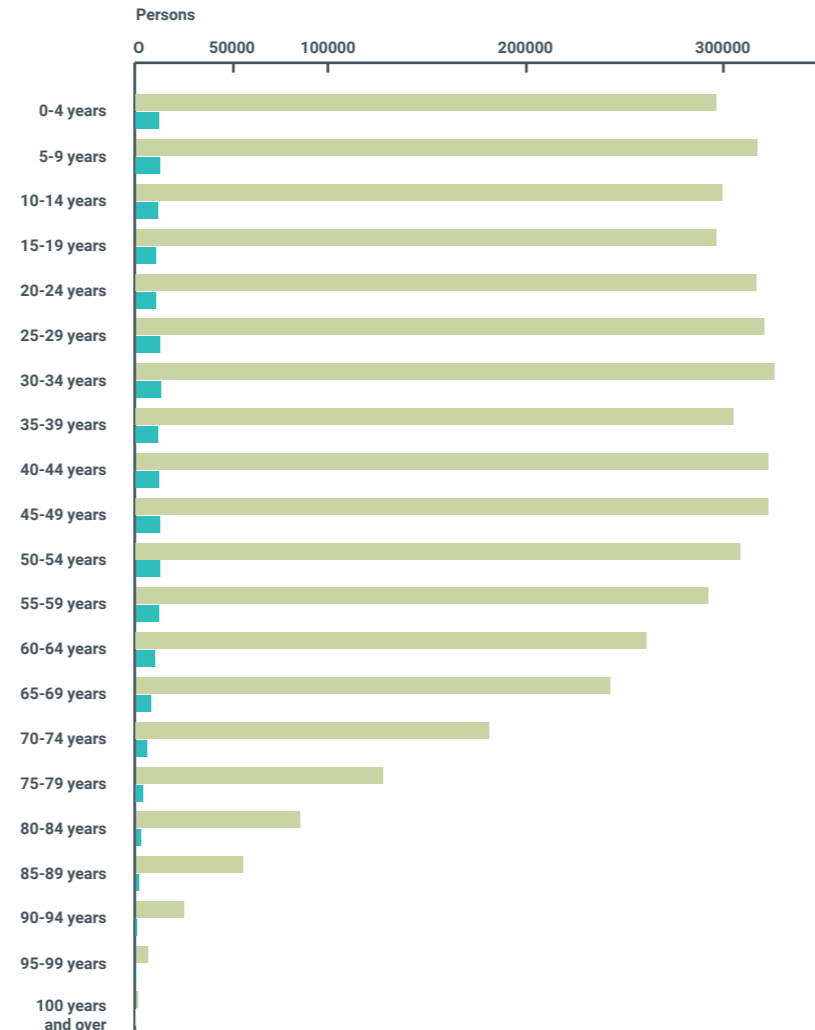


The total number of people usually resident in Queensland (State) zones in all Age cohorts on Census Night 2016 was

**4,703,192**

Population by Age

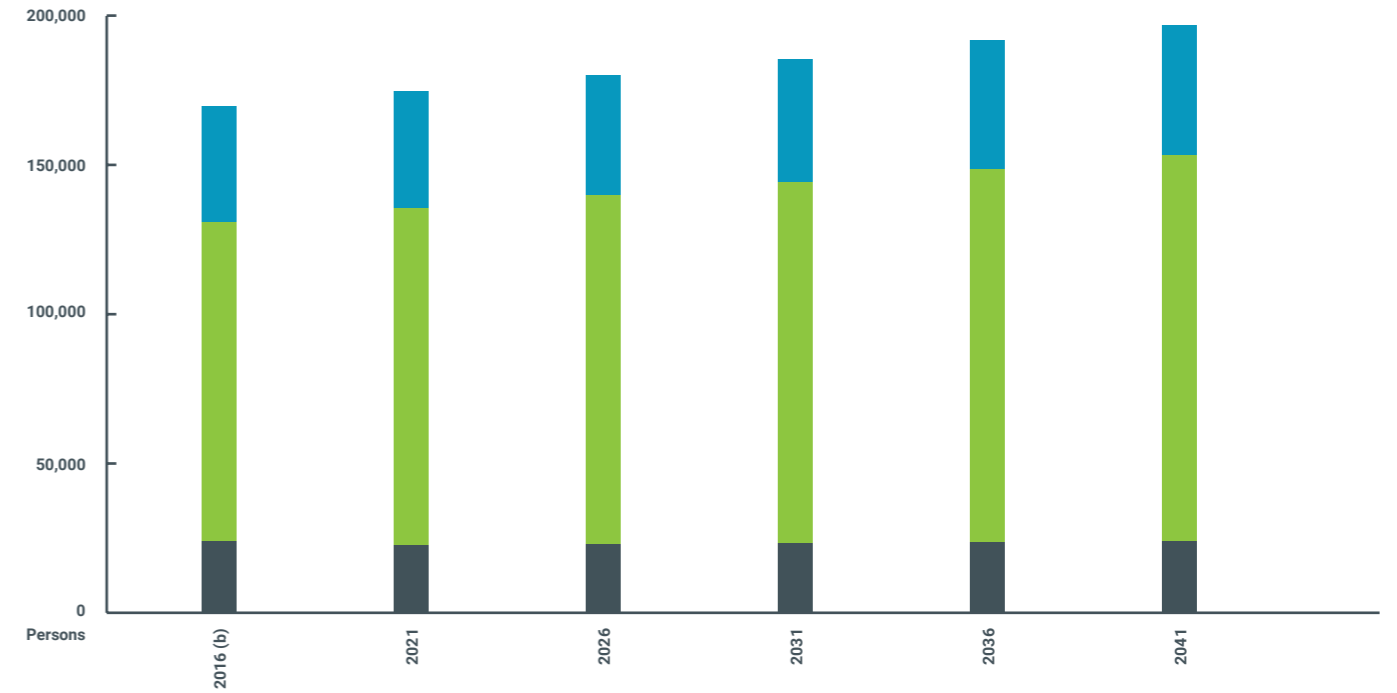
Age	Queensland (2016)		Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) (2016)	
	Persons	%	Persons	%
0-4 years	296,458	6.30%	11,791	6.95%
5-9 years	317,135	6.74%	12,335	7.27%
10-14 years	299,090	6.36%	11,053	6.51%
15-19 years	296,289	6.30%	9,962	5.87%
20-24 years	316,864	6.74%	10,123	5.97%
25-29 years	320,750	6.82%	12,021	7.08%
30-34 years	325,935	6.93%	12,678	7.47%
35-39 years	305,216	6.49%	11,353	6.69%
40-44 years	322,905	6.87%	11,910	7.02%
45-49 years	322,980	6.87%	12,121	7.14%
50-54 years	308,725	6.56%	12,215	7.20%
55-59 years	292,198	6.21%	11,482	6.77%
60-64 years	260,691	5.54%	9,477	5.58%
65-69 years	242,194	5.15%	7,599	4.48%
70-74 years	180,418	3.84%	5,345	3.15%
75-79 years	126,078	2.68%	3,645	2.15%
80-84 years	83,736	1.78%	2,431	1.43%
85-89 years	54,550	1.16%	1,460	0.86%
90-94 years	24,271	0.52%	550	0.32%
95-99 years	5,997	0.13%	125	0.07%
100 years and over	712	0.02%	17	0.01%
	<b>4,703,192</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>169,693</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



SOURCE: REMPLAN

iii. Growth and projection rates

Projected population (low series), by local government area, Queensland, 2016 to 2041



	Isaac (R) LGA
2016 (b)	21,563
2021	20,402
2026	20,579
2031	21,144
2036	21,649
2041	21,446

	Mackay (R) LGA
2016 (b)	117,703
2021	121,902
2026	125,822
2031	129,723
2036	133,644
2041	137,915

	Whitsunday (R) LGA
2016 (b)	34,626
2021	35,237
2026	36,289
2031	37,664
2036	38,628
2041	39,483



Graph depicts steady gradual growth expectancy on a low-risk scale. In this low scale, the population projection to 2041 is expected to reach

**198,844**

This projection would see a 14% increase in population across the Mackay, Isaac, Whitsunday region over 20 years.

	TOTAL
2016 (b)	173,892
2021	177,541
2026	182,690
2031	188,531
2036	193,921
2041	198,844

SOURCE: QGSO.QLD.GOV.AU

# 3.

# Economy



Gross Regional Product (GRP) is one of the primary indicators used to gauge the health of a region's economy. It represents the total dollar value of all goods and services produced over a specific time period. Think of it as the size of the economy.

## A. GRP

SOURCE: REMPLAN

### ISAAC - MACKAY - WHITSUNDAY

(SA4) 2020 Release 1 \$23,812.813 million



Gross Regional Product 2019	Gross Regional Product 2018	Gross Regional Product 2017
\$23,597.319 million	\$22,281.447 million	\$15,928.643 million

### ISAAC

(R) 2020 Release 1  
\$11,927.587 million

Isaac 2019 (R)	\$11,466.455 million
Isaac 2018 (R)	\$10,827.044 million
Isaac 2017 (R)	\$5,948.381 million

### MACKAY

(R) 2020 Release 1  
\$8,946.969 million

Mackay 2019 (R)	\$9,132.265 million
Mackay 2018 (R)	\$8,623.017 million
Mackay 2017 (R)	\$7,539.852 million

### WHITSUNDAY

(R) 2020 Release 1  
\$2,972.687 million

Whitsunday 2019 (R)	\$3,035.182 million
Whitsunday 2018 (R)	\$2,865.929 million
Whitsunday 2017 (R)	\$2,460.244 million

## B. By industry

### i. Key Industry Output Report

This report shows the gross revenue in prices generated by businesses and organisations in Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4).

Output data represents the gross revenue generated by businesses/organisations in each of the industry sectors in a defined region. Gross revenue is also referred to as total sales or total income.

