



**Queensland  
Government**

**REPORT ON  
PRIORITIES IN PROGRESS 2006-07**

**Service Delivery and Performance Commission**

**JANUARY 2008**

*A Smart State Initiative*

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The Honourable Anna Bligh MP  
Premier of Queensland  
Executive Building  
100 George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Premier

In accordance with section 30 of the *Service Delivery and Performance Commission Act 2005*, I hereby provide you with the Commission's report on Priorities in Progress 2006-07

This report is prepared in accordance with the government's Charter of Social and Fiscal Responsibility. It highlights progress towards achieving outcomes in the community, using key performance indicators.

I commend this report to you and provide it for subsequent tabling in the Legislative Assembly.

Yours sincerely

Dr Leo Keliher  
**Chairman**  
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- Commissioners of the Service Delivery and Performance Commission
- Directors-General of Queensland Government departments
- Various staff from Queensland Government departments and agencies
- Staff from the Office of Economic and Statistical Research, and
- The Service Delivery and Performance Commission Review Team and Support Staff.



Welcome to the Queensland Government's Priorities in Progress report for 2006–07.

Queenslanders increasingly want to know how the Government is making a difference in key areas of the economy, society and the environment. This report provides a snapshot of Queensland communities' experiences in these areas.

It provides information on:

- the economy
- education, skills and knowledge
- Queenslanders' standard of living
- safety and security
- health
- fairness, social wellbeing and culture
- the environment and maintenance of natural resources, and
- the Government's responsiveness to your needs.

For each of these areas, the report provides an overview of how the Government performed in 2006–07 (or at the time of the most recent available data) against key criteria. Where possible, it also shows how Queenslanders' experiences have changed over time and how they compare with those of people living in other states in Australia.

The Priorities in Progress report complements other Queensland Government publications that offer more information on specific areas of interest – such as the Smart State Progress Report 2007, the State of the Environment Report, and individual agencies' annual reports. We have included references to these other reports for readers who would like to see more information on particular topics.

**Anna Bligh MP**  
**Premier of Queensland**

## Our economy

The Queensland Government has maintained Standard and Poor's top credit rating of AAA. This credit rating is an independent assessment of an organisation's future ability to repay its long term debt.

### Growth in gross state product

In 2006–07, the Queensland economy grew by 6.8% compared with national growth of 3.3%.

Growth in gross state product measures the increase in the production of goods and services in Queensland. It is an overall indicator of the health of Queensland's economy.

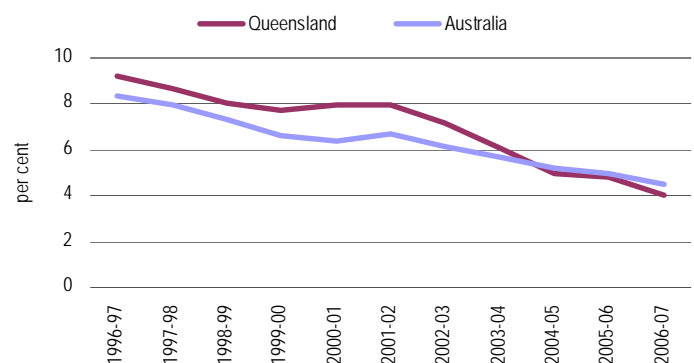
(Note: Figures shown are at 2004-05 prices.)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian National Accounts, cat. no. 5206.0; and Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland State Accounts

### Unemployment

The average unemployment rate in Queensland in 2006–07 was 4.0% – down from 4.8% in 2005–06. Australia's average unemployment rate in 2006–07 was 4.5%.

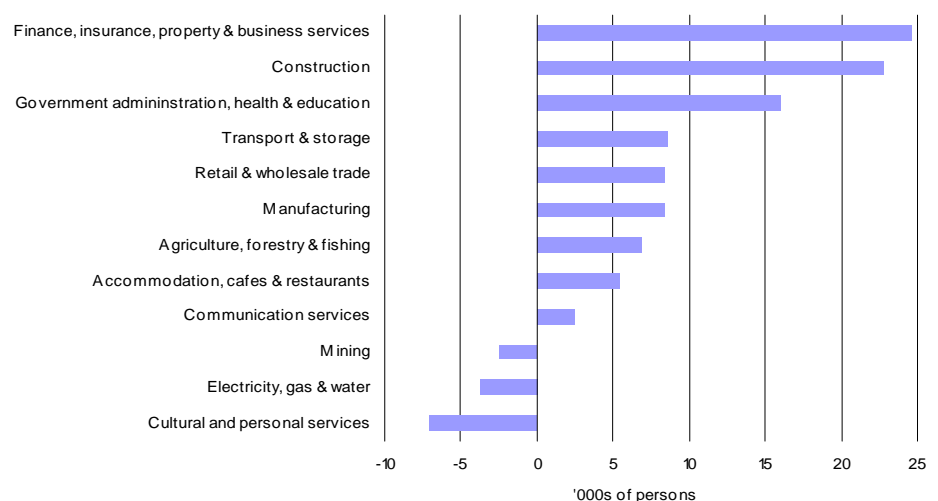


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, cat. no. 6202.0

### Industry employment

Employment growth in 2006–07 was strongest in finance, insurance, property and business services (up 24,600), construction (up 22,800) and government administration, health and education (up 16,000). In contrast, employment declined in cultural, recreational personal and other services, electricity, gas and water, and mining.

