

**Senate Standing Committee on Education Employment and Workplace  
Relations**

**QUESTIONS ON NOTICE  
Additional Estimates 2009-2010**

**Outcome 4 - Employment & Participation Policy**

**DEEWR Question No. EW0984\_10**

**Senator Cormann asked on 10/02/2010, Hansard page 98.**

*Refers to previous DEEWR Question No EW454\_10*

**Question**

**JOBS FUND - 70 LABOUR MARKET INDICATORS**

Senator CORMANN—You are allocating \$132 million of taxpayers' money. Those areas in which you made a special effort to advertise just happen—totally coincidentally!—to be all Labor electorates? How can somebody not smell a rat? Ms Paul—Well, I think perhaps what we can do for you—and we have had some of this discussion here before. We used an analysis involving 70 different variables about what was happening in areas across Australia. That informed the rollout and the announcement of these areas. I am happy, if we have not already provided that on notice, to set out the rationale for you. It is pretty complex, so it is probably easier for us to set it out on notice, I think. Senator CORMANN—Are you going to provide us with a list of the 70 labour market indicators? Ms Paul—I am happy to do so. Senator CORMANN—Okay. Thank you. And you are going to give us an indication of how those 70 labour indicators have tracked between when the program started up until now? Ms Paul—We can try to do that. I do not know; we may have to do a bit of work to do that, but I am happy to try. Senator CORMANN—To be honest, I think it would be good in terms of clearing up. Ms Paul—Sure.

**Answer**

The identification of the Priority Employment Areas, and the Local Government Areas (LGAs) that comprise them, was based on an in-depth analysis of around 70 labour market indicators by ABS Labour Force Region (LFR)<sup>1</sup> and, where available, by LGA. For a list of the 70 indicators, see Attachment A.

The methodology used to identify and then compile the final list of 20 Priority Employment Areas was based on the most up-to-date data available at the time of the analysis, namely, April 2009 ABS Labour Force Survey data and DEEWR administrative data, and DEEWR Small Area Labour Market (SALM) data for the December quarter 2008<sup>2</sup>.

Table 1 at Attachment B provides a summary of the key indicators that were

<sup>1</sup> In order to analyse the most up-to-date data, labour market conditions at the ABS LFR level were examined. The Priority Employment Areas broadly align, and in some cases perfectly align, with ABS LFRs.

<sup>2</sup> Some Census data, on educational attainment for instance, were also considered. This is because the proportion of the population who are well/poorly educated will not have changed dramatically in regions since the time of the Census and will provide a good indication of current educational attainment rates for regions.

considered during the process.

For more details on the methodology underpinning the selection of the Priority Employment Areas, please see the response to Question No. EW454\_10 from the 2009-10 Supplementary Estimates in October 2009.

In terms of how the indicators have tracked over time, see Table 2 at Attachment B for a summary of the latest available ABS Labour Force Survey and DEEWR administrative data for January 2010. For information on how the summary labour market conditions in each Priority Employment Area have tracked over time, see Attachment C.