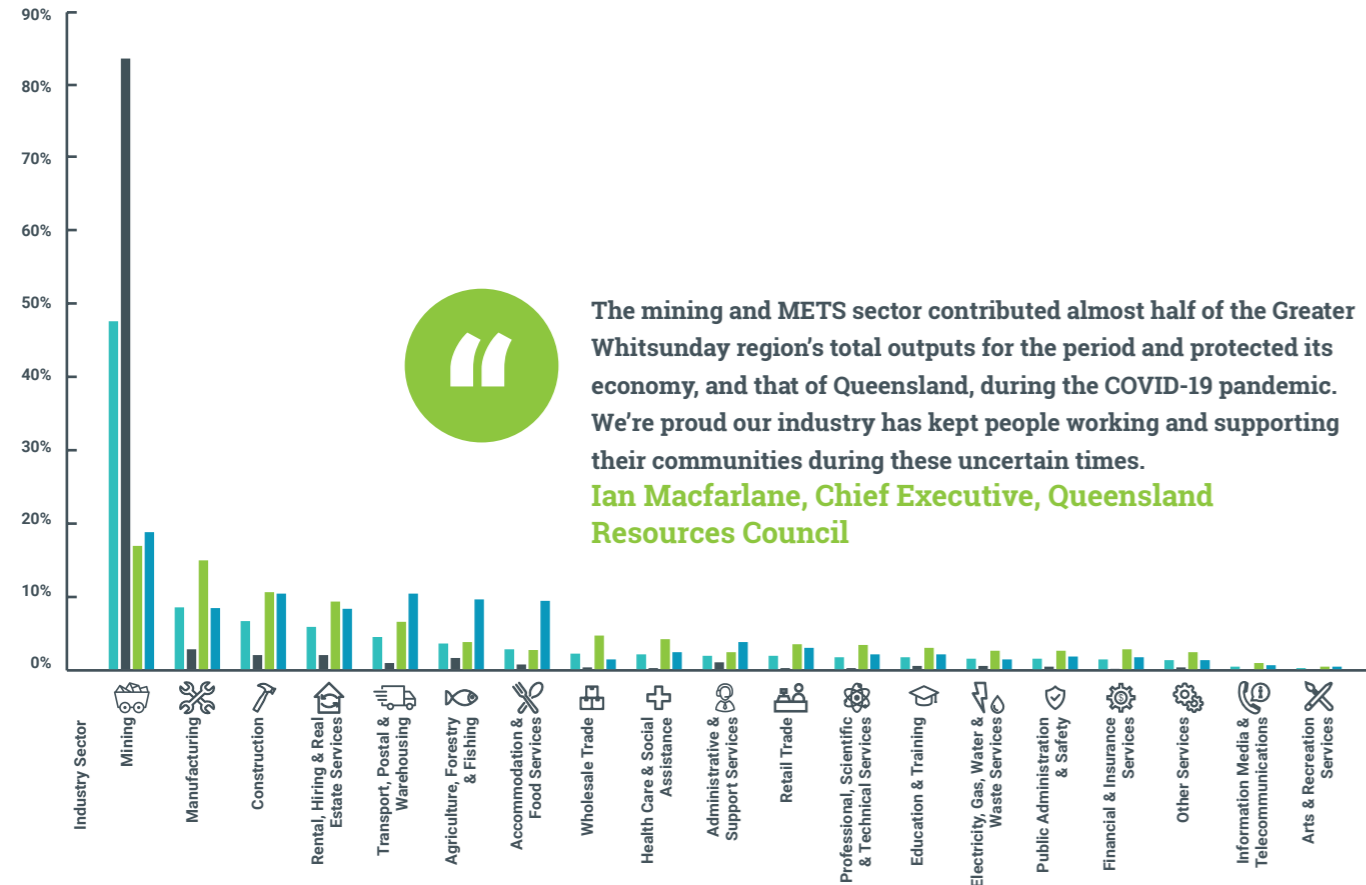
Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) represents 5.87% of the \$719.994 billion in output generated in Queensland.



The output generated by the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) economy is estimated at

# \$42.298 billion

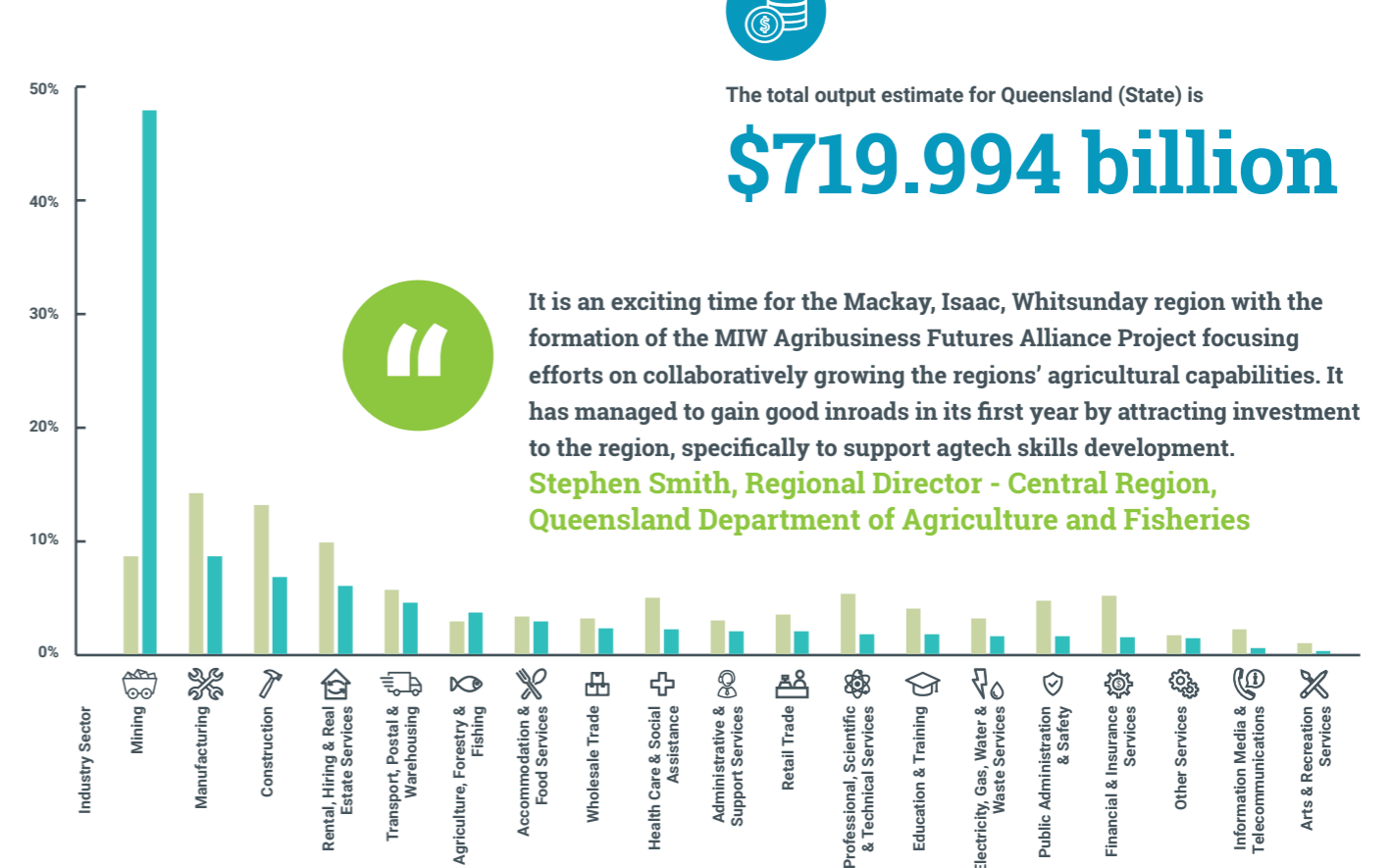
## All industry sectors in Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) ranked by output



Industry Sector	Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4)		Isaac (R) (2020 Release 1)		Mackay (R) (2020 Release 1)		Whitsunday (R) (2020 Release 1)	
	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%
Mining	\$20,391.02	48.2%	\$16,364.33	84.5%	\$2,949.55	17.2%	\$1,113.06	19.1%
Manufacturing	\$3,696.94	8.7%	\$560.48	2.9%	\$2,605.71	15.2%	\$502.59	8.6%
Construction	\$2,872.42	6.8%	\$403.46	2.1%	\$1,846.32	10.8%	\$617.38	10.6%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$2,538.46	6%	\$405.54	2.1%	\$1,633.35	9.5%	\$496.60	8.5%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	\$1,955.84	4.6%	\$199.46	1%	\$1,156.88	6.7%	\$617.36	10.6%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$1,563.89	3.7%	\$323.32	1.7%	\$669.52	3.9%	\$572.99	9.8%
Accommodation & Food Services	\$1,205.58	2.9%	\$163.72	0.8%	\$474.64	2.8%	\$561.25	9.6%
Wholesale Trade	\$992.56	2.3%	\$78.59	0.4%	\$815.83	4.8%	\$88.56	1.5%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$947.29	2.2%	\$61.6	0.3%	\$744.45	4.3%	\$144.78	2.5%
Administrative & Support Services	\$856.55	2%	\$208.99	1.1%	\$424.97	2.5%	\$226.83	3.9%
Retail Trade	\$855.52	2%	\$60.37	0.3%	\$613.14	3.6%	\$179.54	3.1%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	\$778.31	1.8%	\$64.32	0.3%	\$596.27	3.5%	\$126	2.2%
Education & Training	\$777.63	1.8%	\$112.74	0.6%	\$535.11	3.1%	\$129.66	2.2%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	\$664.43	1.6%	\$121.59	0.6%	\$459.43	2.7%	\$90.08	1.5%
Public Administration & Safety	\$662.05	1.6%	\$92.99	0.5%	\$458.02	2.7%	\$110.26	1.9%
Financial & Insurance Services	\$618.73	1.5%	\$29.43	0.2%	\$505.57	2.9%	\$102.09	1.8%
Other Services	\$571.77	1.4%	\$70.08	0.4%	\$423.17	2.5%	\$79.06	1.4%
Information Media & Telecommunications	\$232.44	0.5%	\$25.42	0.1%	\$175.06	1%	\$40.36	0.7%
Arts & Recreation Services	\$117.06	0.3%	\$9.91	0.1%	\$77.49	0.5%	\$27.75	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$42,298.46</b>		<b>\$19,356.35</b>		<b>\$17,164.47</b>		<b>\$5,826.18</b>	

SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)

## ii. All industry (Comparison to Queensland)



Industry Sector	Queensland (State) (2020 Release 1)		Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) (2020 Release 1)	
	\$m	%	\$m	%
Mining	\$62,345.33	8.7%	\$20,391.02	48.2%
Manufacturing	\$103,156	14.3%	\$3,696.94	8.7%
Construction	\$94,814.86	13.2%	\$2,872.42	6.8%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$71,121.68	9.9%	\$2,538.46	6%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	\$40,904.07	5.7%	\$1,955.84	4.6%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$20,916.7	2.9%	\$1,563.89	3.7%
Accommodation & Food Services	\$23,494.66	3.3%	\$1,205.58	2.9%
Wholesale Trade	\$23,370.59	3.2%	\$992.56	2.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$36,251.39	5%	\$947.29	2.2%
Administrative & Support Services	\$21,762.05	3%	\$856.55	2%
Retail Trade	\$24,841.33	3.5%	\$855.52	2%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	\$37,931.78	5.3%	\$778.31	1.8%
Education & Training	\$29,049.41	4%	\$777.63	1.8%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	\$22,759.12	3.2%	\$664.43	1.6%
Public Administration & Safety	\$34,158.88	4.7%	\$662.05	1.6%
Financial & Insurance Services	\$37,650.2	5.2%	\$618.73	1.5%
Other Services	\$12,273.23	1.7%	\$571.77	1.4%
Information Media & Telecommunications	\$15,753.72	2.2%	\$232.44	0.5%
Arts & Recreation Services	\$7,439.13	1%	\$117.06	0.3%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$719,994.14</b>		<b>\$42,298.46</b>	

SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)





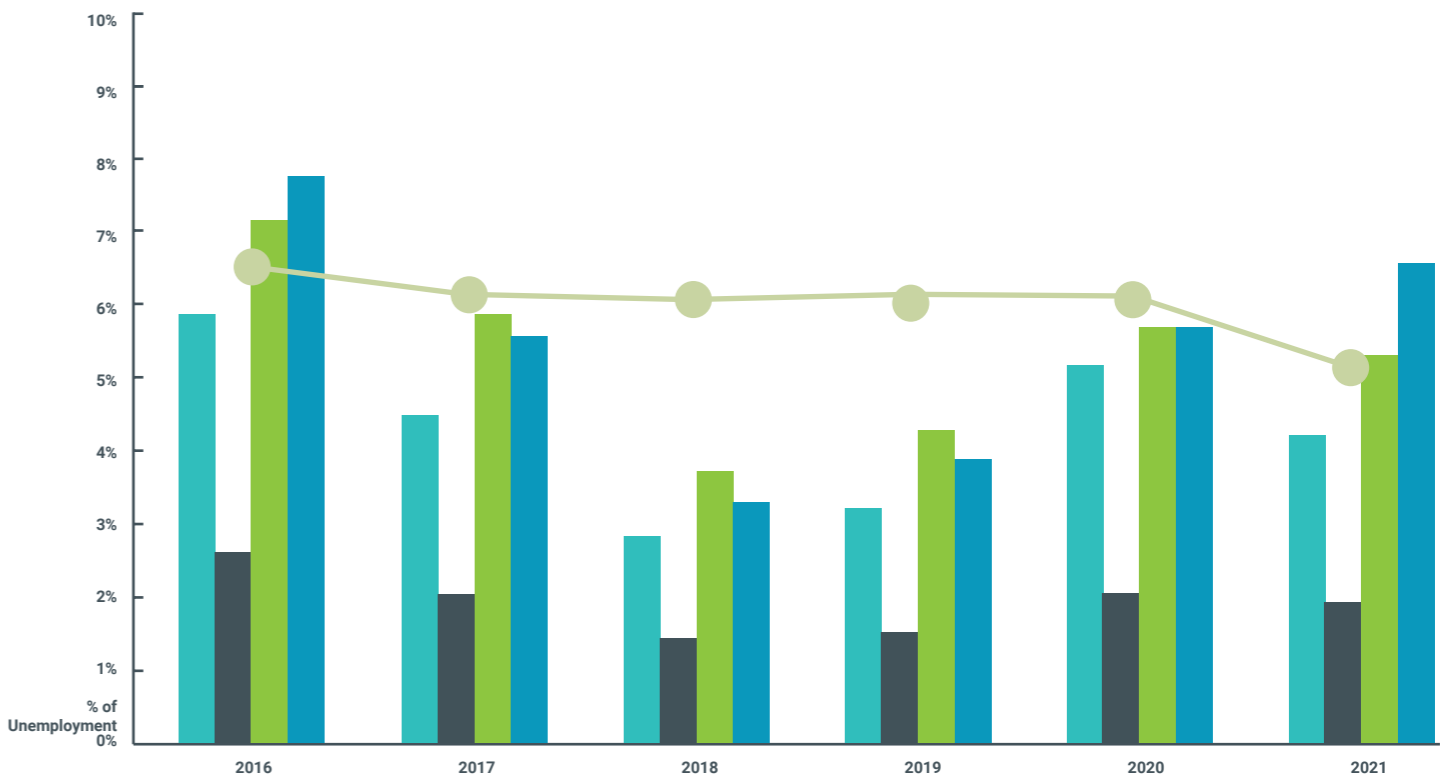
**4.**  
**Labour Force**

**A. Employment**  
**i. Unemployment rate**

**LGA Unemployment Rate MIW - QLD**

Local Government Area (LGA)	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Mackay Isaac Whitsunday	6.0%	4.6%	2.9%	3.3%	5.3%	4.3%
Isaac (R)	2.7%	2.1%	1.5%	1.6%	2.1%	2.0%
Mackay (R)	7.3%	6.0%	3.8%	4.4%	5.8%	5.4%
Whitsunday (R)	7.9%	5.7%	3.4%	4.0%	5.8%	6.7%
Queensland	6.5%	6.2%	6.1%	6.1%	6.1%	5.1%

SOURCE: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release>

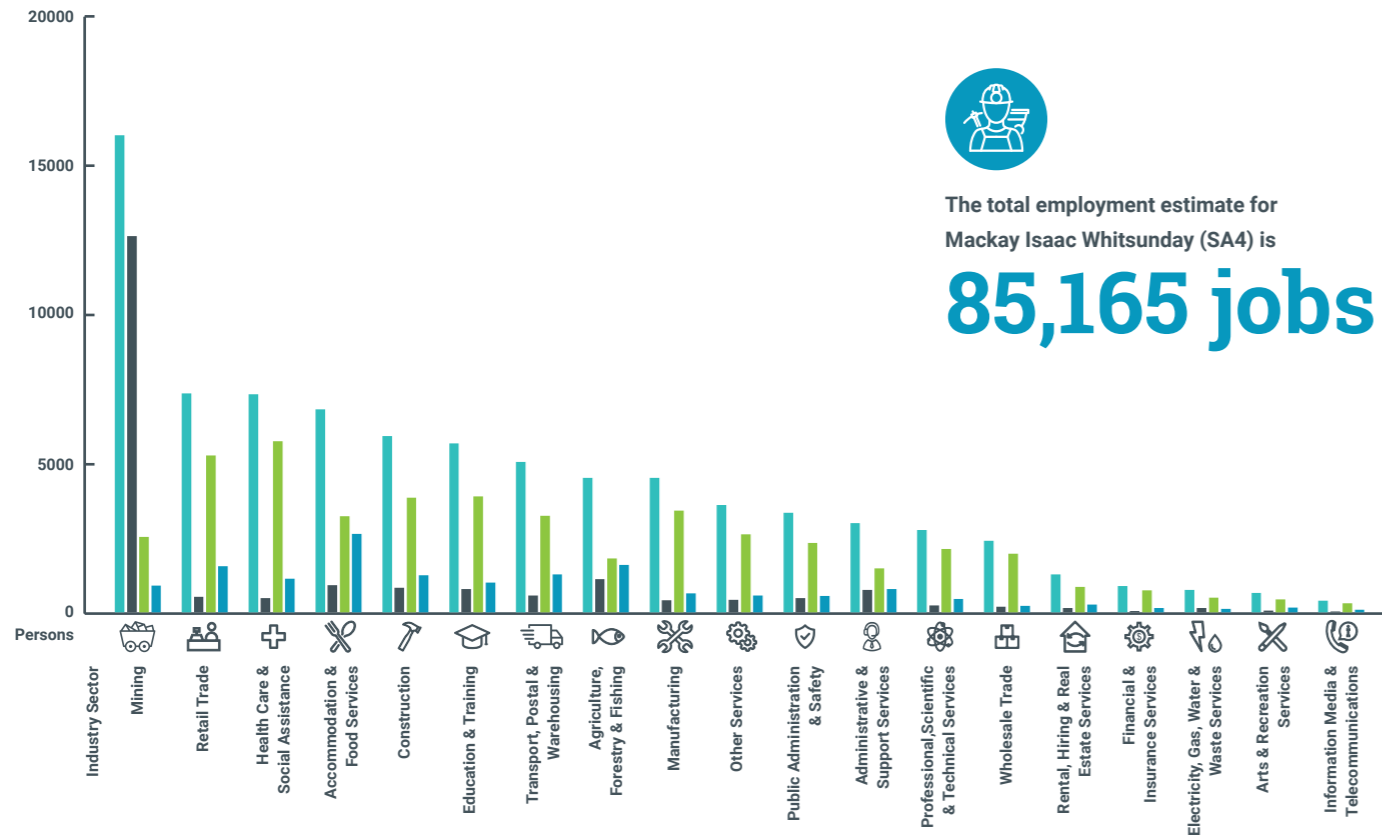


SOURCE: <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/labour/employment-and-unemployment/labour-force-australia/latest-release>

## ii. Industry

### Employment Report

This report shows the number of employees whose place of work is located within Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region (SA4).



