

## **Doomadgee key points**

This report provides information about Doomadgee's strengths, challenges confronting the community, as well as government and non-government services. The information was largely collected during 2009, but often relates to earlier points in time (in particular, the census data is from 2006).

This section of the report provides a summary of key topics identified about Doomadgee. It begins by providing background information about the community. This is followed by strengths in the community. Next are the challenges confronting the community, and consideration of issues with service provision in the community. Finally, a list of recent investments in the community is provided.

## **Background community information**

### **People and language**

- The population of Doomadgee in 2006 was estimated to be 1,170 people, of whom 1,102 were Indigenous (94%).
- In 2006 50 per cent of Doomadgee's Indigenous population were under the age of 20.
- The people of Doomadgee are mainly made up of Gangalidda and Waanyi people as well as the tribal groups of Gadawa, Lardil, Mingginda and Garawa.

### **Population projections**

- The Indigenous population of Doomadgee is projected to increase from 1,102 people in 2006 to 1,348 in 2026, an increase of 22 per cent.
- The number of Indigenous people aged 15 to 64 (the working-age population) is projected to increase by 25 per cent, from 643 to 804, over this period.
- The number of Indigenous people aged 65 years and above (the post-working age population) is projected to increase by 149 per cent, from 35 to 88 people, over the same period.
- The changing size and age composition of the Indigenous population of Doomadgee will increase the need for housing and employment opportunities, as well as aged care and health services.

### **Geography**

- Doomadgee is located in the north-west corner of Queensland, near the Gulf of Carpentaria. It is approximately 500 km by road from Mt Isa.

## **Community strengths**

### **Education initiatives**

- A range of initiatives are operating in Doomadgee State School to promote the attendance, learning and wellbeing of Doomadgee students.
- For those interested in participating, regular extra-curricular activities are offered. These include art, language, swimming and games. Students are able

to attend swimming if they have had 100 per cent attendance throughout the week.

- The key student support program at Doomadgee is the Students at Risk program. This identifies students with needs and supports them either in class, one-on-one or in small groups, depending on the needs of the individual.
- There is a full breakfast, lunch and afternoon snack program provided to students that is funded by parents.

### **Improvements in community safety**

- In 2008–09, the number of offences (488) in Doomadgee was the lowest in five years.
- The decline in offences was across most categories, with traffic and vehicle offences being the major exception.
- There was a corresponding fall in the number of finalised matters in Queensland courts involving defendants from Doomadgee.

### **Challenges facing the community**

#### **Employment**

- In 2006, the proportion of Doomadgee's Indigenous working-age (15–64 years) population who were employed (the employment rate) was 52 per cent.
- However, nearly half of the employment in the community was in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP).
- If the figure is adjusted so that CDEP positions are not considered as employment, Doomadgee's Indigenous employment rate (24%) is approximately half of the national Indigenous non-CDEP employment rate (42%).
- Median personal weekly incomes for people in Doomadgee in 2006 were three-quarters of those of Indigenous people nationally. In part this is due to the reliance on low-paying part-time CDEP for incomes for many residents.

#### **Education**

- Doomadgee's Indigenous population has a very low rate of educational attainment with 5 per cent of Indigenous 20- to 64-year-olds having attained at least a Certificate II (i.e. Year 12) in 2006.
- School attendance is relatively poor in Doomadgee and has declined over the last three years. In 2009, attendance rates varied between 39.2 per cent (Term 3) and 63.5 per cent (Term 1).
- In 2009, participation in NAPLAN testing at Doomadgee was higher than in many Indigenous community schools.
- In Doomadgee, for nearly all domains and year levels, the majority of students were below national minimum standards in the NAPLAN tests.

## Health

- For residents of the Doomadgee statistical local area (SLA), over 2003–04 to 2007–08, the most common principal diagnoses for hospital separations for the Indigenous population were dialysis (168.9 per 1,000), followed by injury and poisoning (97.7 per 1,000) and diseases of the respiratory system (69.2 per 1,000).
- Over the same period, hospital separation rates for Indigenous Australians in the Doomadgee SLA were 21 times higher for assault, 12 times higher for dialysis, 10 times higher for diabetes, five times higher for injury and poisoning, five times higher for alcohol-related conditions and four times higher for diseases of the respiratory system, than the national average (after adjusting for age differences).

