



Introduction

Chapter I

The Australian Government's *State of Australian Cities 2010* report was the first comprehensive snapshot of Australian cities, bringing together existing data and research to inform development of a national urban policy.

On 18 May 2011 the Australian Government released *Our Cities Our Future - a national urban policy for a productive, sustainable and liveable future* (Department of Infrastructure and Transport 2011). The *National Urban Policy* sets out the Australian Government's goals and objectives for our cities in the decades ahead (see Appendix A). It recognises the critical roles of State, Territory and Local governments, the private sector and individuals in planning, managing and investing in cities. It also recognises that the Australian Government makes decisions that affect urban Australia.

Purpose of the report

The *State of Australian Cities 2011* report aims to inform policy makers, industry and the community about how Australian cities are progressing in terms of productivity, sustainability and liveability. In turn, the data contained in this report will help underpin policy, planning and investment decisions and provide a framework for ongoing monitoring.

What's new in 2011?

State of Australian Cities 2010 was largely based on the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) national 2006 Census of Population and Housing and described the main issues affecting cities with populations of 100,000 or more.

This 2011 report supplements the 2010 report updating progress on indicators where data is collected annually. This report also examines in more detail some of the issues described in the 2010 report such as population growth, migration between cities and commuting flows within the largest capital cities.

New research, especially where indicators are under development, is highlighted. Articles on specific issues contribute to a deeper understanding of how our urban systems function.

Structure of the 2011 report

This report follows the model of the 2010 report but with international comparisons integrated within theme chapters rather than in a separate chapter. Chapter 2 details change in urban population and settlement. Indicators relating to productivity, sustainability and liveability are discussed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5. Social inclusion is discussed in Chapter 5 on liveability, as it is closely related to health and wellbeing. The report concludes with a discussion of governance in Chapter 6.

The remainder of this introductory chapter outlines how the major cities are defined and concludes with a brief discussion of the indicators and data used in this report.

Defining our major cities

State of Australian Cities 2010 used the 2006 Census of Population and Housing as a baseline to define major cities as ones with a population of more than 100,000 residents. Applying this definition, there were 17 major cities in Australia in 2006.

The Albury–Wodonga statistical district reached an estimated resident population of 101,516 in 2007, taking the number of major cities now to 18.

Geographical boundaries

As cities' populations grow and change so too does their geographical expanse. Gauging the extent of cities—where they begin and end—is imprecise.

Boundaries based on ABS Australian Standard Geographical Classification have been used because they have the advantage of being readily available and systematic. The 2010 report used two sets of boundaries for the major cities:

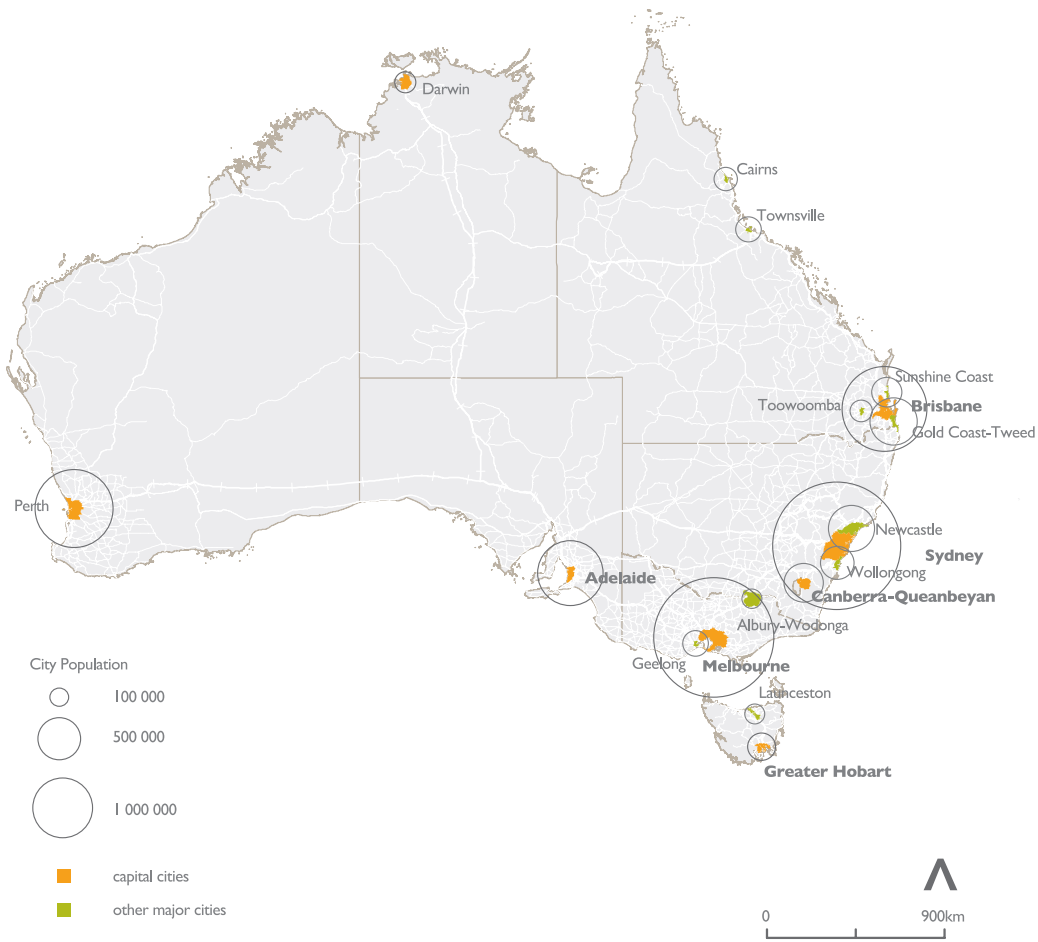
- statistical divisions (SD) for capital cities; and
- statistical districts (SDist) for non-capital cities.