**List of around 70 labour market indicators**

Unemployment rate
Level of unemployment
Average duration of unemployment
Participation rate
Employment growth
Youth (15-24 years) unemployment rate
Proportion of employment by industry:
Agriculture, Forestry and Fishing
Mining
Manufacturing
Electricity, Gas, Water and Waste Services
Construction
Wholesale Trade
Retail Trade
Accommodation and Food Services
Transport, Postal and Warehousing
Information Media and Telecommunications
Financial and Insurance Services
Professional, Scientific and Technical Services
Administrative and Support Services
Public Administration and Safety
Education and Training
Health Care and Social Assistance
Arts and Recreation Services
Other Services
Industry concentration (i.e. the proportion of employment in the four largest industries)
Proportion of employment by occupation:
Managers
Professionals
Technicians and Trades Workers
Community and Personal Service Workers
Clerical and Administrative Workers
Sales Workers
Machinery Operators and Drivers
Labourers
Proportion of employment by skill cluster:
Higher education
Skilled VET
Other VET
Low skill
Population growth over the year
Population growth over the decade
Proportion of the civilian population by age group:
15-24 years
25-44 years
45-64 years
65+ years
Proportion of the working age (15-64 years) population who finished Year 12 or equivalent
Proportion of the working age (15-64 years) population who have attained a Bachelor Degree or above
Proportion of the population who were born in an Other Than Main English Speaking Country
Proportion of the population that identified as being Indigenous
Indigenous unemployment rate
Indigenous participation rate
Proportion of the working age (15-64 years) population in receipt of income support
Change in the level of unemployment beneficiaries since the GFC
Proportion of households by weekly income
Neg/nil to \$499 per week
\$500 to \$999 per week
\$1000 to \$1999 per week
\$2000 or above per week
Proportion of households by monthly housing loan repayment
\$1 to \$8499 per month
\$850 to \$1399 per month
\$1400 to \$1999 per month
\$2000 or above per month
Proportion of households by weekly rent:
\$0 to \$139 per week
\$140 to \$179 per week
\$180 to \$274 per week
\$275 or above per week
Proportion of households by housing loan/rent payment ratio:
First category (lowest income/housing costs)
Second category
Third category
Fourth category (highest income/housing costs)

**Table 1: Key labour market indicators by Priority Employment Area, April 2009**

	Proportion of working age population (aged 15-64) who completed Year 12 or equivalent (%), August 2006 <sup>1</sup>	Proportion of working age population (aged 15-64) who have attained a Bachelor degree or higher, August 2006 <sup>1</sup>	Increase in unemployment beneficiaries September 2008 to April 2009 (%) <sup>2</sup>	Proportion of working age population (aged 15-64) in receipt of Income Support Payments, April 2009 (%) <sup>2</sup>	Unemployment Rate April 2009 (%) <sup>3</sup>	Participation Rate April 2009 (%) <sup>3</sup>	Youth Unemployment Rate April 2009 (%) <sup>3</sup>	Proportion of total employment in Manufacturing (%), August 2006 <sup>1</sup>
Canterbury-Bankstown and South Western Sydney	44.1	11.4	22.6	15.7	8.8	62.2	15.9	15.0
Sydney West and Blue Mountains	45.7	15.8	26.7	13.3	7.9	67.8	12.2	12.5
Central Coast-Hunter	35.3	11.9	15.9	16.2	6.6	58.3	11.9	10.5
Illawarra	36.4	12.8	17.1	15.5	7.4	57.4	13.2	11.1
Richmond-Tweed and Clarence Valley	34.0	11.4	20.2	22.0	8.3	54.2	15.9	7.4
Mid-North Coast	29.1	9.4	11.7	22.0	8.3	54.2	15.9	8.1
South Eastern Melbourne	43.7	12.1	31.2	13.2	7.0	63.3	13.6	19.2
North Western Melbourne	45.0	12.8	24.1	14.4	7.4	64.0	11.2	16.4
Ballarat-Bendigo	37.7	13.6	21.1	15.9	6.6	63.6	13.4	12.6
North Eastern Victoria	34.1	11.0	11.3	16.1	4.7	57.5	13.0	14.6
Ipswich-Logan	39.9	8.4	42.4	14.3	5.6	70.4	10.9	16.6
Caboolture-Sunshine Coast	40.1	10.9	52.9	12.9	5.1	61.3	9.0	9.0
Southern Wide Bay-Burnett	29.2	6.9	32.9	21.6	7.3	57.4	14.5	12.2
Bundaberg-Hervey Bay	30.5	8.0	32.5	21.6	7.3	57.4	14.5	8.9
Townsville-Thuringowa <sup>4</sup>	42.7	12.3	62.2	13.3	3.8	73.4	5.4	9.0
Cairns <sup>4</sup>	42.1	11.5	44.3	16.6	9.4	70.5	12.0	6.5
Northern and Western Adelaide	41.3	12.2	17.5	17.3	8.6	62.9	13.1	15.5
Port Augusta-Whyalla-Port Pirie	26.9	7.1	12.9	19.5	5.4	61.4	14.0	15.5
South West Perth	36.5	8.7	43.3	9.2	6.1	69.1	8.7	14.1
North West and Northern Tasmania	27.9	10.3	12.1	18.1	4.6	61.2	9.5	13.1
<b>Australia</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>24.9</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>5.9*</b>	<b>65.7*</b>	<b>9.8**</b>	<b>10.5</b>

