

# Mildura Social Indicators 2006



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Government



Mildura Rural City Council

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Welcome.

Welcome to the first Audit Report of the Social and Economic Indicators of Well-being in Mildura and the adjoining communities of South West New South Wales.

Illuminating, disturbing, instructive and motivating; this report card will inspire us to look strategically at the strengths and the challenges which face our region.

With increasing expectations on local government, we need to be better informed about the “health” of our municipality and importantly, any indications of “unwellness” in our various communities.

The report will set some essential benchmarks in the hope that we can effectively measure Council’s endeavours to make Mildura “Australia’s most liveable, family friendly municipality”.

The quest reminds us that a simple analysis of employment and income does not define the welfare of our region.

We need to get a handle on all those measures that contribute to community well-being and personal opportunity. In the words of a former President of the World Bank (an Australian to boot) ... James Wolfensohn,

“Development is not just about sound budgets and fiscal management. Development is not just about technocratic fixes. Development is about getting the macro-economics right – yes, but it is also about building the roads, empowering the people, writing the laws, recognising the women, building the banking system, protecting the environment, inoculating the children.”

Cr Vernon Knight

Portfolio Councillor for Community and Economic Development

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# INTRODUCTION

Social statistics can have a long and sterile shelf life unless they relate to human purposes and ambitions. The Mildura City Council has a vision for its region that revolves around the theme of Mildura becoming “the most liveable, people friendly community in Australia.” There is always the danger with declarations of this kind that they can remain just that. Ways have to be found for expressing broad ambitions in sufficiently concrete terms to enable intermediate steps to be planned and taken and progress monitored.

Therein lies the potential value of the present report. To the credit of Mildura Rural City Council it recognises that building a better future involves not only taking new initiatives but identifying aspects of the existing social, economic and cultural arrangements that need to be worked upon. Council’s Community Engagement Framework booklet describes the relevant goal in these terms: “Develop an integrated community planning process where there is a whole of government approach to improving and measuring social, environmental and economic standards, in a geographically isolated area.”

What the community’s priorities should be is ultimately a matter for judgement but data of the kind presented in this volume can aid both reflection and decision-making. The information presented is styled *indicators* because if the measures are repeated in a consistent way over time they act as signposts indicating the direction in which the community is developing. In terms of the desired social destinations, the indicators can help us to know whether conditions are evolving in desired directions or otherwise.

A limitation of indicators is that they seldom reveal a tight connection between the direction of change, up or down, and the causes of that change. However, that limitation is generally of more concern to scholars than administrators. Frequently the selected measures serve the function of signposting the cumulative effects of both local and broader influences including, for example, the consequences of decisions and policies generated by the three levels of government. However, some of the changes may be unplanned and unintended and may pass un-noticed in the absence of consistent monitoring. This is where the availability of indicators can assist that community to ‘nip in the bud’ trends that run counter to its intentions.

To compensate for the present publication being Instalment 1 of a hoped-for indicator series wherever possible, use is made of data covering the recent past. However, the usefulness of the indicators is not confined to monitoring change over a substantial period. Even in the initial stage they can function as alerts raising questions and issues requiring further detailed examination, usually with the involvement of agencies and people most knowledgeable about the matters in question. The present set of indicators raises a number of such questions. For example, how are we to interpret the fact that Mildura Central has a rate of psychiatric hospital admissions approximately double that of Regional Victoria? Allowance needs to be made for factors like the proximity of treatment facilities but this statistic is illustrative of a range of similar findings that warrant close consideration. In some instances the reverse applies in so far as the data suggests that, on a comparative basis, some conditions are of modest scale.

Monitoring Mildura’s social progress requires the analysis of data at several levels including individuals, families and households, organisations and the overall community and its major divisions. Since making sense of indicator findings depends on appropriate comparisons, the results for different sub-regions play an important part. It is possible to cast almost all of the present findings in a consistent set of sub-regional moulds, namely, Mildura Central, Red Cliffs, Merbein, Irymple, Ouyen and Wentworth. These localities are shown in the map that follows together with the postcode areas that approximate closely to their boundaries. Postcodes (as defined by the Australian Bureau of Statistics) are the smallest geographic area for which some types of information incorporated in this report are available. The findings for the sub-areas of Mildura (Red Cliffs and the like) represent the nearest fit possible between aggregated postcode areas and the local government boundaries for each area. The approximations are close in all cases. Sometimes the level of a problem in a sub-region simply reflects its prevalence in other parts of the state so, wherever practicable, comparable findings for Regional Victoria and Metro Melbourne are included in the analysis.



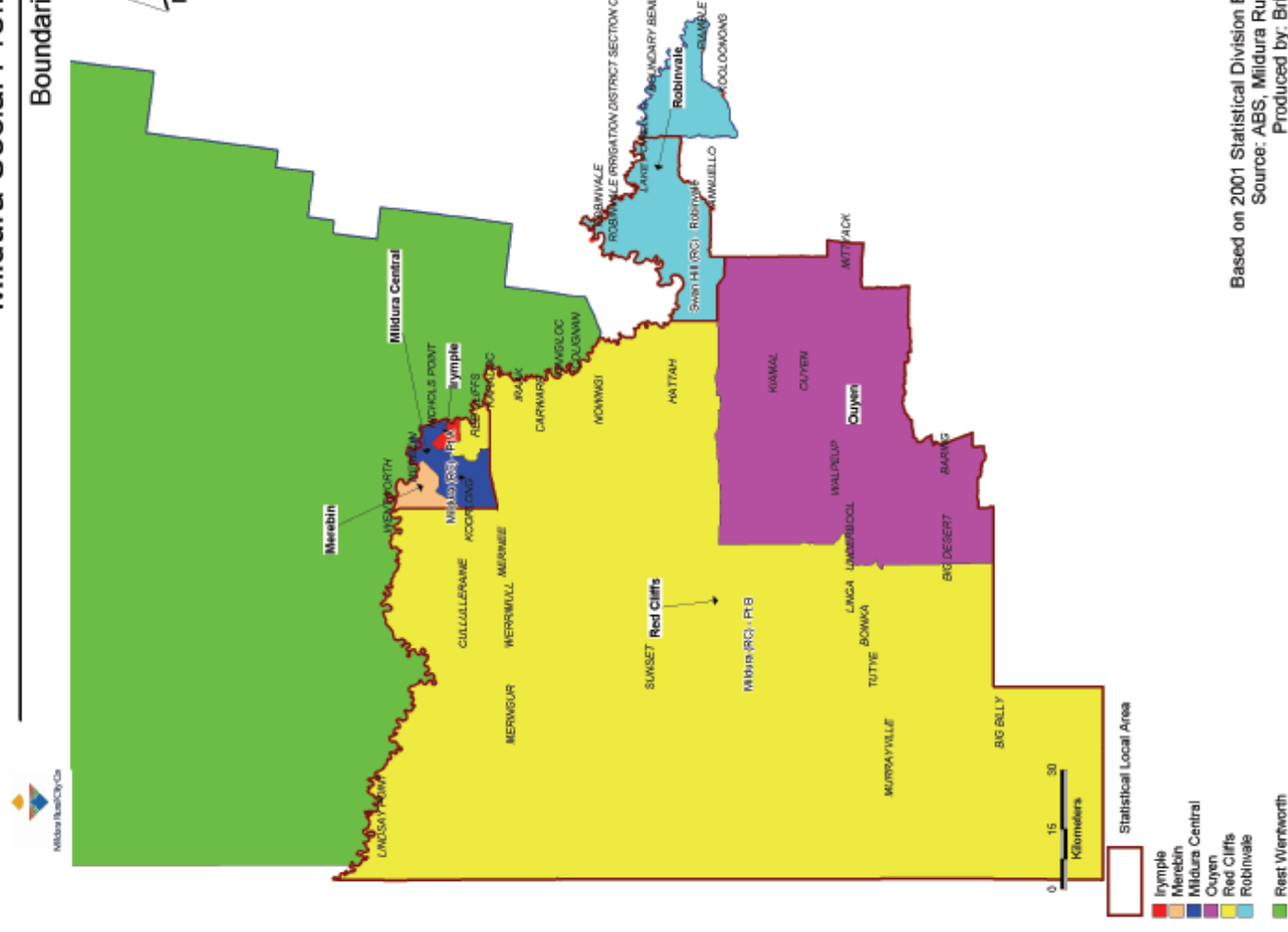
To facilitate comparisons of social data the results are generally expressed as rates per 1,000 of the relevant section of the population (for example, in some cases children under 15 years, and in some others people in the workforce). The array of information that could serve as indicators is virtually limitless but in the interests of avoiding a mentally indigestible assortment of data an attempt has been made to carefully choose salient statistics covering the social, economic and environmental areas of great importance to Mildura. As with all such exercises there remains room for expansion and improvement. This is particularly true of some information that is highly relevant to taking the pulse of the Mildura community but which is not accessible from state-wide statistical collections. Involved is information of a more qualitative nature that typically is obtained by a combination of local sample household surveys and with the cooperation of local organisations. Meanwhile, the data that has been assembled within specified categories is presented in tabular on the following page:

TABLE 1: DATA SOURCES

INDICATOR	SOURCE
<i>1. Overview of Region</i>	
Age / Gender Profile	ABS
Family structures	ABS
Country of Birth	ABS
Stability of population	ABS
<i>2. Social Distress</i>	
Family income	ABS
Rental stress	ABS
Home Purchase Stress	ABS
Lone Person Households	ABS
<i>3. Health</i>	
Low birth weight	DHS
Childhood accidents	Monash University
Immunisation cover	DHS, HIC
Mortality, (life expectancy)	ABS
Disability/sickness payment	Centrelink
Farm accidents	Monash University
Non-farm work accidents	Monash University
Psychiatric hospital admissions	DHS
Exercise	Aust. Sports Commission
<i>4. Community engagement</i>	
Individuals isolated by language	ABS, DIMIA
Social cohesion (volunteering, Mutual support, 'Sociable' recreation)	Dept. of Human Services (DHS)/ Aust. Sports Commission
<i>5. Community Safety</i>	
Confirmed child maltreatment	DHS
Criminal Convictions	Court stats.
Prison admissions	Corrective Services
<i>6. Economic</i>	
Occupational categories	ABS
Types of businesses	ABS
Employment within business categories	ABS
Unemployment	ABS
Long-term unemployment	Centrelink
Taxable income	ATO
Growth in tourism	Tourism Victoria
Access to computer/Internet	ABS
<i>7. Education</i>	
Attendance at pre-school	DHS
Incomplete education (17-24 yrs)	ABS
Overall Education	ABS
Post Schooling Qualifications	ABS
<i>8. Cultural</i>	
Visitors to Art Gallery	Mildura Art Gallery
Library usage	Mildura Council's Library service
<i>9. Environmental</i>	
Water and waste indicators	Mildura Council

## Mildura Social Profile

## Boundaries



Zone	Locality	Postcode
Irymple	Irymple	3498
Merbein	Merbein	3505
Mildura Central	Nichols Point	3501
Mildura Central	Merbein South	3505
Mildura Central	Koorlong	3501
Mildura Central	Mildura	3500
Mildura Central	Nangiloc	3494
Mildura Central	Colignan	3494
Mildura Central (in NSW)	Gol Gol	2738
Mildura Central (in NSW)	Burunga	2739
Mildura Central (in NSW)	Dareton	2717
Rest Wentworth	Wentworth	2648
Ouyen	Baring	3496
Ouyen	Walpeup	3507
Ouyen	Kiamal	3501
Ouyen	Ouyen	3490
Red Cliffs	Murrayville	3512
Red Cliffs	Tutye	3490
Red Cliffs	Boinka	3490
Red Cliffs	Cowangie	3506
Red Cliffs	Linga	3505
Red Cliffs	Underbool	3509
Red Cliffs	Werrimull	3496
Red Cliffs	Lindsay Point	5341
Red Cliffs	Meringur	3496
Red Cliffs	Mernee	3495
Red Cliffs	Yelta	3505
Red Cliffs	Yarrara	3496
Red Cliffs	Karadoc	3496
Red Cliffs	Red Cliffs	3496
Red Cliffs	Cardross	3496
Red Cliffs	Carwarp	3494
Red Cliffs	Cullulleraine	3496
Red Cliffs	Iraak	3494
Red Cliffs	Nowingi	3494
Red Cliffs	Hattah	3500

Based on 2001 Statistical Division Boundaries  
Source: ABS, Mildura Rural Council  
Produced by: Brian Cooper  
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## SECTION 1: OVERVIEW OF REGION

### AGE / GENDER PROFILE

The distribution of males and females across Mildura's sub-regions was generally within the range + or – 2% of Regional Victoria's profile (49.5% males and 50.5% females). The main exception was Wentworth with 53.1% males and 46.9% females.

The accompanying age distribution shows that Ouyen is the regional area with the smallest percentage of very young residents and the largest percentage of older people. The number of toddlers (under five years of age) in the study localities ranges from 4.8% in Ouyen to 7.9% in Mildura Central. The remaining four areas were within the range 6.5% to 7.5%, as were Regional Victoria and Metro Melbourne. In the school age category (5-19 years) Ouyen was again at the lower end of the range (21.0%) but less distinctly so because the Rest of Wentworth (21.5%) and Mildura Central (21.8%) were also 1.5% to 1.8% below the Regional Victoria figure (23.2%). Merbein and Irymple (respectively 24.9% and 24.8%) were at the upper end of the range.

The statistics on ageing present a different picture. With 13.5% of its population 65 years or older, Regional Victoria had more aging residents than Metro Melbourne (10.8%). In this older age group apart from Ouyen (19.5%), and at the other extreme Merbein (11.8%), the remaining Mildura region areas are within + or – 1% of the Regional Victoria figure. In the 'in-between' age categories, Ouyen has the lowest proportion (27.4%) in the 20-44 years group compared with an average for Regional Victoria of 32.6%, and then rises to second rank position (27.3%) within the second highest age bracket of 45-64 years, the Regional Victoria average being 24.0%. Thus the overall picture is one of Ouyen, compared to other regional localities, having a higher proportion of its population in the middle and later stages of life. Merbein, Red Cliffs and Irymple were consistently close to the Victorian Regional average in the same stages. The Wentworth was marginally lower than the Victorian Regional average on the 20-44 years category but exceeded the average on the 45-64 years group. That picture was reversed for Mildura Central: it had the highest percentage of population in the 20-44 years range and the lowest aged 45-64 years.

Consistent with what is known about the relative longevity of the sexes, in all six Mildura localities and Regional Victoria the proportion of women among the 65 years and over group exceeded the proportion of men. The difference was just 1% in Merbein but the difference of 3% in Regional Victoria was indicative of the scale of difference in all but one of the remaining localities, the exception being Ouyen where women over 65 years accounted for 22.4% of the female population, 16.6 % of the men being in the same age group.

TABLE 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION ACROSS MILDURA LOCALITIES

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
0 to 4	7.3%	7.9%	7.2%	7.5%	4.8%	7.6%	6.2%	6.7%	6.4%
5 to 19	23.4%	21.9%	25.0%	24.8%	21.1%	22.6%	21.8%	23.1%	20.3%
20 to 44	32.7%	34.5%	32.6%	32.6%	27.4%	33.6%	29.2%	32.1%	38.6%
45 to 64	24.1%	21.7%	23.6%	22.1%	27.2%	22.5%	28.5%	24.0%	22.4%
65 +	12.6%	14.1%	11.7%	13.1%	19.5%	13.7%	14.2%	14.2%	12.3%
Total	8,284	32,556	4,681	3,505	1,758	49,247	4,423	1,037,811	3,523,999

Source: Table B03 2001 Census of population and Housing

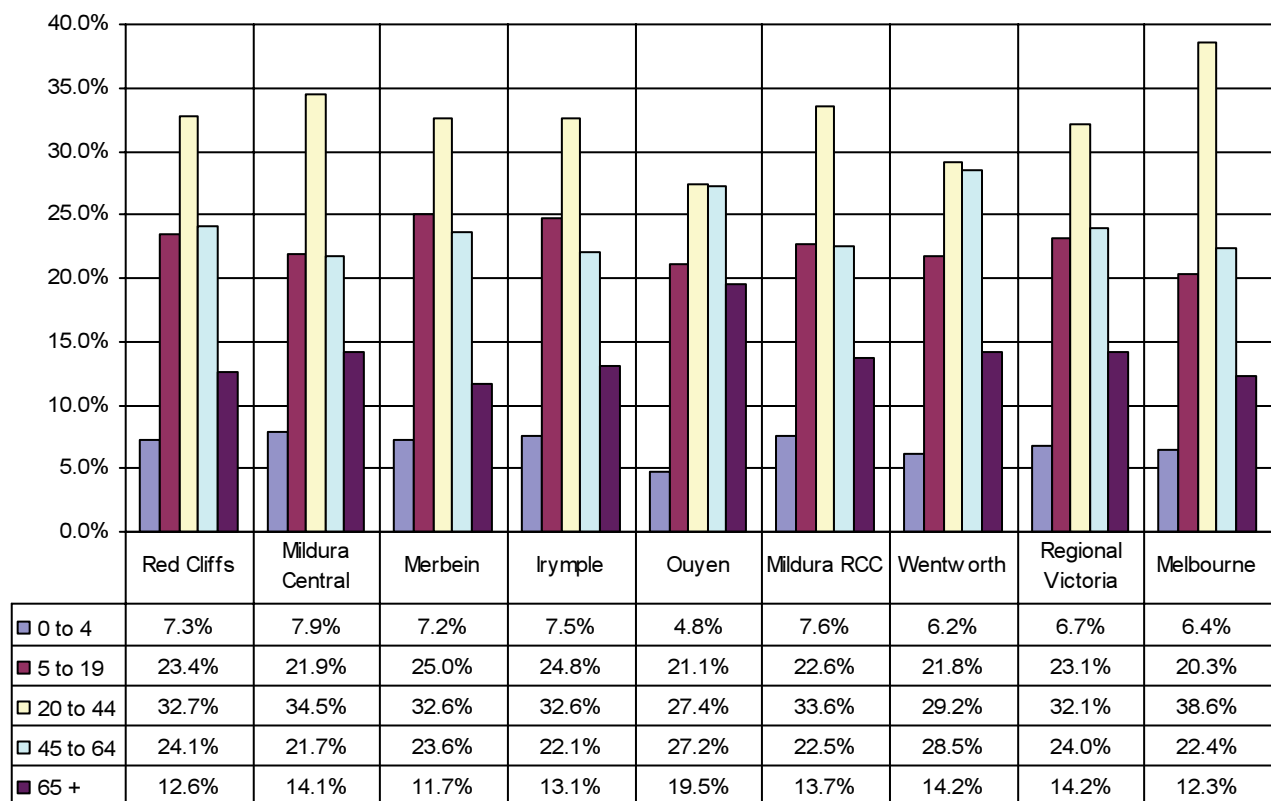


FIGURE 1: AGE DISTRIBUTION ACROSS MILDURA LOCALITIES  
Source: Table B03 2001 Census of population and Housing

TABLE 3: GENDER DISTRIBUTION ACROSS MILDURA LOCALITIES

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Males	51.8%	48.8%	51.0%	49.0%	50.9%	49.5%	53.1%	49.5%	48.9%
Females	48.2%	51.2%	49.0%	51.0%	49.1%	50.5%	46.9%	50.5%	51.1%
Total Persons	8,320	32,680	4,693	3,511	1,741	49,425	4,425	1,041,858	3,552,703

Source: Table B01 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## AN AGING POPULATION

By comparing the number of Mildura residents over 80 years of age at the 1991 and 2001 censuses it can be seen that the increase in that age bracket is four and a half times greater than the increase in the general population. The increase is five and a half times greater than the overall population growth when the threshold is set at 85 + years:

	1991	2001	Increase
80 years +	1076 persons	1,531 persons	42.3%
85 years +	449 persons	679 persons	51.2%
All ages	44,312 persons	48,382 persons	9.2%

Source: Table B03 2001 Census of Population and Housing; Table B03 1991 Census of Population and Housing

This pattern of aging may help to explain reported increase in the demand for services for the elderly. However, the rate of increase in the 80 years+ and 85 years+ groups in Mildura over the decade 1991-2001 was below the rate of increase in Regional Victoria and Melbourne:

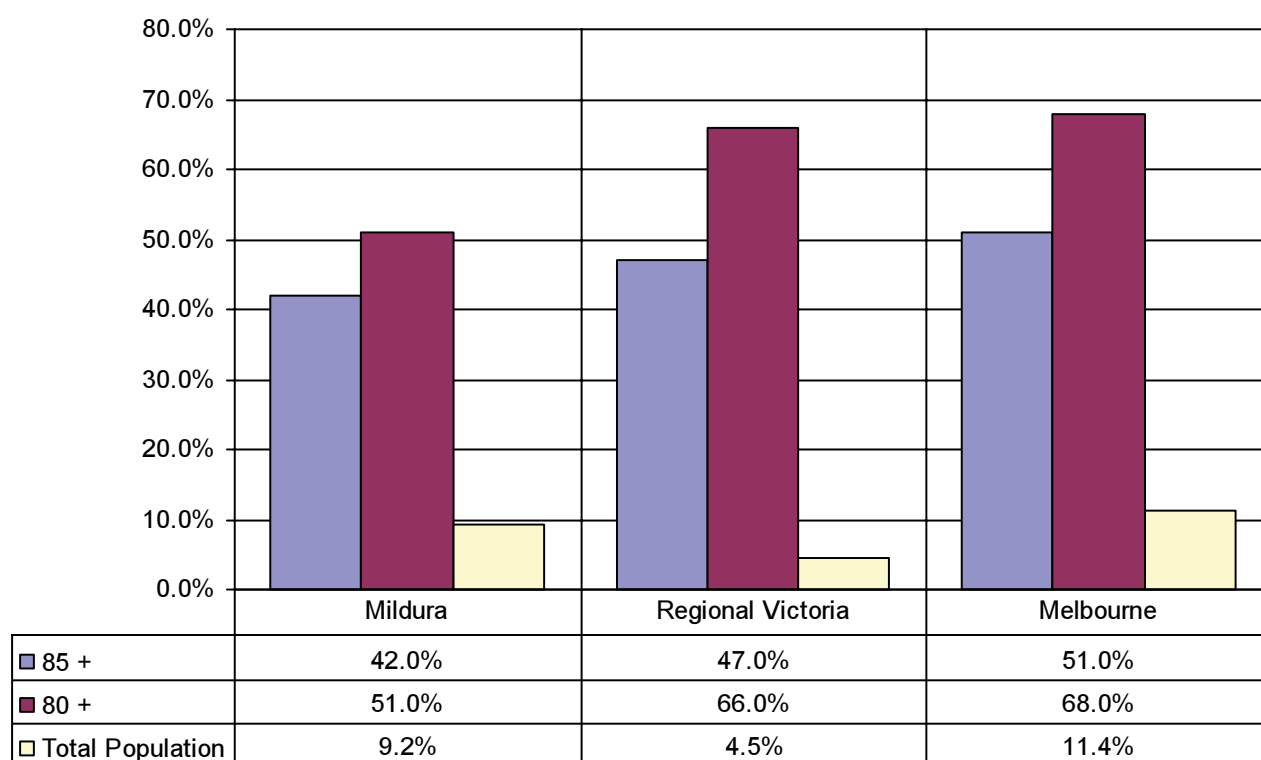


FIGURE 2: COMPARISON OF RATE OF INCREASE BETWEEN 1991 AND 2001 CENSUSES X AGED GROUPS

## BACKGROUNDS OF ARRIVALS

### Age

Between 1996 and 2001, 6831 people of all ages took up residence in Mildura Municipality and provided the census with information about where they were living five years earlier. A little under half (45.2%) arrived from other States and Territories. Of the remainder the numerically most significant sources were Melbourne (20.2% of arrivals), Mallee (7.1%), overseas (5.2%) and Central Highlands (4.4%). In terms of age groups, 6,568 of the arrivals whose previous place of residence was established also supplied their ages and 86.4% of them were under 55 years of age compared with 73.4% of the longer-term Mildura residents. Just 13.6% of the new arrivals between 1996 and 2001 were 55 years or older compared with 26.6% of the longer-term residents. The seventy-five and upwards among the arrivals accounted for 2.3% of their total. The same age group accounted for 6.2% of the longer-settled population. It would seem that the increase in the number of aged residents in Mildura is essentially a home grown phenomenon.

### Income

The following table is based on the income of adult residents of Mildura Municipality in 2001 and distinguishes those who were resident in the Municipality five years earlier than those who had lived elsewhere at that time. Because of the costs that would be involved in extracting this information for specific age groups the findings must be regarded as suggestive rather than conclusive. However, on the available evidence, and excluding those individuals whose previous address was not stated in the census, a higher proportion of the longer-term residents (78.4%) than more recent arrivals (73.6%) had incomes below \$600 per week. Conversely, a slightly greater proportion (7.2%) of the new rivals than longer-term residents (6.0%) had incomes in excess of \$1,000 per week.

There were some identifiable exceptions to this general pattern. New arrivals from the Mallee (81.4%) and to a lesser extent in terms of the numbers involved East Gippsland (93.0%) and Barwon (84.0%) were cases in point. However, among the more numerous arrivals from Melbourne just 71% were in the lowest income category:

TABLE 4: INDIVIDUAL WEEKLY INCOMES IN 2001 X PLACE OF RESIDENCE IN 1996

	<b>Below \$500.0</b>	<b>\$600-\$999.0</b>	<b>\$1,000+</b>
Mildura	78.4%	15.6%	6.0%
Other states	74.0%	18.0%	8.0%
Melbourne	71.0%	21.0%	8.0%
Overseas	72.0%	19.0%	10.0%
Elsewhere	73.8%	21.0%	5.2%

Source: 2001 Census of Housing and Population – Special Run

## FAMILY STRUCTURES

The structure of households partly reflects the stage of life attained by residents so that the proportion of families in Ouyen without children (46.7%) is consistent with the older age profile of residents of that locality (see previous section). The slight excess in the proportion of families without children in Wentworth (43.3%) compared with Regional Victoria (38.9%) and especially Metro Melbourne (33.1%) also reflects the older age profile of the area. The reverse is true of the child bearing age bracket of 20-44 years. Of the four localities with the largest number of people in this category, three (Red Cliffs, Irymple and Merbein) have higher proportions of families with children than is true of regional Victoria. Only one sub-regional area (Central Mildura) has a higher proportion of one-parent families than is the case in regional Victoria but the excess is slight (17.1% compared with 14.6%).

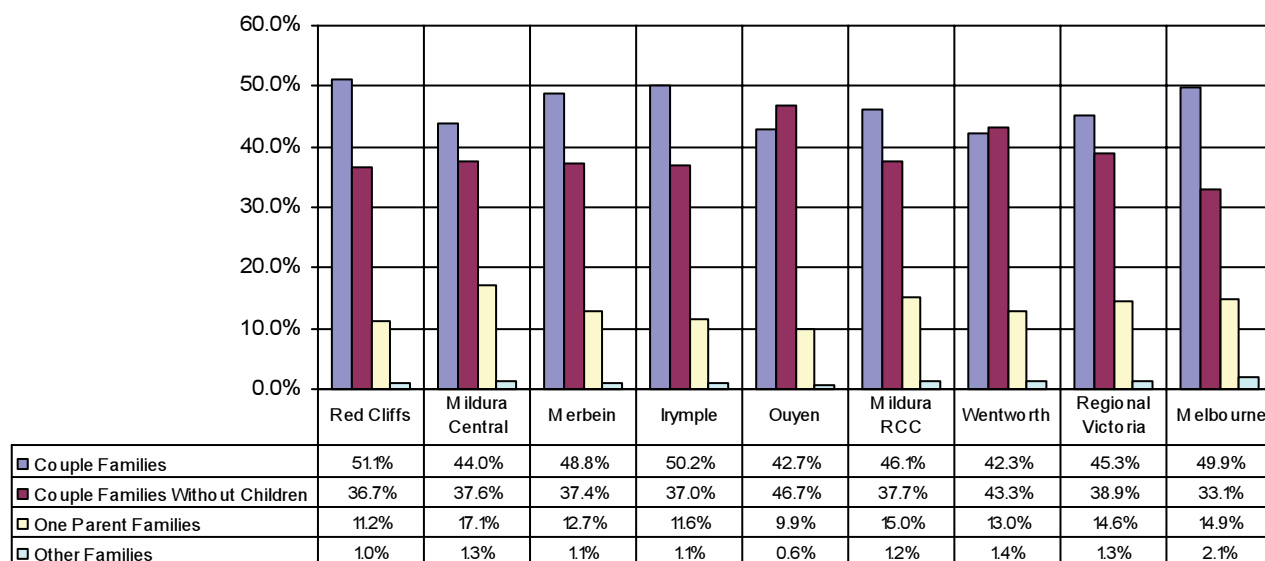


FIGURE 3: FAMILY STRUCTURES ACROSS MILDURA

Source: B17 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## COUNTRY OF BIRTH

There is a major concentration of Australian born people within the Mildura regions accounting for (approximately) upwards of 85.0% of residents. This figure matches the pattern throughout Regional Victoria but exceeds by a wide margin the proportion of Australian born people in Melbourne (65.9%). In the capital there is a higher proportion of residents born in the United Kingdom and a wider range of countries of birth reflected in the 23.7% classified in the residual category:

TABLE 5: COUNTRY OF BIRTH BY LOCALITIES

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Total	8,320	32,680	4,693	3,511	1,741	50,945	4,425	1,041,858	3,552,703
Australia	86.3%	80.2%	87.5%	85.8%	91.8%	85.1%	88.0%	85.7%	65.9%
United Kingdom	1.8%	2.0%	1.8%	1.6%	1.1%	1.9%	1.9%	3.5%	4.7%
Italy	1.6%	1.8%	1.6%	2.7%	0.2%	1.8%	0.7%	0.7%	2.3%
Turkey	0.7%	1.3%	0.8%	0.3%	0.0%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%
New Zealand	0.9%	0.8%	0.9%	0.9%	0.6%	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%	1.3%
Greece	0.1%	0.5%	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.4%	0.2%	0.1%	1.6%
Germany	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%	0.7%
Croatia	0.3%	0.3%	0.2%	0.4%	0.2%	0.3%	0.0%	0.1%	0.5%
Federal Republic of Yugoslavia	0.2%	0.2%	0.3%	0.4%	0.0%	0.2%	0.1%	0.1%	0.5%
Other	7.4%	7.6%	6.2%	7.5%	5.8%	7.4%	8.0%	8.2%	21.2%
Indigenous	87	884	106	35	3	1115	437	10296	13311
Indigenous %	1.0%	2.7%	2.3%	1.0%	0.2%	2.2%	9.9%	1.0%	0.4%

Source: Table B01 2001 Census of Population and Housing; Table B07 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## STABILITY OF POPULATION

The residential stability of households is one factor that contributes to the development of communication and connectedness between people. However, the effect of non-stability may not be a smooth, continuous one. It may only be when household movement reaches a certain threshold that social cohesion is affected. When high and low cohesion postcode areas in Victoria were analysed recently in terms of their inter-census household movement it was found that the low social cohesion category contained three times the proportion of 40%+ turnovers as occurred within the high cohesion category.

The present data concerns individuals rather than households and indicates a level of stability of residence at the municipal level that approximates to the Regional Victoria figure. Mildura Central has a somewhat higher level of individual movement and the other sub-regional areas are at or below the regional figure.

TABLE 6: POPULATION STABILITY 2001 CENSUS

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Same Address 1996	4,852	14,917	2,489	1,935	1,144	24,546	2,434	556,323	1,838,894
Different Address 1996	2,595	13,853	1,736	1,201	477	19,311	1,475	379,083	1,314,266

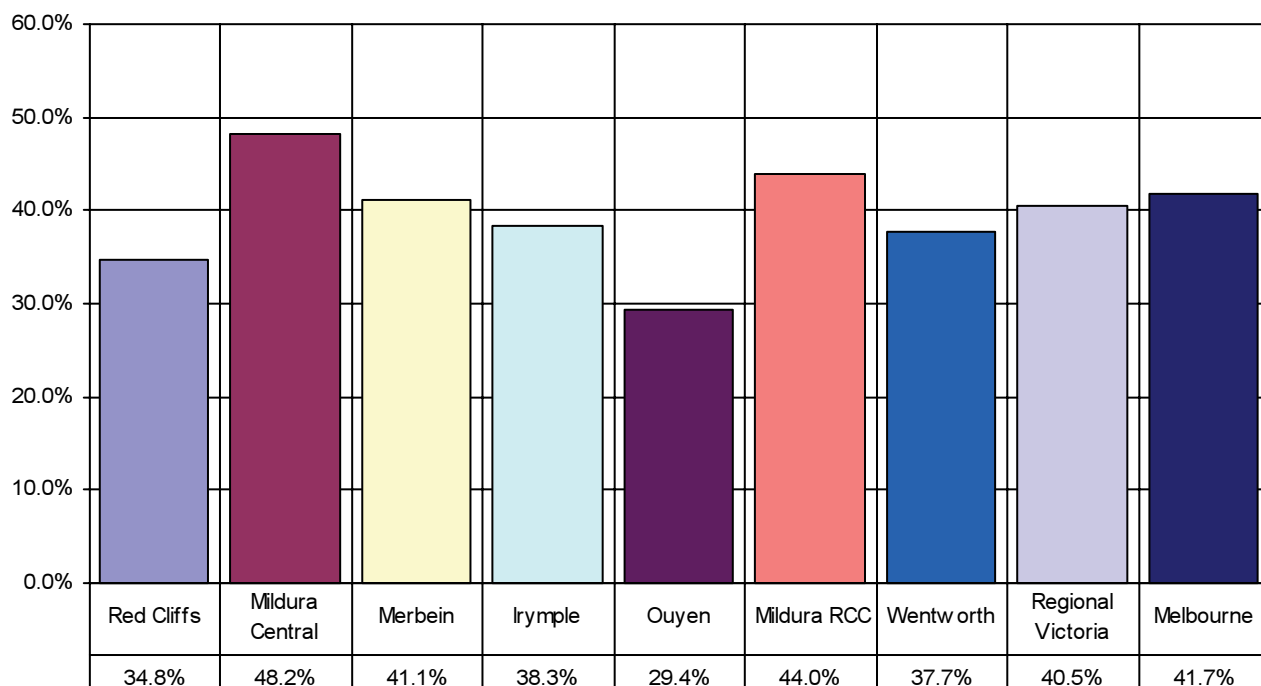


FIGURE 4: POPULATION MOVEMENT 1996 - 2001

Source: Table B22 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## SECTION 2: SOCIAL DISTRESS

### FAMILY INCOME

Low income is interwoven with the influence of other forms of disadvantage. It can be the consequence of factors like limited education, limited skills and poor health that serve to amplify individual and communal problems like mental illness, crime and child maltreatment. Much recent research has emphasised the importance of relative inequality of income and people's consciousness of their comparative position rather than the direct effects of material standards.

A family income of less than \$600 per week attracts some forms of governmental assistance and is often used as an indicator of relatively low income. By that standard a higher proportion of families throughout the Mildura region than in Melbourne have low family incomes (between approximately 27% and 36% compared with 22%). However, with the exception of Wentworth (35.9%), the proportion of low-income families in the Mildura sub-regions was closer to the Regional Victoria rate of 30.7%. That similarity was sustained at the high-income level (\$1,200 per week or more) but the contrast with Melbourne was more marked. The proportion of families with high incomes across Regional Victoria was a little under 14% compared with 25.5% in Melbourne.

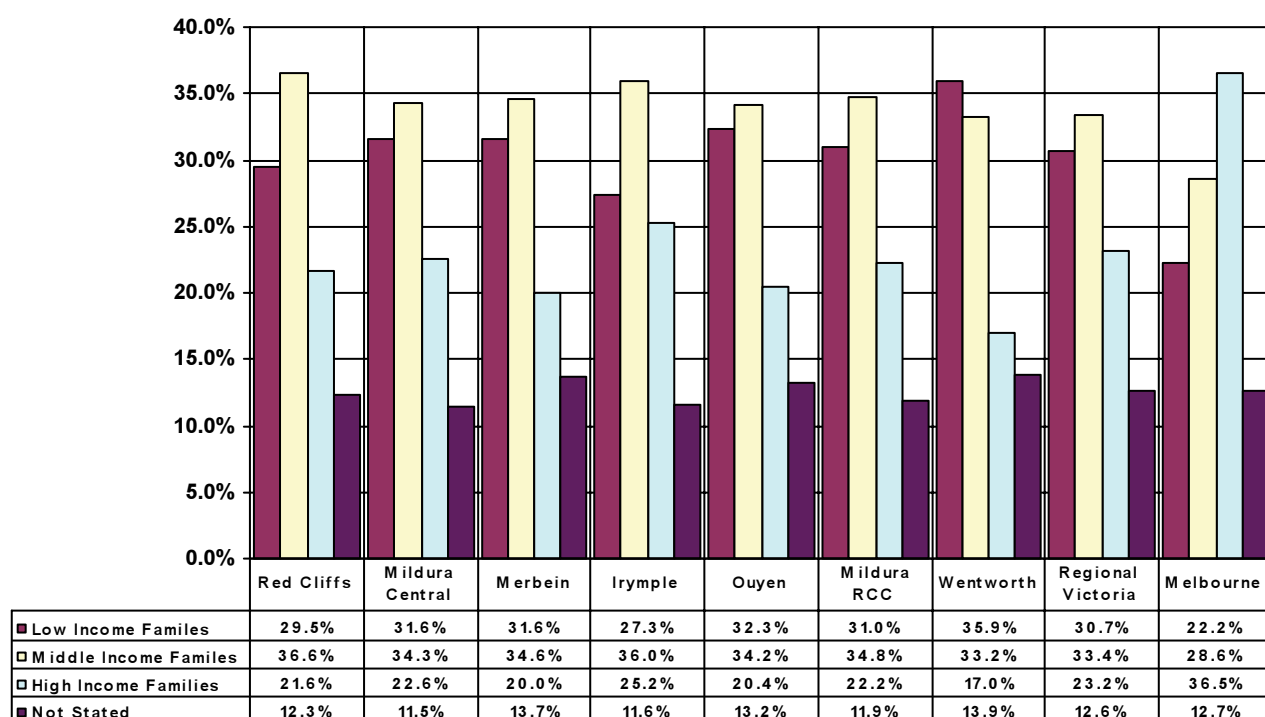


FIGURE 5: FAMILY INCOMES BY LOCALITIES

Source: Table B30 2001 Census of Population and Housing



## RENTAL STRESS

The definition of high housing stress according to the relatively sophisticated approach of NATSEM (University of Canberra) is when a family or single person's "estimated housing costs exceeds 30% of their disposable income and they are in the bottom 40% of income distribution" also taking into account family composition and costs.<sup>1</sup> As a practical substitute the 30% of income ratio is a widely used indicator of housing stress. The former competition 'watchdog' Allan Fels recently pointed to the impacts on wellbeing when households are suffering housing stress including poor health, lower school performance, higher crime rates and unemployment. While there has been much comment about the inflation of house prices "far more serious housing affordability problems are being experienced by low-income households that rent their residences. Many Australians spend such a high proportion of their income on rent that they are left without sufficient funds to meet other basic needs such as food, clothing, transport, medical care and education."<sup>2</sup>

The present findings are consistent with the above conclusion. The housing data shows that high rental stress in the Mildura region is more prevalent than home purchase stress. Although with less renters than Mildura Central, Merbein has 30.3% of its renters under high rental stress, which is comparable to Melbourne's level of 30.6% of renters. Irymple and Mildura Central follow with 26.9% and 26.7% of renters under high rental stress respectively, which accords with Regional Victoria's 25.5%. Wentworth and Red Cliffs' high rental stress levels are at 19.2 and 20.0 per cent respectively, with Ouyen (7.9%) having the lowest proportion of such stress across the region. The final row of the table shows a greater concentration of rental stress among households with limited incomes (below \$600/week). The proportion of high stress renters in each city or sub-region increases between 1.5 to 2.0 times within the less than \$600 per week household income group.