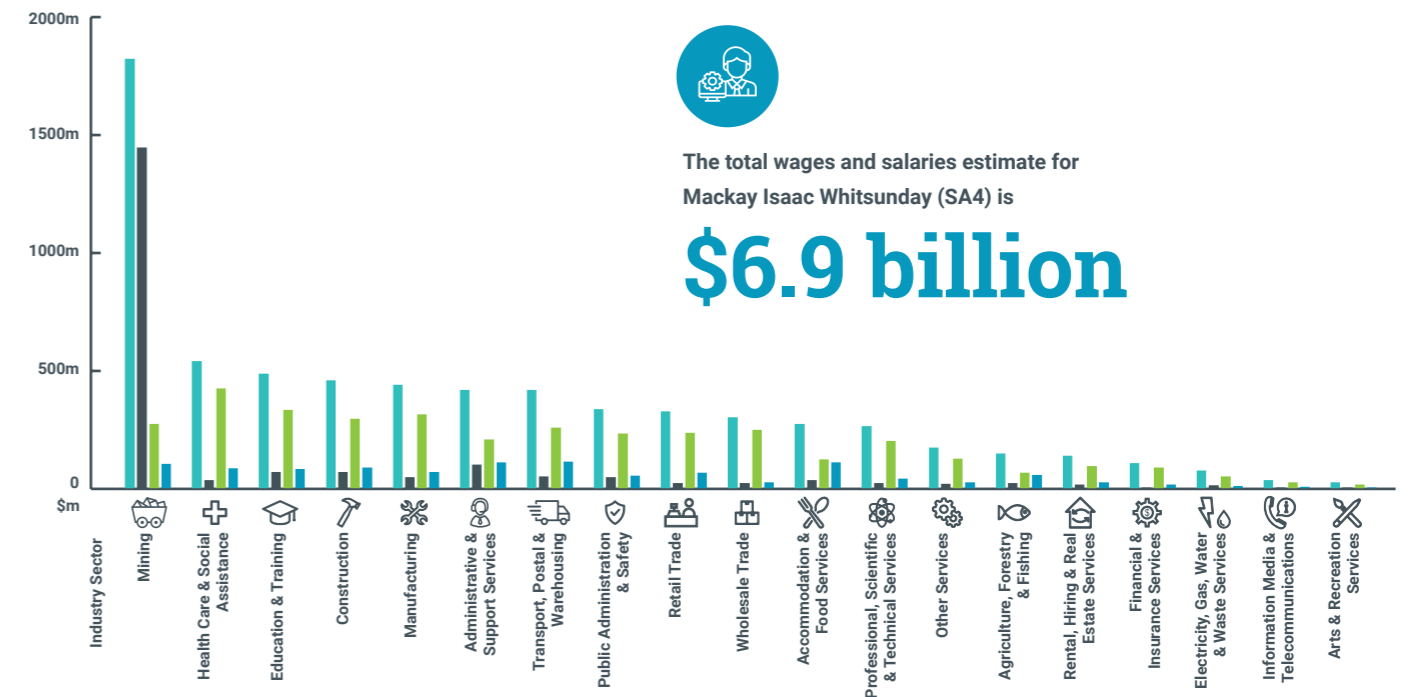
Industry Sector	Mackay - Isaac - Whitsunday (SA4)		Isaac (R)		Mackay (R)		Whitsunday (R)	
	Jobs	%	Jobs	%	Jobs	%	Jobs	%
Mining	16,591	19.5%	13,080	60.9%	2,623	5.5%	924	5.8%
Retail Trade	7,610	8.9%	537	2.5%	5,454	11.4%	1,597	10.1%
Health Care & Social Assistance	7,576	8.9%	492	2.3%	5,948	12.4%	1,164	7.4%
Accommodation & Food Services	7,050	8.3%	947	4.4%	3,337	7.0%	2,727	17.3%
Construction	6,135	7.2%	848	4.0%	3,988	8.3%	1,295	8.2%
Education & Training	5,881	6.9%	806	3.8%	4,038	8.4%	1,035	6.5%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	5,235	6.1%	591	2.8%	3,357	7.0%	1,325	8.4%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	4,672	5.5%	1,160	5.4%	1,873	3.9%	1,646	10.4%
Manufacturing	4,669	5.5%	423	2.0%	3,542	7.4%	666	4.2%
Other Services	3,730	4.4%	440	2.1%	2,715	5.7%	585	3.7%
Public Administration & Safety	3,461	4.1%	488	2.3%	2,407	5.0%	563	3.6%
Administrative & Support Services	3,101	3.6%	777	3.6%	1,536	3.2%	808	5.1%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	2,868	3.4%	237	1.1%	2,199	4.6%	463	2.9%
Wholesale Trade	2,488	2.9%	197	0.9%	2,045	4.3%	222	1.4%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	1,316	1.5%	146	0.7%	883	1.8%	277	1.8%
Financial & Insurance Services	912	1.1%	39	0.2%	758	1.6%	144	0.9%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	777	0.9%	158	0.7%	517	1.1%	119	0.8%
Arts & Recreation Services	680	0.8%	62	0.3%	446	0.9%	159	1.0%
Information Media & Telecommunications	413	0.5%	34	0.2%	309	0.6%	86	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>85,165</b>		<b>21,462</b>		<b>47,975</b>		<b>15,805</b>	

SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)

## iii. Income

### Wages and salaries by industry report

This report shows wages and salaries in prices paid to employees who work in Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4).

