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Hunter

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Population: 624,296
Area: 31,000 sq km

Major cities and centres:

- Cessnock
- Lake Macquarie
- Maitland
- Newcastle
- Port Stephens

Region overview:

- one of Australia's largest regional populations
- Australia's oldest wine growing region
- world's largest coal port
- Australia's equine capital
- energy powerhouse
- fastest growing regional airport
- major defence bases

Major industry sectors:

- manufacturing
- coal and mining
- viticulture and winemaking
- power generation
- agribusiness
- equine
- information communications technology (ICT)
- tourism
- health
- education
- defence and aerospace
- railway rolling stock
- marine
- call centres

The Hunter is one of Australia's economic powerhouses, approximately 2 hours drive north of Sydney and covers an area of 31,000 square kilometres.

It includes the Lower Hunter - Newcastle, Port Stephens, Lake Macquarie, Maitland, Cessnock, Barrington Tops (Gloucester and Dungog), the Upper Hunter (Singleton, Muswellbrook, Upper Hunter) and the Great Lakes.

Residents enjoy employment choice, the chance to choose a lifestyle by the beach or in a rural setting, excellent health and education facilities and the luxury of time that comes from short commuting distances between work and play. The Hunter also has a range of affordable housing options for residents.

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGES

- efficient, uncongested, rail, air and sea transport network
- abundant supply of employment land
- loyal, plentiful and skilled workforce
- easy access to Sydney
- Australia's biggest regional market
- world's largest coal export port
- sophisticated telecommunications services
- progressive, co-operative approach to industrial relations
- leading University, TAFE and education facilities.



Export

The region accounts for more than 32 per cent of the State's exports including coal, mining services, products and equipment, as well as fresh and processed food, and wine.

INDUSTRIES

Coal and metal

\$6 billion a year coal industry, of which 85 million tonnes is exported annually. Produces over 35 per cent of Australia's aluminium.

Wine

The region is one of Australia's top wine growing areas, producing 31 million litres of wine annually valued at more than A\$230 million.

Power generation

Four power stations that generate 80 per cent of the State's electricity.

Equine

Australia's equine capital of Scone is the annual destination for the world's top breeding stallions. More than A\$355 million has been invested in the region's stud farms and horses.

Defence and Aerospace

Major military bases including Australia's primary jet fighter base. Sophisticated defence infrastructure including world competitive aeronautic, engineering and technology capability and a proven track record in defence project delivery. Maintenance base to major aerospace companies Boeing, BAE and JetStar.

Manufacturing

Over the past 10 years, more than \$10 billion worth of industrial projects have been completed on budget and on time. Major sectors include metals processing, transport, machinery and equipment manufacture, chemical processing, mining, defence and light industry.

Agribusiness

Valued at over \$1 billion annually. The industry includes agriculture, horticulture, timber and paper products, aquaculture, food processing and manufacturing of products such as fertilisers.

Tourism

Host to 2.2 million domestic overnight visitors, 4.2 million domestic day trip visitors and 110,600 international overnight visitors for the 12 months ending March 2008.

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

- The Honeysuckle Project: urban renewal redevelopment including 50 hectares of central business district and residential real estate fronting four kilometres of one of Australia's great working harbours. Over \$1.2 billion worth of projects have been completed, projects underway including entertainment, commercial and residential
- Port side land: opportunity exists for locating new port-related industry in the region
- DAREZ: Defence and Airport Related Employment Zone: up to 100 hectares adjacent to RAAF Base Williamtown and Newcastle (civil) Airport.
- Rapidly growing population and employment generating business opportunities

INFRASTRUCTURE

Transport

National and international access. Free-flowing transport links offer importers and exporters a seamless delivery network to and from the Port of Newcastle. Passenger and freight rail services operate within and through the Hunter region to the service networks of the rest of Australia.

Newcastle Airport has direct flights to Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Gold Coast, Canberra, Tamworth and Norfolk Island.

Major educational facilities

- University of Newcastle
- TAFE Hunter Institute
- TOCAL CB Alexander College

Major defence facilities

- RAAF Base Williamtown
- Singleton Army Base

LABOUR

A large professional, skilled labour force and strong industrial relations record. The Hunter has a 292,400-strong workforce with a larger proportion of residents with either Certificate or Diploma qualifications than the State average as well as a strong tertiary education component.

RESEARCH

Research institutions in the Hunter include:


- Hunter Valley Research Foundation, an independent non-profit organisation providing assistance to business, industry, government and wider communities at the regional, State and national levels
www.hvrf.com.au
- Hunter Medical Research Institute is an internationally recognised medical research organisation known for its strength in health and medical research, education and training
www.hmri.net.au
- Newcastle Innovation is the research arm of the University of Newcastle
www.newcastleinnovation.com.au

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Related publications

 [NSW Regional Profile - Hunter Region](#)