TABLE 7: HOME RENTAL STRESS

Rent as a % of income	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Households	499	3,201	251	201	101	4,139	315	69,473	263,889
Unable to Determine Income	2.8%	3.3%	6.4%	3.5%	5.9%	3.6%	3.5%	3.5%	2.9%
Low- <25%	69.9%	59.4%	51.4%	60.7%	80.2%	60.7%	69.5%	61.1%	56.4%
Medium- 25-30%	8.0%	10.5%	12.0%	9.0%	5.9%	10.1%	7.0%	9.9%	10.0%
High- >30%	19.2%	26.7%	30.3%	26.9%	7.9%	25.6%	20.0%	25.5%	30.6%
% households <\$600, high stress	100.0%	96.3%	96.1%	94.4%	100.0%	96.4%	85.7%	97.1%	84.3%

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing Special Run

<sup>1</sup> Harding, A., Phillips, B., Kelly, S., (2004) *Trends in Housing Stress*, Canberra, National Centre for Economic Modelling, 28<sup>th</sup> June

<sup>2</sup> Fels, A., (2004) "The very poor need homes, too," *The Age*, 22<sup>nd</sup>, March, 22<sup>nd</sup>

## HOME PURCHASE STRESS

The proportions of residents experiencing home purchase stress within the Mildura sub-regions was substantial but less than was the case with rental stress. Throughout Regional Victoria the ratio of high stress renters to purchasers was 1.8:1 and approximately the same ratio applied in Mildura Central, Merbein and Irymple with a slight reversal of direction in Ouyen. The proportions of rental and purchase stress were relatively unaltered in Red Cliffs and 'Rest of Wentworth'.

TABLE 8: HOME PURCHASE STRESS WHERE INCOME IS KNOWN

% of Income	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Total purchase	657	2,684	494	335	74	4,119	299	93,762	329,068
Unable to Determine Income	6.7%	0.0%	7.7%	6.0%	4.1%	2.5%	10.0%	5.1%	4.8%
Low- <25%	72.6%	73.1%	69.2%	74.0%	81.1%	72.7%	66.2%	73.8%	68.9%
Medium- 25-30%	3.8%	7.9%	7.1%	6.3%	4.1%	6.9%	7.7%	7.4%	8.9%
High- >30%	16.9%	14.0%	16.0%	13.7%	10.8%	14.8%	16.1%	13.7%	17.4%

Source: ABS 2001 Census of Population and Housing Special Run

## LONE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS

As already noted, Ouyen and Wentworth are the Mildura sub-regions with the highest proportion of aging residents. This is one explanation for the existence of people living alone and helps to account for the prominence of the two mentioned areas among those with high proportions of lone person households. A different explanation concerning younger adults is that they are attracted to the central areas of regional cities and that probably helps to explain the relatively high proportion of single person households in Central Mildura. However, there is not a great deal of difference between the sub-regions with the percentage of single households/persons either resembling or being below the average for Regional Victoria.

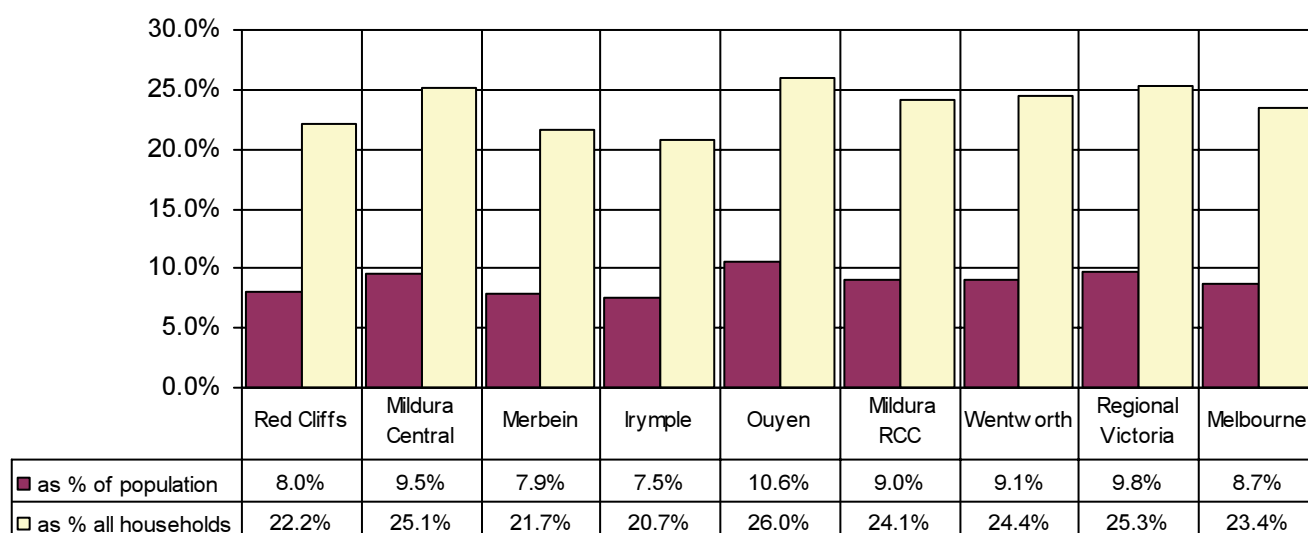


FIGURE 6: SPREAD OF SINGLE PERSON HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS MILDURA'S SUB-REGIONS (2001 CENSUS)

Source: Table 14 2001 Census of Population and Housing; Tables B 32 & 14  
2001 Census of Population and Housing

## SECTION 3: HEALTH

### LOW BIRTH WEIGHT

Low birth weight is a strong risk factor for infant mortality and varies by social class. A decline in social status, the level of parental education (especially that of mothers), living in economically deprived areas, diminished support networks, the timing of pre-natal care and community unemployment rates are among the factors implicated in the occurrence of low weight babies. Studies that have focused on community level social phenomena show the contribution of a cluster of variables subsumed by the term economic hardship to the occurrence of low birth weight deliveries. Low per capita incomes, unemployment, and indicators of social class generally, environmental stressors and poor housing conditions are among the predisposing factors. Across Australia an Aboriginal woman is twice as likely (12.4%) to have a low birth weight baby compared to a non-Aboriginal woman (6.2%).

Red Cliffs and Rest of Wentworth have slightly elevated rates of low weight babies compared with the Victorian and Australian averages and Ouyen (with approximately 3.0% of births of low weight) has a decidedly low rate. Mildura Central, Merbein and Irymple fall on the right side of the state and national averages.

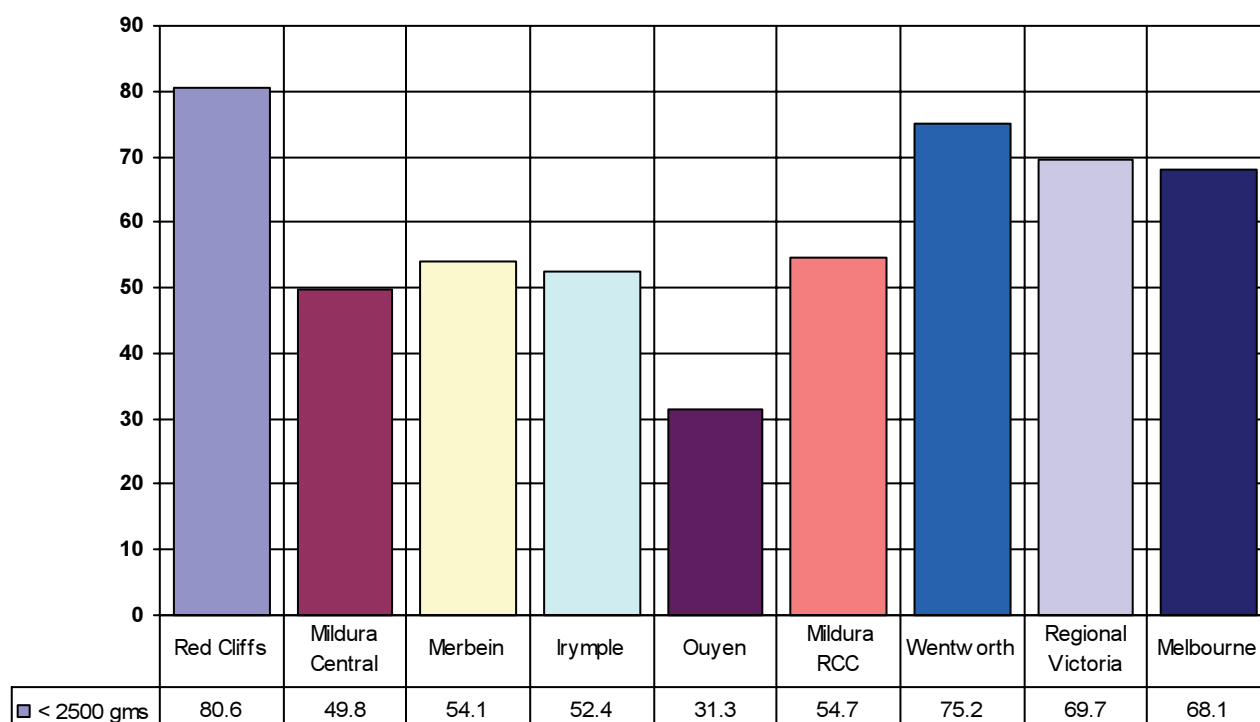


FIGURE 7: RATE OF LOW BIRTH WEIGHTS (<2,500 GMS.) PER 1,000 BIRTHS ACROSS MILDURA'S SUB-REGIONS

Source: Department of Human Services Perinatal Data Collection Unit  
Unpublished Data

## CHILDHOOD ACCIDENTS

Localities characterised by low-income households, single parent families, limited education and unemployment have higher rates of childhood accidents with low income being of particular significance. Increased levels of maternal education and increased maternal age are associated with decreased risk of serious accidents involving children.

According to 2003/'04 hospital treatment records, with the exception of Ouyen and 'Rest of Wentworth,' the rate of childhood accidents (0-18 years) within the Mildura sub-regions is two or more times that of the rest of Victoria (60.5 per 1,000 children). Wentworth has a rate of childhood accidents 1.8 times the state average and Ouyen has a rate marginally lower than the remainder of the state.

There has been a general incremental increase across the surveyed areas since 2001/'02. The results suggest the possible need for further educational campaigns directed to schools and families indicating the dangers and risks that lead to accidents.

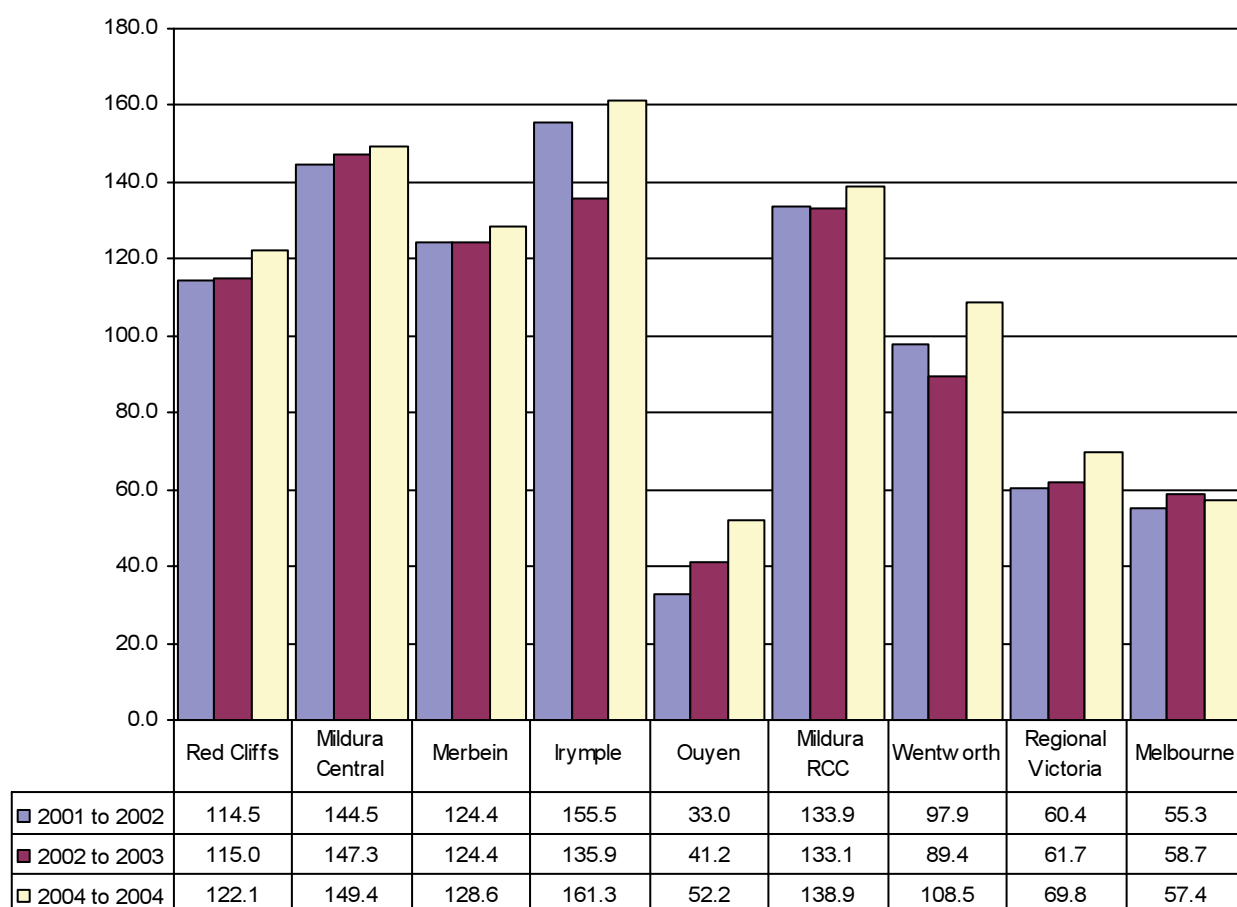


FIGURE 8: RATE OF CHILDHOOD ACCIDENTS OVER THREE YEARS (2001/02 – 2003/04)

Source: Victorian Injury Surveillance and Applied Research Accident Research  
Centre Monash University 2005

## IMMUNISATION COVER

In 2001 the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance reported that immunisation coverage in Australia for all scheduled vaccines was approximately 94% by 12 months, and 90% by 24 months of age.<sup>3</sup> Low coverage reported in inner urban areas of the capital cities seems to reflect under-reporting to the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register but coverage estimates in some rural and other non-capital city metropolitan areas appears to be a truer reflection of low immunisation uptake in those areas. Linking immunisation to the Maternity Allowance and Child Care Benefit has encouraged both uptake and timeliness of immunisation. However, children in larger, lower income families are less likely to be age-appropriately immunised (NCIRS, 2001, pg. ix). In the UK the areas with the lowest measles-mumps-rubella immunisation coverage also tend to be the inner cities particularly those exhibiting high levels of deprivation (Wright and Polack, 2005).<sup>4</sup>

Using data from the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register for 2003, 2004 and 2005 it is apparent that the Mildura sub-regions generally maintain the coverage of infants now characteristic of the rest of Australia. Ouyen is the one exception in that the percentage of children immunised is consistently below the rest of the Mildura's localities and Regional Victoria:

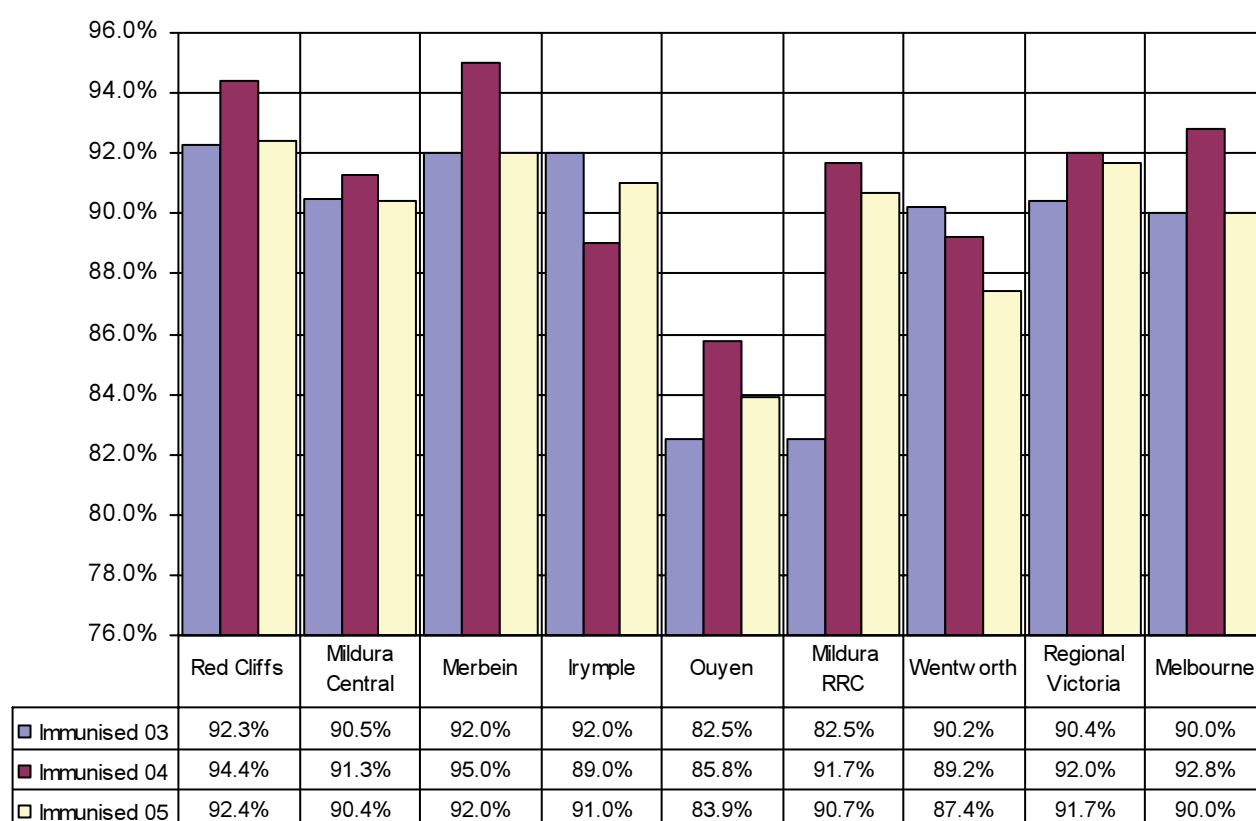


FIGURE 9: CHILDREN IMMUNISED 2003 - 2005

Source: Health Insurance Commission

<sup>3</sup> NCIRS (2001) *Immunisation Coverage: Australia 2001*, Sydney, Sydney University, December

<sup>4</sup> Wright, J. A., Polack, C., (2005) "Understanding variation in measles-mumps-rubella immunization coverage – a population-based study," *The European Journal of Public Health*, October, 1-6

## DISABILITY/SICKNESS PAYMENT

This indicator combines sickness allowance and disability support pension payment data and expresses the findings as a rate per 1,000 for each of the study areas. Briefly, sickness allowance is available to Australian residents (or newly arrived migrants after 104 weeks in Australia) who are temporarily incapacitated for work or full-time study. Recipients must have a job or full-time study to which they can return. A disability support pension is available to Australian residents of ten years standing who are aged 16 years or over. The beneficiaries must have a physical, intellectual or psychiatric impairment assessed at 20 points or more and be unable to work for at least the next two years as a result of impairment and be unable to undertake vocational or educational training that would equip them for work within two years.

