

## **Characteristics of Wage & Salary Earners in Regions of Australia, 2002-03**

*Source: ABS February 2006*

### **INTRODUCTION**

This publication presents regional estimates of the characteristics of wage and salary earners for the 2002-03 financial year, and selected data for the 2001-02 financial year, using the Remoteness Structure outlined within the **Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC), Volume 1, 2001 (cat. no. 1216.0)**. Data for the years 1995-96 to 2000-01 were published in **Characteristics of Wage and Salary Earners in Regions of Australia, 2000-01 (cat. no. 6261.0.55.001)**.

The data presented illustrate the differences in the characteristics of employees living in urban, regional and remote parts of Australia and should provide regional analysts and service providers with insights about employment activity, occupations and variations in wage and salary incomes across different age and occupation groups. The data also enables comparisons of the differing earning levels of employees in the same occupations across regions which may add to the understanding of regional populations and economies. Overall, these data provide valuable and interesting information about the diversity of employees in different parts of the nation.

The estimates of the number of wage and salary earners and their characteristics, including age, sex, occupation and income, have been compiled from the Australian Taxation Office's (ATO) Individual Income Tax Return Database and are part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' (ABS) program to increase the range of regional data available to users of regional statistics, particularly through the use of administrative information from other government agencies. The ABS wishes to acknowledge the support the ATO has provided in compiling these statistics. All individual income tax statistics provided by the ATO have been in aggregated form only. No information about individual taxpayers has been released to the ABS.

The Remoteness Structure, used as the geographic framework for this study, has been designed to provide an alternative geographic classification for the dissemination of statistics which enables comparison across five broad regions of Australia that are based on remoteness or distance from services. The five remoteness areas are Major Cities of Australia, Inner Regional Australia, Outer Regional Australia, Remote Australia and Very Remote Australia. A brief description and example of each remoteness area is provided in the **Glossary**. For further information relating to the remoteness structure refer to **Information Paper: ABS Views on Remoteness, 2001 (cat. no. 1244.0)** and **Information Paper: Outcomes on ABS Views on Remoteness Consultation, Australia, 2001 (cat. no. 1244.0.00.001)**.

Data on the characteristics of wage and salary earners across remoteness areas are provided below and should be read in conjunction with the **Explanatory Notes**. For further information about these or related statistics please contact the National Information Service on 1300 135 070, or Kirsten Hastwell on (08) 8237 7369.

## **DEFINITION OF WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS**

For the purposes of this publication **wage and salary earners** have been defined as:

**persons aged 15 years and over who have submitted an individual income tax return and for whom wage and salary income was the principal (or main) source of income for the financial year.**

The data presented within this publication does not take account of whether wage and salary earners worked on a full-time or part-time basis, had overtime earnings or had multiple job holdings. These factors may account for some of the differences when comparing median wage and salary incomes across regions. The data exclude persons in their own unincorporated businesses, such as farmers, who are not wage and salary earners, but do include people in their own incorporated business (that is, a company that has a legal status separate to that of the individuals involved). For further definitional clarification please refer to the **Explanatory Notes**.

## **SUMMARY POINTS**

In 2002-03:

- The highest median annual wage and salary income for employees was in the remoteness area of Major Cities. Outside of Major Cities, employees in Remote and Very Remote areas recorded higher median annual wage and salary incomes than employees in Inner Regional and Outer Regional Australia.
- As the degree of remoteness increased, the proportion of male wage and salary earners in each remoteness area generally increased.
- Median wage and salary incomes for males were higher than those for females in all remoteness areas.
- In both the 25-34 year and 35-44 year age groups, the proportion of wage and salary earners outside of Major Cities increased as the degree of remoteness increased.

- The proportion of male wage and salary earners in the age group 55 years and over were consistently higher than the female proportions in all remoteness areas
- Across all remoteness areas, median wage and salary income increased with age, peaking in the 45-54 year age group.

Between 2001-02 and 2002-03:

- Major Cities, Inner Regional, Outer Regional and Remote areas recorded positive growth in the number of wage and salary earners. During this period, however, all remoteness areas recorded positive growth in the level of total wages and salaries paid (as the principal source of income).
- Median annual wage and salary income increased at the highest rate for males in Outer Regional areas. Females had the highest median annual wage and salary income increase during this period within Remote Australia.

## **DISTRIBUTION OF WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS**

In 2002-03, approximately 90% of Australia's wage and salary earners resided in Major Cities and Inner Regional areas, with 69.7% and 18.9% in these areas respectively. Outer Regional areas accounted for 9.3% of Australia's wage and salary earner population, while Remote and Very Remote areas comprised a combined 2.1% of total wage and salary earners resident in Australia.

In comparison, at 30 June 2003, it was estimated that 66.3% of Australia's total population were located in Major Cities, while Inner Regional areas accounted for 20.9%. Outer Regional areas comprised 10.3% of the total population, with Remote and Very Remote areas combined estimated to account for 2.5%. These proportions show that the distribution of wage and salary earners is similar to the distribution of the total population. They also broadly reflect the concentration of wage and salary earners within Major Cities areas, with the greater availability and versatility of employment opportunities within these regions.

