



Gender & Disaster Australia

Tasmania

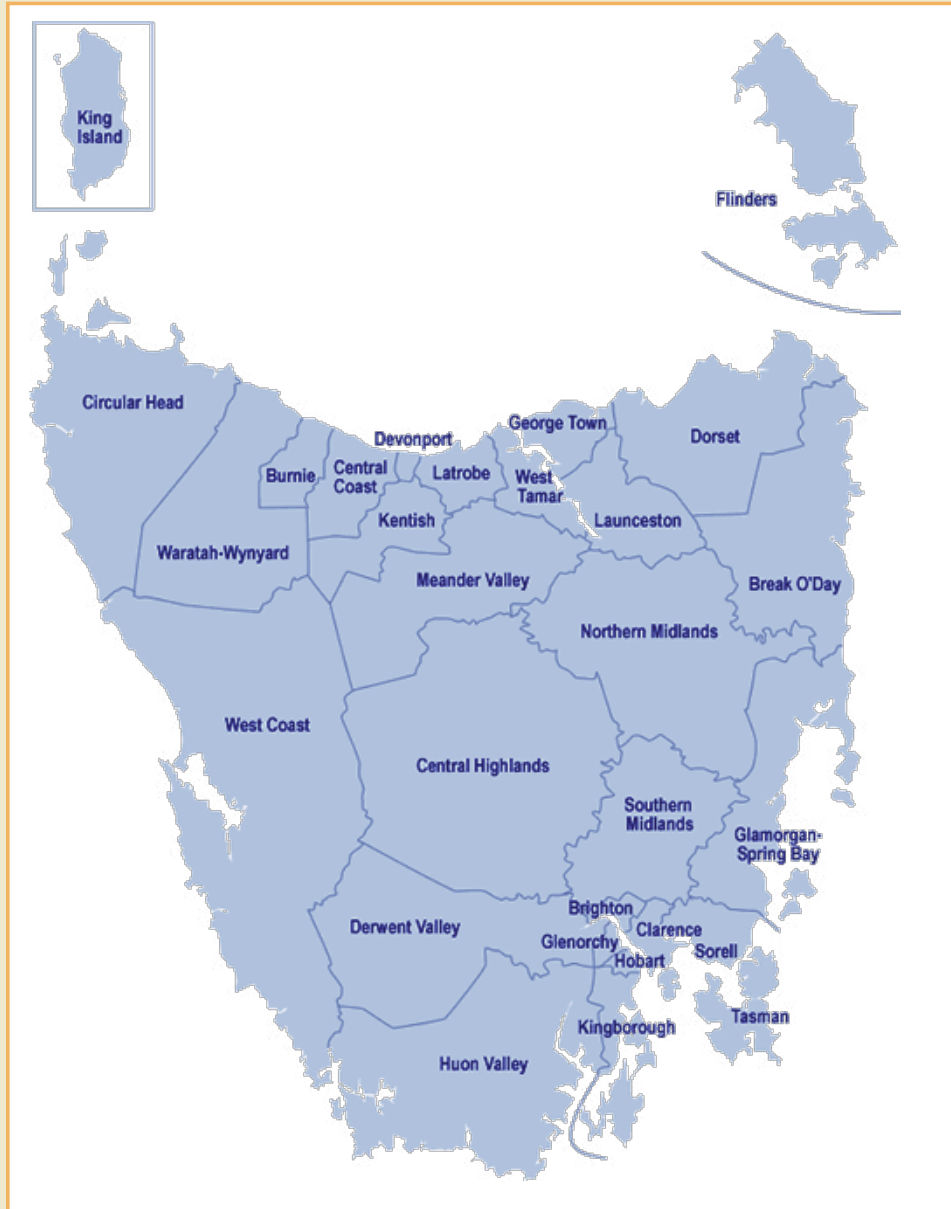
DISASTER CONTEXT

Socio-demographics from
a gendered perspective





Tasmania



Map of Tasmania divided by LGA.

Source: https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/divisions/local_government/council_directory





The area covered by this map, and considered in this factsheet, is the state of Tasmania.¹ This was selected as most useful because Tasmania's relatively small size and island geography means that the impact of disasters are often felt across the entire state. For example, the 2016 Tasmania floods impacted 20 out of the state's 29 Local Government Areas (LGAs).² Areas impacted by the Black Summer bushfires of 2019-2020 spread from the Derwent Valley, to the Southern Midlands, to Break O'Day, while the bushfires the year before stretched from the Central Highlands down through the Derwent Valley and into the Huon Valley.