The indicator provides us with one comparative measure of the health and robustness of the Mildura community and its sub-regions. In 2005 the rates of disability/sickness payments in four of the sub-areas of Mildura fell below that for Regional Victoria, Mildura Central having virtually the equivalent of the regional rate and Wentworth slightly exceeding it. However, all of the areas had rates higher than was the case in Melbourne. 2001 appears to have been an atypical year so far as the (low) metro rate was concerned but thereafter it remained fairly stable while the regional equivalent increased over each of the five years. In each year the rate for Wentworth substantially exceeded that of Melbourne and to a lesser degree since 2003, the rate for Regional Victoria. Ouyen had a strikingly stable low rate for the first four years reviewed.

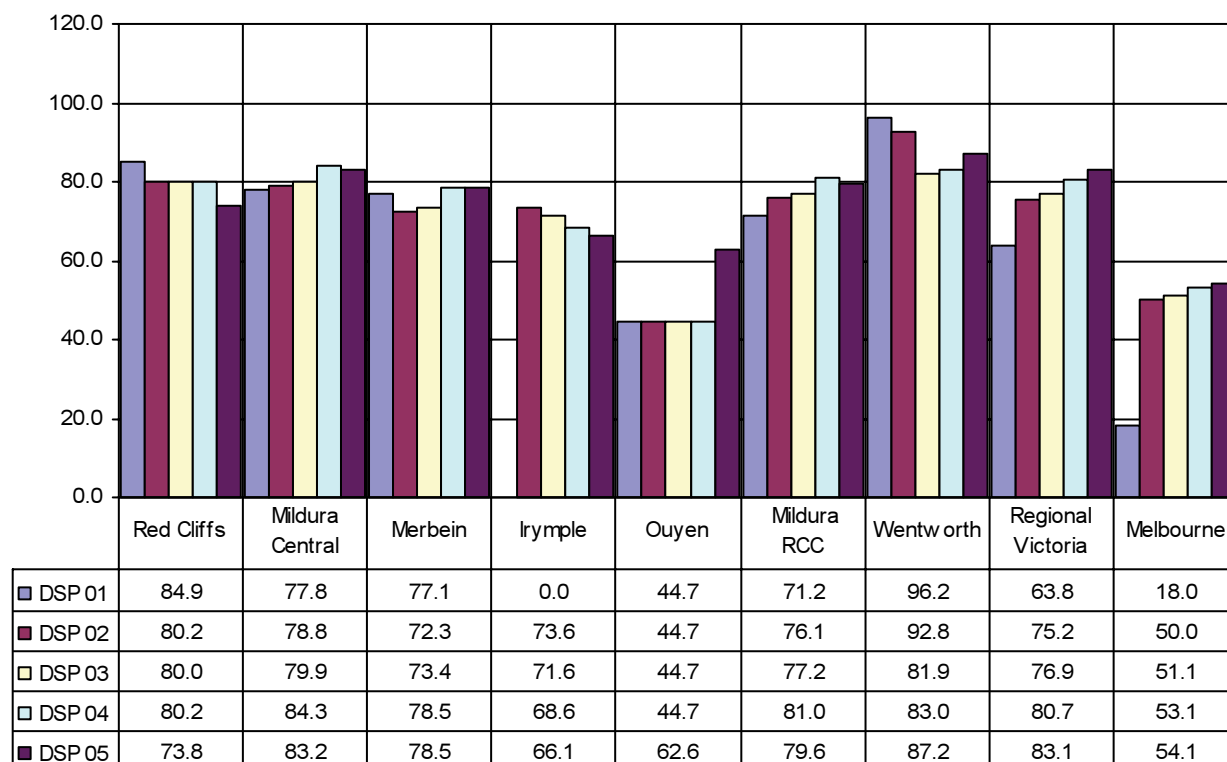


FIGURE 10: DISTRIBUTION OF DISABILITY PENSIONS AND SICKNESS ALLOWANCES – RATES PER 1,000  
Source: Centrelink Unpublished Data 2005

## OCCUPATIONAL ACCIDENTS

The accident data drawn upon in this section is based on hospital treatment records and indicates the volume rather than the severity of the accidents occurring over a three-year period (2001/2002 – 2003/2004). The results have been averaged and expressed as a rate per 1,000 in the farm labour force and non-farm labour force.

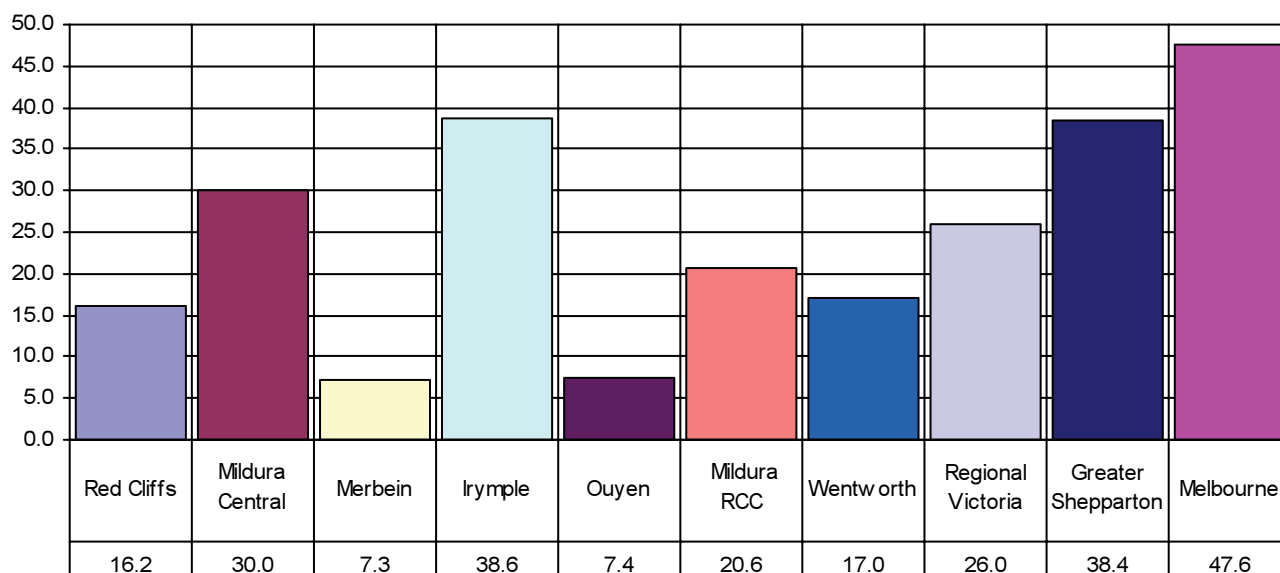


FIGURE 11: AVERAGE RATE OF FARM ACCIDENTS OVER PERIOD 2001/2002 – 2003/2004 (RATE PER 1,000 PEOPLE IN FARM LABOUR FORCE)

The above table shows a substantial range of rates of farm accidents from an extreme high in those localities close to Melbourne to a low figure in both Merbein and Ouyen. Irymple (38.6 per 1,000 workers) has a high rate compared with the Victorian Regional average (26.0) while the remaining Mildura localities stand near or below that average. So far as non-farm work accidents are concerned, with the exception of Ouyen (with its higher proportion of aging people), the Mildura sub-regions have rates in excess of twice that of Regional Victoria:

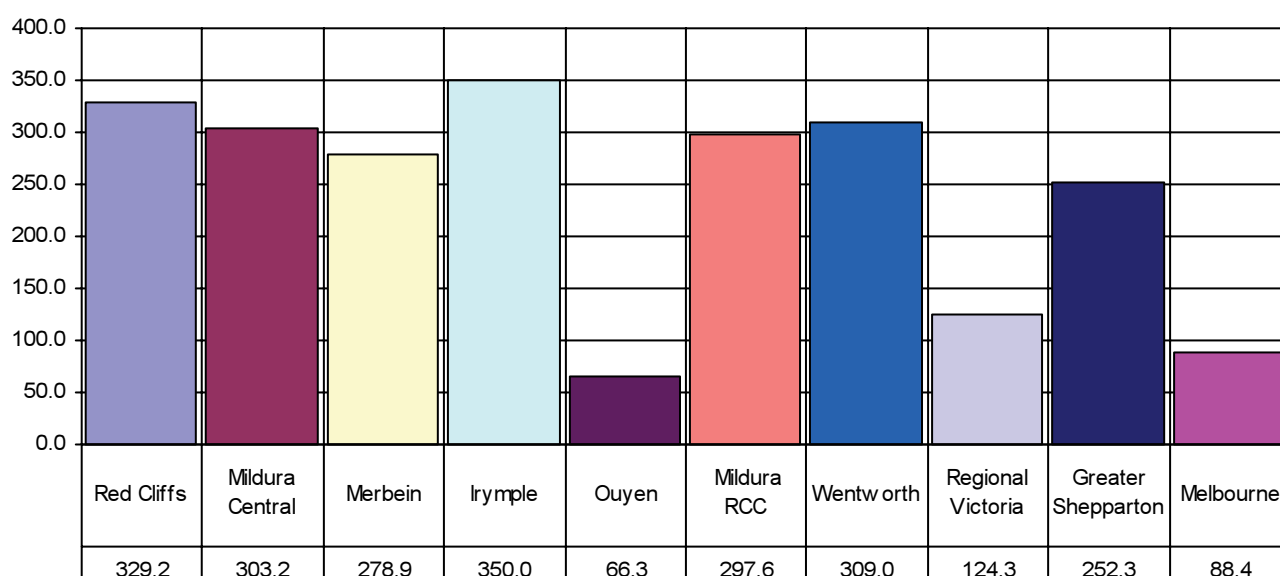


FIGURE 12: AVERAGE RATE OF NON-FARM WORK ACCIDENTS OVER PERIOD 2001/2002 – 2003/2004

## PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS

An association between admissions to hospital for mental illness and socio-economic status has been acknowledged for more than fifty years. Considerable research testifies to the connection between social disadvantage (particularly an area's unemployment rate) and psychiatric admissions.

Admission rates have been calculated for Mildura's sub-regions using 2003 data. The number of admissions have been related to area populations over 18 years of age and expressed as a rate per 1,000. This enables comparisons with the rate per 1,000 for Regional Victoria (13.5) and the fractionally lower rate for Melbourne (12.4). The accompanying table shows that Mildura Central (27.8) has a rate of admissions approximately double that of Regional Victoria and even after allowing for factors like the proximity of treatment facilities this statistic would seem to warrant closer attention. The rate for Merbein (23.9) is also comparatively high. Indeed, the rate for all of the Mildura localities equals or exceeds that of Regional Victoria.

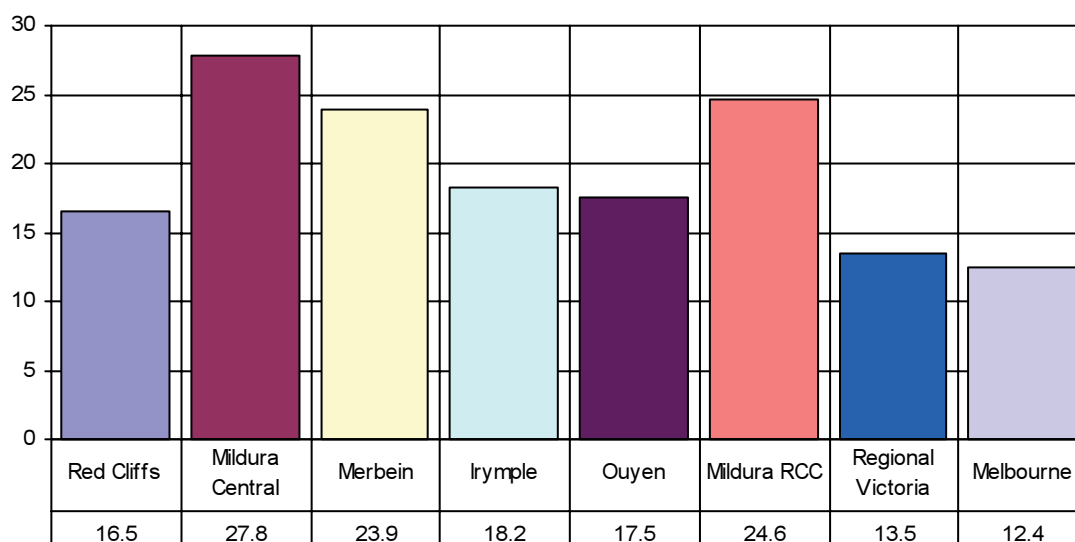


FIGURE 13: RATE PER 1000 PSYCHIATRIC ADMISSIONS ACROSS MILDURA'S SUB-REGIONS (2003)

Source: Department of Human Services Unpublished Data 2003



## EXERCISE

Because of the health-promoting benefits of exercise it is desirable to monitor people's engagement in it. The data available on this occasion is only an indirect measure of what is required. It derives from the Australian Sports Commission's continuous survey of recreational activity which it would seem safe to assume includes a significant proportion of sporting activity and exercise, either of an organised or non-organised nature. The latter distinction is made in the survey findings for 2002/'03. In 2006 it is hoped to obtain information that relates more precisely to people's participation in health-promoting exercise from the Victorian Population Health Survey. Meanwhile, organised recreational activity is clearly more strongly pursued in Irymple than the other sub-regions, Regional Victoria and Melbourne. Merbein matched Regional Victoria's participation in organised recreational activity but Red Cliffs, Ouyen and Mildura Central clearly lagged in this regard although Ouyen compensated by having the highest rate of non-organised participation of any of the areas studied:

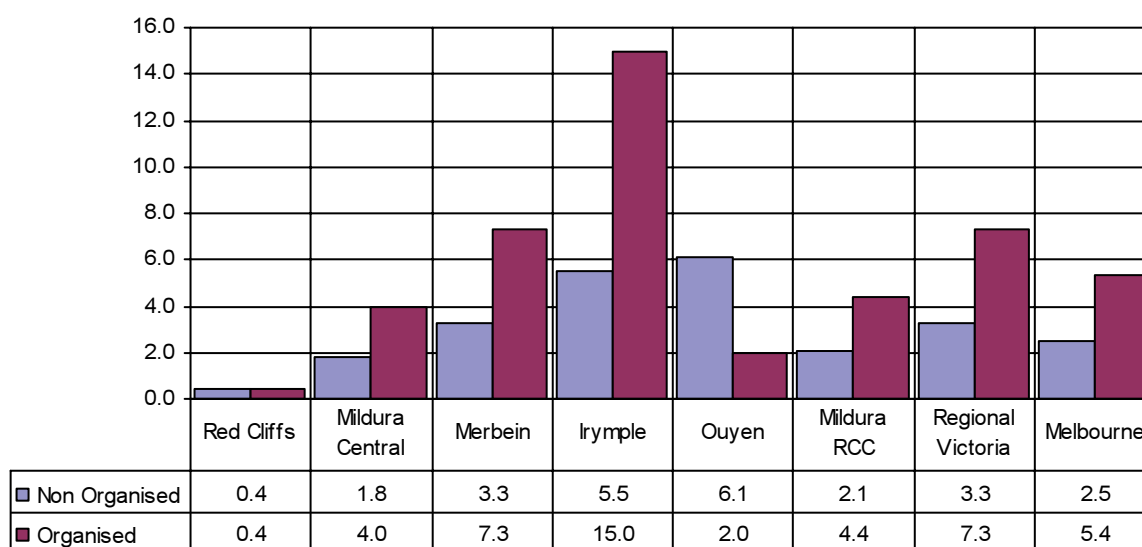


FIGURE 14: PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION RATE PER 1000  
Source: Australian Sports Commission 2003 Unpublished Data

## SECTION 4: COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

### INDIVIDUALS ISOLATED BY LANGUAGE

Language can be one barrier to effective engagement with the wider community. The proportion of Mildura Central residents who could be impeded by lack of facility with spoken English is four times that of Regional Victoria. Similar difficulties might be facing 12% of the residents of Irymple and 11% of those living at Red Cliffs. These are levels of communication restriction that are comparable to those applying in Melbourne.

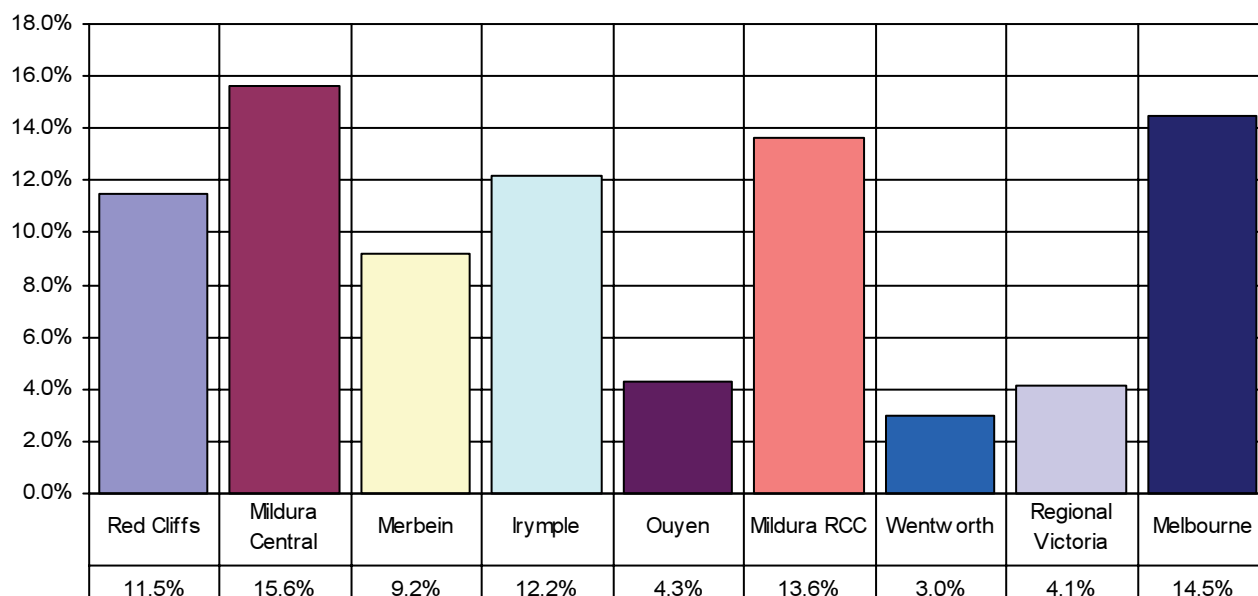


FIGURE 15: INDIVIDUALS ISOLATED BY LANGUAGE ACROSS SUB-REGIONS (2001 CENSUS) ENGLISH NOT VERY WELL/AT ALL, AS % TOTAL POPULATION

Source: Table B09 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## PROFILE OF GROUP

To clarify the circumstances of the above-mentioned group, further information has been sought from the Australian Bureau of Statistics. The Bureau indicated that a high cost would be incurred for limited benefit. Therefore, additional information has been obtained from the Department of Immigration, Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (DIMIA) about new arrivals from abroad moving to Mildura between 1<sup>st</sup> January 2000 and 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 (Settlement Reports).

