

RIC Report: Key findings

Analysis of social indicators for
Pilbara Aboriginal people (2001 - 2016)



Key messages

More people employed, more on higher incomes, additional housing, increased school retention, fewer avoidable deaths.



However, change is often mixed with either slight or substantial improvement in the employment rate (depending on definition), more people on higher incomes but poverty rates increasing, no change in low school attendance rates but some positive shift in literacy and numeracy outcomes, less apparent housing need overall but continued high occupancy rates in many locations, significant decline in mortality and morbidity rates for some conditions but not most, lower arrest rates for males but not for females.

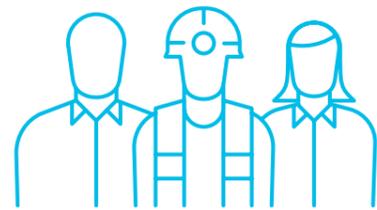
Population

Aboriginal population

11,700

40% higher than pre-mining boom; 19% of population.

Participation in regional labour market



Aboriginal business and community organisations sectors remain statistically invisible (even though they almost certainly provide for more Aboriginal employment in the Pilbara than three tiers of government put together).

Education, employment and training

The proportion of students attending for more than 90% of available school days is low and unchanged at 30% in primary schools and 20% in secondary.

Less than half the Aboriginal working age population are employed

46%

Aboriginal employment in government sectors has decreased.



An estimated 1,700 adults are not engaged in employment, education or training (data from other parts of the report indicate that factors such as ill-health, disability, home duties, and incarceration all play a significant part).

Mining accounts for two-thirds of employment for aboriginal males and one-third of females.



Just to maintain the current Aboriginal employment rate an additional 125 jobs would need to be created each year over the next 10 years.

Housing

The vast majority of Aboriginal households remain in rented accommodation and very low rates of home ownership recorded in 2001 are now even lower still.



The percentage of dwellings deemed to be overcrowded has reduced but the absolute number has increased.



Health

There have been measurable improvements in Aboriginal health outcomes, including a significant drop in mortality (especially child mortality).



Aboriginal people consistently account for almost half of those in the Pilbara with a disability despite comprising only 19% of the population.

Leading causes of mortality have remained unchanged and are dominated by so-called 'lifestyle' diseases that, by definition, are potentially avoidable.



Dialysis treatment for end-stage renal disease remains prevalent and is rising despite significant decline in some contributory diseases such as diabetes.

50%



Aboriginal male deaths still outnumber non-Aboriginal male deaths by almost 4 to one and Aboriginal female deaths outnumber non-Aboriginal female deaths by more than 5 to one.

It is conservatively estimated that

1,100 Aboriginal people

provide care for others who are incapacitated.

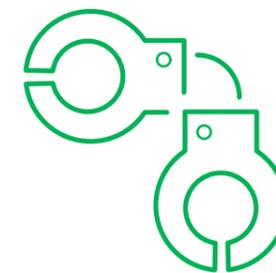
Crime and justice

Almost all criminal cases brought to the Children's Court in the Pilbara refer to Aboriginal defendants and while the Aboriginal share of Magistrates Court cases is lower, this has steadily risen over recent years and is now at almost 80%.



80%

Feeding into this are rates of arrest that, while lower than they have been, still account for 19% of the Aboriginal population aged 10 years and over and reach up to 33% among males aged between 18 and 29 years.



As many as

20%

of Aboriginal males aged between 18 and 34 years could have been either in custody or subject to a CBO

(rather than potentially in work) at any one time over the decade of the mining boom.