Certain LGAs do appear to be exposed to heightened disaster risk, and where pertinent these have been pulled out and discussed throughout the fact sheet. These LGAs include the Derwent Valley, which has been affected by two recent bushfires,³ the Huon Valley, which experienced flooding in 2016⁴ and a bushfire in 2018/19,⁵ and Latrobe, which was significantly damaged in the 2016 flooding and which was found by the Report of the Independent Review into the Tasmanian Floods of June and July 2016 to have not been as prepared for the flooding as other LGAs.⁶

Data cited in this factsheet relate to the state of Tasmania except where the Derwent Valley, Huon Valley, or Latrobe LGAs are highlighted.

INTRODUCTION

The state of Tasmania is exposed to a diverse array of disasters, including a high exposure to bushfires, floods, severe storms, and a lower but not insignificant threat of landslides, tsunamis, earthquakes, heatwaves, coastal inundation, and pandemic influenza.⁷ Tasmania has unique geographic and demographic features that differentiate it from other states and territories in terms of its disaster resilience and response. For example, Tasmania's small population is highly decentralised and spread out across the state into small and isolated communities. Tasmania's population is older than the population in other states and territories, with 20% of Tasmanians aged over 65. Finally, Tasmania's social and health indicators align it with rural and remote areas of Australia, with associated implications for the extent to which Tasmanian communities can prepare and recover from the impacts of disaster.⁸

The Tasmanian State Natural Disaster Risk Assessment is periodically conducted to assess the State-level risks posed by possible disasters. In 2016, it concluded that bushfire poses the highest aggregate risk to Tasmania, with a 'High' or 'Extreme' risk posed to all sectors of society (People, Economic, Environment, Public and Administration, and Social Setting), and an every-30-years likelihood that is expected to increase with the impacts of climate change. Floods are considered the next most hazardous threat, rarer than bushfires but with almost as catastrophic consequences.⁹

1 Unless otherwise indicated, information comes from <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/bushfire-parkerville-and-perth-hills-western-australia-2014/>

2 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/flood-tasmania-june-july-2016/>

3 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/black-summer-bushfires-tas-2019-20/>; <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/2018-19-bushfire-tas-tasmanian-bushfires/>

4 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3996/floodreview.pdf>

5 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/2018-19-bushfire-tas-tasmanian-bushfires/>

6 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3996/floodreview.pdf>

7 2016 Tasmanian State Natural Disaster Risk Assessment, available at: <https://www.ses.tas.gov.au/about/risk-management/tasdra-2022/>

8 Sandra Astill, Stuart Corney, Rebecca Carey, Stuart Auckland, & Merylin Cross. (2019). Reconceptualising "community" to identify place-based disaster management needs in Tasmania. *Australian Journal of Emergency Management*, 34(1), 48-51.

9 2016 Tasmanian State Natural Disaster Risk Assessment: All Hazard Summary, available at: <https://www.ses.tas.gov.au/about/risk-management/tasdra-2022/>

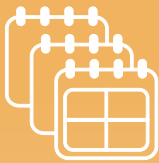


This threat assessment has borne out in recent years, with significant flooding events in 2016 and 2018, and bushfire events in 2013, 2018/19, and 2019/20. The social impacts of these disaster events were significant, as exemplified by the case study of the 2016 Tasmanian floods below. Some of the areas with the lowest socio-economic status in Tasmania, and indeed in Australia, are also isolated, rural communities that can be cut off from disaster support when roads, rail lines, and bridges are disabled by fire or flood. Additionally, Tasmania's hazard modelling and mapping is considered to be of a lower quality than that of other states and territories.¹⁰

However, Tasmanian communities have been shown to be resilient in the face of disaster. One study of the response to the 2013 Tasmanian bushfires identified the significance of social networks in the preparedness for the bushfires, arguing that community members that may be considered 'vulnerable' (such as older women) can in fact act as anchors for bushfire preparedness and recovery because of their broad social networks.¹¹ Other studies of the social impact of disaster in Tasmania have emphasised the importance of communities empowered to participate and local networks of support, particularly when government infrastructure is absent or inadequate.¹²

DISASTER BACKGROUND

Kind of disasters affecting this region/town: Bushfire, flood, severe storm, landslide, tsunami, earthquake, heatwave, coastal inundation, pandemic influenza¹³



EVENT NAME ¹⁴	Hazard Type(s)
Black Summer Bushfires, 2019-2020	Bushfire
Tasmanian bushfires, 2018-2019	Bushfire
Hobart flash flooding, 2018	Flood
Tasmania flooding, 2016	Flood
Dunalley and Forcett bushfires, 2013	Bushfire
NSW Bushfires: 31 August 2019 onwards	Bushfire