In New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Western Australia, approximately 75% of wage and salary earners resided in Major Cities, corresponding to total population estimates in these same areas of just over 70%.

Queensland recorded the lowest proportion of wage and salary earners residing within Major Cities at 55.9%, corresponding to a lower total population estimate of 52.7%. The proportion of wage and salary earners residing in Queensland's Inner Regional areas (including Gladstone and Hervey Bay) and Outer Regional areas (including Cairns and Port Douglas) were 23.1% and 17.6% respectively, higher than the national proportions of 18.9% and 9.3%. These figures are consistent with the greater distribution of Queensland's population along the coastal seaboard.

It was estimated that 45.6% of the Northern Territory's total population were located in Remote (including Alice Springs and Katherine) and Very Remote areas (including Tennant Creek and Nhulunbuy) as at 30 June 2003. With 33.7% of its wage and salary earner population residing in these areas (19.9% and 13.7% respectively), the Northern Territory displays the largest differential between wage and salary earners and total population within these remoteness areas. In Tasmania, 65.9% of the wage and salary population were resident in Inner Regional areas (including Hobart and Launceston) and 31.8% in Outer Regional areas (including Georgetown and Latrobe), while 63.8% and 33.9% of the total population were residents in Inner Regional and Outer Regional areas respectively.

**DISTRIBUTION OF WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS BY REMOTENESS  
AREA,  
States and Territories, 2002-03**

	Major cities %	Inner regional %	Outer regional %	Remote %	Very remote %	Total(a)  '000
New South Wales	75.6	18.3	5.7	0.4	0.1	2,532.3
Victoria	76.2	19.5	4.3	0.1	0.0	1,931.1
Queensland	55.9	23.1	17.6	2.4	1.1	1,446.0
South Australia	74.2	12.1	10.3	2.7	0.7	569.0
Western Australia	73.3	11.6	8.7	4.4	1.9	740.8
Tasmania	-	65.9	31.8	1.6	0.6	169.7
Northern Territory	-	-	66.3	19.9	13.7	74.6
Australian Capital Territory	99.8	0.2	-	-	-	150.2
<b>Australia</b>	<b>69.7</b>	<b>18.9</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>0.6</b>	<b>7,613.7</b>

(a) Excludes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.  
Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

**DISTRIBUTION OF ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION BY REMOTENESS  
AREA  
States and Territories, 30 June 2003**

	Major cities %	Inner regional %	Outer regional %	Remote %	Very remote %	Total(a)  '000
New South Wales	71.5	20.6	7.2	0.6	0.1	6,682.1
Victoria	73.4	21.3	5.2	0.1	0.0	4,911.4
Queensland	52.7	25.9	17.5	2.5	1.4	3,801.0
South Australia	71.1	12.6	11.7	3.0	0.9	1,526.3
Western Australia	70.5	12.7	9.6	4.7	2.6	1,949.9
Tasmania	-	63.8	33.9	1.8	0.5	477.3
Northern Territory	-	-	54.4	20.8	24.8	198.5
Australian Capital Territory	99.8	0.2	-	-	-	323.4
<b>Australia</b>	<b>66.3</b>	<b>20.9</b>	<b>10.3</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>19,870.0</b>

(a) Excludes Jervis Bay Territory, Territory of Christmas Island and Territory of Cocos Island.  
Source: ABS, *Regional Population Growth, Australia and New Zealand 2003-04 (cat. no. 3218.0)*

All of Australia's remoteness areas recorded positive growth in the number of wage and salary earners between 2001-02 and 2002-03, except for Very Remote areas (-0.2%) which continues to reflect a downward trend since 1996-97 (Note: The exclusion of Community Development Employment Project (CDEP) income from 1998-99 onwards could also be responsible for the observable decrease in the number of wage and salary earners and conversely the upward movement in the median annual wage and salary income for Remote and Very Remote areas. For further details please refer to the Explanatory Notes).

Inner Regional areas recorded the highest increase of wage and salary earners at 3.6%, followed by Major Cities and Outer Regional areas, both with increases of 2.0%. The growth in Inner Regional areas of wage and salary earners may be influenced by lifestyle choices and the relative affordability of these regions, whilst still offering high levels of accessibility to services and Major Cities areas (**Australian Social Trends, 2003 (cat. no. 4102.0)**).

Total wage and salary income received by Australia's wage and salary earners was \$283.8 billion in 2002-03, increasing from \$267.4 billion in 2001-02 and \$259.6 billion in 2000-01.

In 2002-03, all remoteness areas recorded positive growth in the level of total wage and salary income. The growth in Inner Regional areas was greatest in percentage terms, recording an increase of 7.4% from 2001-02 and an average annual rate of increase of 5.4% over the 6 year period from 1996-97 to 2002-03. Remote areas recorded an increase in 2002-03 over the previous year of 4.8% and an average annual rate of increase of 2.1% between 1996-97 and 2002-03.