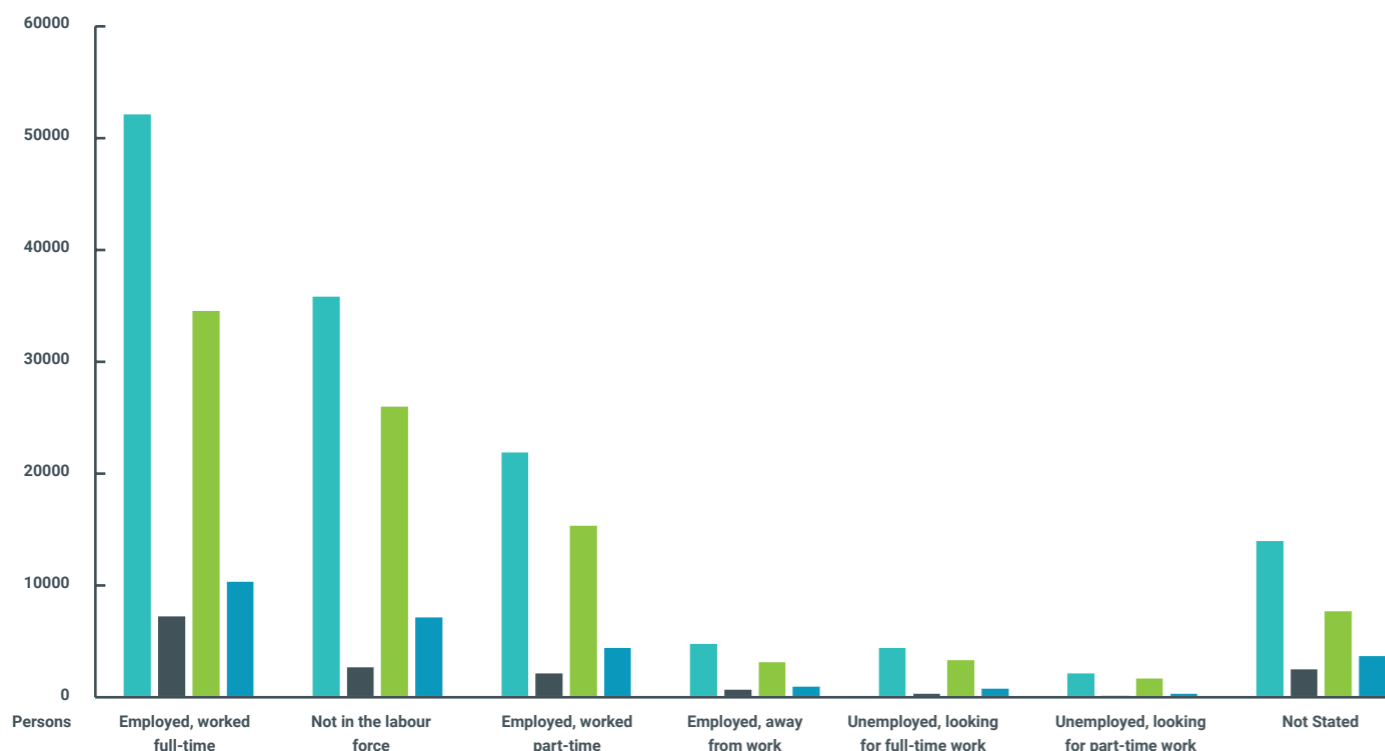


Industry Sector	Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4)		Isaac (R)		Mackay (R)		Whitsunday (R)	
	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%	\$m	%
Mining	\$1,864.70	26.8%	\$1,481.41	70.1%	\$280.74	7.6%	\$106.23	9.3%
Health Care & Social Assistance	\$554.27	8%	\$35.74	1.7%	\$432.84	11.6%	\$87.62	7.7%
Education & Training	\$497.01	7.1%	\$70.99	3.4%	\$342.49	9.2%	\$83.38	7.3%
Construction	\$468.49	6.7%	\$72.77	3.4%	\$303	8.2%	\$91.97	8.1%
Manufacturing	\$451.14	6.5%	\$50.68	2.4%	\$322.8	8.7%	\$73.34	6.4%
Administrative & Support Services	\$429.12	6.2%	\$104.01	4.9%	\$212.99	5.7%	\$114.09	10%
Transport, Postal & Warehousing	\$429	6.2%	\$51.37	2.4%	\$265.54	7.1%	\$115.34	10.1%
Public Administration & Safety	\$344.97	5%	\$48.51	2.3%	\$239.09	6.4%	\$57	5%
Retail Trade	\$335.47	4.8%	\$23.67	1.1%	\$240.43	6.5%	\$70.4	6.2%
Wholesale Trade	\$309.43	4.4%	\$24.5	1.2%	\$254.33	6.8%	\$27.61	2.4%
Accommodation & Food Services	\$280.78	4%	\$37.81	1.8%	\$127.65	3.4%	\$113.8	10%
Professional, Scientific & Technical Services	\$271.39	3.9%	\$22.43	1.1%	\$207.69	5.6%	\$44.1	3.9%
Other Services	\$177.97	2.6%	\$21.32	1%	\$131.19	3.5%	\$26.17	2.3%
Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing	\$150.63	2.2%	\$24.17	1.1%	\$68.3	1.8%	\$57.9	5.1%
Rental, Hiring & Real Estate Services	\$142.91	2.1%	\$17.52	0.8%	\$96.68	2.6%	\$28.21	2.5%
Financial & Insurance Services	\$110.94	1.6%	\$4.42	0.2%	\$92.41	2.5%	\$17.3	1.5%
Electricity, Gas, Water & Waste Services	\$78.54	1.1%	\$15.51	0.7%	\$52.6	1.4%	\$11.98	1.1%
Information Media & Telecommunications	\$37.46	0.5%	\$4.1	0.2%	\$27.58	0.7%	\$6.9	0.6%
Arts & Recreation Services	\$26.06	0.4%	\$2.29	0.1%	\$17.39	0.5%	\$5.96	0.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,960.27</b>		<b>\$2,113.22</b>		<b>\$3,715.75</b>		<b>\$1,139.28</b>	

SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)

#### iv. Employment status

##### By labour force status report



Labour Force Status	Mackay Isaac Whitsunday		Isaac (R)		Mackay (R)		Whitsunday (R)	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Employed, worked full-time	51,848	38.55%	7,170	45.84%	34,347	37.66%	10,331	37.35%
Not in the labour force	35,639	26.5%	2,640	16.88%	25,860	28.35%	7,139	25.81%
Employed, worked part-time	21,788	16.2%	2,121	13.56%	15,257	16.73%	4,410	15.94%
Employed, away from work	4,756	3.54%	687	4.39%	3,130	3.43%	939	3.39%
Unemployed, looking for full-time work	4,443	3.3%	328	2.1%	3,298	3.62%	817	2.95%
Unemployed, looking for part-time work	2,154	1.6%	185	1.18%	1,662	1.82%	307	1.11%
Not stated	13,880	10.32%	2,512	16.06%	7,650	8.39%	3,718	13.44%
<b>Total</b>	<b>134,508</b>		<b>15,643</b>		<b>91,204</b>		<b>27,661</b>	

This report excludes 35,555 people categorised as "Not applicable". SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)

The total number of people enumerated in Mackay - Isaac - Whitsunday (SA4) zones in all applicable Labour Force Status cohorts on Census Night 2016 was 134,508.

##### Labour Force Status

This variable records a person's labour force status for the week prior to Census Night. People aged 15 years and over who are neither employed nor unemployed are classified as not in the labour force. This includes people who are retired, pensioners and people engaged solely in home duties. Information about employment type is important for a wide range of social and economic policy and planning purposes. The Census of Population and Housing and the Labour Force Survey (LFS) both measure information about the labour market activity of people aged 15 years and over. The Census provides a five yearly snapshot with social-economic data at a small area level, while the Labour Force Survey is based on a monthly household survey.

This variable is applicable to persons aged 15 years and over. It includes a 'Not applicable' category, which comprises: Persons aged under 15 years.

Labour Force Status corresponds with the ABS Census variable 'LFSP Labour Force Status'.

#### v. Education qualifications

##### Qualifications (2016 Census - Place of Usual Residence - People)



Industry transformation, as a result of technological changes, is accelerating at an unprecedented pace and the Greater Whitsunday Region needs to consider new and innovative ways to ensure that the workforce have the skills and education required to remain competitive into the future. In my role as Research Chair of Automation and Future Work Skills, I am actively promoting collaboration between industry and education providers, to address these challenges.

**Prof Pierre Viljoen**, Associate Vice President (North Queensland and Hinterland) & Research Chair (Automation and Future Work Skills) – CQUniversity

Level	Mackay Isaac Whitsunday		Isaac		Mackay		Whitsunday	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Certificate Level	35,451	46.1%	4,127	43.31%	24,394	47.91%	6,930	42.1%
Bachelor Degree Level	10,837	14.09%	1,305	13.69%	7,502	14.73%	2,118	12.87%
Advanced Diploma and Diploma Level	8,686	11.29%	796	8.35%	5,772	11.34%	2,030	12.33%
Postgraduate Degree Level	1,608	2.09%	171	1.79%	1,145	2.25%	292	1.77%
Graduate Diploma and Graduate Certificate Level	1,444	1.88%	144	1.51%	1,042	2.05%	258	1.57%
Inadequately described	725	0.94%	66	0.69%	496	0.97%	163	0.99%
Level of education not stated	18,156	23.61%	2,921	30.65%	10,567	20.75%	4,668	28.36%
<b>Total</b>	<b>76,907</b>		<b>9,530</b>		<b>50,918</b>		<b>16,459</b>	

This report excludes 92,786 people categorised as "Not applicable". SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)

The total number of people usually resident in Mackay - Isaac - Whitsunday (SA4) zones in all applicable Qualification cohorts on Census Night 2016 was 76,907.

##### Qualifications

This variable describes the level of a person's highest completed non-school qualification (i.e. educational attainments other than those of pre-primary, primary or secondary education). Qualifications are coded using the Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED), 2001. This data provides a resource to investigate the relationship between levels of education and employment outcomes, income and other socioeconomic variables; and as a proxy measure of socioeconomic status\*.

This variable is applicable to persons aged 15 years and over who stated a completed qualification. It includes a 'Not applicable' category, which comprises:

- Persons who have a qualification that is out of scope of this classification
- Persons with no qualification
- Persons still studying for a first qualification
- Persons aged under 15 years

Qualifications corresponds with the ABS Census variable 'QALLP Non-School Qualification: Level of Education'. SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)

# 5.

# Housing and Liveability

## A. Housing

### i. Median house prices

The housing sector is continuing to improve across the region. This strong demand has started to flow across into the construction sector, also contributing to the low regional unemployment figures.

### Annual Median Sales Price Houses, Units, Land

Region	Houses (<2400m <sup>2</sup> )		Units		Land (<2400m <sup>2</sup> )	
	Annual Median Sale	1 Yr Change	Annual Median Sale	1 Yr Change	Annual Median Sale	1 Yr Change
Isaac	\$250,000	19%	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Mackay	\$370,000	4.5%	\$221,000	1.3%	\$180,000	0.6%
Whitsunday	\$350,000	-2.6%	\$275,000	5.9%	\$162,000	8.3%

N/A Not available due to insufficient sales numbers;  
Source: REIQ Queensland Market Monitor December 2020

### Mortgage Repayment

This data provides insights into the amount of money spent on monthly mortgage repayments, by loan repayment range and refers only to occupied dwellings being purchased. This provides informative data when combined with income data and then analysed at smaller geographic boundaries to provide powerful insights into areas that may be experiencing mortgage stress\*.

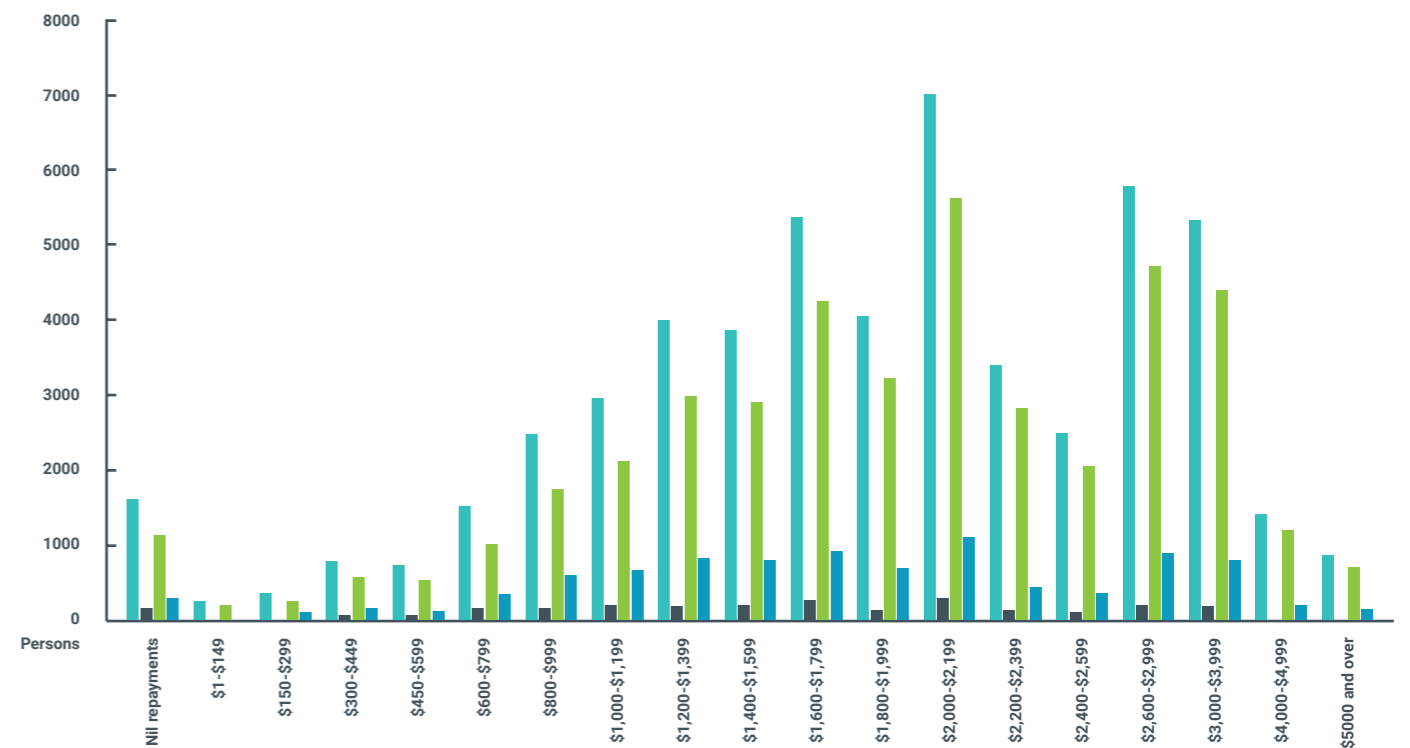
This variable is applicable to occupied private dwellings that are owned with a mortgage (including being purchased under a rent/buy scheme). It includes a 'Not applicable' category, which comprises:

- Occupied private dwellings with Tenure Type (TEND) of owned outright, rented, being occupied rent free, being occupied under a life tenure scheme, other and not stated
- Unoccupied private dwellings
- Non-private dwellings
- Migratory, off-shore and shipping SA1s

Mortgage Repayment corresponds with the ABS Census variable 'MRERD Mortgage Repayment (monthly) Ranges. SOURCE: REMPLAN (2020 Release 1)

### ii. Population by mortgage payments

The total number of people enumerated in Mackay - Isaac - Whitsunday (SA4) zones in all applicable Mortgage Repayment cohorts on Census Night 2016 was 56,168. This excludes 129,539 people categorised as "Not applicable".



Repayment	Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4) (2016)		Isaac (R) (Jun 2016)		Mackay (R) (Jun 2016)		Whitsunday (R) (Jun 2016)	
	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%	Persons	%
Nil repayments	1,575	2.80%	161	5.98%	1,130	2.58%	284	2.92%
\$1-\$149	248	0.44%	5	0.19%	184	0.42%	59	0.61%
\$150-\$299	350	0.62%	30	1.11%	240	0.55%	80	0.82%
\$300-\$449	776	1.38%	65	2.41%	569	1.30%	142	1.46%
\$450-\$599	716	1.27%	67	2.49%	518	1.18%	131	1.35%
\$600-\$799	1,475	2.63%	141	5.24%	1,003	2.29%	331	3.41%
\$800-\$999	2,455	4.37%	167	6.20%	1,711	3.91%	577	5.94%
\$1,000-\$1,199	2,926	5.21%	190	7.06%	2,092	4.78%	644	6.63%
\$1,200-\$1,399	3,954	7.04%	194	7.20%	2,946	6.73%	814	8.37%
\$1,400-\$1,599	3,808	6.78%	191	7.09%	2,851	6.52%	766	7.88%
\$1,600-\$1,799	5,305	9.44%	226	8.39%	4,198	9.59%	881	9.06%
\$1,800-\$1,999	4,021	7.16%	129	4.79%	3,205	7.32%	687	7.07%
\$2,000-\$2,199	6,941	12.36%	274	10.17%	5,568	12.73%	1,099	11.31%
\$2,200-\$2,399	3,351	5.97%	126	4.68%	2,787	6.37%	438	4.51%
\$2,400-\$2,599	2,450	4.36%	82	3.04%	2,021	4.62%	347	3.57%
\$2,600-\$2,999	5,727	10.20%	200	7.43%	4,654	10.64%	873	8.98%
\$3,000-\$3,999	5,273	9.39%	168	6.24%	4,349	9.94%	756	7.78%
\$4,000-\$4,999	1,409	2.51%	48	1.78%	1,197	2.74%	164	1.69%
\$5000 and over	840	1.50%	26	0.97%	675	1.54%	139	1.43%
Sub-Total	53,600	95.43%	2,490	92.46%	41,898	95.76%	9,212	94.77%
Other	2,568	4.57%	203	7.54%	1,857	4.24%	508	5.23%
<b>Total</b>	<b>56,168</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>2,693</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>43,755</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>9,720</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
Not applicable	129,539		27,245		69,108		33,186	

This report excludes 129,539 people categorised as "Not applicable". SOURCE: REMPLAN

SOURCE: REIQ QUEENSLAND MARKET MONITOR JUNE 2019

### iii. Rental prices

Demand for house rentals across all local government areas remains strong, which has a flow-on impact to investor property sales.

#### Rental Market - 3 Bedroom Houses

	DEC-20	DEC-19	Trending
Region	\$/week	\$/week	
Isaac	\$320	\$300	6.7%
Mackay	\$395	\$370	6.8%
Whitsunday	\$380	\$360	5.6%

#### Rental Market - 2 Bedroom Units

	DEC-20	DEC-19	Trending
Region	\$/week	\$/week	
Isaac	\$225	\$260	-13.5%
Mackay	\$295	\$270	9.3%
Whitsunday	\$300	\$300	0%

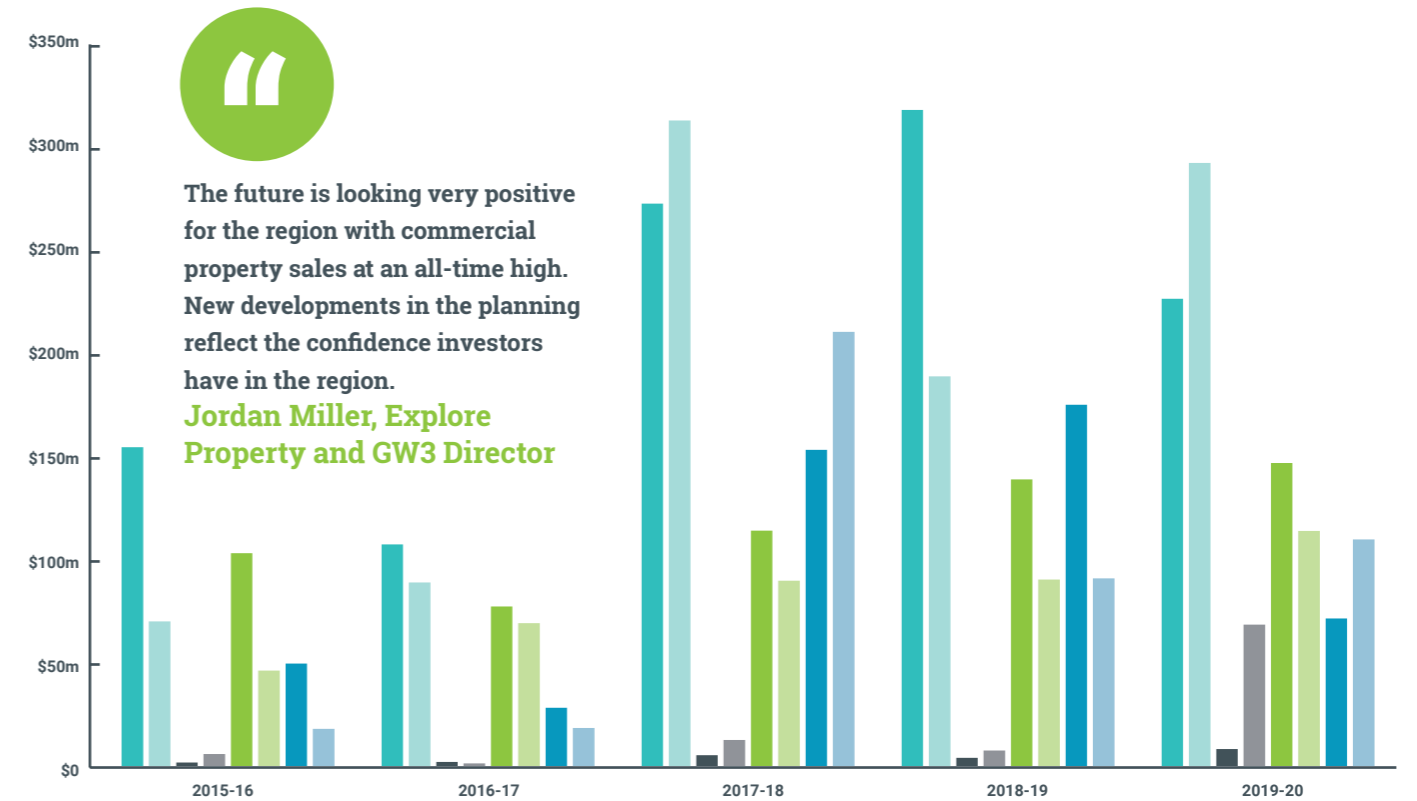
SOURCE: REIQ QUEENSLAND MARKET MONITOR DECEMBER 2020



### iv. Building approvals

Non-residential approvals were very strong across the region for the 2019-2020 period, with greatest improvement in the Isaac region. The Isaac region also experienced very positive residential approvals. The spike in approvals in the 2017-2018 period were most likely due to impacts of Cyclone Debbie in March 2017.