- 10 Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) submission to the Tasmanian Government Flood Review, available at https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/government_flood_review/submissions, Submission 28
- 11 Akama, Y., Chaplin, S., & Fairbrother, P. (2014). Role of social networks in community preparedness for bushfire. *International Journal of Disaster Resilience in the Built Environment*, 5(3), 277-291.
- 12 Singleton, J. A., Khng, S., McCourt, E. M., Watson, K. E., & Lau, E. T. (2020). Still Burning: An Exploration of the Impacts of the 2018/2019 Tasmanian Summer Bushfires on Community Pharmacy Operations in Affected Communities. *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine*, 35(6), 612-618; Jennings, F. (2018). *Navigating Uncertainty: A qualitative study of resident involvement in the 2013 Forcett Tasmania bushfire disaster* (Doctoral dissertation, RMIT University).
- 13 2016 Tasmanian State Natural Disaster Risk Assessment, available at: <https://www.ses.tas.gov.au/about/risk-management/tasdra-2022/>
- 14 Table compiled using interactive map available at: <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/disasters/>





Recent major disaster: Tasmania flooding, 2016¹⁵

- Fatalities: 3¹⁶
- People displaced:
 - Approximately 400-600 requests for assistance were received by the State Emergency Service (SES) and more than 100 people were rescued¹⁷
 - Emergency Assistance Grants were provided to over 2,000 people who had been displaced by the floods; more than \$375,000 was paid out to individuals and families in the immediate response period.¹⁸
- Properties and infrastructure affected:
 - At the time that floodwaters receded on 6 June, there were more than 130 residential properties affected by the floods.¹⁹ This was later updated to include at least 130 residential properties, more than 140 small businesses, and 89 Department of Education sites.²⁰
 - Estimated infrastructure damage costs from the floods were approximately \$70 million; more than 350 roads and nearly 90 bridges were reported as damaged.²¹
 - In the immediate aftermath of the flood, more than 800 assessments of infrastructure repairs were undertaken. Identified priorities for repair included:²²
 - Extensive damage to roads, bridges, culverts, and footpaths
 - Damage to rail lines, tracks, and bridges
 - More than 2,000 homes and businesses without power (ultimately, TasNetworks restored power to more than 20,000 customers)²³
 - Marine debris clogging the Port of Devonport, which was re-opened after four days
 - Logjams, debris, and livestock carcasses on farms; thousands of livestock died as a result of the floods with an estimated value of \$1.5 million.²⁴
- TasRail identified damage at 65 locations, including five bridges, and the cost of repair was estimated at \$10 million.²⁵
- Forestry Tasmania suffered a two-week loss of production and damage to infrastructure included 120 km of forest road, 6 bridges, and 30 culverts. The estimated cost of repairs was \$1.57 million and was planned over a number of years.²⁶

¹⁵ This disaster was chosen to profile here because of its significant impact on large swathes of the state, affecting 20 out of 29 LGAs, and because it triggered a government review that identified that Tasmania's preparedness for flooding disasters was lower than in other states and territories.

¹⁶ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/resources/flood-tasmania-june-july-2016/>

¹⁷ Tasmanian Flood Recovery Taskforce submission to the Tasmanian Government Flood Review, available at https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/government_flood_review/submissions, Submission 33; <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 14

¹⁸ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 38

¹⁹ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3996/floodreview.pdf>, p. 86

²⁰ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 32

²¹ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 41

²² <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3996/floodreview.pdf>, p. 88

²³ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 14

²⁴ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 52

²⁵ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3996/floodreview.pdf>, p. 90

²⁶ <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3996/floodreview.pdf>, p. 90





- o The Department of Premier and Cabinet's submission to the Tasmanian Government Flood Review²⁷ further estimated that:
 - The economic cost to agribusiness was estimated to be \$70 million.
 - The estimated cost to small businesses was \$3.4 million.
 - The estimated cost of repairing damaged parks and reserves was estimated to be \$6.4 million.
- Insurance statistics:
 - o The Insurance Council of Australia (ICA) submitted to the Tasmanian Government Flood Review that as at November 2016, the insured losses associated with the flood event were estimated at \$45 million, and that less than 0.9% of household claims and less than 1.9% of business claims were denied by insurers.²⁸
 - o The ICA submitted that 91.5% of insured properties in Tasmania are covered for flood, but that they were subject to higher premiums due to the lower quality of flood mapping data in Tasmania compared to other states.²⁹
 - o The ICA argued that flood mapping had not been carried out by the government at many addresses where a flood risk was likely to exist, and that as a result many in the community affected by the flooding claimed to be unaware of their property's exposure to flood risk.³⁰
 - o A year after the floods, the Tasmanian Flood Recovery Taskforce estimated the total cost of the social, environmental, and economic impacts on 20 out of Tasmania's 29 LGAs, was \$180 million.³¹
- Other notable facts:
 - o 2016 was Tasmania's warmest year on record and the state also documented the second highest average annual rainfall on record.³²
 - o The Tasmanian Flood Recovery Taskforce intentionally maintained a strong online presence to provide information about the recovery to the public. More than 100 Facebook posts were delivered on the page during the recovery, building more than 1600 followers and reaching more than 250,000 people.³³

27 Available at https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/government_flood_review/submissions, Submission 50, p.4.