## Early childhood

- According to the 2009 Australian Early Development Index, the proportion of Indigenous children in the Burke local government area (which incorporates Doomadgee) considered to be developmentally vulnerable in the language and cognitive skills domain (66%) is greater than for all Queensland Indigenous children (36%) and all Australian Indigenous children (29%).
- Over 2003–07, the Indigenous age-specific fertility rate for mothers aged 15 to 19 in the Doomadgee SLA (176.7 live births per 1,000 women) is nearly 11 times the total national rate (16.4 live births per 1,000 women).

## Disengaged youth

- According to the 2006 Census, the Doomadgee population has a relatively young age profile, with nearly one-fifth of the Doomadgee Indigenous population being aged between 15 and 24 years.
- Only 15 per cent of this large group (Doomadgee's Indigenous 15- to 24-year-olds) were engaged in full-time study or employment in 2006, according to the census.
- In Doomadgee, between 2004–05 and 2008–09, 15- to 24-year-olds are substantially over-represented in the crime figures—39 per cent of offenders were in this age group. Thirteen per cent of offenders were between 10 and 14 years of age.

## Community safety

- Nearly one-third of offences in 2008–09 were traffic and vehicle offences, while around 16 per cent were public order offences.
- In the five-year period from 2004–05 to 2008–09, nearly 60 per cent of offences were recorded as alcohol or drug related.
- Over this period, young offenders (10 to 19 years old) were more likely to be involved in property crime than violent crime. Forty-two per cent of young offenders were involved in unlawful entry with intent.

## **Healthy homes**

- In 2006, 65 per cent of Indigenous households in Doomadgee experienced overcrowding. This is nearly six times the rate for Indigenous Queensland and Indigenous Australia.
- Between 2003–04 and 2007–08, hospital separation rates for Indigenous Australians in the Doomadgee SLA for conditions associated with poor environmental health were six times higher than the national average (after adjusting for age differences).

## **Potential issues with service delivery**

### **Accessibility**

- Most forms of service provision are affected by accessibility.
- The main road providing access to Doomadgee is the Wologorang Road. This road is the main transport link through to the Gulf of Carpentaria region and Northern Territory for road transport vehicles associated with mining, cattle transport and seasonal tourist traffic. Significant lengths of this road are unsealed and road access can be cut off to Doomadgee from both directions for weeks over the wet season.
- Doomadgee's internal road network generally consists of sealed roads of varying widths. Less than 20 per cent of the community access roads are unsealed. Ponding of water over roads and within house lots and public areas is a major problem around the residential areas during the wet season. Town streets are not line marked and street signs are in poor condition.

### **Water supply system**

- Doomadgee has a treated water supply with sufficient capacity to meet the existing demands.
- Pressure problems exist in several areas around town. House services have also deteriorated causing disruption of services to the residences.
- While clearwater storage is adequate, maintenance on the storage is not possible as it cannot be taken offline for cleaning or repairs.

### **English as a second language teachers**

- The level of English as a second language (ESL) support in Doomadgee needs to be reconsidered. None of the teachers at the school has any ESL training and there are neither ESL programs in the school nor any external ESL support available.

### **Health services**

- The main health services in Doomadgee are Doomadgee Hospital and the Doomadgee Community Health Centre. Maintenance and renovations at Doomadgee Hospital will improve patient care as well as additional storage space to support service delivery.

## **Safety**

- There is no detoxification or sobering-up facility in Doomadgee.

## **Significant new investments**

### **Early childhood development**

- A children and family centre will be established in Doomadgee through the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development.
- It is intended that the centre will bring together important services for children and families, including childcare, early learning, parent and family support programs.
- The centre is expected to connect with other services in the community to ensure families can easily access the services they need, for example, maternal and child health services, playgroups or family literacy programs.