According to DIMIA, during the specified period the countries of birth of new settlers moving to the Mildura Local Government Area were as follows:

TABLE 9: CHARACTERISTICS OF NEW ARRIVALS

Country of birth% (Total = 386)		Religion % (total known= 195)		Major Language % (Total language known =286)	
Turkey	22.8	Islam	54.4	English	32.2
Iraq	10.4	Catholic (nec)	6.6	Turkish	18.5
United Kingdom	8.8	Christian (nfd)	6.6	Arabic (inc Lebanese)	16.1
India	5.7	No religion	6.2	Kurdish	5.6
Tonga	4.4	Buddhism	4.6	Tongan	3.1
South Africa	3.9	Latter Day Saints/Mormons	4.6	Russian	2.8
Afghanistan	3.6	Anglican	3.6	Vietnamese	2.1
Vietnam	3.6	Orthodox (nfd)	3.6	Others	19.6
Philippines	3.4	Jehovah's Witnesses	2.1		
Former USSR	2.8	Catholic/Western Catholic	1.5		
Other	25.6	Others	7.2		
Birthplace unknown	4.9				

## EDUCATION

The years of education completed was available for 175/386...45.3% of overseas arrivals. Approaching a third (29.7%) of those whose educational background was known had completed six or fewer years of education; a further 38 or 21.7 percent had undertaken between seven and ten years and 75 (42.9%) had an educational experience extending beyond ten years.

## SOCIAL COHESION – INCORPORATING: VOLUNTEERING, MUTUAL SUPPORT & ‘SOCIABLE RECREATION’

When the degree of social cohesion or ‘connectedness’ of people in neighbourhoods is assessed by their involvement in volunteer services, by their expectation of mutual support in difficult times, and by the extent to which they take their leisure and/or exercise in the company of others, then certain communal benefits appear to follow in the high scoring localities. The harmful effects that generally accompany social conditions like unemployment, limited education and low family income are held in check or dampened by relatively strong bonds between people.

The information needed to gauge the degree of social cohesion in Mildura is obtained from continuous health and sport and recreation surveys conducted across Victoria. By comparison with the census data and collections that form the basis of other indicators included in this report, the number of people from the Mildura region included in those state-wide surveys is comparatively small. Now that the surveys have been instigated the numbers will build up over time. Meanwhile the results presented here need to be interpreted with caution and should be regarded as illustrating future data possibilities rather than conclusive results. The numbers of respondents from the localities of interest who were included in the state wide samples were as follows:

TABLE 10: NUMBER OF SURVEY RESPONDENTS IN SUB REGIONS (2001/02)

	<b>Volunteering</b>	<b>Mutual help</b>	<b>Group recreation</b>
Irymple	15	15	41
Merbein	-	-	-
Red Cliffs	41	41	12
Mildura Central	204	204	106
Mildura Municipality	260	260	159

Source: DHS, Australian Sports Commission 2002 Unpublished Data

With the above variation in base figures in mind, the respective rates of volunteering, the degree to which residents are confident of mutual support, and their participation in group recreation and/or exercise can be calculated for each locality except Merbein (from which no survey responses were available). Obviously at this stage more confidence can be placed in the results for Mildura Central and the Municipality but Red Cliffs and Irymple are included for illustrative purposes:

Mildura Central and Mildura Municipality had reasonably similar scores on the volunteering and mutual help components and both exceeded the rates for Victoria as a whole, substantially so in the case of volunteering. The Municipality rates on these two indicators benefited from the Irymple results that were based on comparatively small numbers. However the credibility of the Irymple findings was enhanced somewhat by the high group recreation rate (based on 41 respondents). This was higher than the state-wide average and contributed to an overall cohesion score that placed the area among the 10% highest postcode areas in Victoria. It is necessary to see whether this pattern is sustained as larger base figures become available. The overall cohesion scores for Mildura Central and the Municipality were close to the state average.

## SECTION 5: COMMUNITY SAFETY

### CHILD MALTREATMENT

The socio-economic circumstances of neighbourhoods, including income and the rate of employment, affect the incidence of child maltreatment. Residential mobility, crime, single parent households, limited social cohesion and support among neighbours are other characteristics of areas with elevated rates of child maltreatment.

The most recent figures available on confirmed instances of child maltreatment within the Mildura sub-regions are for 2002, supplemented by almost complete data for 2001 and partial data for the previous two years. Because of its sensitivity, this information has been made available on the basis that results for individual neighbourhoods will not be published. The number of instances of child maltreatment per 1,000 children between 1999 and 2002 in Melbourne was stable at between 6.6 and 7.1. Without breaching guidelines covering the release of this material, over the same period the rate in parts of the Municipality were two-to-three times that in Melbourne. Further details would have to be obtained directly from Child Protection and Family Services, Victorian Department of Human Services. This is an area that warrants the close consideration of the Governance Group. It can be added that the rate in Merbein has decreased since 1999 and in the one year for which data is available; Wentworth had a comparatively low rate.

### CRIMINAL CONVICTIONS

The accompanying crime rates are based on adult criminal convictions across the age group (18-50 years) that accounts for the overwhelming majority of those convicted of adult crimes. The average rate of criminal convictions per 1000 people within the specified age group within the Mildura region (all six localities) is 8.7 per 1,000 people, while in Melbourne and Regional Victoria it is 4.4 and 6.7 per 1000 respectively. Two sub-regions' conviction rates lie below the Victorian Regional average of 6.7 per 1000, namely Irymple and Ouyen with rates of 4.3 and 4.6 respectively. In the middle range, Red Cliffs' rate of 7.0 per 1000 people is on par with that of Regional Victoria. Merbein's rate of 7.7, while Mildura Central's conviction rate is the highest in the region with 10.0 per 1000 citizen's aged 18-50. On the whole, the rate of criminal convictions within the Mildura region is higher than that of Regional Victoria, with only two sub-regions below the regional Victorian rate.

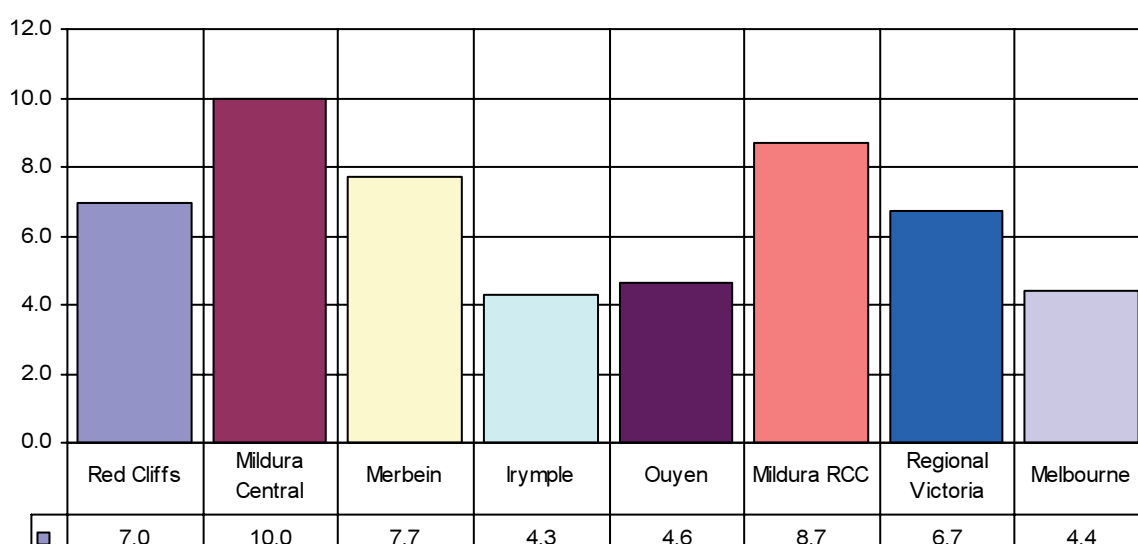


FIGURE 16: CRIMINAL CONVICTION RATE PER 1000 (2003)

Source: Corrections Victoria

## PRISON ADMISSIONS

The rate of prison admissions throughout Victoria correlates with a range of other indicators of disadvantage especially unemployment, psychiatric hospital admissions, childhood accidents, child maltreatment and lack of work skills.<sup>5</sup> The unskilled occupational background of the majority of prisoners and their poor level of formal education – two-thirds are functionally illiterate in NSW – testify to their markedly depressed economic and social backgrounds.

Because the bulk of adult prisoners are within the age range 18-50 years, we have expressed the number of admissions in each area as a rate per 10,000 of that section of the population. The most recent data is for 2003 and the base number of offenders is small, warranting cautious interpretation of the results. Additional information may become available in 2006. Meanwhile, with a prison admission rate (41.4 per 10,000) twice that of Regional Victoria (18.84) Mildura Central appears to be in need of additional crime prevention planning. The comparatively high rate for Merbein is based on a small number of prisoners so that additional data needs to be obtained to assess the comparative seriousness of offending in that locality.

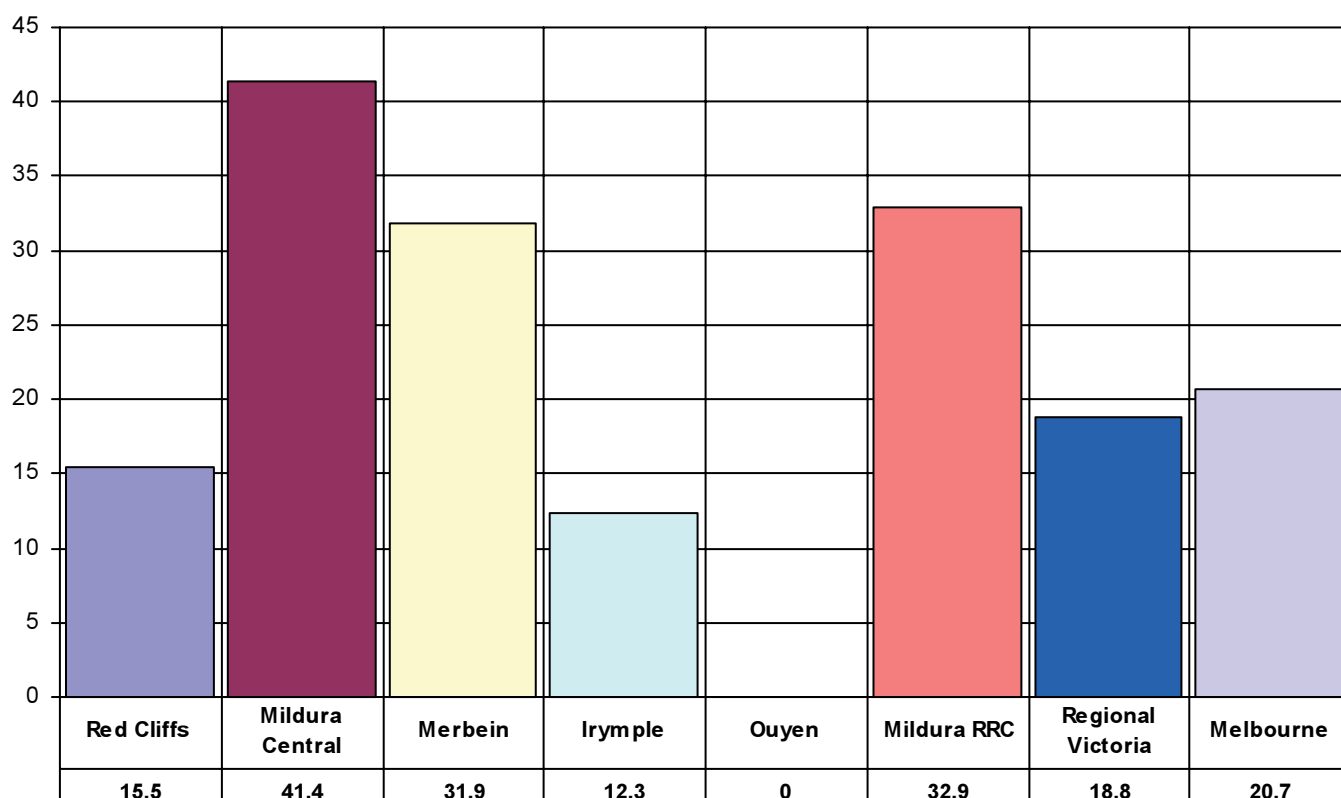


FIGURE 17: PRISON ADMISSIONS ACROSS MILDURA'S SUB-REGIONS EXPRESSED AS A RATE PER 10,000 POPULATION (18-50 YEARS)

Source: Corrections Victoria 2003

<sup>5</sup> Vinson, T., (2004) *Community Adversity and Resilience*, Melbourne, Jesuit Social Services

## SECTION 6: ECONOMIC

### OCCUPATIONS

The census enables the pattern of occupations throughout the Mildura region to be examined from a number of different angles. Possibly the least complicated is the range of broad occupational classifications and this is the first aspect presented below. To avoid an incomprehensible amount of detail the consideration of occupational categories is confined to the Mildura Rural and Mildura Central sub-regions with comparisons for the State of Victoria. This material is followed by data on the profile of businesses and the proportions of employed persons engaged in different types of businesses, distributed across the sub-regions generally employed throughout this report.

### OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES

The differences between the Mildura Central sub-region and Victoria as a whole are not all that great. The proportion of the workforce comprising the least skilled group (labourers and related) in Mildura is 8.8% and the corresponding state figure is 8.3%. The Victorian labourer component has been quite stable over the past three censuses but Mildura Central has seen a contraction of 5.0% over the same period during which time a movement of equal magnitude in the opposite direction has occurred in Mildura Rural.

The large percentage of managers/administrators in the rural areas of Mildura reflects the designation and statistical coding of farm managers. The number of workers classified as managers or administrators in Mildura Central slightly exceeds the state average but there has been a decline in the percentage of workers in this category across all three zones in the recent past. The past decade has seen a modest growth in the professional/associated professional sector of the Mildura Central workforce from 19.0% to approximately 25.0%. During the same time the corresponding increase across the state has been from approximately 23.0% to 30.5%.

TABLE 11: PROPORTION OF EMPLOYEES IN OCCUPATIONAL CATEGORIES (MILDURA CENTRAL AND RURAL)

	Mildura - Rural			Mildura - Central			Victoria		
	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001	1991	1996	2001
Managers/admin	41.2%	37.4%	36.0%	15.0%	13.9%	12.5%	14.9%	10.0%	9.5%
Labourers, related	14.4%	19.2%	19.3%	13.8%	14.6%	8.8%	8.8%	8.3%	8.3%
Professional	8.7%	8.3%	8.8%	11.9%	13.2%	14.1%	15.6%	17.8%	19.1%
Assoc. professionals	5.5%	6.9%	6.3%	7.1%	10.4%	10.8%	7.5%	11.4%	11.4%
Intermed. clerical, sales, service	4.1%	6.7%	7.7%	10.6%	13.4%	14.4%	11.6%	15.4%	16.1%
Intermed. Production, transpt	5.3%	6.4%	6.8%	6.2%	7.1%	7.3%	8.7%	8.9%	8.1%
Trades and related	6.0%	6.2%	6.3%	11.8%	11.5%	11.8%	13.7%	12.9%	12.2%
Element. clerical, sales, service	4.3%	4.3%	4.7%	11.0%	9.4%	9.4%	10.8%	8.9%	9.6%
Advanced clerical, service	2.3%	1.6%	1.6%	4.8%	3.3%	3.0%	6.5%	4.3%	3.6%
Not stated, inadeq. described	8.1%	2.9%	2.4%	7.8%	3.1%	2.2%	6.8%	2.7%	2.1%
Total	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Table T16 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## TYPES OF BUSINESSES

The following two sections are based on data obtained from the Small Business Register (Australian Bureau of Statistics) covering the period 2001

It is obvious from the following table that the dominant industries in each of the rural sub-regions of Mildura fall within the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' category accounting generally for three-fifths of the businesses in each locality – a rate almost double that applying throughout regional Victoria. Red Cliffs stands a little higher and Irymple a little lower than the Mildura rural average. Mildura Central is:

- representative of the proportion of businesses classified 'Manufacturing,' 'Wholesale Trade,' 'Transport and Storage,' 'Cultural and Recreational Services,' across Victoria,
- exceeds the state-wide proportion engaged in 'Construction,' 'Retail Trade,' 'Finance and Insurance,' 'Health and Community Services,' and 'Personal and Other Services,' and
- has a lower proportion – substantially so – in 'Property and Business Services,' and perhaps surprisingly in the low volume area of 'Accommodation, Cafes and Restaurants,' where the Mildura Central figure (0.79) is below that of Regional Victoria as well as Melbourne and Victoria:

TABLE 12: PROPORTIONS OF BUSINESSES WITHIN MILDURA SUB-REGIONS

Industry	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing	67.3%	13.1%	60.8%	51.5%	59.8%	39.0%	60.6%	33.0%	2.3%
Construction	6.0%	19.1%	8.1%	15.2%	4.5%	13.4%	6.5%	12.8%	15.9%
Retail Trade	4.8%	17.8%	5.5%	3.7%	7.4%	11.3%	5.0%	10.4%	10.7%
Finance & Insurance	1.5%	10.6%	2.4%	1.7%	1.3%	6.0%	1.7%	3.8%	9.5%
Transport & Storage	3.4%	6.6%	5.0%	3.7%	5.5%	5.1%	2.8%	4.9%	6.3%
Property & Business Services	5.8%	3.0%	6.6%	8.8%	4.2%	4.3%	7.6%	11.9%	26.2%
Personal & Other Services	2.2%	6.1%	2.2%	3.5%	2.9%	4.3%	2.9%	3.8%	4.3%
Manufacturing	1.7%	6.1%	2.8%	3.0%	1.3%	4.1%	1.2%	4.5%	7.2%
Health & Community Services	0.8%	6.7%	0.8%	0.3%	0.6%	3.6%	1.9%	3.0%	4.5%
Wholesale Trade	2.2%	3.9%	1.4%	3.0%	2.6%	3.0%	2.8%	2.7%	4.2%
Cultural & Recreational Services	0.3%	3.3%	1.5%	1.7%	2.3%	2.2%	1.1%	2.4%	3.3%
Education	1.3%	1.6%	1.1%	0.8%	2.3%	1.4%	1.1%	1.4%	1.4%
Accommodation, Cafes And Restaurants	1.4%	0.8%	0.8%	1.0%	3.2%	1.0%	2.6%	3.4%	2.0%
Communication Services	0.5%	0.8%	0.3%	1.0%	1.6%	0.8%	0.6%	0.8%	1.4%
Electricity, Gas & Water Supply	0.1%	0.2%	0.0%	0.3%	0.0%	0.2%	0.6%	0.1%	0.1%
Government Administration & Defence	0.3%	0.0%	0.3%	0.3%	0.6%	0.2%	0.3%	0.5%	0.1%
Mining	0.1%	0.1%	0.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.1%	0.3%	0.2%	0.1%
Industry Not Stated	0.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%	0.1%	0.6%	0.1%	0.2%

Source: Australian Business Register 2001 ABS



## EMPLOYMENT WITHIN BUSINESS CATEGORIES

Not unexpectedly, a major proportion of employment within Mildura rural areas is within the 'Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing' industries but with the exception of Ouyen (2.8%) and Wentworth (7.7%), upwards of approximately 9.0% of the employees in Red Cliffs, Merbein and Irymple were engaged in 'Manufacturing.' Again with the exception of Ouyen (2.2%) between five and seven per cent of employees in the rural sub-areas were employed within the 'Wholesale Trade' category. Apart from the Rest of Wentworth (8.0%) a greater number still work within the retail trade, the proportion ranging from 10.2% to 16.5 %. This same category was dominant in the employment profile of Mildura Central accounting for 17.0% of employees with Manufacturing (9.3%) and Health and Community Services (10.6%) also significant components of the city's workforce.