#### Building Approvals, by region, by year, by type (\$'m)



Type	Year	Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (SA4)		Isaac		Mackay		Whitsunday	
		Approvals \$m	% Change	Approvals \$m	% Change	Approvals \$m	% Change	Approvals \$m	% Change
Residential	2015-16	\$158,919	-26%	\$1,758	-30%	\$106,075	-36%	\$51,086	10%
	2016-17	\$110,514	-30%	\$1,974	12%	\$79,534	-25%	\$29,006	-43%
	2017-18	\$280,374	154%	\$5,348	171%	\$117,321	48%	\$157,705	444%
	2018-19	\$327,065	17%	\$4,063	-24%	\$142,866	22%	\$180,136	15%
	2019-20	\$233,013	-29%	\$8,442	107%	\$151,036	6%	\$73,535	-59%
Non-Residential	2015-16	\$72,129	-44%	\$5,989	-48%	\$47,623	-52%	\$18,516	13%
	2016-17	\$91,531	27%	\$1,332	-78%	\$71,214	50%	\$18,984	3%
	2017-18	\$321,847	252%	\$12,971	874%	\$92,426	30%	\$216,450	1040%
	2018-19	\$194,316	-40%	\$7,795	-40%	\$92,906	1%	\$93,615	-57%
	2019-20	\$300,742	55%	\$70,460	804%	\$117,281	26%	\$113,001	21%

SOURCE: REMPLAN

## B. Liveability

### i. Connectivity

#### Passenger numbers by airport

AIRPORTS	LGA	Year	TOTAL PASSENGERS		
			INBOUND	OUTBOUND	TOTAL
HAMILTON ISLAND	Whitsunday	2020	92,831	95,941	188,772
MACKAY	Mackay	2020	225,612	225,632	451,244
MORANBAH	Isaac	2020	24,023	23,434	47,457
PROSERPINE	Whitsunday	2020	102,413	103,253	205,666

SOURCE: [https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/airport\\_traffic\\_data.aspx](https://www.bitre.gov.au/publications/ongoing/airport_traffic_data.aspx)

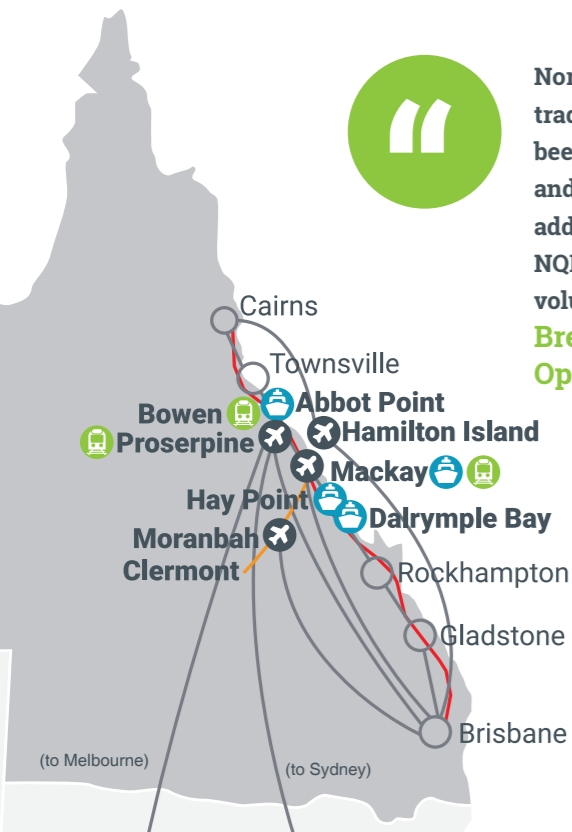
#### COVID-19 impacted passenger numbers significantly in 2020:

- 58% down at Hamilton Island Airport, from 452,546 in 2019 to 188,772 in 2020.
- 46% down at Mackay Airport, from 840,650 in 2019 to 451,244 in 2020.
- 48% at Moranbah Airport, from 109,824 in 2019 to 47,457 in 2020.
- 53% at Proserpine Airport, from 433,414 in 2019 to 205,666 in 2020.

#### Total throughput by port

Financial Year	2015-2016	2016-2017	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	Variance	% change
Abbot Point	27,053,965	25,407,736	27,992,820	28,943,291	31,882,050	2,938,759	10.20%
Hay Point	115,768,354	106,454,734	120,439,077	118,317,132	110,862,552	-7,454,580	-6.30%
Mackay	2,829,464	2,906,955	3,007,779	2,910,527	3,177,893	267,366	9.20%

SOURCE: <https://www.tmr.qld.gov.au/business-industry/Transport-sectors/Ports/Port-governance/Trade-statistics-for-Queensland-ports>



North Queensland Bulk Ports (NQBP) is very positive about the future trade potential of the MIW region. Our roll-on, roll-off capability has been a game-changer for us being able to support trade for the mining and METS sector in the region. These vessels make it easier to ship additional heavy vehicles and machinery into the port. In addition, NQBP has a number of strategic initiatives underway to improve the volume of agricultural trade through the Mackay port.

**Brendan Webb, General Manager Trade and Marine Operations, North Queensland Bulk Ports**

#### Legend

- Rail
- Airport
- Port
- Peak Downs Highway
- Bruce Highway (Highway 1)

### ii. Arts, culture and events

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region boasts a thriving art, cultural and events scene. The region is diverse and rich, and offers residents and visitors alike a range of sights, activities and opportunities to enjoy.



## Mackay

Some of regional Queensland's best-preserved examples of art deco buildings proudly reside in Mackay. These beautiful buildings sit alongside a collection of public art installations, which pay tribute to Mackay's historical and ecological diversity.

The city has a thriving arts scene, including the wildly popular annual Festival of Arts event. The Mackay Entertainment and Convention Centre and public gallery Artspace precinct, is the epicentre for many of the city's cultural activities, including performances from local and renowned national and international artists, eisteddfods and touring exhibitions.

Restaurants, bars, live entertainment and of course, cafes (who can survive without coffee) have blossomed across all areas of the city and the main city centre intersection is home to fun night spots for the young and the young-at-heart.

## Isaac

Isaac has a vibrant and active culture which values its arts, history and community. The charm of Isaac is greatly influenced by its art galleries, libraries and museums, and supported by an annual stream of arts and cultural activities.

Every year in October, the region celebrates the Clermont Beef Expo. Celebrations occur each year commemorating Australia Day, Clean up Australia Day, Anzac Day, International Women's Day, NAIDOC Week, Youth Week, Senior's Week and during the Christmas holiday period. Other events such as market days, outdoor movie evenings, fetes, rodeos, race days, and camp drafts, also occur frequently throughout the year.

The region's history is also proudly on show and visits to the Clermont Historical Centre, Nebo Museum, Coalface Art Gallery or Dysart Art Space are well worth the time.



ii. Arts, culture and events (cont)



### Whitsunday

The Whitsunday region's four town centres are diverse and provide unique opportunities in the art, culture and events spheres. If you can drag yourself away from enjoying some of the best outdoor leisure activities in Australia, then you'll be sure to enjoy a huge range of cultural pursuits. Airlie Beach is a colourful, cosmopolitan and inviting holiday town. It has developed into a busy retail and major tourism and hospitality hub and provides a gateway to the Whitsunday Islands and Great Barrier Reef. Every year, a range of events including Airlie Beach Race Week and music festivals entertains locals and visitors alike. Bowen surprises visitors with its beautiful buildings and quality lifestyle features, including eight Tidy Town Award-winning beautiful beaches, parkland and social infrastructure. Make sure you check out its unique public art murals. Collinsville, situated in the region's west, is passionate about its heritage and a visit to the Coalface Museum is well worth it. Proserpine has a lively retail scene and houses the area's main entertainment centre. The main street's well preserved art deco shop architecture is a reminder of how life used to be.

### iii. Education; schools and tertiary

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has a well developed education sector and includes a good range of quality educational facilities, ranging from day care facilities to tertiary education campuses, including CQ University and James Cook University and vocational pathway institutions including the Mackay Engineering College.

	Schools	Tertiary Institutions (campus')
Isaac	17	
Mackay	43	2
Whitsunday	13	
Total	73	2

<https://schoolsdirectory.eq.edu.au/AdvancedSearch>

### iv. Health services; hospitals

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has 16 hospitals and community health facilities. However, the bulk of public health services are delivered by the Mackay Hospital and Health Service (MHHS), which provides an integrated approach to service delivery and offers an extensive range of specialist services delivered by resident and visiting medical specialists. This facility supports service delivery to hospitals in Bowen, Clermont, Collinsville, Dysart, Glenden, Middlemount, Moranbah, Proserpine and Sarina.

In addition, there are three private hospitals in the region:

- The Mackay Rehabilitation Hospital (rehabilitation and pain management facility);
- The Mackay Specialist Day Hospital;
- The Mater Misericordiae Hospital and Day Unit.

	Hospital and Community Health Centres
Isaac	4
Mackay	7
Whitsunday	5
Total	16

SOURCE: GW3 MIW Future Employment Study conducted by @2020 KPMG and <https://www.mackay.health.qld.gov.au/>

v. Nature



Mackay offers an enviable lifestyle, including a combination of fresh air, ambient temperatures and stunning natural attractions.

### Mackay

The region's 66,484 square kilometres encompass a diverse natural environment, which includes a picturesque blue-water river, 31 secluded beaches, a seaside marina and pristine rainforest hinterland. In addition to spectacular scenery, the Mackay region has some of the most amazing nature experiences in Australia, ranging from wallabies on the beach at beautiful Cape Hillsborough National Park, to spying a platypus in the Pioneer Valley. Mackay is a nature lover's dream location. The Mackay region's tropical warm summers and mild, sunny winters, make its climate one of the best in the world. Average daily temperatures range from just over 22°C in the winter months of June to August and up to 30°C during the summer months from December to February. Mackay experiences on average, approximately 261 days of sunshine a year.

### Isaac

The Isaac coast reveals quaint beach communities nestled along one of the last remaining relatively undeveloped, yet accessible stretches of shoreline on the east coast. Dugong sanctuaries, remote turtle nesting grounds and uninhabited islands, offer a unique opportunity to get back to nature and re-energise the mind. The Mining Trail will introduce you to wide, beautiful landscapes, historic towns, vibrant mining communities and impressive man-made works. Follow the Great Inland Way, where golden sunflowers line the road, while majestic mountains and lava plugs in National Parks, form spectacular backdrops on the horizon. The Isaac region covers 58,862 square kilometres of fertile plains, rich soils, beaches and coal mines in the mineral rich Bowen Basin. The best time to explore Isaac is during the cooler months of May to October.