Major Cities contributed \$206.3 billion, or 72.7% of total wages and salaries paid in 2002-03, decreasing from 72.9% in 2001-02. Inner Regional areas have consistently increased its contribution to total wages and salaries paid, at 16.8% in 2002-03, 16.5% in 2001-02 and 16.2% in 2000-01. Very Remote areas contributed \$1.7 billion or 0.6% of Australia's total wages and salaries paid in 2002-03. The wages and salaries paid to employees in Major Cities and Inner Regional areas continue to increase at a higher rate than for employees in other regions, increasing the income disparity between these and other remoteness areas.

## WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, by Remoteness Area, 1996-97 to 2002-03

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	% Change 2001-1996-97 02 to 2002- 03 2002- 03(a)	
<b>WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS (no.)</b>									
Major cities	4,984,589	5,083,685	5,148,414	5,194,329	5,227,031	5,201,940	5,307,867	2.0	1.1
Inner regional	1,292,080	1,317,926	1,336,494	1,347,744	1,361,808	1,388,536	1,438,424	3.6	1.8
Outer regional	686,672	695,281	695,557	693,029	688,313	692,968	707,005	2.0	0.5
Remote	121,525	122,077	118,161	114,354	112,428	111,745	112,295	0.5	-1.3
Very remote	62,057	61,848	53,204	51,595	50,232	48,186	48,080	-0.2	-4.2
<b>Australia(b)</b>	<b>7,188,213</b>	<b>7,313,428</b>	<b>7,380,064</b>	<b>7,434,438</b>	<b>7,471,989</b>	<b>7,472,423</b>	<b>7,640,538</b>	<b>2.2</b>	<b>1.0</b>
<b>WAGE AND SALARY INCOME (\$m)</b>									
Major cities	153,901	163,793	172,735	181,312	190,313	194,803	206,315	5.9	5.0
Inner regional	34,718	36,745	38,552	40,089	41,975	44,250	47,540	7.4	5.4
Outer regional	18,180	19,067	19,710	20,064	20,747	21,720	23,054	6.1	4.0
Remote	3,634	3,763	3,770	3,689	3,797	3,935	4,125	4.8	2.1
Very remote	1,701	1,753	1,672	1,661	1,688	1,657	1,737	4.8	0.3
<b>Australia(b)</b>	<b>213,378</b>	<b>226,043</b>	<b>237,367</b>	<b>247,874</b>	<b>259,612</b>	<b>267,379</b>	<b>283,798</b>	<b>6.1</b>	<b>4.9</b>

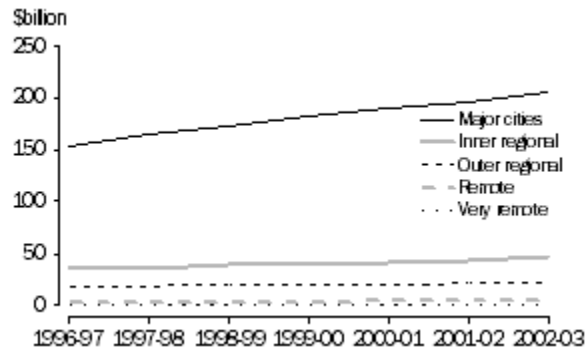
(a) Average annual rate of increase.

(b) Total includes data that could not be allocated to remoteness area.

Note: Indigenous persons engaged in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) may be included in the above data for the years 1996-97 to 1997-98 and excluded for 1998-99 onwards. Consequently, changes between 1997-98 and 1998-99 and 1996-97 and 2002-03 in particular need to be treated with caution. For further details please refer to the Explanatory Notes.

Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

## TOTAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Remoteness Area, 1996-97 to 2002-03



Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

The median annual wage and salary income for wage and salary earners in Australia, for the financial year 2002-03, was estimated at \$32,698, an increase of 3.9% over the previous year (\$31,483) and an average annual rate of increase for the period 1996-97 to 2002-03 of 3.3%. Very Remote areas had the highest average annual rate of increase of median annual wage and salary income over the period 1996-97 to 2002-03 at 5.3%, followed by Remote areas at 3.5%.

In 2002-03, employees in Remote and Very Remote areas recorded higher medians than employees in Inner Regional and Outer Regional Australia, moreover, Remote areas had the greatest percentage increase in median wage and salary income between 2001-02 and 2002-03 at 4.5%. Outer Regional and Very Remote areas followed at 4.2% and 4.0% respectively. The higher medians in these areas are likely to be influenced by the concentration of mining within these sectors, and the higher wage and salary packages offered to attract and retain skilled and semi-skilled employees within these regions (**AMP-NATSEM Income and Wealth Report, Issue 1, February 2002**). Inner Regional areas recorded the smallest percentage increase between 2001-02 and 2002-03 at 3.5%.

**MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Remoteness Area,  
1996-97 to 2002-03**

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2001-02 to 2002-03	% Change 1996-97 to 2002-03(a)
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	%	%
Major cities	27,895	28,827	29,778	30,741	31,775	32,793	33,982	3.6	3.3
Inner regional	24,988	25,714	26,495	27,161	27,951	28,886	29,903	3.5	3.0
Outer regional	24,504	25,194	26,100	26,495	27,451	28,492	29,689	4.2	3.3
Remote	25,965	26,656	27,823	28,043	29,296	30,462	31,838	4.5	3.5
Very remote	22,950	23,754	27,495	27,983	29,137	30,046	31,243	4.0	5.3
<b>Australia (b)</b>	<b>26,919</b>	<b>27,775</b>	<b>28,705</b>	<b>29,509</b>	<b>30,470</b>	<b>31,483</b>	<b>32,698</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>3.3</b>

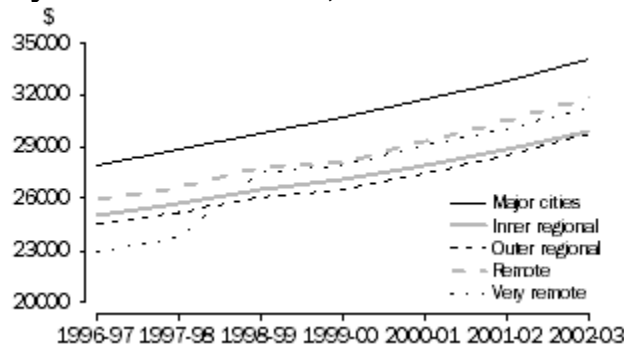
(a) Average annual rate of increase.

(b) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.

Note: The median is the mid value which divides a population distribution into two, with half of the observations falling below it and half above it. Median wage and salary income has been calculated from data provided in ranges and therefore distribution within a range has been assumed to be even. Care should be taken when using the data and the median treated as an estimate only).

Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

**MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME(a),  
by Remoteness Area, 1996-97 to 2002-03**



Source: ATO Income Tax Data

(a) Indigenous persons engaged in Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP) may be included in the data for the years 1996-97 to 1997-98 and excluded for 1998-99 onwards. Consequently, changes between 1997-98 and 1998-99 and 1996-97 and 2002-03 in particular need to be treated with caution. For further details please refer to the Explanatory Notes.

## DISTRIBUTION BY SEX

In 2002-03 there were 4.1 million male (53.0%) and 3.6 million female (47.0%) wage and salary earners in Australia. As the degree of remoteness increased, the proportion of male wage and salary earners generally increased in each remoteness area. The proportion of male wage and salary earners in Major Cities was 52.6% compared with 56.0% in Remote areas. Conversely, the proportion of female wage and salary earners in Major Cities was 47.4% compared with 44.0% and 45.5% in Remote and Very Remote areas respectively.

### WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, by Sex and Remoteness Area, 2002-03

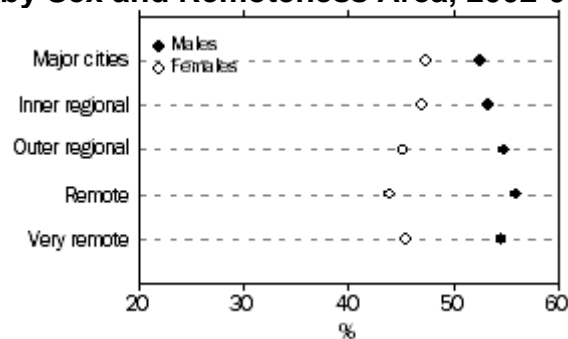
	Percentage within remoteness area				
	Males no.	Females no.	Persons no.	Males %	Females %
Major cities	2,792,924	2,514,923	5,307,847	52.6	47.4
Inner regional	768,169	670,233	1,438,402	53.4	47.0
Outer regional	387,563	319,415	706,978	54.8	45.2
Remote	62,894	49,408	112,302	56.0	44.0
Very remote	26,201	21,900	48,101	54.5	45.5
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>4,052,635</b>	<b>3,587,905</b>	<b>7,640,540</b>	<b>53.0</b>	<b>47.0</b>

(a) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.

Note: Due to the randomisation process applied to small cells for confidentiality purposes, totals for each characteristic and geographic area may differ from table to table. For further information please refer to the Explanatory Notes.

Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

### PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, by Sex and Remoteness Area, 2002-03



Source: ATO Income Tax Data

In 2002-03 median wage and salary income for both males and females was highest in Major Cities at \$40,213 and \$27,945 respectively. The second highest median for males was in Remote areas at \$39,866, higher than the Australia wide median figure for males of \$38,909. Very Remote areas recorded the second highest median annual wage and salary income for females at \$25,164.