<sup>1</sup> Source: ABS *Census of Population and Housing*, August 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Source: DEEWR administrative databases.

<sup>3</sup> Source: ABS *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery*, April 2009 (Cat.no. 6291.0.55.001). The unemployment rate and participation rates are three-month averages of *original* estimates while the youth unemployment rates are 12-month averages of *original* estimates. Labour market indicators are based on the ABS Labour Force Region (LFR), or combination of LFRs, that best approximate the Priority Regions.

<sup>4</sup> Please note that the estimates for Cairns and Townsville-Thuringowa in this table are based on the boundaries as at April 2009 and do not include LGAs that have recently been added to these two Priority Employment Areas (e.g. Yarrabah in Cairns). The figures that are based on Census data will therefore differ slightly to those provided in Table 2.

\*Please note that the *seasonally adjusted* unemployment rate for Australia stood at 5.5 per cent in April 2009 and the seasonally adjusted participation rate for Australia stood at 65.4 per cent in April 2009. The national unemployment rate of 5.9 per cent and the national participation rate of 65.7 per cent, provided above, are in three-month average *original* terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level.

\*\*Please note that while the *seasonally adjusted* youth unemployment rate for Australia stood at 11.7 per cent in April 2009, the national figure of 9.8 per cent provided above is in 12-month average *original* terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level.