TABLE 13: PROPORTIONS OF WORKFORCE X EMPLOYMENT CATEGORIES WITHIN MILDURA'S SUB-REGIONS

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Agriculture Forestry and Fishing	40.7%	10.7%	22.5%	18.2%	33.3%	18.6%	35.2%	12.6%	0.8%
Mining	0.3%	0.5%	0.1%	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.6%	0.4%	0.2%
Manufacturing	8.9%	9.3%	13.9%	11.7%	2.8%	9.7%	7.7%	12.9%	16.0%
Electricity Gas and Water	0.9%	1.3%	0.8%	1.1%	1.6%	1.2%	1.1%	1.2%	0.5%
Construction	4.1%	6.1%	5.2%	6.8%	4.8%	5.6%	4.3%	6.5%	6.6%
Wholesale	6.5%	6.5%	5.6%	7.2%	2.2%	6.2%	5.7%	4.3%	5.9%
Retail	10.2%	17.0%	14.3%	16.5%	12.9%	15.3%	8.0%	14.9%	14.7%
Accommodation Cafes and Restaurants	2.3%	5.5%	3.8%	4.3%	4.4%	4.6%	6.4%	5.0%	4.2%
Transport and Storage	2.3%	4.0%	5.3%	3.0%	4.7%	3.7%	3.9%	3.5%	3.9%
Communication services	0.8%	0.9%	0.5%	0.6%	1.5%	0.9%	0.3%	1.3%	2.2%
Finance and Insurance	1.0%	2.1%	0.9%	2.2%	1.5%	1.8%	0.8%	1.9%	4.5%
Property and Business Services	3.3%	7.6%	4.9%	5.5%	4.1%	6.3%	4.3%	6.2%	12.9%
Government Administration and Defence	1.5%	2.9%	1.5%	1.9%	2.6%	2.4%	3.6%	3.4%	2.9%
Education	5.9%	7.6%	5.9%	6.8%	7.2%	7.2%	5.9%	7.4%	7.0%
Health and Community Services	5.5%	10.6%	8.0%	7.0%	10.4%	9.2%	6.1%	10.8%	9.4%
Cultural and Recreation Services	1.0%	1.8%	1.3%	1.5%	0.4%	1.5%	1.6%	2.0%	2.7%
Personal and Other Services	1.8%	3.5%	2.7%	2.9%	1.4%	3.0%	2.3%	3.3%	3.3%
Non Classified Economic Units	0.4%	0.4%	0.1%	0.4%	1.5%	0.4%	0.2%	0.5%	0.6%
Not sated	2.6%	1.8%	2.7%	1.8%	2.5%	2.1%	1.9%	1.8%	1.8%

Source: Table B25 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## UNEMPLOYMENT

At the time of the last census (2001) the rate of unemployment within the labour force of the Mildura sub-regions, with the exception of Mildura Central (7.2%), was generally below that of Regional Victoria (7.3%). Of the remaining five areas only one, Merbein (6.8%), exceeded the Melbourne unemployment rate of 6.7%.

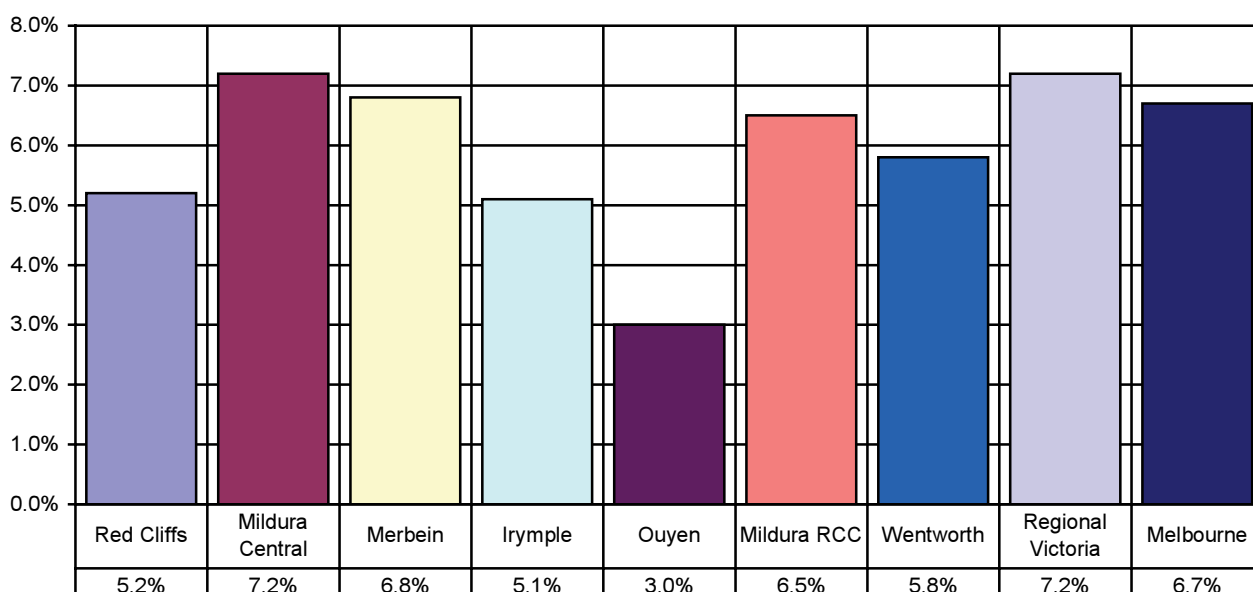


FIGURE 18: COMPARATIVE RATES OF UNEMPLOYMENT (2001)

Source: Table B22 2001 Census of Population and Housing

Using New Start allowance data it is possible to gain an overview of the protracted unemployment of people dependent upon assistance and out of work for upwards of two years. In 2001, with the exception of Ouyen which had a comparatively low rate of workers unemployed for 2+ years, the remaining localities of Mildura were within + or – 1% of the Regional Victorian average (3.3%) but exceeded the comparative rate in Melbourne (2.4%). In keeping with the (estimated) reductions in the number of 24+ months New Start recipients in Melbourne and Regional Victoria by 2005, the rates in Mildura's sub-regions remained fairly stable the major changes being an increase of 0.5% in Central Mildura and a decrease of equivalent magnitude in Merbein. The fact that 24 months+ recipients accounted for a slightly higher proportion of people receiving New Start allowances in 2005 than in 2001 suggests that the group of continuing unemployed contains a higher proportion of hard-to-place workers.

TABLE 14: RECIPIENTS OF NEW START ALLOWANCE AND UNEMPLOYED FOR 2+ YEARS (2001)\*

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
% of work-force-2001	3.3%	3.8%	4.1%	3.0%	2.6%	3.6%	4.0%	3.4%	2.4%
% of New Start Recipients (2001)	33.8%	43.6%	45.9%	40.3%	28.6%	42.2%	38.0%	41.3%	41.8%
Estimated % of work-force (2005)*	6.8%	8.6%	7.3%	6.4%	5.4%	7.8%	8.1%	6.2%	4.8%
% of New Start Recipients (2005)*	46.2%	50.5%	49.1%	48.8%	33.3%	50.5%	47.9%	43.2%	44.3%

\* Estimated using 2001 workforce figures

Source: Centrelink Unpublished Data 2005; Table B22 2001 Census of Population and Housing

## TAXABLE INCOME

With few exceptions the taxable income of workers in Regional Victoria and the sub-regions of Mildura is substantially below that of Metropolitan Melbourne. The table below covers the three years 2001-2003 and expresses comparative earnings in terms of average (mean) taxable incomes. In 2003, with the exception of Ouyen's average of \$37,094 which exceeded the Regional Victorian counterpart by more than \$2,000, all other sub-areas of Mildura had mean taxable incomes that were of the order of \$9,000 or more below the Melbourne figure. The differences ranged from almost \$12,000 in the case of Wentworth to around \$5,000 in the case of Ouyen.

How stable were these differences over the three-year period? In 2002 Ouyen's average (\$40,022) again exceeded that of Regional Victoria by almost \$6,000 and was just \$890 short of the Melbourne figure. This followed a far less favourable position in the preceding year when Ouyen's average mean taxable income was slightly below that of Regional Victoria and more than \$8,000 below that for Melbourne. Averages for the remaining sub-areas of Mildura in 2002 and 2001 were of the order of \$8,000 to \$11,000 and \$9,500 to \$11,500 respectively below the Melbourne average with Wentworth and Merbein either at or close to the extreme low end of the scale in those two years.

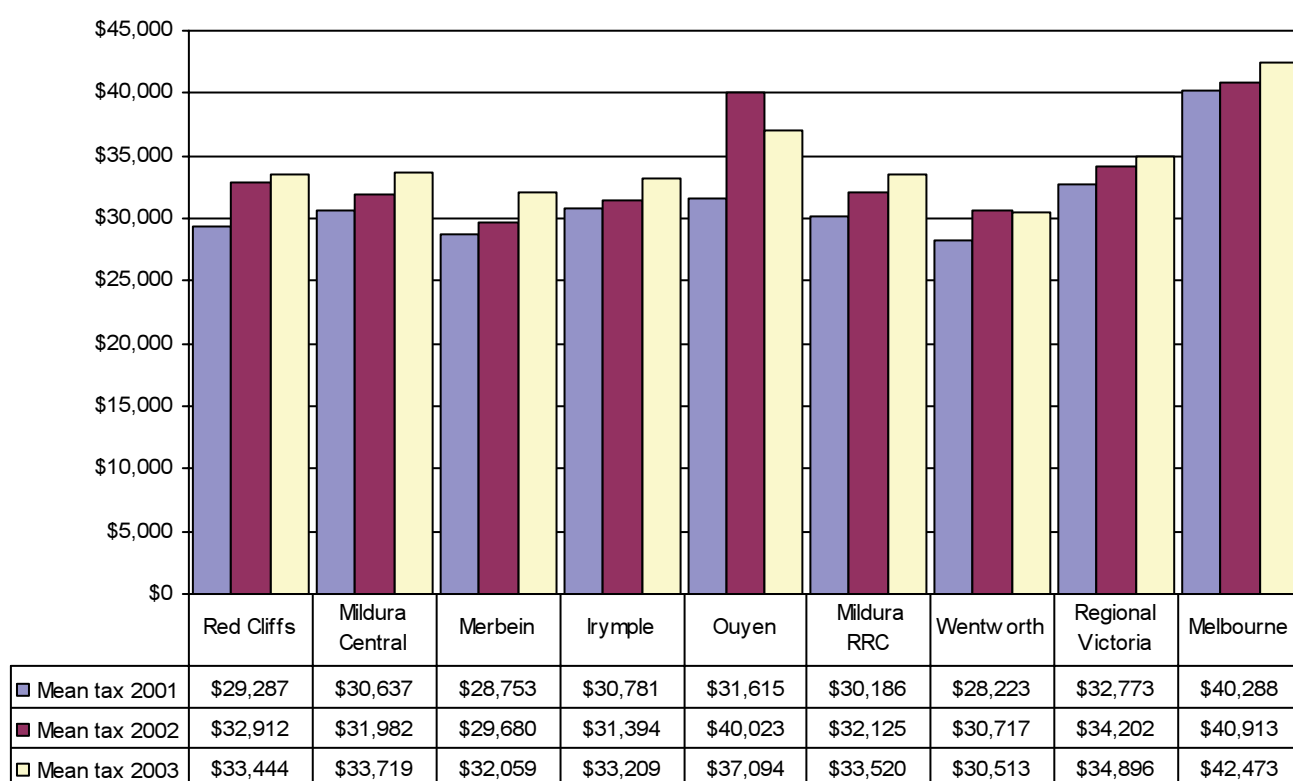


FIGURE 19: TAXABLE INCOME DISTRIBUTION ACROSS MILDURA LOCALITIES

Source ATO Annual Reports 2002, 2003, 2004

## GROWTH IN TOURISM

Because tourism is a significant part of the region's economy, information concerning its growth is included in this section of the indicator report. Tourism Victoria's Murray Market Profile includes data that lend themselves to use as indicators of the development of the regional tourism industry. The three aspects adopted for present purposes are:

Domestic Overnight Visitation

Domestic Visitor Nights

Domestic Daytrip Visitation

The Murray Region received 2.5 million domestic overnight visitors during the year ending June 2004. At the end of the six-year period 1999-2004 there was a 9.5% increase in the number of overnight visitors but the pattern was not one of continuous even growth:

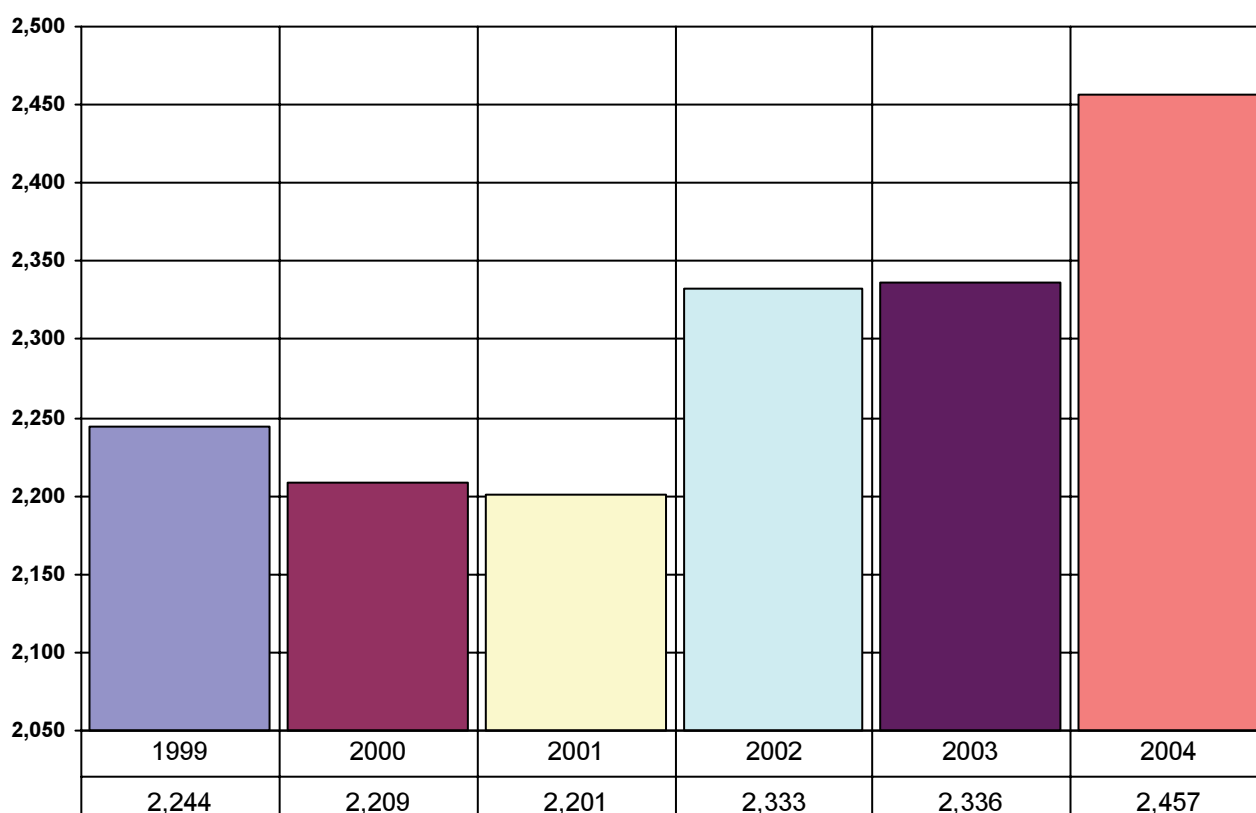


FIGURE 20: OVERNIGHT VISITORS (000S)

In 2004 the region benefited from 7.2 million domestic visitor nights. Between the beginning of the six-year period and its end there was an increase of 14.7% and apart from a reduction in 2001 the pattern of growth was fairly continuous:

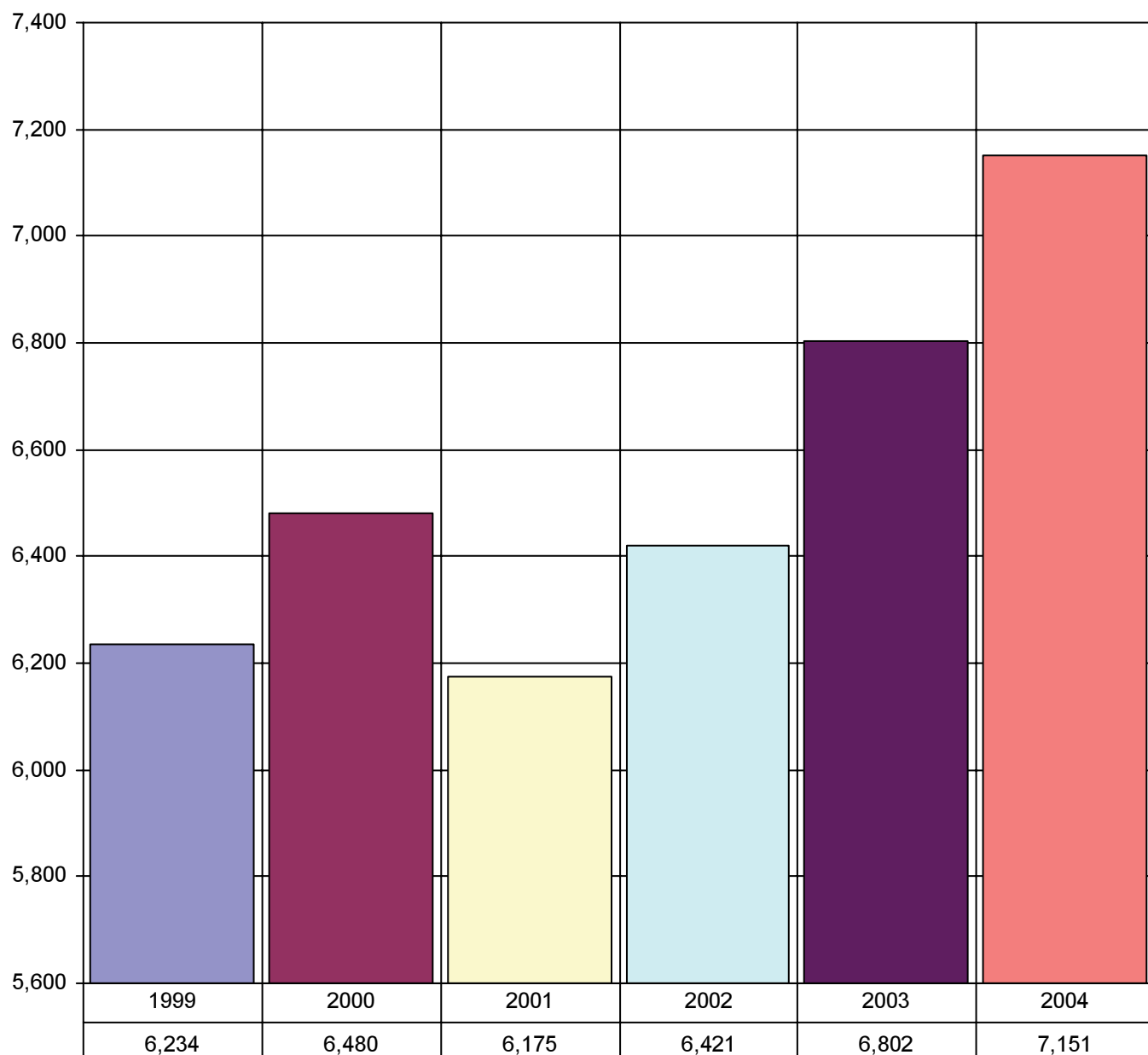


FIGURE 21: VISITOR NIGHTS (000S)