### **Investments in education**

- Several projects are being funded in Doomadgee State School under the Building the Education Revolution program including building refurbishment, an outdoor learning centre and a resource centre, totalling \$2,650,000 in funding.
- The National School Pride Program has provided funding for the refurbishment of buildings including the extension of classrooms and enclosing of verandahs.
- Primary Schools for the 21st Century has provided funding for the construction of a covered outdoor learning area and for the construction of a library.

### **Community infrastructure**

- Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire will receive \$130,000 of the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure Program grants in 2009–10 as part of the Australian Government's Nation Building—Economic Stimulus Plan.
- This program provided \$100,000 for the development of the Walkway Network Project, the construction of concrete pathways along some streets providing a link to the major facilities in the town.

### **Health initiatives**

- A wellbeing centre will be established in Doomadgee to provide integrated, community-based social health services.
- The centre will focus on drug and alcohol issues, gambling, family violence, mental health and general counselling.

### **Community safety**

- In 2009–10, the Queensland Government will provide a new safe house in Doomadgee.
- The safe house will provide fully supervised care for children, to allow children to remain safely within their community while the child's situation is assessed and a course of action is decided on.

- The safe house will also provide family support services to the community.

### **Sports, recreation and the arts**

- There is a sport and recreation and arts precinct redevelopment project in Doomadgee.
- The current recreation hall at Doomadgee is being redeveloped, including the redesign of the existing building as the central part of the project.
- The project also includes the development of facilities to support the establishment of sport, recreation, training, health, art, cultural, justice and youth programs.

### **National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing**

- Under the National Partnership Agreement on Remote Indigenous Housing, 12 new dwellings and 25 refurbishments have been proposed Doomadgee during 2009–10.
- Over the coming years, the National Partnership Agreement will provide funding for further housing in remote Indigenous communities through a process of competitive bids. From 1 July 2010, state governments will submit proposals for new dwellings, refurbishment activity and employment-related accommodation for their communities.

## **Mornington Island key points**

This report provides information about Mornington Island's strengths, challenges confronting the community, as well as government and non-government services. The information was largely collected during 2009, but often relates to earlier points in time (in particular, the census data is from 2006).

This section of the report provides a summary of key topics identified about Mornington Island. It begins by providing background information about the community. This is followed by strengths in the community. Next are the challenges confronting the community, and consideration of issues with service provision in the community. Finally, a list of recent investments in the community is provided.

## **Background community information**

### **People**

- The population of Mornington Island in 2006 was estimated to be 1,122 people, of whom 1,028 were Indigenous (92%).
- In 2006, 41 per cent of the Indigenous population of Mornington Island were aged under 20.
- The people of Mornington Island are members of the Lardil tribe.

### **Population projections**

- The Indigenous population of Mornington Island is projected to increase from 1,028 people in 2006 to 1,308 in 2026, an increase of 27 per cent.
- The number of Indigenous people aged 15 to 64 (the working-age population) is projected to increase by 36 per cent, from 600 to 816, over this period.
- The number of Indigenous people aged 65 years and above (the post-working age population) is projected to increase by 141 per cent, from 33 to 80 people, over the same period.
- The changing size and age composition of the Indigenous population of Mornington Island will increase the need for housing and employment opportunities, as well as aged care and health services.

### **Geography**

- Mornington Island is the largest island of the 22 islands in the Wellesley group and is approximately 1,000 square kilometres in area.
- By air, it is approximately 450 km from Mt Isa, 125 km north-west of Burketown and 200 km west of Karumba. The main township on Mornington Island is Gununa.

## **Community strengths**

### **School-based programs**

- There are a range of school-based programs that have been identified as effective by members of the Mornington Island school community.

- Deadly Minds is a self-development and life skills program. The program develops school values (choice, courage, challenge and respect), as well as student leadership and social skills.
- The Lardil Indigenous language program and dance program encourage students to learn skills and knowledge about the local language and culture.
- The Learning to Learn Year 3 program works with children who do not speak Standard Australian English at home. Year 3 students have shown substantial improvement in NAPLAN results between 2008 and 2009.
- The Travelling School program targets students with poor attendance. It works collaboratively with local agencies and the community. Case meetings occur between parents, students and school staff in an attempt to encourage school attendance.