**Table 2: Key labour market indicators by Priority Employment Area, January 2010**

	Proportion of working age population (aged 15-64) who completed Year 12 or equivalent (%), August 2006 <sup>1</sup>	Proportion of working age population (aged 15-64) who have attained a Bachelor degree or higher, August 2006 <sup>1</sup>	Increase in unemployment beneficiaries September 2008 to January 2010 (%) <sup>2</sup>	Proportion of working age population (aged 15-64) in receipt of Income Support Payments, January 2010 (%) <sup>2</sup>	Unemployment Rate January 2010 (%) <sup>3</sup>	Peak in the unemployment rate since September 2008 (%) <sup>3</sup>	Participation Rate January 2010 (%) <sup>3</sup>	Youth Unemployment Rate January 2010 (%) <sup>3</sup>	Proportion of total employment in Manufacturing (%), August 2006 <sup>1</sup>
Canterbury-Bankstown and South Western Sydney	44.1	11.4	35.2	16.5	7.6	9.4 Jun-09	60.0	16.8	15.0
Sydney West and Blue Mountains	45.7	15.8	40.4	13.9	6.5	8.0 Mar-09	65.2	14.4	12.5
Central Coast-Hunter	35.3	11.9	28.8	16.8	6.5	6.6 Apr-09	60.2	13.7	10.5
Illawarra	36.4	12.8	27.1	16.7	7.2	8.3 May-09	53.0	15.0	11.1
Richmond-Tweed and Clarence Valley	34.0	11.4	34.2	23.0	6.5	10.1 Mar-09	50.9	13.5	7.4
Mid-North Coast	29.1	9.4	23.6	23.0	6.5	10.1 Mar-09	50.9	13.5	8.1
South Eastern Melbourne	43.7	12.1	50.2	13.8	6.7	8.8 Oct-09	65.8	12.9	19.2
North Western Melbourne	45.0	12.8	42.5	14.6	6.9	7.6 Jun-09	64.6	15.5	16.4
Ballarat-Bendigo	37.7	13.6	33.6	17.0	6.5	7.8 Feb-09	63.0	13.5	12.6
North Eastern Victoria	34.1	11.0	30.1	16.1	5.4	7.1 Oct-09	61.7	13.1	14.6
Ipswich-Logan	39.9	8.4	82.6	15.4	6.6	6.8 Oct-09	69.3	13.2	16.6
Caboolture-Sunshine Coast	40.1	10.9	78.9	13.8	6.0	6.8 Jul-09	62.7	12.2	9.0
Southern Wide Bay-Burnett	29.2	6.9	48.6	23.6	6.6	8.6 May-09	54.3	13.2	12.2
Bundaberg-Hervey Bay	30.5	8.0	49.0	23.6	6.6	8.6 May-09	54.3	13.2	8.9
Townsville-Thuringowa <sup>4</sup>	42.4	12.2	74.1	13.5	5.1	5.1 Jan-10	75.2	7.8	8.9
Cairns <sup>4</sup>	40.8	11.0	73.7	17.8	11.0	12.3 Sep-09	69.8	15.5	6.4
Northern and Western Adelaide	41.3	12.2	31.2	18.2	6.1	8.6 Mar-09	62.2	14.3	15.5
Port Augusta-Whyalla-Port Pirie	26.9	7.1	19.1	20.4	5.0	6.5 Oct-08	59.8	11.3	15.5
South West Perth	36.5	8.7	77.0	9.6	5.2	6.1 Apr-09	69.3	9.4	14.1
North West and Northern Tasmania	27.9	10.3	30.2	19.1	6.5	6.5 Jan-10	60.1	10.3	13.1
<b>Australia</b>	<b>46.5</b>	<b>17.4</b>	<b>44.0</b>	<b>12.9</b>	<b>5.4*</b>	<b>5.9 Apr-09</b>	<b>65.2*</b>	<b>11.7**</b>	<b>10.5</b>

<sup>1</sup> Source: ABS *Census of Population and Housing*, August 2006.

<sup>2</sup> Source: DEEWR administrative databases.

<sup>3</sup> Source: ABS *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery*, January 2010 (Cat.no. 6291.0.55.001). The unemployment rate and participation rates are three-month averages of *original* estimates while the youth unemployment rates are 12-month averages of *original* estimates. Labour market indicators are based on the ABS Labour Force Region (LFR), or combination of LFRs, that best approximate the Priority Regions.

<sup>4</sup> Please note that the estimates for Cairns and Townsville-Thuringowa are based on the latest boundaries and include LGAs that have recently been added to these two Priority Employment Areas (e.g. Yarrabah in Cairns). The figures that are based on Census data will therefore differ slightly to those provided in Table 1.

\*Please note that the *seasonally adjusted* unemployment rate for Australia stood at 5.3 per cent in January 2010 and the *seasonally adjusted* participation rate for Australia stood at 65.3 per cent in January 2010. The national unemployment rate of 5.4 per cent and the national participation rate of 65.2 per cent, provided above, are in three-month average *original* terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level.

\*\*Please note that while the *seasonally adjusted* youth unemployment rate for Australia stood at 11.4 per cent in January 2010, the national figure of 11.7 per cent provided above is in 12-month average *original* terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level.

**How key labour market indicators in the Priority Employment Areas have tracked over time since the introduction of the program**

The following summaries highlight the developments in labour market conditions in each of the 20 Priority Employment Areas since April 2009.

- Please note that the labour market indicators referred to in this analysis (with the exception of industry employment, educational attainment and unemployment beneficiaries data) are based on the ABS data for the ABS Labour Force Region (LFR), or combination of LFRs, that best approximate the Priority Employment Areas to enable an up-to-date analysis of labour market developments.
- Please note also that any data for Australia provided below are comparable with data at the regional level and may not match the figures commonly reported in the media. For instance, while the *seasonally adjusted* unemployment rate for Australia stood at 5.3 per cent in January 2010, the national figure of 5.4 per cent provided below is in three month average *original* terms to enable valid comparisons to be made with the data at the regional level (which are only available in *original* terms).