28 Available at https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/government_flood_review/submissions, Submission 28.

29 Available at https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/government_flood_review/submissions, Submission 28.

30 Available at https://www.dpac.tas.gov.au/government_flood_review/submissions, Submission 28.

31 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 3

32 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 10

33 <https://knowledge.aidr.org.au/media/3997/flood-recovery-action-plan.pdf>, p. 21



ECONOMIC DISADVANTAGE³⁴

- Derwent Valley LGA is ranked:
 - 61 out of 544 LGAs in Australia (where 1 is least advantaged)
 - in the 2nd decile (out of 10, where 1 is least advantaged)
 - In the 12th percentile (out of 100, where 1 is least advantaged)
- Huon Valley LGA is ranked:
 - 227 out of 544 LGAs in Australia (where 1 is least advantaged)
 - in the 5th decile (out of 10, where 1 is least advantaged)
 - In the 42nd percentile (out of 100, where 1 is least advantaged)
- Latrobe LGA is ranked:
 - 251 out of 544 LGAs in Australia (where 1 is least advantaged)
 - in the 5th decile (out of 10, where 1 is least advantaged)
 - In the 47th percentile (out of 100, where 1 is least advantaged)

Given the relative socioeconomic disadvantage of the Derwent Valley LGA, and its proximity to recent bushfires, the rest of this fact sheet will include data for the Derwent Valley LGA where available as well as data for the state of Tasmania. Unless the Derwent Valley is specified, data relate to the state of Tasmania.



HOUSING AFFORDABILITY AND HOMELESSNESS

- Housing affordability in the Derwent Valley and in Tasmania:³⁵
 - Median mortgage repayments: DV: \$1235/mth | TAS: \$1313/mth | Aus: \$1863/mth
 - Mortgage stress:³⁶ DV: 10% | TAS: 10.1% | Aus: 14.5%
 - Median rent payments: DV: \$285/wk | TAS: \$290/wk | Aus: \$375/wk
 - Rental stress:³⁷ DV: 35.6% | TAS: 34.2% | Aus: 32.2%
 - Rental affordability: For a household on the Derwent Valley LGA's median annual income (approx. \$65,000), the Rental Affordability Index rates the 7140 postcode, which is one of two postcodes in the Derwent Valley LGA (data for postcode 7139 was not available), 'Unaffordable'.³⁸
- Homelessness
 - In 2021-22, 141 people accessed Specialist Homelessness Services in the Derwent Valley LGA,³⁹ equating to 1.3% of the population, or 129 per 10,000.
 - 48 of these were men (87 per 10,000) and 93 were women (171 per 10,000)⁴⁰

³⁴ These rankings come from the ABS Local Government Area Indexes, available here: <https://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/2033.0.55.0012016?OpenDocument>

³⁵ Unless otherwise indicated, data was sourced here: <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/6>; <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA61510>

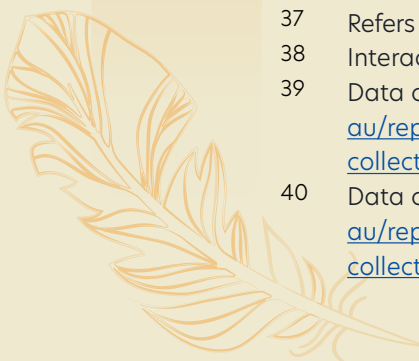
³⁶ Refers to the percentage of households with mortgage repayments exceeding 30% of household income

³⁷ Refers to the percentage of households with rental payments exceeding 30% of household income

³⁸ Interactive map available here: <https://sgsep.com.au/projects/rental-affordability-index>

³⁹ Data cube: SHSC geographical location of client - LGA. Available here: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/shsc-data-cubes/contents/specialist-homelessness-services-collection-shsc-data-cubes>

⁴⁰ Data cube: SHSC geographical location of client - LGA. Available here: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/reports/homelessness-services/shsc-data-cubes/contents/specialist-homelessness-services-collection-shsc-data-cubes>