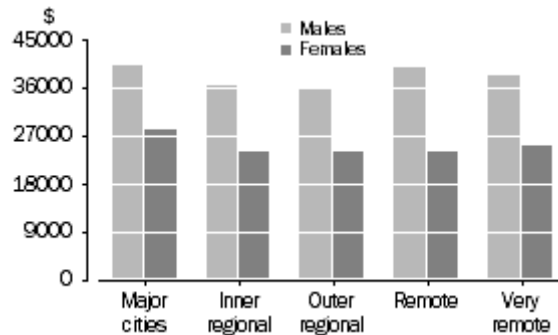
In 2002-03 the median wage and salary incomes for males were consistently higher than those for females in all remoteness areas. The difference between male and female median incomes was over \$10,000 in each region, with the highest difference in Remote and Very Remote areas (\$15,833 and \$13,035 respectively). The smallest difference between male and female median wage and salary income was in Outer Regional areas at \$11,888. These differences may be attributable to females being more likely to occupy lower paid positions and to be working on a part-time basis. In 2003 approximately 46% of employed women worked part-time, compared to around 15% of males (**Australian Social Trends, 2003 and 2004, (cat. no. 4102.0)**).

**MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Sex and Remoteness Area, 2002-03**

	<b>Males</b> \$	<b>Females</b> \$	<b>Persons</b> \$
Major cities	40,213	27,945	33,982
Inner regional	36,447	23,929	29,903
Outer regional	35,660	23,772	29,689
Remote	39,866	24,033	31,838
Very remote	38,199	25,164	31,243
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>38,909</b>	<b>26,633</b>	<b>32,698</b>

(a) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness areas.  
Source: ATO Income Tax Data

**MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Sex and Remoteness Area, 2002-03**



Source: ATO Income Tax Data

Between 2001-02 and 2002-03 median wage and salary incomes for males increased at the highest rate in Outer Regional areas at 4.5%, while for females the highest increase was in Remote areas at 4.4%.

The median wage and salary incomes for both male and female wage and salary earners increased between the years 1996-97 to 2002-03 at an average annual rate of growth of 3.3%. The highest male wage and salary income increase in this period was in Very Remote areas, which saw an average annual increase of 4.9%. The highest increase of female wage and salary income over this time period was in Very Remote areas at 6.2%, followed by Remote areas at 4.2%.

**MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Sex and Remoteness Area, 1996-97 to 2002-03**

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2001-02 to 2002-03 %	% Change 1996-97 to 2002-03(a) %
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$		
<b>MALES</b>									
Major cities	33,356	34,487	35,661	36,681	37,709	38,763	40,213	3.7	3.2
Inner regional	29,798	30,776	31,908	32,893	33,865	35,098	36,447	3.8	3.4
Outer regional	28,904	29,787	30,946	31,425	32,728	34,102	35,660	4.5	3.6
Remote	32,567	33,632	35,125	35,423	36,920	38,420	39,866	3.8	3.4
Very remote	28,666	29,364	34,113	34,439	35,879	36,662	38,199	4.2	4.9
<b>Australia(b)</b>	<b>32,111</b>	<b>33,250</b>	<b>34,464</b>	<b>35,369</b>	<b>36,403</b>	<b>37,498</b>	<b>38,909</b>	<b>3.8</b>	<b>3.3</b>
<b>FEMALES</b>									
Major cities	23,083	23,866	24,609	25,422	26,306	27,072	27,945	3.2	3.2
Inner regional	19,528	20,250	21,023	21,721	22,498	23,232	23,929	3.0	3.4
Outer regional	19,039	19,689	20,590	21,205	22,107	22,919	23,772	3.7	3.8
Remote	18,823	19,507	20,663	21,069	22,246	23,010	24,033	4.4	4.2
Very remote	17,534	18,400	21,396	22,192	23,229	24,139	25,164	4.2	6.2
<b>Australia(b)</b>	<b>21,955</b>	<b>22,725</b>	<b>23,507</b>	<b>24,238</b>	<b>25,091</b>	<b>25,822</b>	<b>26,633</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.3</b>

(a) Average annual rate of increase

(b) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.

Source: ATO Income Tax Data

## DISTRIBUTION BY AGE

The proportion of wage and salary earners in each age group varies within each of the remoteness areas. The 25-34 year age group accounted for the largest proportion of wage and salary earners in Major cities and Very Remote areas (26.4% and 26.2% respectively), while in Inner Regional and Outer Regional areas the 35-44 year age group accounted for the largest proportion, both at 24.8%. In Remote Areas the 25-34 and 35-44 year age groups accounted for an equally high proportion of wage and salary earners at just over 25%.

In the 25-34 and 35-44 year age groups the proportion of wage and salary earners outside of Major Cities increased as the degree of remoteness increased. For example, in Inner Regional areas, 21.5% of wage and salary earners were aged 25-34 rising to 26.2% in Very Remote areas. In contrast, outside of Major Cities, the proportion of wage and salary earners in the 15-24, 45-54 and 55 and over age groups generally decreased in proportion as the degree of remoteness increased.

### WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, by Age Group and Remoteness Area, 2002-03

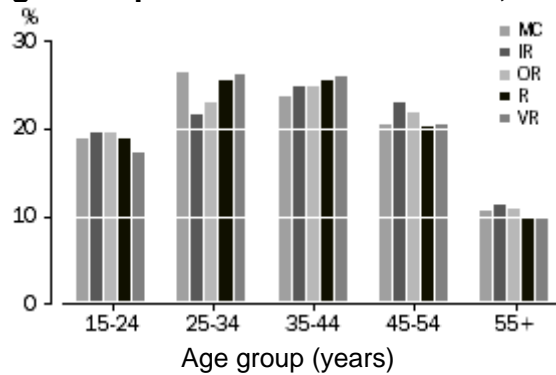
	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55 years and over	Total
WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS (no.)						
Major cities	1,000,277	1,399,456	1,257,363	1,084,365	566,387	5,307,847
Inner regional	280,665	309,269	356,351	331,019	161,097	1,438,402
Outer regional	138,289	162,840	175,320	154,227	76,302	706,978
Remote	21,294	28,651	28,611	22,721	11,025	112,302
Very remote	8,309	12,602	12,474	9,900	4,817	48,102
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>1,453,625</b>	<b>1,920,376</b>	<b>1,836,361</b>	<b>1,607,639</b>	<b>822,489</b>	<b>7,640,490</b>

	WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS (Percentage within Remoteness area)					
Major cities	18.8	26.4	23.7	20.4	10.7	100.0
Inner regional	19.5	21.5	24.8	23.0	11.2	100.0
Outer regional	19.6	23.0	24.8	21.8	10.8	100.0
Remote	19.0	25.5	25.5	20.2	9.8	100.0
Very remote	17.3	26.2	25.9	20.6	10.0	100.0
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>19.0</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>24.0</b>	<b>21.0</b>	<b>10.8</b>	<b>100.00</b>

(a) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area

Source: ATO Income Tax Data

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS,  
by Age Group and Remoteness Area, 2002-03**



Source: ATO Income Tax Data

Australia wide, median annual wage and salary increased with age, peaking in the 45-54 year age group at \$38,616. This figure is likely to be influenced by the propensity of wage and salaries earners within this age bracket benefiting financially from promotions, increased qualifications and employment tenure. Median annual wage and salary income was lowest in the 15-24 year age group at \$16,501, influenced by people in this age group beginning their careers, being in less skilled occupations and having lower levels of work experience and educational attainment. The past decade has also seen a rise in part-time employment among this age group, consistent with higher rates of participation in non-compulsory education (**Australian Social Trends, 2004, (cat. no. 4102.0)**).

Median annual wage and salary income was highest in Major Cities for all age groups except for those aged 15-24 years, where Very Remote areas recorded the highest median wage and salary for this age group at \$18,586. In general, as the degree of remoteness increased, median wage and salary incomes for those aged 15-24 years increased, from \$16,577 in Major Cities to \$18,586 in Very Remote areas. Due to the lower availability of educational facilities and accessibility to these services in Remote and Very Remote areas, wage and salary earners in the age group 15-24 are more likely to be working full time than combining part-time employment with non-compulsory schooling.

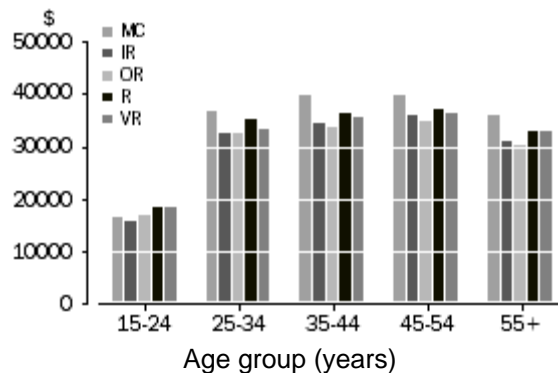
In 2002-03, Outer Regional areas had the lowest median annual wage and salary income for all age groups except the 15-24 year age group. Across all age groups the medians were greater in Remote and Very Remote areas than in the Inner Regional and Outer Regional areas. This is likely to reflect the industry mix in each of these broad regions.

## MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Age Group and Remoteness Area, 2002-03

	15-24 years \$	25-34 years \$	35-44 years \$	45-54 years \$	55 years and over \$	Total \$
Major cities	16,577	36,733	39,805	40,083	35,908	33,982
Inner regional	15,813	32,560	34,444	35,978	31,211	29,903
Outer regional	17,097	32,513	33,714	34,799	30,306	29,687
Remote	18,540	35,090	36,443	36,953	32,793	31,819
Very remote	18,586	33,203	35,586	36,564	33,050	31,183
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>16,501</b>	<b>35,605</b>	<b>37,991</b>	<b>38,616</b>	<b>34,410</b>	<b>32,697</b>

(a) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.  
Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

## MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Age Group and Remoteness Area, 2002-03



Source: ATO Income Tax Data

## DISTRIBUTION BY AGE BY SEX

In 2002-03, the proportion of male wage and salary earner populations in the age group 55 years and over were consistently higher in all remoteness area than the female populations within the same age group. The highest proportion of both male and female wage and salary earners in this age group were residing in Inner Regional areas at 12.5% and 9.7% respectively. The lowest proportion of males within this age group was in Remote areas at 10.9% and for females Very Remote areas at 8.3%.