There were over 2.6 million domestic daytrip visitors to the Murray Region in the year ending June 2004. This represented a decline from the start of the six-year period of 17.2%. The turning point was 2000, the decline thereafter being most marked in the year 2002:

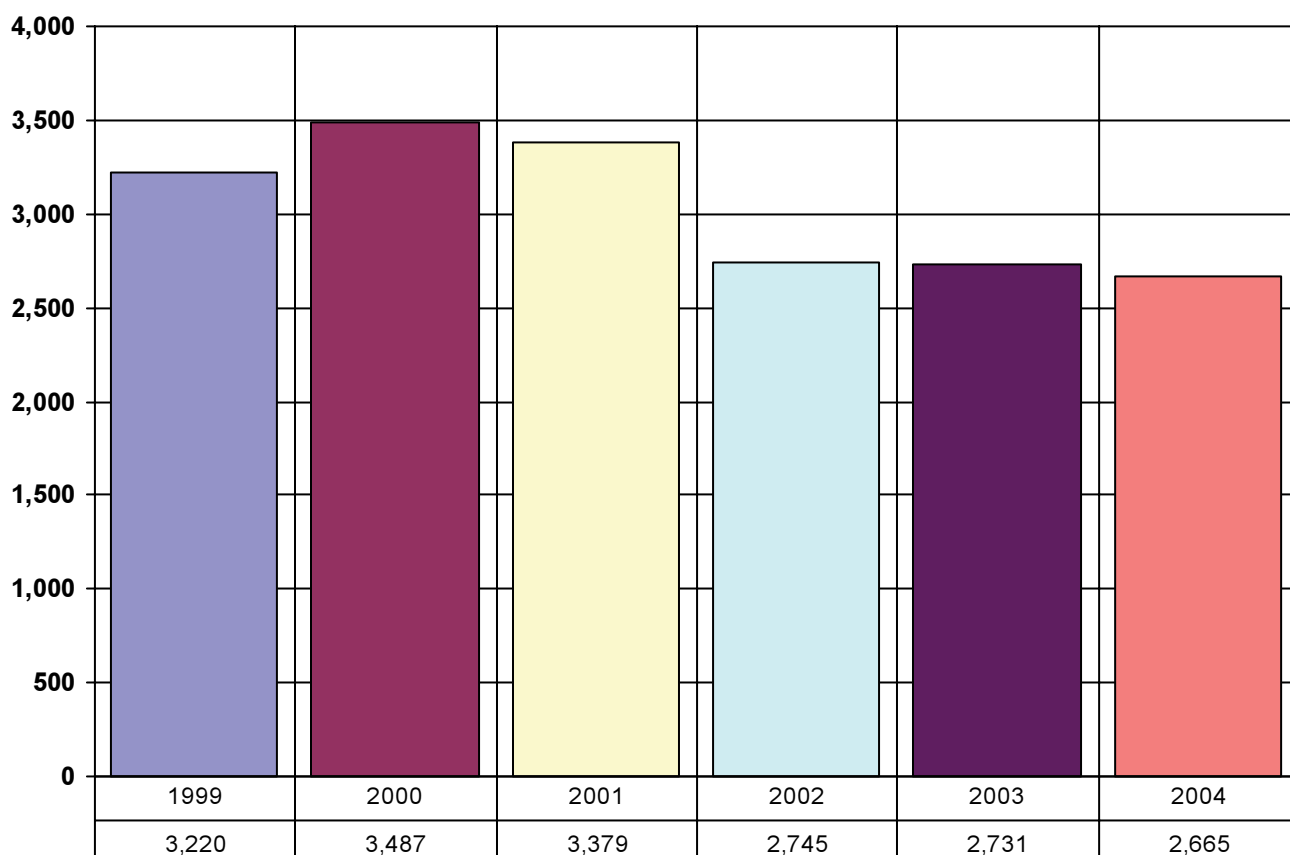


FIGURE 22: DOMESTIC DAYTRIP VISITATION (000S)

## COMPUTER AND INTERNET USE/ACCESS

The level of access to a computer within the majority of Mildura's sub-regions is significantly below the corresponding data for both Melbourne and Regional Victoria, regardless of where the computers are located. Generally, those with access to a computer are likely to also have access to the Internet, as the data shows, although there are some discrepancies. Irymple and the Mildura area have the greatest computer and Internet access (40.1% and 32.4% respectively). It is also the area that most closely matches the level of access across Regional Victoria (41.0% computer; 32.9% Internet). Wentworth had 31.5% computer use and 24.9% Internet access. Computer access figures for Red Cliffs, Mildura Central, Merbein and Ouyen fell within a compressed range, from 35.1% in Ouyen to 36.6% in Red Cliffs, while Internet access ranged from 25.9% in Ouyen to 30.6% in Mildura Central.

A complication with the ABS data used in this section is that these figures may include access at both work and school, thus skewing the results. In line with the region's ambition to be enterprising and culturally attuned, increased home access to a computer and the Internet would be advantageous. Thus, raising the household computer and internet access to a level on par with Irymple and regional Victoria, with a goal of bringing the region up to 75% home computer and internet access within ten years, would greatly benefit Mildura's individual, family and collective wellbeing.

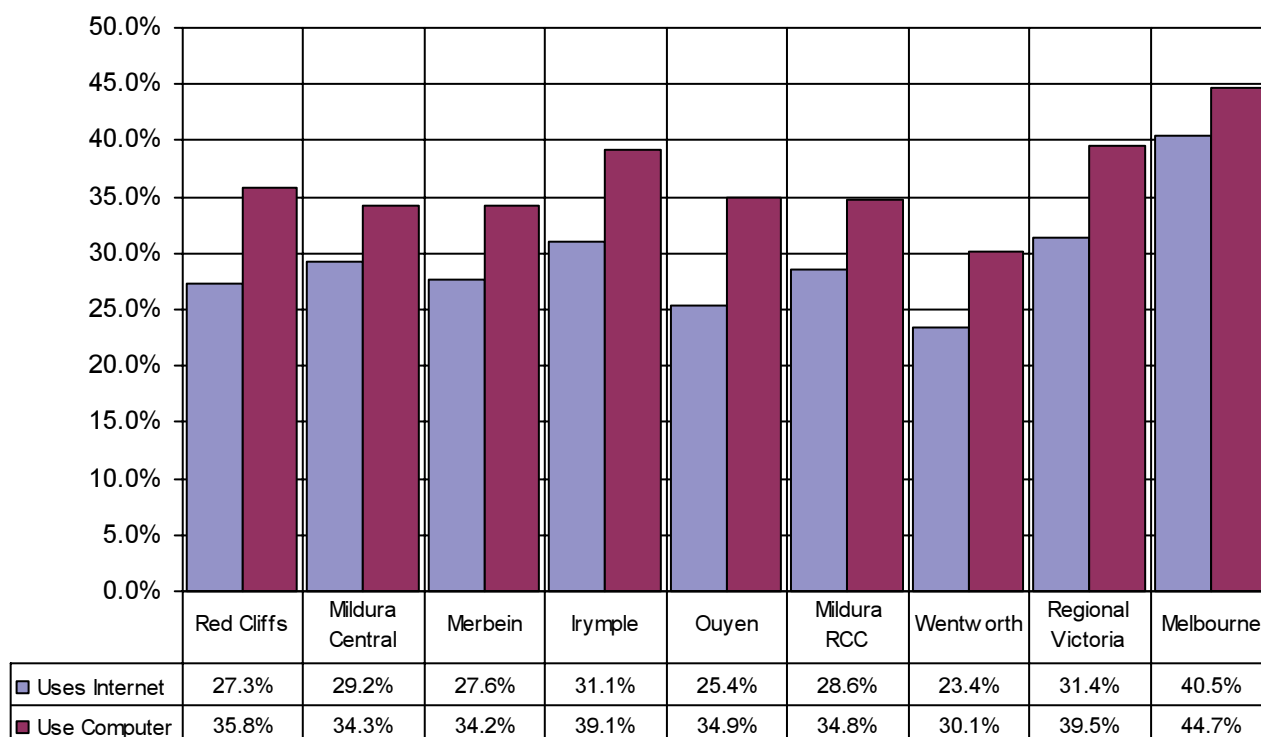


FIGURE 23: COMPUTER AND INTERNET ACCROSS SUB-REGION  
Source: Table B15, B16 Census of Population and Housing

## SECTION 7: EDUCATION

### ATTENDANCE AT PRE-SCHOOL

Although prior-to-school and pre-school services may be advisable at a very early age in some instances, the customary age for pre-school attendance is four. In calculating attendance at pre-school in Mildura's sub-regions and making external comparisons it has been necessary to relate the number of attendees to infants aged 0-4 years. On this basis it appears that the rates of attendance in Mildura generally match or exceed that in Melbourne and the average for Regional Victoria. Wentworth is the one locality that is marginally below the comparison areas.

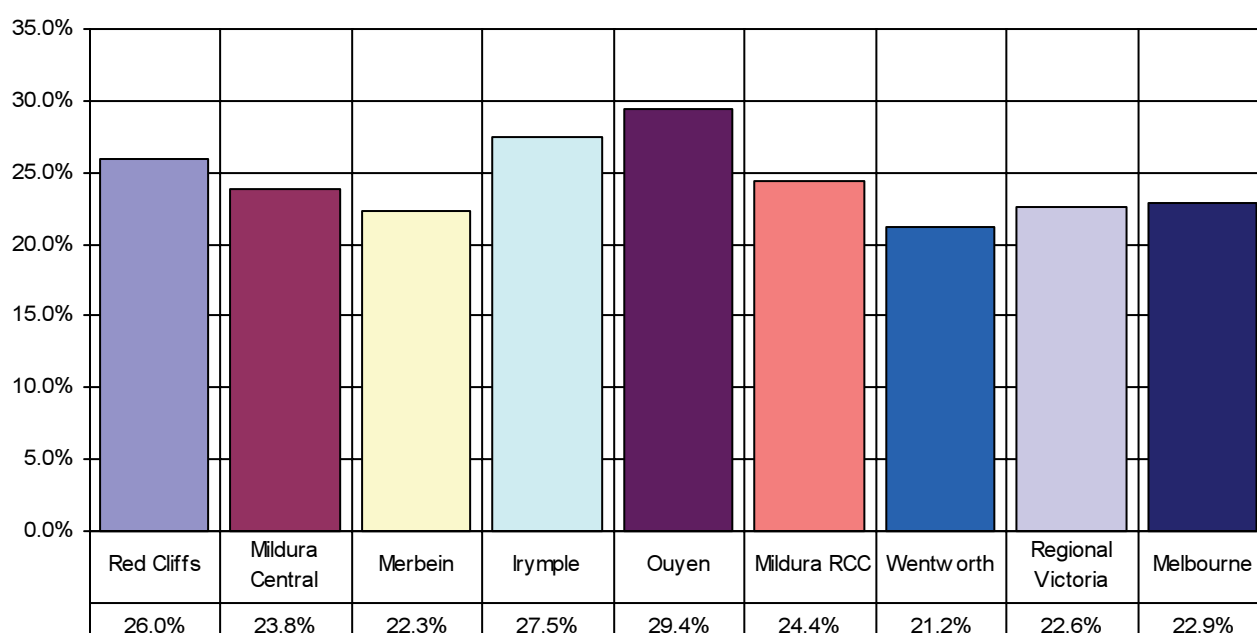


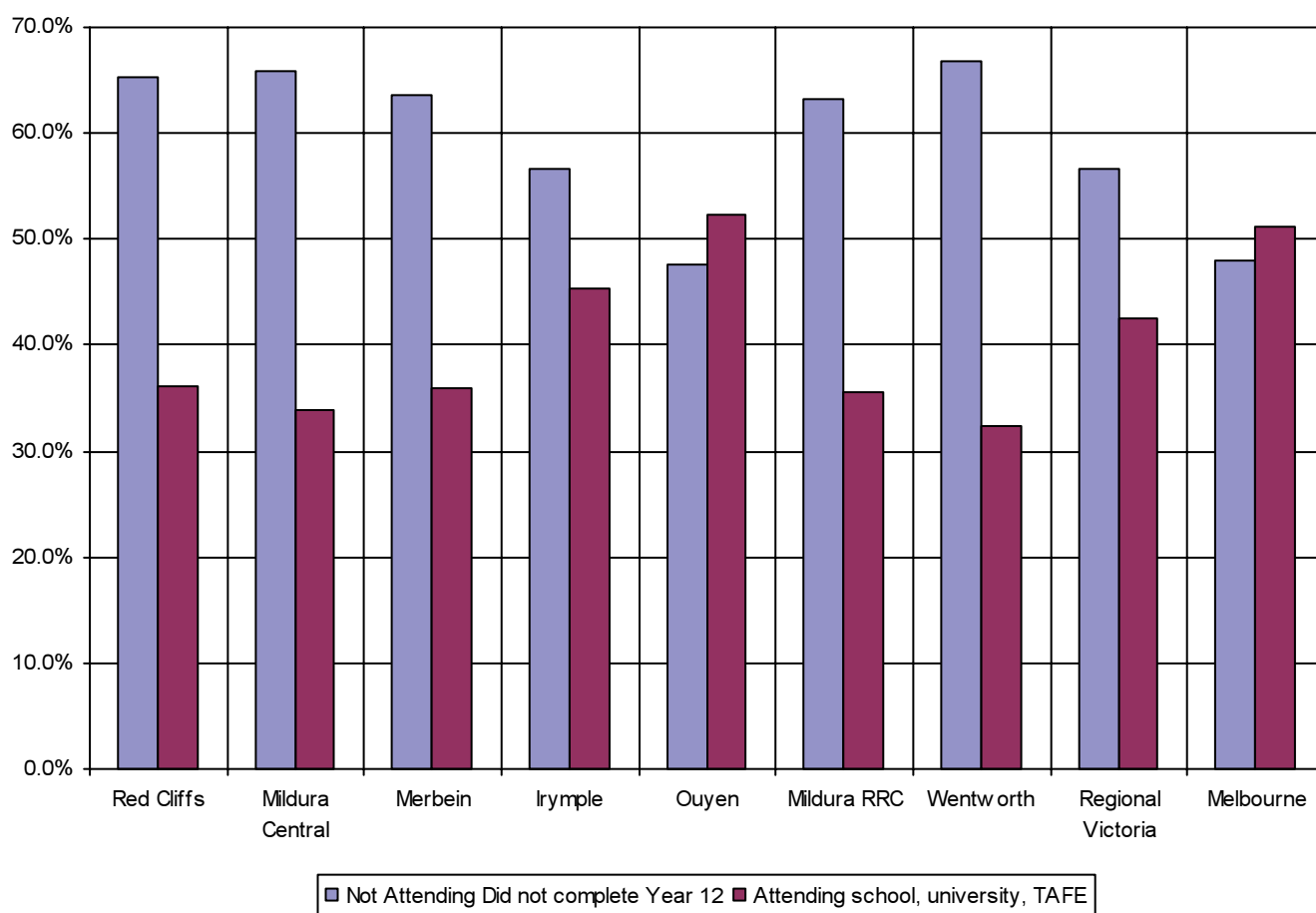
FIGURE 24 PROPORTION OF PRE-SCHOOL ATTENDANCE ACROSS MILDURA'S SUB-REGIONS (CALCULATED ON BASIS NUMBER 0-4 YEAR OLDS)

Source: B11 Census of Population and Housing



## INCOMPLETE EDUCATION/TRAINING (17 – 24 YEAR OLDS)

Apart from the intrinsic value of education, it is a major handicap to enter today's world of work without credentials. One way of capturing a community's position in this regard is to examine the number of 17-24 year olds who are neither completing the VCE and not in further education and training. The table below shows that four of Mildura's sub-regions (Mildura Central, Red Cliffs, Merbein and Wentworth) had a third as many again of their young people as Melbourne in the less educated/vocationally under-prepared category. The situation in Ouyen and Irymple was considerably better with the former (with its small base number) matching Melbourne and the latter matching the findings for Regional Victoria:



	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Not Attending Did not complete Year 12	65.3%	65.8%	63.7%	56.6%	47.7%	63.2%	66.8%	56.6%	48.0%
Attending school, university, TAFE	36.2%	33.8%	35.9%	45.4%	52.3%	35.5%	32.4%	42.6%	51.3%

FIGURE 25: PROPORTION 17-24 YEAR OLDS NEITHER COMPLETING VCE NOR UNDERTAKING FURTHER SCHOOLING, EDUCATION AND/OR TRAINING (CENSUS 2001)

Source: 2001 Census of Population and Housing Special Run

## OVERALL EDUCATION

In addition to examining what is happening educationally to young people aged 17 to 24 years today, it is also important to consider the overall levels of education within each sub-region. Obviously those who are still completing their schooling need to be left out of this calculation but for everyone over 15 years of age we can deduce the following picture\*:

TABLE 15: LEVEL OF SCHOOLING ATTAINED BY RESIDENTS OVER 15 EXCLUDING THOSE STILL AT SCHOOL\*

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Year 12 or equivalent	22.3%	29.0%	23.6%	26.6%	22.3%	27.1%	20.5%	30.6%	48.2%
Year 11 or equivalent	18.8%	17.4%	17.9%	17.5%	20.9%	17.9%	14.9%	18.9%	14.9%
Year 10 or equivalent	25.7%	23.0%	25.9%	25.6%	22.0%	23.8%	28.0%	23.3%	16.5%
Year 9 or equivalent	14.1%	12.0%	14.6%	12.2%	12.5%	12.6%	16.5%	12.1%	7.5%
Year 8 or below	18.0%	17.3%	17.1%	16.7%	22.3%	17.5%	19.2%	14.5%	11.3%
Did not go to school	1.1%	1.2%	0.9%	1.3%	0.0%	1.1%	0.8%	0.5%	1.7%

\*Also excludes 'not stated' respondents

Source: B12 2001 Census of Population and Housing

There is a marked difference between the rate of completion of high school in Melbourne and Regional Victoria, especially within several of Mildura's sub-regions. The proportion of the population over fifteen years who have completed Year 12 in Melbourne (48.2%) is 1.6 times the proportion in Regional Victoria (30.8%), a pattern to which Mildura Central and Irymple fairly closely conform. However, the Year 12 rate in Melbourne is at least double and as many as 2.3 times greater than in Merbein, Red Cliffs, Ouyen and Wentworth. These differences are matched at the other end of the education scale. The proportion of Melbourne's population over fifteen years who had not been to school or left in Year 9 or earlier was 20.4%. Mildura's sub-regions exceeded this figure between 1.5 and 1.6 times (Mildura Central, Irymple, Red Cliffs and Merbein) and 1.7/1.8 times (Ouyen and Wentworth).

## POST-SCHOOLING QUALIFICATIONS (WHOLE POPULATION)

The proportion of people in Melbourne with degrees (13.5%) is 1.8 times the proportion across Regional Victoria and Mildura Central. Otherwise the remaining sub-areas of Mildura have numbers of degree holders that are 2.5 to 3.5 times below that applying in Melbourne and a similar pattern applies to Graduate Diploma and Post-Graduate Degree holders with ratios ranging from 2.3 (Mildura Central) to 3.5 (Merbein and Wentworth.) The distribution of those with certificate-level qualifications is much more even.

