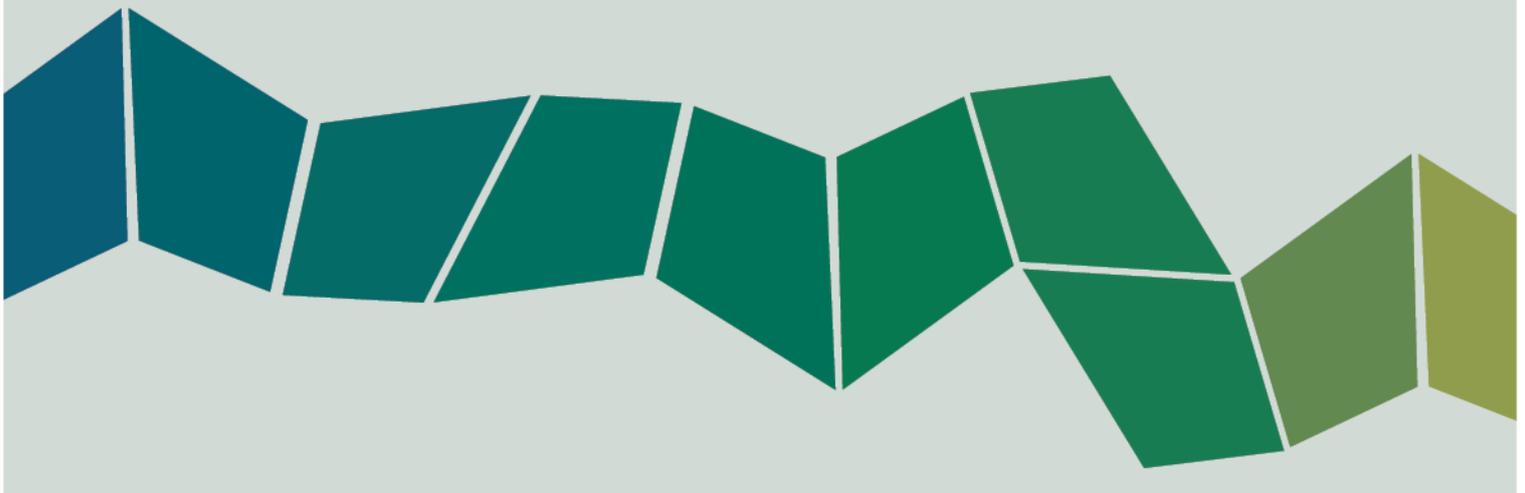




Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Regional Development**

Living in the Regions 2013

Frequently Asked Questions



1. What is the *Living in the Regions 2013* project?

The *Living in the Regions 2013* project was a large-scale survey, conducted by the Department of Regional Development (DRD), to better understand the quality of life experienced by people living in regional Western Australia, and the attractiveness of regional Western Australia as a place to live.

2. Why was the survey conducted?

The survey was designed to provide information regarding the:

- Factors that attract people to regional locations
- Factors that assist in retaining people in regional locations
- 'Sense of wellbeing' factors that influence the choice of place to live.

3. How will the results be used?

The *Living in the Regions* survey results provide up-to-date information about life in the regions. The results will also form the basis for a series of reports including a state-based report, nine regional reports and topic based reports.

The survey findings will be used by DRD to inform future regional policy and programs.

DRD will make this data accessible to interested parties.

It is anticipated that individuals, community groups and organisations, such as Regional Development Commissions, will also use the survey findings as a data source to support other work and for informing decision-making.

4. Who will use the survey findings?

It is anticipated that State Government agencies with regional offices, local governments, not-for-profit organisations, industry, community groups and research bodies will use the survey findings to help drive development in regional communities.

5. What did the survey ask?

The survey asked questions about:

- Why respondents live in the regions and why they might relocate?
- How happy they were living in the regions and what factors influenced their decision to remain or relocate?
- Respondents' level of education, occupation, employment status along with other demographics.

6. Who carried out the survey?

DRD engaged 361 Degrees Stakeholder Engagement Services who worked with an independent research company, SAVANT Surveys and Strategies, to conduct the survey.

7. How were residents in the regional mail out chosen?

The survey was mailed to a random selection of 40,000 regional residents based on Australia Post's listings of place and address. The survey was also available online for regional participants and a small number of surveys were made available to key stakeholders for their distribution.