Males aged 55 years and over continue to have a higher participation rate in the labour force than females 55 years and over, consistent with the eligibility of females to receive the age pension before the age of 65 years. The proportion of people in the labour force aged 45-64 years continues to grow, reflecting a range of legislative and policy initiatives designed to decrease incentives for early retirement (**Australian Social Trends, 2004 (cat. no. 4102.0)**).

Both males and females in the age category 15-24 had the lowest proportion of wage and salary earners located in Very Remote areas, while in the 35-44 year age category, the lowest proportion of wage and salary earners for both males and females was in Major Cities (24.1% and 23.2% respectively). Overall, outside of Major Cities areas, as the degree of remoteness increased the proportion of male and female wage and salary earners aged 25-34 and 35-44 years of age increased.

**WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, by Age Group, Sex and Remoteness Area, 2002-03**

MALES (Percentage within Remoteness Area)						
	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55 years and over	Total
Major cities	18.0	26.2	24.1	19.8	11.8	100.0
Inner regional	19.3	21.9	24.3	22.0	12.5	100.0
Outer regional	19.6	23.4	24.3	20.8	11.9	100.0
Remote	18.7	25.5	25.2	19.6	10.9	100.0
Very remote	16.9	25.6	25.7	20.4	11.5	100.0
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>18.4</b>	<b>25.1</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>20.3</b>	<b>11.9</b>	<b>100.0</b>
FEMALES (Percentage within Remoteness Area)						
	15-24 years	25-34 years	35-44 years	45-54 years	55 years and over	Total
Major cities	19.7	26.5	23.2	21.2	9.4	100.0
Inner regional	19.8	21.1	25.3	24.2	9.7	100.0
Outer regional	19.5	22.6	25.4	23.0	9.4	100.0
Remote	19.3	25.5	25.8	21.0	8.4	100.0
Very remote	17.8	26.9	26.3	20.8	8.3	100.0
<b>Australia(a)</b>	<b>19.7</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>23.8</b>	<b>21.9</b>	<b>9.4</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.  
Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

## **DISTRIBUTION BY OCCUPATION**

The proportion of wage and salary earners in each occupation group varies within each of the remoteness areas. Occupation groups such as Managers and administrators; Professionals; and Advanced clerical and service workers tended to decrease in proportion as remoteness increased whereas occupation groups such as Tradespersons and related workers; Intermediate clerical, sales and service workers; and Elementary clerical, sales and service workers generally increased in proportion as remoteness increased.

Occupation data compiled from the ATO database includes a high proportion of wage and salary earners for whom the occupation was not stated or not coded. Care should therefore be taken when analysing the occupation distribution. Over the period for which this series has been compiled, the proportion of persons in the "not stated" category has decreased each year from around 27% in 1995-96 to 10.7% in 2002-03. It should also be noted that the proportion in the "not stated" category decreases with remoteness and may account for some of the apparent differences in occupations in the different remoteness areas. In Major Cities 11.2% of wage and salary earners did not state their occupation in 2002-03, decreasing to 6.9% in Very Remote areas. Further information is contained in the **Glossary** under Occupation.

**WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS, by Occupation(a) and Remoteness Area,  
2002-03**

	Manag- ers and admini- strators	Profess- ionals	Associ- ate prof- ession- als	Trades- and related workers	Advanc- ed clerical and service workers	Interme- diate clerical, sales and service workers	Interme- diate product- ion and transport workers	Element- ary clerical, sales and service workers	Labour- ers and related workers	Not stated	Total
--	--	--------------------	---	--------------------------------------	--	--	--	--	--	---------------	-------

**WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS (no.) (b)**

Major cities	532,759	1,056,907	368,297	506,681	178,512	954,740	321,271	495,690	436,544	614,907	5,466,307
Inner regional	113,022	234,530	93,144	176,013	35,150	244,216	107,639	149,798	178,249	139,129	1,470,890
Outer regional	51,677	103,374	43,849	86,624	14,211	115,302	60,268	70,347	111,427	65,351	722,431
Remote	8,177	15,816	7,415	14,984	2,059	16,993	12,887	9,953	18,193	8,583	115,060
Very remote	3,585	7,704	3,734	5,873	771	7,883	4,669	3,798	7,920	3,429	49,365
<b>Australia(c)</b>	<b>712,348</b>	<b>1,424,273</b>	<b>518,480</b>	<b>792,444</b>	<b>231,541</b>	<b>1,343,636</b>	<b>508,204</b>	<b>731,491</b>	<b>754,698</b>	<b>837,416</b>	<b>7,854,531</b>

**WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS (Percentage within Remoteness Area)**

Major cities	9.7	19.3	6.7	9.3	3.3	17.5	5.9	9.1	8.0	11.2	100.0
Inner regional	7.7	15.9	6.3	12.0	2.4	16.6	7.3	10.2	12.1	9.5	100.0
Outer regional	7.2	14.3	6.1	12.0	2.0	16.0	8.3	9.7	15.4	9.0	100.0
Remote	7.1	13.7	6.4	13.0	1.8	14.8	11.2	8.6	15.8	7.5	100.0
Very remote	7.3	15.6	7.6	11.9	1.6	16.0	9.5	7.7	16.0	6.9	100.0
<b>Australia(c)</b>	<b>9.1</b>	<b>18.1</b>	<b>6.6</b>	<b>10.1</b>	<b>17.1</b>	<b>6.5</b>	<b>9.3</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>9.6</b>	<b>10.7</b>	<b>100.0</b>

(a) Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, 2nd Edition.

