

ANSWERS TO ESTIMATES QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

HEALTH AND AGEING PORTFOLIO

Additional Estimates 2011-2012, 15 February 2012

Question: E12-169

OUTCOME 12: Health Workforce Capacity

Topic: AUSTRALIAN STANDARD GEOGRAPHICAL CLASSIFICATION –
REMOTENESS AREAS (ASGC-RA) SYSTEM.

Written Question on Notice

Senator Boyce asked:

Can the Government explain how the Australian Standard Geographical Classification - Remoteness Area (ASGC-RA) system helps small rural towns such as Gundagai, Deniliquin, Cootamundra and Tumut compete with larger regional centres such as Albury, Wagga Wagga, Dubbo, Tamworth, Orange and even Hobart for much needed doctors when they are all classified the same under the ASGC-RA?

Answer:

The ASGC-RA classification system was developed and is maintained by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). It divides Australia into geographical areas based on physical remoteness from goods and services. A town's RA classification is calculated by measuring its remoteness and physical road distance to nearby urban centres of varying population sizes.

The ASGC-RA system was introduced as a measure of eligibility for a number of targeted rural health programs. Financial and non-financial assistance is provided to support and encourage doctors practising in regional and remote Australia by scaling or gearing of incentives and return of service obligations to provide greatest benefits to the most remote communities where there is the greatest need.