**Canterbury-Bankstown and South Western Sydney**

Since April 2009, labour market conditions in the Priority Employment Area of Canterbury-Bankstown and South Western Sydney have continued to deteriorate. While the unemployment rate in the area has actually fallen by 1.2 percentage points to stand at 7.6 per cent in January 2010 (still well above the national average), this has occurred in conjunction with a significant decline in the participation rate (down by 2.2 percentage points to 60.0 per cent (which is the driving force behind the decline in the unemployment rate)) and a fall in the level of employment (down by 5400 or 1.3 per cent). In addition, the youth unemployment rate has increased by 1.0 percentage point to stand at 16.8 per cent, well above the national average of 11.7 per cent. Moreover, the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support has increased, from 15.7 per cent in April 2009 to now stand at 16.5 per cent in January 2010.

**Sydney West and Blue Mountains**

Labour market conditions in the Priority Employment Area of Sydney West and Blue Mountains have deteriorated since April 2009. While the unemployment rate in the area has actually fallen (by 1.5 percentage points to 6.5 per cent), this has occurred in conjunction with a decline in the level of employment (down by 4800 or 1.0 per cent) and a fall in the participation rate (down by 2.6 percentage points to 65.2 per cent). The youth unemployment rate has also risen, by 2.2 percentage points to 14.4 per cent. Furthermore, the proportion of the population in receipt of income support has increased, from 13.3 per cent in April 2009 to stand at 13.9 per cent in January 2010.

### **Richmond-Tweed and ClarenceValley**

- The vast majority of the Priority Employment Area of Richmond-Tweed and ClarenceValley lies within the ABS LFR of Richmond-Tweed and Mid-NorthCoast, which provides a proxy for the Priority Employment Area.

Labour market conditions in Richmond-Tweed and ClarenceValley have continued to soften. While the unemployment rate has fallen in the Priority Employment Area of Richmond-Tweed and ClarenceValley (down by 1.8 percentage points to stand at 6.5 per cent), this has occurred in conjunction with a fall in the participation rate, down by 3.3 percentage points to 50.9 per cent.

### **Central Coast-Hunter**

While labour market conditions appear to have improved slightly in Central Coast-Hunter between April 2009 and January 2010 (with a marginal 0.1 percentage point fall in the unemployment rate to 6.5 per cent and a rise in the participation rate of 1.9 percentage points to 60.2 per cent), the area is still experiencing labour market disadvantage compared with the national average. Furthermore, this slight improvement hasn't occurred uniformly across Central Coast-Hunter's labour market, with the youth unemployment rate increasing from 11.9 per cent in April 2009 to stand at 13.7 per cent in January 2010.

### **Illawarra**

Since April 2009, labour market conditions in the Priority Employment Area of the Illawarra have continued to deteriorate. While the unemployment rate in the Illawarra has actually fallen slightly by 0.2 percentage points to stand at 7.2 per cent in January 2010 (still well above the national average), the decline in the unemployment rate has occurred in conjunction with a significant fall in the participation rate (down by 4.4 percentage points to 53.0 per cent) and a substantial decline in the level of employment (by 11 200 or 6.1 per cent). In addition, the youth unemployment rate in the Illawarra has increased by 1.8 percentage point to stand at 15.0 per cent, well above the national average of 11.7 per cent. Moreover, the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support has increased, from 15.5 per cent in April 2009 to 16.7 per cent in January 2010.

### **Mid-NorthCoast in NSW**

- The vast majority of the Priority Employment Area of Mid-North Coast lies within the ABS LFR of Richmond-Tweed and Mid-NorthCoast, which provides a proxy for the Priority Employment Area.