8. When was the survey held?

The survey was held over six weeks. It commenced on 22 April and ended on 31 May 2013.

Discussion groups were held in 21 regional locations from 2 May to 5 June 2013.

9. Who participated?

Over 10,000 people participated in the survey. One hundred and seventy five people participated in discussion groups held in all nine regions with a wide range of community members invited to attend.

Perth metropolitan residents could also participate by completing an online version of the survey that closely reflected the regional survey form.

10. Is this the first *Living in the Regions* survey?

A similar but much more limited telephone survey was conducted in 1997, with 1,351 participants. The *Living in the Regions 2013* survey was much more comprehensive and wide ranging, and so could be considered as setting a new benchmark to make future comparisons and measure progress.

11. How has the survey changed since 1997?

The 2013 survey expanded on the original 1997 survey form by adding new items, updating language and clarifying items. For example, additional questions were included about satisfaction levels relating to personal wellbeing and participation in professional development.

12. Was the survey compulsory?

No. The survey was voluntary and open to any individual aged 18 years and over.

13. When is the next survey?

The next survey is planned to be repeated in 2016.

14. Why were discussion groups held?

Discussion groups were held to support the survey content and to explore issues in greater detail, such as the multiple factors that contribute to the value people place on living in the regions.

15. How were the discussion group locations selected?

A range of regional cities and town sizes in each of the regions were selected to obtain a wide representation of regional Western Australia.

16. How were members selected for the discussion groups?

DRD's stakeholder groups assisted with this process by nominating a wide representation from their communities so that a range of views could be reached. The stakeholders involved were the Regional Development Commissions, Community Resources Centres and regional local governments.

17. Are survey details confidential?

Yes. Contact details for all respondents are confidential and results have been de-identified. Post code data was collected for administrative purposes and to ensure that the survey was completed by regional residents.

Data will be available down to the local government area level. To prevent the potential identification of individuals, for local government areas where there were less than 50 respondents, the data has been combined with that of an adjacent local government.

18. Were there any differences between the regional and metropolitan surveys?

Yes. One area of difference was that the metropolitan survey asked respondents about what they viewed as attractive aspects of a region.

19. How many people completed the survey?

The *Living in the Regions 2013* survey elicited one of the largest responses to a regional survey in Western Australia. A total of 10,714 regional and metropolitan people completed the surveys.

20. Why was a paper-based survey used?

In order to reach a larger audience, compared to the 1997 telephone survey.

21. Where other formats available?

Regional residents who received a paper based survey in the mail also had the option to complete it online.

The online versions of the survey were widely promoted to people in both regional and metropolitan areas. The metropolitan survey was only available online.

22. When will the survey findings become available?

The *Living in the Regions 2013* whole of state report was released in December 2013. Results are available on DRD's website.

A database of survey findings and reports on each of the regions and on particular topics such as the views of regional retirees will follow.

23. Why is there a separate report for the retiree findings?

As a sample, respondents who identified themselves as retirees were quite a distinct group. Reasons why they live in the regions and might consider moving were quite different.

A separate report will enable their specific views and experiences to be captured and explored in greater detail than if they were included with the state report.

24. How were retirees defined?

In the survey, retirees were self-identified, as either 'retired' or 'on a pension'.

25. How can the results be accessed?

The whole of state report can be viewed on DRD's website at www.drd.wa.gov.au. A limited number of hard copies have been printed. These can be mailed on request or obtained from Regional Development Commission offices.

The reports and information contained in a DRD database will also be available to download later in 2014.

26. At what level are survey results presented?

Results are available at the state and regional levels. Where sufficient responses have been collected (at least 50 responses), findings will be presented at the local government level. Where respondent numbers are insufficient, responses will be amalgamated with that of an adjacent local government.

27. Why do some figures in the state report not add up to 100 per cent?

Unless otherwise indicated, number and percentages were rounded to the nearest whole number. In cases of decimal numbers ending in five, number and percentages were rounded up.

Some respondents did not answer all questions. Such non-responses were treated as missing information in most analyses. Depending on the distribution of non-responses not all tables sum to 100 per cent or to the total number of survey respondents.

28. How can I participate in the next survey?

Please visit DRD's website to be kept informed on the *Living in the Regions* project. The next survey is anticipated to be held in 2016.

29. What next?

DRD will continue to analyse and produce further reports, which will be available on DRD's website: www.drd.wa.gov.au.

30. Who can I contact for more information?

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