



POSTCODES AND CENSUS DATA

1. POSTCODES AND POSTAL AREAS

A postcode is a four digit number used by Australia Post to assist with mail delivery. As it is readily available on the end of each postal address, many researchers and businesses use postcode as a make-shift geographic region for aggregation and analysis of address based data. The desire to compare such data to census data in turn creates demand for census data aggregated by postcode. Census data are collected on Collection Districts (CDs) which, for several reasons, are not compatible with postcodes. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has, however developed a Census Geographic Area classification known as Postal Areas which approximates the area of those postcodes where people live.

Postal Area

Postal Areas are created by allocating whole CDs to Australia Post postcode areas on a 'best fit' basis (See [Statistical Geography: Volume 2 - Census Geographic Areas \(Cat. no. 2905.0\)](#)). Postal Areas derived in this way only **approximate** Australia Post postcode boundaries.

In developing Postal Areas each CD is allocated an Australia Post postcode.

Allocations are made based on the distribution of addresses and not area. This means that a CD is allocated to a postcode if the majority of the residential address points¹ in that CD are contained within that postcode. Postal Areas are then formed by joining together the CDs that have been allocated the same postcode.

Allocations have been determined using the best available information on postcode boundaries. Unfortunately official maps of postcode boundaries have not been updated since the early 1990s and none of the more recent interpretations have been endorsed by Australia Post. **Users should, therefore, be aware of the limitations of the Postal Area classification.**

Some Australia Post postcodes are not included in the Postal Area classification. See **5. Unallocated Australia Post Postcodes** for further information on page 3.

Postal Areas that cross State/Territory borders:

Where Postal Areas cross State/Territory borders standard census products will provide data for the entire Postal Area.

NSW - Postal Areas 2618 and 2620 cross into the ACT, 2406 crosses into Qld and 2540 crosses into Jervis Bay (Other Territories).

Vic. - Postal Areas 3585 and 3644 cross into NSW

Qld - Postal Area 4385 crosses into NSW, and 4825 crosses into NT.

SA - No South Australian Postal Areas cross borders

WA - Postal Area 6743 crosses into NT

Tas. - No Tasmanian Postal Areas cross State Borders

NT - Postal Area 0872 crosses into both SA and WA.

ACT - Postal Area 2611 crosses into NSW

OT - N/A

2. DIGITAL BOUNDARIES

Postal Area digital boundaries are Census Geographic boundaries and are available as part of the [2006 Census DataPacks Cat No. 2069.0.30.001 to 2069.0.30.007, Australia CD-ROM](#). More information on Census Geographic boundaries can be found in [Statistical Geography: Volume 2 - Census Geographic Areas \(Cat. no. 2905.0\)](#)

Postal Area digital boundaries are supplied in both MapInfo Export (.mif/.mid) and ESRI Shape formats. These are suitable for import into geographic information systems and desktop mapping packages. All spatial data released by the ABS are published in unprojected geographic coordinates and after August 2001 are based on the Geocentric Datum of Australia, 1994 (GDA94). For more information on GDA94 see the Fact sheet [Geocentric Datum of Australia and Australian Bureau of Statistics Boundaries](#).

3. COMPARING OTHER POSTCODE BASED STATISTICS TO CENSUS STATISTICS

Users of census data can have trouble reconciling their own postcode based statistics with census statistics because:

- many respondents mis-report their postcode;
- it is also difficult to say what the 'correct' postcode for some respondents should be, especially when considering post office boxes and rural delivery services. Census data are based either upon the Postal Area of the residence where a person was enumerated or the Postal Area where they normally reside.
- by contrast many non-ABS datasets only record the postcode of a person's mailing address. Since many people have different mailing and residential addresses the datasets are difficult to reconcile; and
- postcode boundaries change over time and it can take a long time for respondents and coding systems to adjust to a change in a postcode. This causes problems when working with postcode based data taken from different reference periods as the changes to the boundaries are difficult to reconcile with changes in the population.

Comparing non-ABS data on postcode with ABS data on Postal Area as enumerated

The primary consideration when doing a comparison with census data based on the Postal Area classification is that the Postal Areas are derived using a 'best fit' of whole CDs. The census data is correct for the Postal Area but the Postal Area only approximates the area of the postcode. The Postal Area classification also excludes some postcodes and as such there will be no census data for these postcodes.

Postal Area of Usual Address Census Night (POCUCP)

Postal Area of Usual Address Census Night (POCUCP) is a census variable which identifies the Postal Area of the person's usual address. For people counted at home, the value for POCUCP is determined from the CD of the residence. For people enumerated away from home, their usual address is coded to a CD where possible and then the Postal Area of that CD is used. Where a person does not state his/her place of usual residence they are coded to Postal Area undefined. For example:

2999 - NSW Postal Area undefined

3999 - Vic. Postal Area undefined

4. ALTERNATIVES TO POSTCODE/POSTAL AREA CENSUS DATA

2006 Census data is available by CD of usual residence. Users of census data who previously resorted to Postal Area data may instead wish to consider using CD of usual residence.

2006 Census State Suburbs (See [Statistical Geography: Volume 2 - Census Geographic Areas \(Cat. no. 2905.0\)](#)) have been defined for most of Australia. Many users of Postal Area data may find that the suburb is a more convenient and more readily recognisable geographical area for their purposes. In many cities there is a many-to-one relationship between suburb and postcode so in these cases suburb data also provide a finer level of geographical resolution.

