



SMALL TOWNS REPORT CARD

ACCESS TO SERVICES

The Regional Australia Institute's (RAI) Small Towns Report Card: Access to Services ranks how we have fared as a nation providing essential professional services to residents living in small towns across Australia.

Looking over a 30 year period, the RAI has given access to selected professionals a grade from A – F.



For more information about the rankings, please refer to the RAI's latest report titled **Pillars of communities: Service delivery professionals in small Australian towns 1981 – 2011**.

OCCUPATION

COMMENT

GRADE



GENERAL PRACTITIONER

While only 14% of small towns had a doctor in 1981, the percentage did increase to 18% in 2011. This increase was seen across all categories of small towns.



NURSE

A healthy 78% of all small towns had a nurse in 2011. While numbers remained fairly stable in most towns, "remote and very remote" areas saw a significant decline from 76% to 58%.



PSYCHOLOGIST

While the number of small towns that had access to a psychologist rose from a measly 1% to 6% over the 30 year period, "remote and very remote" towns saw a dramatic decline.



DENTIST

Only 5% of small towns across Australia had access to a dentist in 2011. That number drops to 1% in "remote and very remote" towns in 2011 and 4% in "outer regional small towns".



PRESCHOOL TEACHER

The number of preschool teachers in small towns has dropped dramatically, with only 16% having access to one, compared to 25% three decades ago.



PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHER

While numbers have dipped slightly, it is encouraging to see that more than 73% of all small towns have access to primary school teachers.



SECONDARY TEACHER

Across the board, small towns are less likely to have a secondary school teacher than a primary school teacher, with numbers dropping in this category from 66% to 62% in 2011.



POLICE OFFICER

The number of small towns with a police officer declined slightly overall, as resident police numbers fell in the smallest towns. However "remote and very remote" small towns still ranked quite well in 2011 with 51% having a police officer.



PARAMEDIC

The number of towns who have access to a paramedic locally has increased by 1% (18% to 19%) and this trend is fairly stable across all categories of small towns.



SOCIAL WELFARE WORKER

Only 11% of "remote and very remote towns" had access to a social welfare professional in 2011, compared to 24% in 1989.