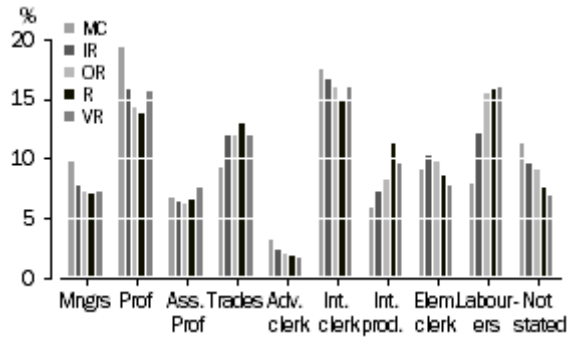
(b) Occupation based data was extracted from ATO datasets after the extraction of the data on other characteristics of wage and salary earners had occurred. This has resulted in more records been processed at the time of the second extract as can be seen in the higher totals in the occupation data.

(c) Australia total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.

Note: Due to the randomisation process applied to small cells for confidentiality purposes, totals for each characteristic and geographic area may differ from table to table. For further information please refer to the Explanatory Notes.

Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

**PERCENTAGE DISTRIBUTION OF WAGE AND SALARY EARNERS,  
by Occupation(a) and Remoteness Area, 2002-03**



(a) Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, 2nd Edition.  
Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

In 2002-03, Managers and administrators had the highest median annual wage and salary income (\$47,611), followed by Professionals (\$45,640) and Associate professionals (\$39,594). The median annual wage and salary income for Managers and administrators substantially decreased outside of Major Cities.

Reflecting the skills required in the major industry sectors of primary production and mining, Intermediate production and transport workers had the highest median income from wages and salaries in Remote and Very Remote areas at \$49,983 and \$50,117 respectively.

Elementary clerical, sales and service workers had the lowest median annual wage and salary income in every remoteness area. In Major Cities, Elementary clerical, sales and service workers had a median annual wage and salary income of \$17,215 while in Very Remote areas it was \$19,795.

**MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Occupation(a) and Remoteness Area, 2002-03**

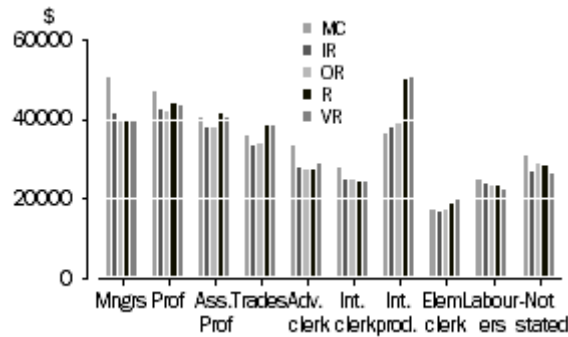
	Managers and administrators	Professionals	Associate professionals	Tradespersons and related workers	Advanced clerical and service workers	Intermediate clerical and service workers	Intermediate production and transport workers	Elementary clerical and service workers	Labourers and related workers	Not stated	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Major cities	50,233	46,825	40,282	35,895	33,080	27,846	36,197	17,215	24,572	231,002	34,028
Inner regional	41,163	42,420	37,676	33,384	27,895	24,799	37,561	16,514	23,700	26,472	29,913
Outer regional	39,136	42,026	37,735	33,560	27,364	24,704	38,819	17,305	23,041	28,509	29,684
Remote	39,659	43,824	41,130	38,336	27,015	24,177	49,983	18,392	23,241	28,300	31,751
Very remote	39,160	43,599	40,565	38,257	28,792	24,253	50,117	19,795	22,302	25,947	31,137
<b>Australia(b)</b>	<b>47,611</b>	<b>45,640</b>	<b>39,594</b>	<b>35,091</b>	<b>31,835</b>	<b>26,842</b>	<b>37,071</b>	<b>17,102</b>	<b>24,072</b>	<b>229,819</b>	<b>32,728</b>

(a) Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, 2nd Edition.

(b) Total includes data that could not be allocated to a remoteness area.

Source: ATO Income Tax Data.

**MEDIAN ANNUAL WAGE AND SALARY INCOME, by Occupation(a) and Remoteness Area, 2002-03**



(a) Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, 2nd Edition.

Source: ATO Income Tax Data.