MENTAL HEALTH

- Mental health conditions (any):⁴¹ DV: 13.4% | TAS: 11.5% | Aus: 8.8%
- Suicide rate for Statistical Area 3 (SA3) Central Highlands (Tas.), in which the Derwent Valley sits:⁴²
 - 15 deaths from 2017-2021
 - Age-standardised rate per 100,000 population was not available for publication
- The age-standardised rate per 100,000 population is available at the Statistical Area 4 (SA4) level. SA3 Central Highlands (Tas.) sits within SA4 South East (Tas.). In the table below, we can see that the age-standardised suicide rate in SA4 South East (Tas.) is significantly higher than the rate for the whole of Tasmania, which is already significantly higher than the Australia-wide rate.

Area	SA4 South East (Tas.)	Tasmania	Australia
Age-standardised suicide rate per 100,000 population	20.7	15.2	12.6
Rate for males	30.6	23.3	19.2
Rate for females	n/a	7.2	6.1



GENDER EQUALITY

- Lone parent status
 - 17.3% one-parent families, of which 78.8% are female-led⁴³
- Mothers' Index (measured at LGA level)⁴⁴
 - Derwent Valley ranked equal 26th out of 26 LGAs, where 1 is the best place in Tasmania for a mother to live
- Unpaid work⁴⁵
 - Unpaid domestic work: 139,839 women did more than 5 hours of unpaid domestic work per week, compared to 93,059 men
 - Unpaid care: 36,404 women provided unpaid assistance to a person with a disability, health condition, or due to old age, compared to 23,454 men
 - Unpaid childcare: 69,133 women provided unpaid childcare, compared to 50,067 men

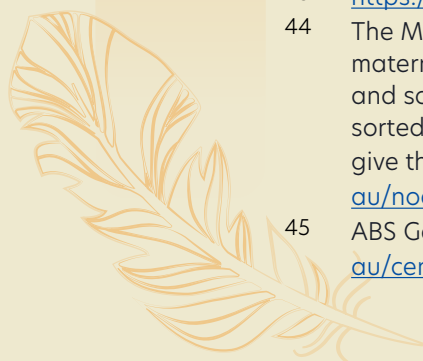
⁴¹ <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/6>

⁴² All suicide rate stats come from Data table: 2021 National Mortality Database - Suicide, available at: <https://www.aihw.gov.au/suicide-self-harm-monitoring/data/data-downloads>

⁴³ <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/6>

⁴⁴ The Mothers' Index consists of composite scores from five different indicators relating to maternal wellbeing (maternal health, children's wellbeing, educational status, economic status and socio-economic disadvantage), with each indicator given equal weighting. Scores were sorted from low to high and ranked from 1 to 26 (1 being the best place for a mother to live) to give the overall Mothers Index rank for each LGA in TAS. Full table available at <https://apo.org.au/node/63692>, p. 33.

⁴⁵ ABS General Community Profile for Tasmania, Tables G24-G26, available here: <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/community-profiles/2021/6>





- Violence against women⁴⁶
 - o There were 470 victims of sexual assault recorded in Tasmania in 2021, an increase of 53% (163 victims) from 2020. This was the highest recorded number in the twenty-nine year time series. 86% of victims were women.
 - o The number of victims of assault increased 4% (140 victims) from the previous year to 3,559 victims in 2021. 53% of assault victims were female and more than two-fifths (45%) of assaults were family and domestic violence related (1,616 victims).



DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

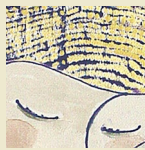
	Derwent Valley ⁴⁷	Tasmania ⁴⁸	Australia
Median age	42	42	38
Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander	6.6%	5.4%	3.2%
Both parents born in Australia	76.6%	66.6%	45.9%
Non-English language used in household	3.8%	9.4%	24.8%
With university education	9%	21.9%	26.3%
Year 10 as highest qualification	22.1%	15.9%	10.0%
Labour force participation	55.5%	58.2%	61.1%
Working part-time	33.3%	36.4%	31.2%
Unemployment	7.4%	5.9%	5.1%
Median weekly personal income	\$619	\$701	\$805
Median weekly household income	\$1244	\$1358	\$1746
Rate of people on Disability Support Pension per 10,000 population ⁴⁹	768	497	294

⁴⁶ <https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/people/crime-and-justice/recorded-crime-victims/latest-release>

⁴⁷ <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/quickstats/2021/LGA61510>

⁴⁸ <https://abs.gov.au/census/find-census-data/community-profiles/2021/6>

⁴⁹ <https://data.gov.au/data/dataset/dss-payment-demographic-data>



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