While the unemployment rate has fallen in the Priority Employment Area of Mid-North Coast (down by 1.8 percentage points to stand at 6.5 per cent), this has occurred in conjunction with a fall in the participation rate, down by 3.3 percentage points to 50.9 per cent.

### **South Eastern Melbourne**

Labour market conditions continued to deteriorate in South Eastern Melbourne after April 2009 up until around October 2009, when conditions began to improve in the area somewhat. For instance, the unemployment rate rose from 7.0 per cent in April 2009 to a peak of 8.8 per cent in October 2009, before falling to 6.7 per cent in January 2010. The participation rate has also risen by 2.5 percentage points since April 2009 to stand at 65.8 per cent. That said the region has recorded an above average increase in its level of unemployment beneficiaries since September 2008 (up by 50.2 per cent), which suggests there is still potential for further job losses in the period ahead.



### **North Western Melbourne**

While labour market conditions appear to have improved in North Western Melbourne between April 2009 and January 2010 (with the unemployment rate falling by 0.5 percentage points to 6.9 per cent and the participation rate rising by 0.6 percentage points to 64.6 per cent), the area is still relatively disadvantaged compared with the national average. Furthermore, the apparent improvement in labour market conditions hasn't occurred uniformly across North Western Melbourne, with the youth unemployment rate increasing from 11.2 per cent in April 2009 to currently stand at 15.5 per cent in January 2010.

### **Ballarat-Bendigo**

Labour market conditions have softened in the Priority Employment Area of Ballarat-Bendigo. While the unemployment rate in the area has fallen marginally since April 2009, by 0.1 percentage points to stand at 6.5 per cent in January 2010, this has occurred in conjunction with a decline in the participation rate (down by 0.6 percentage points to stand at 63.0 per cent). Furthermore, the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support payments has increased, from 15.9 per cent in April 2009 to 17.0 per cent in January 2010.

### **North Eastern Victoria**

Since April 2009, labour market conditions in North Eastern Victoria have been mixed. While the unemployment rate has increased by 0.7 percentage points to stand at 5.4 per cent in January 2010 (a level now on par with the national average), the level of employment in the region has also increased, by 10 500 (or 7.8 per cent) and the participation rate has increased by 4.2 percentage points to stand at 61.7 per cent in January 2010. Over the same period, the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support has remained steady at 16.1 per cent (compared with the national average of 12.9 per cent).

### **Ipswich-Logan**

Labour market conditions in Ipswich-Logan have softened since April 2009, with the unemployment rate increasing by 1.0 percentage point to stand at 6.6 per cent in January 2010 (above the national average), while the participation rate has fallen by 1.1 percentage points over the period to 69.3 per cent. Moreover, the number of unemployment beneficiaries in Ipswich-Logan has continued to grow, with an increase of 82.6 per cent recorded since September 2008, compared with the national average of 44.0 per cent. It is also worth noting that the youth unemployment rate has risen by 2.3 percentage points since April 2009, to stand at 13.2 per cent in January 2010 (compared with 11.7 per cent for Australia).

### **Caboolture-SunshineCoast**

The unemployment rate in the Priority Employment Area of Caboolture-Sunshine Coast has increased since April 2009, up by 0.9 percentage points to stand at 6.0 per cent in January 2010, although this has occurred in conjunction with a rise in the participation rate (up by 1.4 percentage points to 62.7 per cent). The number of unemployment beneficiaries in Caboolture-SunshineCoast has also continued to grow, with an increase of 78.9 per cent recorded since September 2008, compared with the national average increase of 44.0 per cent. It is also worth noting that the youth unemployment rate has risen by 3.1 percentage points since April 2009, to stand at 12.2 per cent in January 2010 (compared with 11.7 per cent for Australia).

### **Southern Wide Bay-Burnett**

- The Priority Employment Area of Southern Wide Bay-Burnett lies within the ABS LFR of Wide Bay-Burnett, which provides a proxy for the Priority Employment Area.

