

Regional Profile

Established in the 1980's to accommodate the growth population of the Darwin area, Palmerston is located 21km south-east of Darwin. Palmerston has consistently been one of the fastest growing areas in Australia since its establishment and now consists of over 10 major suburbs.

Palmerston is part of the Darwin region and shares its facilities with other areas in the region: the city of Darwin, and the rural areas of Litchfield and Finnis. The Darwin region covers a total area 10,262 km², 7.6% of the Northern Territory's land mass. The region is the most densely populated in the Northern Territory.

Much of the data in this snapshot is sourced from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) which uses its own geographical boundaries. In this snapshot three statistical areas are used: the Darwin region, the Palmerston Statistical Subdivision (SSD) includes the Palmerston suburbs, East-Arm and Palmerston (C) Balance (see map below). The Palmerston SSD covers an area of 95.6 km², while the Palmerston Local Government Area (LGA) covers 52.9 km². The map below shows the Palmerston Subdivision and highlights the boundary for the Palmerston LGA.



Darwin Region Key Facts 2007

Area		10 262km ²
Population	- Darwin Region	105 990
	- Darwin City	66 290
	- Palmerston	24,145
Labour force	- Darwin Region	59 819
	- Darwin	46 874
	- Palmerston	12 945
Unemployment rate	- Region	2.3%
	- Darwin	2.2%
	- Palmerston	2.3%
Average Visitor numbers (Darwin Region)		775 000
Number of businesses (Palmerston)		1,410 (2007)
Mining production value (Palmerston)		\$6.7 M ('04-'05)

Society

Population

An estimated 26 592 people live in Palmerston. This is about 12% of the total Northern Territory population (214 975). Indigenous people represent approximately 13% of Palmerston's population, well below the Northern Territory average. (2006 Census)

In the five years to 2006, the estimated population of Palmerston grew by 3,251 people. Over 2006-07, the population in Palmerston was the fastest growing region in the Northern Territory, with growth of 1,221 people. (ABS Catalogue no. 3218.0 2006-07 and 2006 Census)

The population of the Darwin Region is expected to rise to almost 175,000 persons by 2051 based on medium growth predictions by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). Much of this growth is expected to occur in Palmerston. (ABS Catalogue no. 3218.0 and 3222.0)

Education

In 2007 there were 8 government schools and 3 non-government schools with 4,646 students enrolled in Palmerston. The NT Government has budgeted for 2 new schools to be built in Palmerston to cater for 1,450 students at a cost of \$48.8 M. (ABS Cat no 1362.7 - 2007) and MLA Press release 2008

Charles Darwin University has a campus at Palmerston with a School of Tourism and Hospitality, a School of Law and Business and a new School of Conservation and Land Management. Library and beauty studies are also available at the campus. There were 247 Palmerston residents enrolled in higher education at Charles Darwin University and 4,071 students enrolled in vocational education and training in the Palmerston East-Arm. (ABS Cat no 1362.7 - 2007)

Health

Many of Palmerston's health needs are serviced by the Palmerston Health Precinct which includes the Palmerston Community Care Centre, public dental service, private dental service, Renal Unit, St Johns' Ambulance, Medical Specialists Clinic, Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services, private pathology services and the Farrar Medical Centre. There are seven general practices in the Palmerston health region, four of which provide after-hours services.

In addition, new health services due to be introduced over the next six months include improved child and family health services, expanded post-natal home visiting services, a new breast screening service, an expanded homebirth service, and a new drug and alcohol service.

Economy

Employment

Palmerston SSD has about 12,945 people in the labour force. The unemployment rate in December 2007 was 2.3%, well below the Northern Territory average of 4.3%. This does not take into account the Community Development Employment Program (CDEP) employment. (Department of Employment and Workplace Relations)

The major industries of employment in Palmerston are public administration & safety, retail trade, construction, health care & social assistance and education & training. The main occupations for Palmerston are clerical & administrative, technicians & trades, community & personal service workers, and professionals and managers. (2006 Census)

Income and Prices

In 2006, the median weekly income for Palmerston was \$679, above the Northern Territory median weekly income of \$551 and just below the figure for Darwin City of \$687. (2006 Census)

In 2000/01 wages and salary accounted for 86% of income earned in the Palmerston East-Arm area. This was followed by government cash benefits (8%), own incorporated business (4%), superannuation (1%) and investment and other income (0.2%). (ABS Catalogue no. 1362.7 - 2006)

In December 2006, grocery prices were roughly the same in Palmerston and Darwin. (Grocery price survey, June 2006)

Number of Businesses

The total numbers of actively trading businesses in Palmerston was 1,410 at June 2007. Of these, 57% of businesses were categorised as non employing. [Caution should be taken when comparing this data to previous years as due to changes in data collection methodology there is no comparative data.] (ABS Catalogue no, 8165.0, 8136.0.55.001)

Construction and Building

In 2005/06 there was \$38.6M worth of non-residential building approvals for Palmerston East-Arm SSD. This was an increase of the previous year's value of \$31.2M. Residential building approvals also saw an increase. In 2006 there were 387 residential buildings approved at a value of \$91M, up from the previous year's value of \$70.4M for 341 buildings. 90% of these approvals in 2006 were for new houses.

In 2005/06 there were 410 people on a waiting list for public housing in the Palmerston East-Arm area. This was an increase of 48 from the previous year. Of these, 123 people were waiting for a one bedroom house, of which 51 were pensioners. There were a further 117 people on the waiting list for a three bedroom house and four registered for a four bedroom house.

(ABS Catalogue no. 1362.7)

Real Estate

Palmerston has shown continued growth in median house prices, recording an increase of 5.3% for the year to March 2008. The market may be easing, as the growth for the March quarter was only 3.9%. In comparison, Darwin overall experienced an increase of 7.7% for the year to March 2007 and an increase of only 1.8% for the March 2008 quarter.

As at March 2008, the median house and unit prices in Palmerston were \$395,000 and \$300,000 respectively. The vacancy rate in Palmerston was 0.9% compared with 0.5% for Darwin. Vacancy rates traditionally rise in December due to seasonal population movements. Palmerston provided around a half of the vacant land sales in the NT for the year to March 2008 (72 out of 139). (Northern Territory Real Estate Local Market Analysis – March 2008 Quarter)

Mining and Agriculture

In 2005-06, production of minerals and petroleum in the Darwin region was valued at \$4.2M. This was mainly from crushed rock, gravel and sand. (DPIFM unpublished data).

The surrounding areas of Palmerston are rich in agricultural produce especially Mangoes and Asian greens. The fruit, vegetable and nursery industry within the Darwin region contributes significantly towards the total primary industry production for the Northern Territory.

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