TABLE 16: POST-SCHOOLING QUALIFICATIONS (WHOLE POPULATION)

	Red Cliffs	Mildura Central	Merbein	Irymple	Ouyen	Mildura RCC	Wentworth	Regional Victoria	Melbourne
Postgraduate Degree	0.3%	0.7%	0.3%	0.3%	0.9%	0.6%	0.2%	0.9%	2.4%
Grad Diploma    Grad Certificate	1.1%	1.3%	1.0%	1.2%	1.1%	1.2%	1.1%	1.6%	2.1%
Degree	4.3%	7.4%	4.3%	5.4%	5.6%	6.4%	3.9%	7.5%	13.4%
Diploma	4.1%	5.0%	4.2%	4.8%	4.4%	4.8%	4.1%	5.8%	7.3%
Certificate	15.4%	16.8%	14.8%	17.4%	13.4%	16.2%	14.1%	18.7%	15.8%
Not applicable	74.9%	68.8%	75.4%	70.9%	74.7%	70.8%	76.5%	65.6%	59.1%

\*Also excludes 'not stated' respondents

Source: Table B23 Census of Population and Housing

## SECTION 8: CULTURAL INDICATORS

Mildura Rural City Council's plan for the cohesive development of the Mildura community demands the monitoring of cultural and recreational opportunities and people's access to the services provided. It is often difficult to assemble relevant local indicators covering these matters and that has proved to be the case with Mildura. The major problem is that it is necessary to rely on information that has not been collected with a research application in mind and yet which demands completeness and accuracy. Nevertheless to make a start now exercising due caution in the interpretation of findings, is to encourage a level of care in compiling data that will benefit future instalments of Mildura's social indicators.

The present report includes two cultural indicators, namely, visits to the City Art Gallery and borrowings from the public libraries.

### ART GALLERY

The communal benefits of the Art Gallery are not entirely reducible to the number of people who visit it. However, in a region that emphasises the value of education and expanding opportunities for cultural experiences one might expect to see an increasing number of residents availing themselves of the chance to view the art on display and also an increasing spread of visitors from the Mildura sub-regions. Possibly because the application of information gathered from visitors to the gallery about their place of residence was uncertain the records appear to have received reduced attention after a six-month period ending October 2004. Therefore this initial compilation of attendances at the gallery utilises the sample of attendees during the period May-October, 2004 in the expectation that the relevant information will be gathered more consistently from this point onwards.

Incomplete though the present data it still serves to illustrate the concentration of patronage within a limited number of areas. On a share of population basis, Mildura Central (where the gallery is located) and Irymple are over-represented among visitors to the gallery, Red Cliffs has its due share, and Merbein, Ouyen and Wentworth are under-represented. This pattern is a reflection of many variables, geographic and social, but it might serve to stimulate further thought about the educational and outreach functions of the gallery.

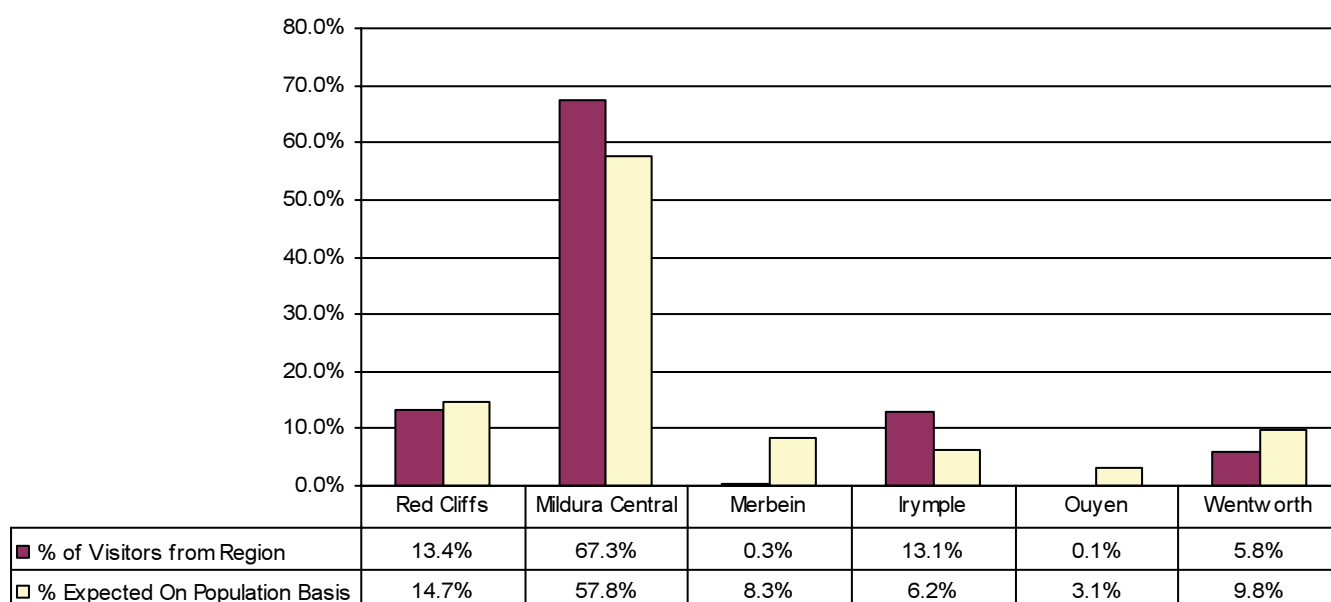


FIGURE 26: PROPORTION OF VISITORS TO ART GALLERY FROM SUB-REGIONS AND PROPORTIONS EXPECTED ON A POPULATION BASIS

Source: Mildura Regional Rural Council – Art Gallery

## LIBRARY BORROWINGS

According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, libraries are the second most frequently attended cultural venues – after cinemas.<sup>6</sup> In 2002, 6.1 million people or 42.1% of the Australian population aged 15 to 74 visit libraries at least once a year. The use made of libraries in Mildura and possibly in regional areas generally appears on the evidence of the records of the Municipal Library and its branches to be lower than for the nation as a whole. A fraction under a quarter (24.4%) of the total population of the five sub-regions for which data is available can be regarded as ‘active’ in that they borrowed from the Municipal Library during the period 1<sup>st</sup> t July 2004 to 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2005. The result was almost identical when the calculation was based on people 15 years of age and older (24.7% of that segment of the population).

The proportion of ‘active’ library users within each sub-region approximated to each locality’s share of population with Mildura Central and Irymple slightly exceeding their proportion but not to any significant extent. On the present evidence the challenge is less one of increasing equity but rather raising the overall use of libraries to match the demands of the ‘Information Age.’ Strategies to achieve that goal need to be linked to the earlier discussed requirement of expanding residents’ access to computers and the internet.

Council’s libraries are located at Mildura City, Red Cliffs, Merbein and Irymple and the Mobile Library serves Nangiloc, Underbool, Cowangie, Ouyen, Werrimull, Walpeup, Murrayville and Cullulleraine.

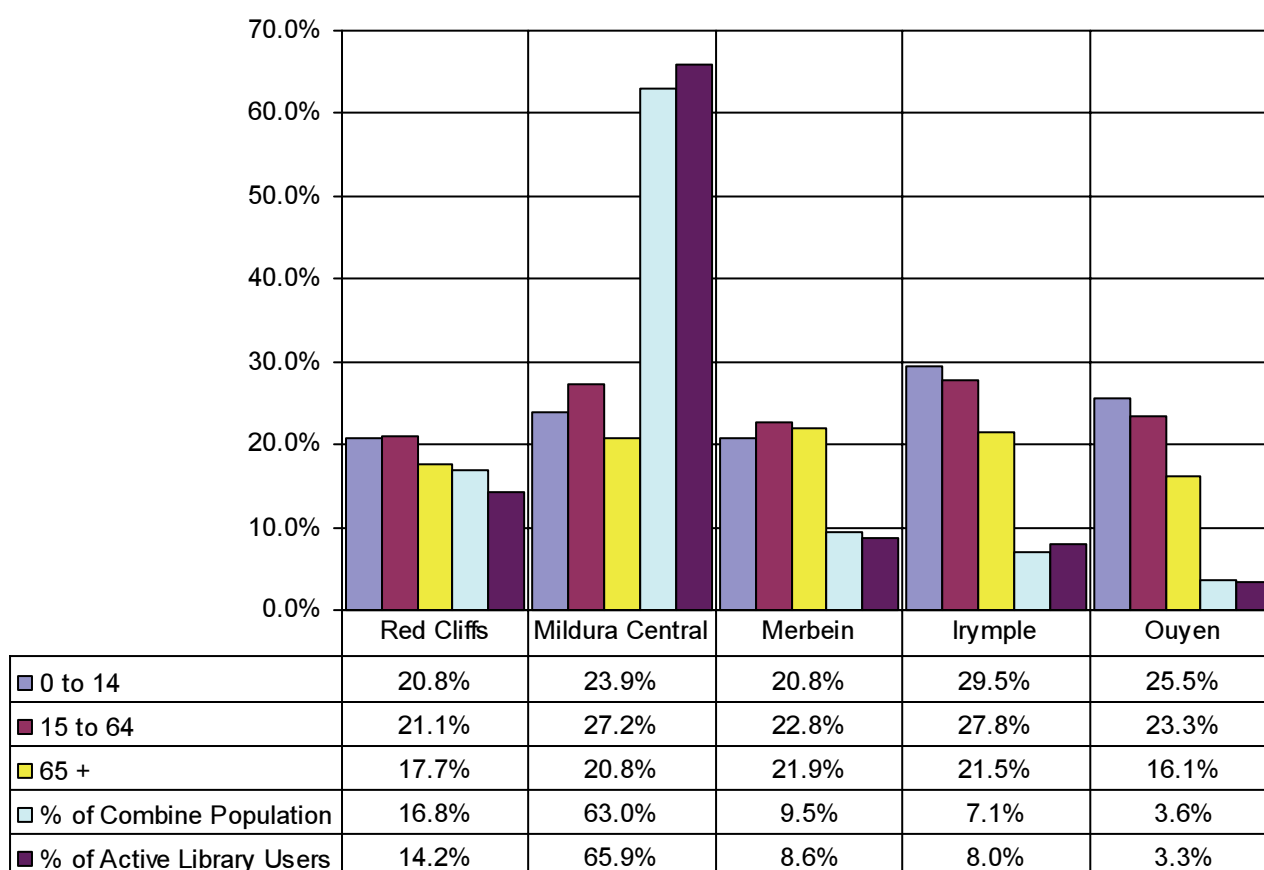


FIGURE 27: LIBRARY USAGE

Source: Tables 03 2001 Census of Population and Housing, Mildura Rural City Council – Library Service

<sup>6</sup> ABS Library Extension Program – Beattie’s Best – Counting on Libraries,

<http://www.abs.gov.au/Websitedbs/D3110127.NSF/0/1ca1378b9355b1c1ca25688f00259fde?OpenDocument#VITAL%20STATISTICS!>

## SECTION 9: ENVIRONMENTAL INDICATORS

The Mildura Rural City Council has established a series of environmental objectives based on accepted best practices. The objectives for 2005-06 are in the table below. The measures chosen in this report are those where community participation is able to make an impact on the local environment. The measures chosen are the Community Kerbside Recycling Service, the number of Tonnes of green waste diverted from Landfill and the Service Eco-Recycle.

TABLE 17: ANNUAL TARGETS AND/OR BEST PRACTICE KPI 05/06

Total tonnes of waste deposited to Mildura Landfill	<30,000 tonnes per annum
Tonnes of domestic waste collected from Kerbside Service.	<11,000 tonnes per annum
Tonnes of contaminated waste from the Kerbside Recycling Service deposited to Mildura Landfill	<15% of total collected
Tonnes of domestic material collected from Kerbside Recycling Service	4200 tonnes per annum
Cost of Kerbside Recycling	\$50.00 per tenement per annum
Service Eco-Recycle Best Practice Target	\$200 per tonne collected
Community Kerbside Recycling Service participation rate	90%
Tonnes of steel recycled from Mildura Landfill	300 tonnes per annum
Number of chemical containers diverted from all waste facilities.	14000 drums per annum
Litres of oil diverted from Mildura Landfill	3000 litre of Oil per annum
Tonnes of green waste diverted from Mildura Landfill	7000 tonnes per annum
Number of car tyres diverted from Mildura Landfill.	1200 tonnes per annum
Tonnes of concrete diverted from Mildura Landfill	2000 tonnes per annum
Number of schools participating in School Recycling Program	25 schools in total (16 more schools)

Source: Mildura Rural City Council – Environmental Services

The Community Kerbside Recycling Service has obtained in 2005 a monthly average participation rate of 80%. This is an increase upon the rate from the previous year of 63%.

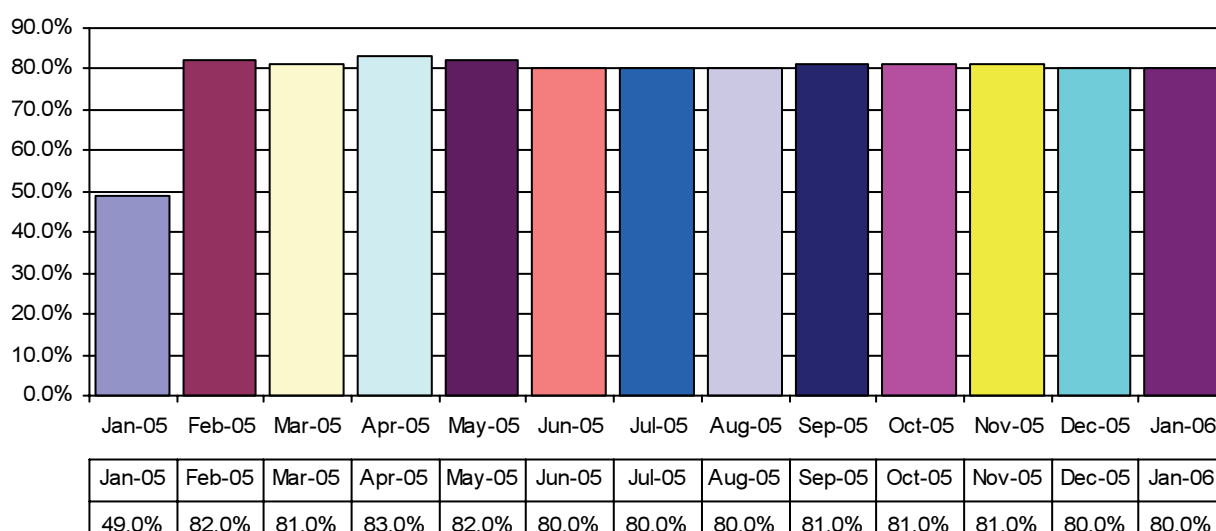


FIGURE 28: COMMUNITY KERBSIDE RECYCLING SERVICE PARTICIPATION RATE

The average amount of green waste diverted from the Mildura Landfill for the period was 550 tonnes per month with some seasonal decline in the winter period and corresponding increase in late Spring and early Summer.

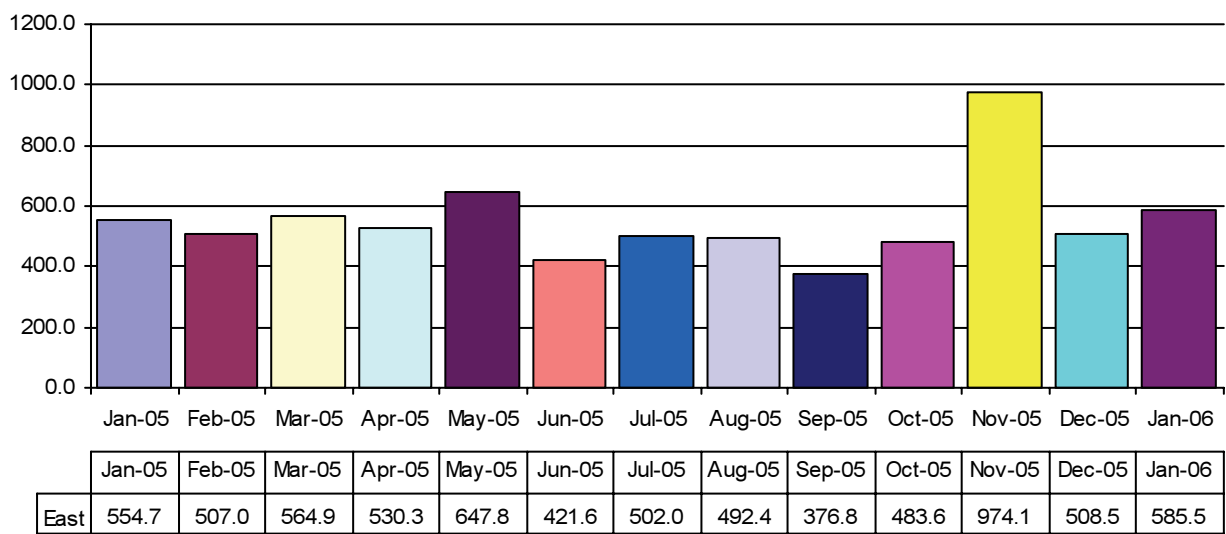


FIGURE 29: TONNES OF GREEN WASTE DIVERTED FROM MILDURA LANDFILL

It is also important to ensure environmental management is also economically responsible as well. This aspect of performance is reviewed in Figure 30.

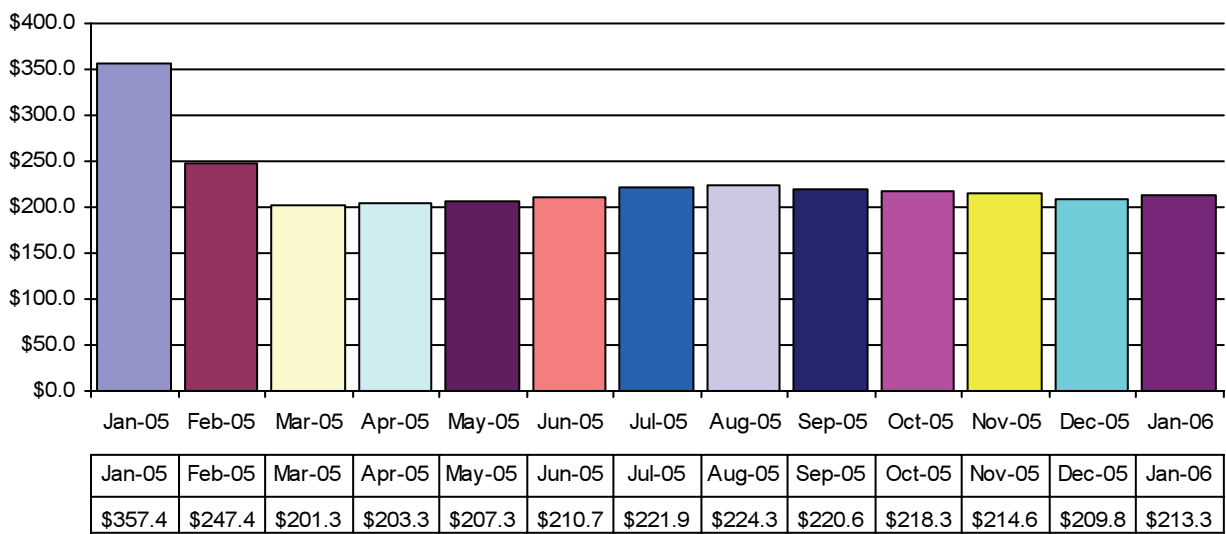


FIGURE 30: SERVICE ECO-RECYCLE BEST PRACTICE TARGET