While the unemployment rate in Southern Wide Bay-Burnett has fallen since April 2009, by 0.7 percentage points to stand at 6.6 per cent in January 2010, this has occurred in conjunction with a substantial decline in the participation rate (down by 3.1 percentage points to stand at 54.3 per cent). Furthermore, the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support payments has increased, from 21.6 per cent in April 2009 to 23.6 per cent in January 2010.

### **Townsville-Thuringowa**

The unemployment rate in Townsville-Thuringowa has risen since April 2009, by 1.3 percentage points to 5.1 per cent, although this has occurred in conjunction with a 1.8 percentage point rise in the participation rate to 75.2 per cent (well above the national average of 65.2 per cent). Townsville-Thuringowahas recorded a well above average increase in its level of unemployment beneficiaries since September 2008 (up by 74.1 per cent), which may result in further job losses going forward.

### **Cairns**

Cairns, in Far North Queensland, recorded the highest regional unemployment rate in the country in January 2010, of 11.0 per cent (compared with 9.4 per cent in April 2009). Furthermore, this occurred in conjunction with a fall in the participation rate, down by 0.7 percentage points to 69.8 per cent (although this remains above the national average of 65.2 per cent). Cairnshas recorded a sharp increase in its number of unemployment beneficiary recipients since September 2008, which suggests that further job losses may occur in the period ahead. Furthermore, the proportion of the population in receipt of income support has also risenbetween April 2009 and January 2010, up by 1.2 percentage points to 17.8 per cent (compared with the national average of 12.9 per cent).

### **Bundaberg-HerveyBay**

- The Priority Employment Area of Bundaberg-Hervey Bay lies within the ABS LFR of Wide Bay-Burnett, which provides a proxy for the Priority Employment Area.

While the unemployment rate in Bundaberg-Hervey Bay has fallen since April 2009, by 0.7 percentage points to stand at 6.6 per cent in January 2010, this has been driven by a substantial decline in the participation rate (down by 3.1 percentage points to stand at 54.3 per cent). Furthermore, the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support payments has increased, from 21.6 per cent in April 2009 to 23.6 per cent in January 2010.

### **Northern and Western Adelaide**

The unemployment rate in Northern and Western Adelaidehas fallensince April 2009, down by 2.5 percentage points to 6.1 per cent in January 2010. However, this has occurred in conjunction with a decline in the participation rate (down by 0.7 percentage points to 62.2 per cent). Moreover, the proportion of the population receiving income support increased from 17.3 per cent in April 2009 to 18.2 per cent in January 2010.

### **Port Augusta-Whyalla-Port Pirie**

While the unemployment rate Port Augusta-Whyalla-Port Pirie has fallen since April 2009 (down by 0.4 percentage points to stand at 5.0 per cent in January 2010), this has occurred in conjunction with a sizeable decline in the participation rate (down by 1.6 percentage points to stand at 59.8 per cent). Furthermore, the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support payments has increased, from 19.5 per cent in April 2009 to 20.4 per cent in January 2010.

### **South West Perth**

The unemployment rate in South West Perth has fallen since April 2009, down by 0.9 percentage points to 5.2 per cent. This has occurred in conjunction with a rise in the participation rate, up by 0.2 percentage points to 69.3 per cent (well above the national average of 65.2 per cent). South West Perth, however, has recorded a well above average increase in its number of unemployment beneficiary recipients since September 2008 (up by 77.0 per cent) which may still result in job losses in the period ahead.

### **North West and Northern Tasmania**

The unemployment rate in North West and Northern Tasmania has risen since April 2009, up by 1.9 percentage points to 6.5 per cent. Furthermore, this has occurred in conjunction with a fall in the participation rate, down by 1.1 percentage points to 60.1 per cent (well below the national average of 65.2 per cent). It is also important to note that the proportion of the working age population in receipt of income support in North West and Northern Tasmania has increased by 1.0 percentage point since April 2009 to 19.1 per cent, compared with the national average of 12.9 per cent.