

Summary of report

Regional findings from the report include:

- The FNQ Region's population increased from 208,290 to 211,427 people in the year to June 2004, representing an annual growth rate of 1.5%, compared with Queensland's growth rate of 2.1%.
- Cairns City had the largest annual population change of any LGA outside South East Queensland (SEQ) in the year to June 2004.
- Of the ten LGAs in the FNQ Region, five recorded positive growth rates in the year to June 2004: Atherton, Cairns, Cardwell, Douglas and Herberton.
- In the year to December 2004, dwelling approvals in the FNQ Region (2,394) were the highest since the mid 1990s, and approvals were up 36.3% on the previous year's total of 1,757.
- Cairns City had the highest labour force containment in Queensland, with more than 96% of the total labour force working within the LGA.

Queensland's population was 3.88 million in June 2004, having recorded an increase of 81,000 people since 2003. Based on current and likely growth trends, PIFU estimates that the population of Queensland will reach 4 million by the end of 2005.

Population growth in Queensland over the past three years was the largest ever recorded for any three-year period. The peak year was 2003, with growth in 2004 easing by 10%. Growth in the year to June 2004 of almost 81,000 people is 40% (or about 23,000 people) higher than average levels of growth recorded during the slower second half of the 1990s (58,000 people each year). It is also slightly higher than the first half of the 1990s, when Queensland grew by an average of 75,000 people each year.

Due to the variable nature of population change, it is vital that the most recent data are assessed when they become available. Population change is also location specific, requiring any such changes to be considered at a local scale. Identifying the highlights and trends in these data will contribute to more efficient planning for future infrastructure and services by providing the fundamental information necessary to address the challenges and capitalise on the opportunities created by Queensland's future population growth.

Minister's message

Welcome to the 2005 edition of *Population Growth – Far North Queensland Region 2005*.

This latest report shows the Far North continues to grow, with the region's population increasing by 3,137 to 211,427 people in the 12 months to June 30, 2004.

In terms of actual people, Cairns led Queensland's population growth outside the densely packed south-east corner, growing by 2,800 people to have a population of 125,000.

It's no great surprise though - we know the Far North is a great place to work and live.

Population growth in the region is boosting the building industry, with 2,394 new dwellings approved in the 12 months to December 31, 2004 – up around the same level as during the boom of the mid 1990s.

We need to make sure the Far North's growth and development is sustainable and that we retain the region's character. We need to balance development with our region's magnificent environment.

This growth is an opportunity to make Cairns Australia's premier eco-city – showing off best-practice, environmentally-sustainable development. This can be achieved if we all work together – government, industry and the community.

Desley Boyle MP
Minister for Environment
Minister for Local Government and Planning
Minister for Women

Contents

Introduction	4
Summary of report	5
Queensland in the Australian context	6
Far North Queensland in the Queensland context	7
Regional comparisons	7
Components of change	10
Local population trends	13
Far North Queensland Region	14
Patterns of job and labour force containment	18
Job containment	18
Labour force containment	20
Dwelling activity	22
Appendices	
Appendix A – Estimated Resident Population	
Appendix B – Components of population growth	
Appendix C – Labour force and job containment	
Appendix D – Local migration patterns	
Appendix E – Regional Planning Project Areas	
Glossary	
Queensland Local Government Area Map 1	
Queensland Local Government Area Map 2	

Technical notes:

The latest available Estimated Resident Population, released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), below the state level are preliminary estimates for Local Government Areas (LGAs) and Statistical Local Areas as at 30 June 2004. These latest estimates also include revised estimates for June 2003. These estimates are available as Appendix A of this report and may also be downloaded from the PIFU website (www.lgp.qld.gov.au/pifu).

The ABS has not been able to estimate population change for Aboriginal Councils (ACs) and Island Councils (ICs) in Queensland from 30 June 2002 to 30 June 2004. A significant change occurred in a previously used data source limiting its suitability for estimating population change for ACs and ICs during 2002-04, and, as a result, populations for these areas have been held constant.

Appendix B contains figures for natural increase in the year to June 2004 for all LGAs in Queensland. This allows an estimate of net migration to be made, which is assumed to be the balance of population growth in each respective area.

Appendix C presents data on labour force and job containment in Queensland LGAs. These data have been selected from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing, where respondents were asked where they worked on Census day.

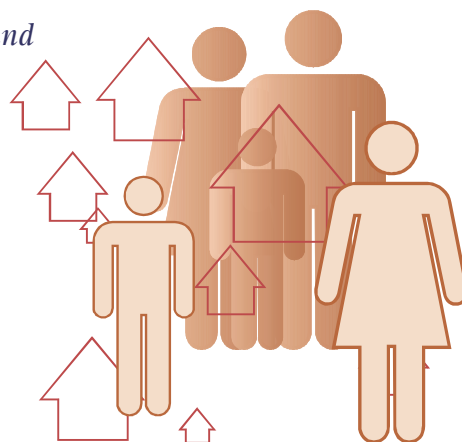
The Census data presented in Appendix D are not comparable to the interstate migration estimates in Table 1 of the report. Table 1 (Source ABS, Cat No 3101.0) presents estimates of annual flows for financial years. In contrast, the Census data provide information on where people stated their place of residence was five years ago. As such, these data refer to the intercensal period of 1996 to 2001. The Census data are limited by a number of factors (for example, there are respondents who did not specify their place of residence five years prior to the Census and there is no record of persons who moved more than once during the five-year period). The Census data are, nevertheless, a most useful source for analysing migration patterns at sub-state levels.

Introduction

Population growth – highlights and trends, Queensland

2005 contains analysis of the latest available Australian Bureau of Statistics estimates of the resident population of the Far North Queensland Regional Plan project area. These include preliminary estimates of the population as at June 2004 and revised estimates of the population as at June 2003. The Far North

Queensland Region (FNQ Region) is made up of the Local Government Areas (LGAs) of Atherton, Cairns, Cardwell, Douglas, Eacham, Herberton, Johnstone and Mareeba, and the Aboriginal Councils (ACs) of Wujal Wujal and Yarrabah.



This report complements other more detailed reports produced by the Department's Planning Information and Forecasting Unit (PIFU) such as *Recent Population and Housing Trends in Queensland 2003* and *Queensland's Future Population 2003*. These earlier reports contain more detailed analysis of both recent and projected population trends as well as discussion of the implications of these trends.

Population growth – highlights and trends reports for other Regions will be released progressively during 2005. A more detailed report on migration patterns for the intercensal period 1996 to 2001 is also to be released later in 2005.