South West: A regional profile
South West covers an area of nearly 24,000 square kilometres and is known for its natural beauty and typically Mediterranean climate. The South West is regional Western Australia’s most popular tourist destination and features some of the best natural wonders including famous surfing beaches. The towns of Augusta, Margaret River and Dunsborough are among the top destinations to experience award-winning wineries, restaurants, tall timber forests and ancient caves.

The region has 12 local government areas with 40 per cent of the population residing in the cities of Bunbury and Busselton. These key urban centres provide a diverse range of high quality medical, educational, communications, commercial and administrative services.

The South West benefits from strong economic growth, a skilled labour force with job diversity, business infrastructure and close proximity to expanding economies in south-east Asia. The production of alumina is a key driver of the mineral processing industry. Stable primary industry production diversifies the economic contribution of the region through its mining, agriculture, forestry and fishing industries.

Facts

- **Produced most of WA’s $44 million wine exports in 2015-16**
- **Produces 77% of Australia’s truffles and mushrooms**
- **Famous for surf beaches and wine production**
- **Has a $1.9b mining industry mostly in coal, alumina and mineral sands**
- **21% of the world’s alumina comes from the South West**
- **Collie power stations produce 71% of WA’s base load electricity and 34.5% of total electricity production**
- **Margaret River region attracts 86% of overseas tourists**
Figures

Economic

**Gross Regional Product**

$13 billion

▲ 1.2% (2012-2017)

- **Mining**: 18%
- **Construction**: 11%
- **Hiring & real estate**: 10%
- **Other industries**: 62%

Source: DPIRD 2017 Gross Regional Product (GRP); ABS State Accounts (5220.0); ABS 2016 Census data.

**Employment**

- Retail trade: 12%
- Health care & social: 12%
- Construction: 10%
- Manufacturing: 9%
- Other services: 8%
- Education & training: 9%
- Other industries: 41%

**Employed persons** (2016)

71,632

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census of Population and Housing

**Community**

**Population**

175,904

▲ 1.9% (2012-17)

**Indigenous population**

4,034

2.3%

**Median age**

41

Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) 2016 Census of Population and Housing

**Median annual income**

$33,800 – $41,599

95.5% Employment rate
For further information on the South West, contact:

**South West Development Commission – Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development**
9th Floor, Bunbury Tower, 61 Victoria Street, Bunbury Western Australia 6230
Phone: +61 8 9792 2000  Email: info@swdc.wa.gov.au  Website: swdc.wa.gov.au

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