Isaac is a region unique in charm and character and is a growing attraction for visitors keen to explore the road less travelled on their journeys.



The Whitsunday region lays claim to the 74 Whitsunday Islands and is a world renowned tourism destination.

### Whitsunday

Most of the Whitsunday Islands are beautiful, tropical deserted islands with Hamilton, Hayman, Daydream, Long, and South Molle Island offering a variety of resort accommodation, with access to the Great Barrier Reef and fringing coral reefs. Much of the region's natural environment is protected, with approximately 50% of the Whitsundays being National Park. There are several National Park walks to explore on the mainland of the Whitsunday region and all offer a variety of flora and fauna to discover, most with stunning views of the ocean and islands or hinterland. The Whitsundays enjoys a tropical climate of hot summers, warm winters and bright spring and autumn days. Average daily temperatures range from just over 23°C in the winter months of June and July and up to 30.5°C in January during the height of summer.

# 6.

## Economic Enablers

### A. Location

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region is ideally located in the strategic heart of Northern Australia, a key focus area for policy from the Commonwealth Government. Our unique location means that the region has a thriving and diverse export market in resources, energy, agriculture and tourism, all future key industries which underpin Australia's income. The Port of Hay Point (110.8 million tonnes) had the second greatest total throughput of ports in Queensland 2019-2020 (coal), the Ports of Gladstone and Hay Point account for 65 per cent of Queensland's total trade throughput in 2019-20.

### B. Natural Assets

Undoubtedly one of Australia's biggest natural assets, the Great Barrier Reef, is located squarely off the coast of the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region, attracting significant tourism to the region. In addition to the Great Barrier Reef and Whitsunday Islands, the region is home to many magnificent national parks and natural waterways, plus hundreds of kilometres of untouched coastline. The entire Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has an abundant supply of water, due in part to our enviable location in the tropics, significant annual rainfall and also through a mature network of dams, weirs, bores and channels. The Bowen Basin in the west of the region boasts Australia's largest metallurgical coal reserves, which are exported across the globe.

### C. Infrastructure

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region boasts a modern, connected infrastructure network. The region actively collaborates to pursue funding for enabling infrastructure to support the regional economy and improve liveability for residents and community.



#### Roads

The regional road network is critical to the economic development of the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region as it facilitates the transport of export goods to market and enables the movement of critical materials and technology across the region (fuel; mining equipment etc). The road network is also a vital connector for growth in the tourism sector. The region is supported by a number of national roads, including the Bruce Highway and the Peak Downs Highway, as well as an extensive network of strategic state and district roads. There has been significant investment in the region's road network over the past decade to support growth in the resources sector and to enhance 'port to pit' connectivity. The \$473 million Mackay Ring Road Stage 1 opened in September 2020. This 11.3km ring route connects the Bruce Highway south of Mackay (Paget industrial estate and mining services hub) to the Bruce Highway north of Mackay. This ring road increases freight efficiencies, and removes heavy vehicles from residential streets. It will also enable connection to the \$150 million Bowen Basin Service Link Road (Walkerston Bypass).

#### Ports

The region is home to a number of major ports including coal ports at both Hay Point in the south of the region and Abbot Point in the north. The Port of Mackay is vital for fuel distribution into resource areas as well as agricultural exports. Over the next 20 years, the Queensland coal industry will be increasing production to around 340 million tonnes per year with Abbot Point meeting a large portion of the required port capacity.

#### Rail

The rail network is particularly critical to the economy of the Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region. It serves the agriculture, resources and tourism industry sectors but also plays a significant role in containerised freight transport. Aurizon's Central Queensland Coal Network is one of the world's largest and most complex rail supply chains, and connects domestic coal users to the export terminals at Abbot Point, Dalrymple Bay and Hay Point.

#### Air

The region is home to three regional airports servicing more than 1.3 million passengers annually. Mackay Airport, Moranbah Airport and Whitsunday Coast Airport in Proserpine are serviced by major airlines with convenient destinations and connections. Agribusiness has opportunities in air freight for high value agri-food product in the future. Mackay has also been announced as the location for the second Qantas Group Flight Training Academy with a construction date to be announced once the COVID-19 situation stabilises.



## D. Innovation & Technology

The Resources Centre of Excellence opened in Mackay in July 2020. This centre, complete with 300m of underground mining simulation and a range of training facilities and research laboratories, will further our region's expertise in the Mining and METS sector as well as create opportunities for cross-sector collaboration.

In July 2020 GW3 launched the Transformation Region online platform to showcase the region being at the forefront of adopting Fourth Industrial Revolution (4IR) technologies. This platform demystifies 4IR and showcases local business innovating and embracing technology enabled change.

Innovation is occurring at an accelerating rate across our region, fuelled by technology and a supportive innovation ecosystem. Continuing to advocate for regional programs that support this ecosystem will have a big impact on the success of our region for years to come.

## E. Liveability

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region offers an enviable lifestyle: fresh air; stunning natural attractions and a thriving cultural scene. The regional infrastructure is robust and the economy stable. The workforce of Mackay Isaac Whitsunday is almost fully employed, suggesting that jobs are plentiful. This fact, coupled with the region's lifestyle attributes, makes inter-region migration an important factor to achieve ongoing economic growth.



By embracing, utilising and adapting new technologies as early as possible, always thinking outside the box and asking what if? This will allow us as a region to lead the way and become a testing ground to develop and improve new technologies for the global community.

**Jason Sharam, Managing Director Linked Group Services**

# 7. Regional Economic Drivers



## A. Resources

The region's proximity to the Galilee, Bowen and Surat Basins make it one of Queensland's largest areas of coal, energy and gas production. The region's mining and resource activity includes underground and open-cut thermal and metallurgical coal, minerals and coal seam gas (CSG). The dominant minerals commodity is coal and comes from the Bowen Basin and Galilee Basin regions. Into the future, there is growing interest in the region's capacity to process critical minerals and extend the region's exports in this area.

## B. METS

The region is home to one of Australia's most advanced Mining Equipment, Technology and Services (METS) sectors. This sector focuses on innovation, precision and highly technical skills which have a global focus and a myriad of export opportunities.

## C. Agriculture

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region has the capability to competitively produce some of the world's most energy dense and productive feedstocks, such as sugar cane, eucalypts and algae, to fuel the emerging Biofutures sector. In recent years, global interest in reducing waste, creating circular economy opportunities and producing biofuels is increasing at an incredible rate. The biofutures conversation is increasingly turning to bio-foods and the use of synthetic biology.

Queensland is positioned to create a multi-billion-dollar bio-manufacturing industry that meets the growing market demand for synthetic biology derived food products and become a leading supplier globally. The Queensland government has identified that Mackay Isaac Whitsunday (MIW) region is ideally suited to advancing the Queensland biofutures sector and has invested more than \$1 million to support investment attraction of international bio manufacturing companies to the region. The benefits to Queensland and the MIW region from this investment include diversified business opportunities, potential new income streams for producers and job creation. Biofutures and in particular, bio-foods has strong global demand and export potential to the Asian market is significant.

## D. Tourism

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region offers an abundance of natural attractions including national parks, gorges, the Great Barrier Reef, numerous tropical islands and beaches. The region also boasts strong opportunities in the adventure, heritage, ecotourism, grey nomad and agritourism space.

The Mackay region continues to grow a strong reputation as a fast emerging tourism destination with an extensive nature based offering. Nature has been established as the region's core hero experience and, as a result, locations such as the Eungella and Cape Hillsborough National Parks have gained strong national and international exposure – particularly around the themes of the platypus and the Sunrise Wallaby Experience.

The Isaac region has a mix of authentic inland and coastal experiences. The inland towns of Moranbah and Clermont have rich cultural and heritage stories to share, and Clairview provides a stunning coastal scene ideal for fishing and crabbing – home to a Dugong Sanctuary and close to the St Lawrence Wetlands.

The Whitsundays is truly a world class destination and is recognised as a key marine and coastal playground for both the region and Queensland. The Whitsunday region offers numerous unspoilt and reef fringed islands to explore; great sailing; a place to unwind and party; luxury resorts and a romance destination. Not to mention its growing popularity as a winter escape for grey nomads from the south who flock to fill caravan parks and enjoy coastal activities (particularly fishing).

## E. Construction

The construction sector is a fundamental component in building the infrastructure of an economy and community. In the Mackay and Whitsunday region, this activity has mainly focused on residential and commercial construction. However, engineering construction such as enabling transport infrastructure such as roads, rail and port also plays a significant role across all three government areas. The Isaac region boasts a large number of mining construction projects and this will be an ongoing integral component of the regional economy.

8.

# The Future



The Greater Whitsunday region is not just greater in name, it's greater in nature.

The Mackay Isaac Whitsunday region is evolving – and transforming before our eyes. The traditional industry sectors of agriculture, mining and METS are evolving towards a new economy and our region's businesses and industries are embracing technology at a rate never seen before.

The region is committed to building on the strengths that have underpinned our past success, to position us for greater prosperity. Examples include critical minerals processing, future foods processing, and low orbit satellite launch capabilities – all new industries to the region that leverage the region's strong METS capabilities, existing infrastructure, existing outputs and skills sets, and unique location.

GW3's strategic focus in the coming years will be driving activity in the key enablers that underpins economic prosperity and diversification. These key enablers include:

1. Education Skills and Training
2. Infrastructure Development (roads, ports, air, rail, digital)
3. Transformation through Technology
4. Energy and Power
5. Water
6. Policy and Influence
7. Data Collection and Analysis

These enablers provide the foundations for growth in all identified priority sectors: Agriculture and Aquaculture; Mining and METS; Biofutures and Tourism.



**Greater Whitsunday**  
– a major regional economic powerhouse.

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