## **Challenges facing the community**

### **Employment**

- In 2006, the proportion of Mornington Island's Indigenous working-age (15–64 years) population who were employed (the employment rate) was 33 per cent.
- However, the overwhelming majority of employment in the community was in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP).
- If the figure is adjusted so that CDEP positions are not considered as employment, Mornington Island's Indigenous employment rate (8%) is approximately one-fifth of the national Indigenous non-CDEP employment rate (42%).

### **Education**

- Attendance at Mornington Island State School is low. Attendance varied between 63.7 and 67.1 per cent over 2009.
- Mornington Island's Indigenous population had a low rate of educational qualification— in 2006 only 6 per cent of Indigenous 20- to 64-year-olds attained at least a Certificate II (i.e. Year 12).
- In 2006 the proportion of Indigenous 20- to 64-year-olds with at least a Certificate II is much lower in Mornington Island than in Queensland (20%) and Australia (22%).

### **NAPLAN**

- In 2009 for Years 5, 7 and 9 at the Mornington Island State School, the majority of students did not meet the national minimum standard in nearly every domain.
- However, for both the reading test and writing test, a substantial majority of Year 3 students were at or above the national minimum standard (75% and 67% respectively).

## Health

- For residents of the Mornington SLA, between 2003–04 and 2007–08, the most common principal diagnoses for hospital separations of the Indigenous population were dialysis (154.9 per 1,000), followed by injury and poisoning (117.4 per 1,000) and symptoms, signs and abnormal findings (95.4 per 1,000).
- For most groupings of principal diagnoses, crude separation rates for Indigenous Australians in Mornington SLA were substantially higher than corresponding Queensland and national Indigenous rates.
- Over 2003–04 to 2007–08, after adjusting for age differences, hospital separation rates for Indigenous Australians in Mornington SLA were nearly 38 times higher for assault and 10 times higher for diabetes than for other Australians.
- Similarly, these rates were eight times higher for dialysis, six times higher for injury and poisoning, and nine times higher for alcohol-related conditions in Mornington SLA than for other Australians.
- Over the same period, Indigenous residents of Mornington SLA were hospitalised for preventable chronic conditions at more than twice the rate for the Queensland Indigenous population, and three times the rate for the total Queensland and national populations.

## Early childhood

- According to the 2009 Australian Early Development Index, the proportion of Indigenous children in the Burke local government area (which includes Mornington Island) considered to be developmentally vulnerable in the language and cognitive skills domain (66%) is greater than for all Queensland Indigenous children (36%) and all Australian Indigenous children (29%).
- From 2003–2007, the Indigenous population at Mornington Island had higher age-specific fertility rates of live births than the total national population across all age groups.
- Over the same period, the Indigenous age-specific fertility rate for mothers aged 15–19 in Mornington SLA (252.8 live births per 1,000 women) was more than three times the national Indigenous rate (77.2 live births per 1,000 women) and 15 times the total national rate (16.4 live births per 1,000 women).
- For the same period, the lowest number of antenatal visits was in the 15–19 year age group, where 100 per 1,000 women who gave birth had no antenatal visits.

## Disengaged youth

- In 2006, the Mornington Island population had a relatively young age profile, with 15 per cent of the Mornington Island Indigenous population aged between 15 and 24 years.
- Youth who are engaged in employment or education are less likely to engage in criminal activity and are more likely to have positive outcomes throughout their life.

- One quarter of this large group (Mornington Island's Indigenous 15- to 24-year-olds) were engaged in full-time study or employment in 2006.
- In Mornington Island, 15- to 24-year-olds are substantially over-represented in the crime figures—approximately one-third of offenders were in this age group.