5. Unallocated Australia Post Postcodes

Some Australia Post postcodes are not included in the Postal Area classification. For instance, in some cases when applying the 'best fit' principle there is no CD which can be allocated to a particular Australia Post postcode. This occurs in two cases:

- where a CD covers two or more whole postcodes, the CD can be allocated to only one Postal Area ; or
- where more than one CD partially covers a postcode but all the CDs are allocated to other postcodes with which they also share area.
- the Postal Area classification also excludes Australia Post postcodes that are not street delivery areas. These include post office box, mail back competition, large volume receivers and specialist delivery postcodes. These postcodes are only valid for postal addresses and are not a valid location for population data.

Listing of Unallocated Australia Post Postcodes

1. New South Wales

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
2052	UNIVERSITY OF NEW SOUTH WALES
2123	PARRAMATTA
2129	SYDNEY MARKETS
2139	CONCORD REPATRIATION HOSPITAL
2308	Multiple Localities
2314	WILLIAMTOWN RAAF
2351	UNIVERSITY OF NEW ENGLAND
2398	GURLEY
2522	UNIVERSITY OF WOLLONGONG
2649	Multiple Localities
2661	KAPOOKA
2899	NORFOLK ISLAND

2. Victoria

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
3063	Multiple Localities
3237	Multiple Localities
3254	COROROKE
3267	SCOTTS CREEK
3273	HEXHAM
3309	DIGBY

Listing of Unallocated Australia Post Postcodes (cont)

2. Victoria (cont)

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
3329	Multiple Localities
3378	Multiple Localities
3385	Multiple Localities
3415	Multiple Localities
3063	Multiple Localities
3237	Multiple Localities
3254	COROROOKE
3267	SCOTTS CREEK
3273	HEXHAM
3309	DIGBY
3329	Multiple Localities
3378	Multiple Localities
3385	Multiple Localities
3415	Multiple Localities
3430	CLARKEFIELD
3432	BOLINDA
3433	MONEGEETTA
3488	Multiple Localities
3489	TEMPY
3506	COWANGIE
3565	KOTTA
3572	Multiple Localities
3576	DURHAM OX
3583	TRESCO
3596	Multiple Localities
3607	TABILK
3617	BYRNESIDE
3647	DOOKIE COLLEGE
3663	MANGALORE
3704	KOETONG
3708	TINTALDRA
3715	Multiple Localities
3718	MOLESWORTH
3751	WOODSTOCK
3755	YAN YEAN
3760	SMITHS GULLY
3762	BYLANDS
3864	Multiple Localities
3873	GORMANDALE
3893	Multiple Localities
3903	SWAN REACH
3957	Multiple Localities
3967	HEDLEY
3979	Multiple Localities
3989	ST HELIER
3990	GLEN FORBES

Listing of Unallocated Australia Post Postcodes (cont)

3. Queensland

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
4029	ROYAL BRISBANE HOSPITAL
4353	Multiple Localities
4372	TANNYMOREL
4375	COTTONVALE
4376	THULIMBAH
4378	APPLETHORPE
4384	LIMEVALE
4406	Multiple Localities
4461	MUCKADILLA
4471	Multiple Localities
4479	COOLADDI
4611	Multiple Localities
4697	RAGLAN
4704	Multiple Localities

4. South Australia

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
5005	ADELAIDE UNIVERSITY
5139	FOREST RANGE
5150	Multiple Localities
5220	PARNDANA
5263	COONAWARRA
5273	AVENUE RANGE
5310	Multiple Localities
5312	VEITCH
5414	MANOORA
5455	HILLTOWN
5493	YONGALA
5630	EDILILLIE
5651	KYANCUTTA
5660	CUNGENA

5. Western Australia

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
6223	BENGER
6240	LOWDEN
6243	Multiple Localities
6252	MULLALYUP
6313	HIGHBURY
6327	Multiple Localities
6351	Multiple Localities
6357	PINGARING
6384	PANTAPIN
6393	Multiple Localities
6403	GRASS VALLEY
6412	Multiple Localities

Listing of Unallocated Australia Post Postcodes (cont)

5. Western Australia (cont.)

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
6413	HINES HILL
6414	NANGEENAN
6419	ARDATH
6422	WALGOOLAN
6424	Multiple Localities
6428	BABAKIN
6446	GRASS PATCH
6447	Multiple Localities
6452	Multiple Localities
6466	CADOUX
6467	BURAKIN
6480	NUKARNI
6504	MOOLIABEENEE
6506	MOGUMBER
6509	Multiple Localities
6512	Multiple Localities
6564	CLACKLINE
6571	YERECOIN
6574	Multiple Localities
6605	KONDUT
6613	BUNTINE
6614	MAYA
6625	MERKANOOKA
6628	TARDUN
6631	PINDAR
6632	Multiple Localities
6639	SANDSTONE
6711	THEVENARD ISLAND
6712	BARROW ISLAND
6731	COCKATOO ISLAND
6733	KOOLAN ISLAND
6761	SHAY GAP
6762	TELFER

6. Tasmania

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
7001	Multiple Localities
7119	STONOR
7139	STRATHGORDON
7174	COPPING
7175	Multiple Localities
7176	KELLEVIE
7183	HIGHCROFT
7187	KOONYA
7257	CAPE BARREN ISLAND

Listing of Unallocated Australia Post Postcodes (cont)

7. Northern Territory

Australia Post Postcode	Locality
0829	PINELANDS
0846	ADELAIDE RIVER
0853	TINDAL RAAF
0909	NORTHERN TERRITORY UNIVERSITY

8. Australian Capital Territory

No unallocated Australia Post postcodes

9. Other Territory

No unallocated Australia Post postcodes

Notes

1. Residential address points were derived from the Geocoded National Address File.