To maintain consistency, these two statistical groupings have been retained in this 2011 report. Where specified, the Statistical District of Canberra-Queanbeyan is used in this report to better reflect the national capital region. Where possible, data is presented to show the variations that occur within cities at smaller geographical scales, mainly by:

- statistical sub-divisions (SSD), which group a number of adjacent local government areas into a broadly defined sub-metropolitan region; and
- statistical local areas, (SLA) which are based on local government area boundaries.

The location and relative size of Australia's major cities are shown in the following map (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1 Australia's major cities, 2011



Emerging major cities

Population projections prepared by the ABS for the Department of Health and Ageing in 2008 indicate that in addition to the current 18 major cities, six rapidly growing regional centres are likely to have a population of more than 100,000 by 2027. As shown in Table 1.1, these 'emerging cities' are Mandurah and Bunbury in Western Australia, Bendigo and Ballarat in Victoria and Mackay and Hervey Bay in Queensland.

Table 1.1 Emerging major cities based on projected populations, 2007 to 2027

Growing Regional Centres	2007 Population	2010 Estimated Population	2027 Projected Population	Year in which population is projected to exceed 100 000
Mandurah, Western Australia	74 419	85 814	119 679	2018
Mackay, Queensland	79 153	85 700	118 652	2018
Bendigo, Victoria	86 330	91 713	111 585	2018
Ballarat, Victoria	89 703	96 097	111 449	2017
Bunbury, Western Australia	60 509	68 248	103 651	2026
Hervey Bay, Queensland	53 365	60 807	103 628	2026

Source: Department of Health and Ageing 2008

Cities within cities

Within the statistical divisions of the largest capital cities there are a number of local government areas which have populations in excess of 100,000 people. Some, like Parramatta in Sydney, also have a densely developed central business district (CBD) and provide a wide range of commercial and employment opportunities, services, cultural and recreational facilities. These local government areas are not separately identified as major cities at this time because much of their economic infrastructure, like transport, energy and water, is shared with the wider metropolitan region.

Measuring progress in our major cities

There are many national and international projects to improve monitoring and reporting of progress on economic, environmental and social indicators. Two important initiatives underway in Australia include the update of the Australian Bureau of Statistics *Measures of Australia's Progress* (ABS 2011) and the Australian Government's *Measuring Sustainability Program* (DSEWPoC 2011). Future *State of Australian Cities* reports may incorporate some of the indicators identified in these two initiatives.

The indicators included in this report are mostly the same as those used in 2010. Many of the indicators cannot be updated annually, such as those based on Census data, which are collected every five years. A more comprehensive review of the trends for our major cities will be produced as 2011 Census data becomes available.

Chapter I References

Department of Health and Ageing 2008, Customised projections prepared for the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2010, *Measures of Australia's Progress*, cat. no. 1370.0, Canberra.

Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPoC) 2011, *Sustainable Australia – Sustainable Communities: A Sustainable Population Strategy for Australia*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.

Department of Infrastructure and Transport 2011, *Our Cities, our future: a national urban policy for a more productive, sustainable and liveable future*, Commonwealth of Australia, Canberra.