### **Community safety**

- In 2008–09, there were 1,237 offences recorded in Mornington Island. Nearly 60 per cent of these were public order offences.
- This represents a very large increase (over 70%) on the previous year.
- The increase largely consists of public order offences. This may reflect a range of factors—community unrest following the closure of the hotel, increased policing and an extension of restricted areas.
- In the five-year period from 2004–05 to 2008–09, approximately three-quarters of offences were recorded as alcohol or drug related.

### **Healthy homes**

- In 2006, 41 per cent of Indigenous households experienced overcrowding in Mornington Island. This is more than three times the rate for Indigenous Australia (14%).
- Over 2003–04 to 2007–08, hospital separation rates for Indigenous Australians in Mornington SLA were nearly six times higher for conditions associated with poor environmental health than for other Australians (after adjusting for age differences).

## **Potential issues with service delivery**

### **Accessibility**

- Most forms of service provision are affected by a lack of accessibility.
- The Gununa township on Mornington Island generally has sealed and formed roads with a piped drainage system. The roads are generally in good condition and serve the community adequately.
- There are sealed access roads to the landfill, boat ramp, dam, aerodrome and barge ramp. The access to the sewage treatment plant is via an unsealed road.
- Access roads to outstations and Birra Lodge are by way of unsealed roads with poor drainage.
- The council owns and maintains the barge landing, boat ramp and jetty. A regular barge delivers food to the community once a week while a fuel barge arrives once every two months. The barge landing is not serviceable during the full range of the tidal cycle.

### **Water supply system**

- The water supply system does not meet standards in terms of pressure and, on some occasions, water quality.
- Due to the undersize main from the dam to the clearwater tank, the council has had to turn off the water supply during the night so that the reservoir levels can be replenished.

### **English as a second language teachers**

- None of the teachers at Mornington Island has training in English as a second language.
- All students at the school are learning English as a second language.

### **Support for students with disabilities**

- Up to 50 students at Mornington Island State School have hearing impairments, but only extreme cases are identified for support.
- There may be a need for a wider range of health services to support students in Mornington Island.

### **Teacher housing**

- There is only limited space in the available teacher housing for teachers' partners and families.
- Male and female teachers are often required to share accommodation.

### **Health services**

- The Mornington Island Hospital provides primary health, emergency and a range of community health services as well as outreach services to surrounding homeland communities.
- An ambulance service is offered by the Mornington Island Hospital and emergency air services are also available through the Royal Flying Doctor Service (usually to Mt Isa or Cairns Base Hospital).

### **Victim support and community safety services**

- A restorative justice pilot program is to be established in Mornington Island aimed at enhancing the community's capacity to resolve disputes and violence. The pilot is currently awaiting Queensland Government funding approval.
- In the past there has been a women's group which provided support services for victims of violence. The group is not currently operating.
- The Police–Citizens Youth Club operates a number of crime prevention and community safety programs, most of which employ local Indigenous community members and elders.
- There is a women's refuge and a children's refuge which provide safe haven, family support and assistance as well as anti-domestic violence and drug awareness counselling.

## **Significant new investments**

### **Children and family centre**

- A children and family centre will be established on Mornington Island through the National Partnership Agreement on Indigenous Early Childhood Development.
- It is intended that the centre will bring together important services for children and families, including childcare, early learning, parent and family support programs.
- The centre is expected to connect with other services in the community to ensure families can easily access the services they need, for example, maternal and child health services, playgroups or family literacy programs.

### **Community infrastructure**

- Under the Regional and Local Community Infrastructure program, funds were provided for the recreation centre upgrade project.
- This includes upgrading the existing Gununa recreation hall, improving access and safety, and installing entertainment equipment and air conditioning.
- The project is currently in progress.

### **Investments in education**

- Mornington Island State School is to benefit from the Low Socio-economic Status School Communities National Partnership.
- Through the Building the Education Revolution initiative, \$2,125,00 of funding has been allocated to Mornington Island State School for the building of covered walkways and a resource centre.
- The National School Pride Program has provided funding for the construction of covered walkways and a covered outdoor learning area.
- Primary Schools for the 21st Century has provided funding for the construction of a library.