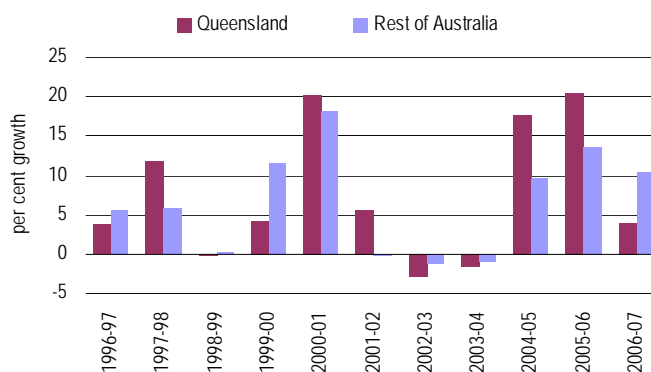
(Note: These data are volatile because of sampling error and should be used with caution.)



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Labour Force, Australia, Detailed – Electronic Delivery, cat. no. 6291.0.55.001.

### Interstate and overseas exports

Queensland's ability to access export markets for its goods and services reflects the State's export potential and contributes to overall economic growth. In 2006–07, Queensland's overseas and interstate exports were valued at \$61.37 billion in nominal terms, an increase of 4.0% on 2005–06.

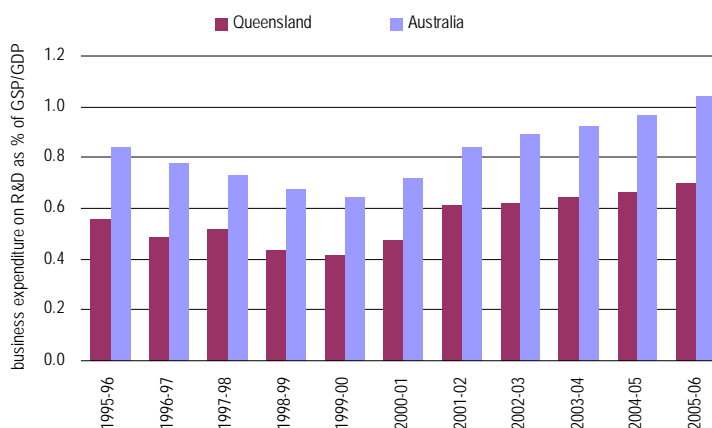


Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland State Accounts

### Research and development

Business expenditure on research and development in Queensland in 2005–06 was \$1.27 billion, or 12.6% of total Australian business expenditure on research and development.

Queensland's business expenditure on research and development represented 0.70% of gross state product, while Australian expenditure represented 1.04% of gross domestic product.



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Research and Experimental Development, Businesses, Australia, cat. No. 8104.0

### Managing the State Budget

For service delivery to be sustainable, it needs to be managed within available resources. In 2006-07, Queensland recorded a General Government sector operating surplus of \$1.856 billion. To ensure infrastructure and other assets are not run down, the Government has a policy of building the State's net worth. The General Government sector's net worth increased to \$117.831 billion as at 30 June 2007.

(Note: Western Australia values land under roads as part of its overall asset base. This has been adjusted to allow comparison with other jurisdictions which do not value land under roads.)



Source: New South Wales, Victoria, Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania's Outcome Results. Population data from ABS 3101.0

More information on how Queensland's economy is performing is included in the *Annual Economic Report* and *Queensland Economic Review* available at [www.oesr.qld.gov.au](http://www.oesr.qld.gov.au). More information on the State's fiscal position is included in the *State Budget Papers* and *Report on State Finances* available at [www.treasury.qld.gov.au](http://www.treasury.qld.gov.au).

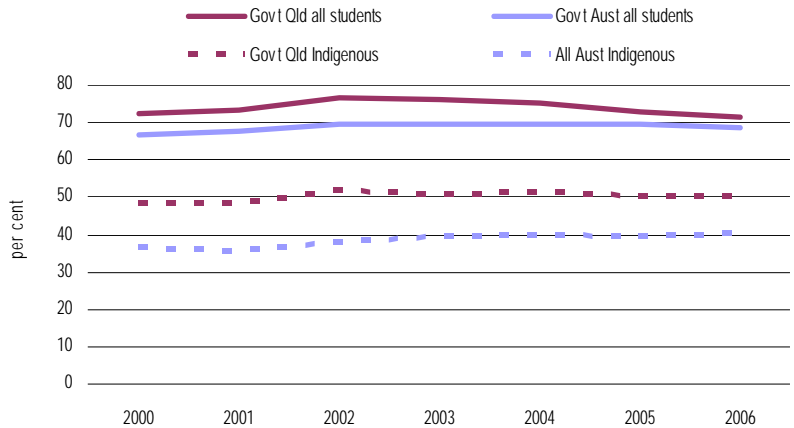
## Education, skills and knowledge

Queensland school students perform at levels comparable with the national average in reading, writing and numeracy.

### State school retention rates

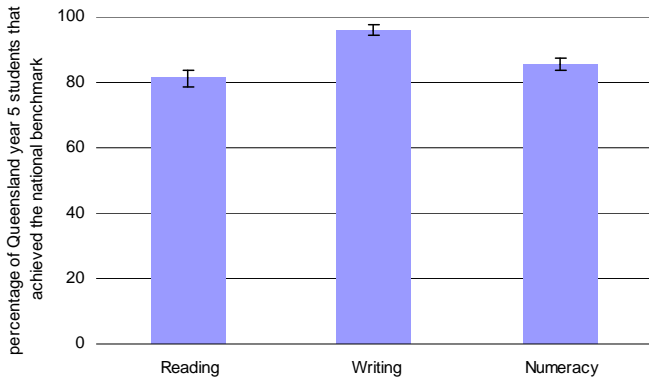
Since 2003, more young people have stayed in school for longer in Queensland than in the rest of Australia. Queensland's Indigenous students also stay at school longer than Indigenous students in Australia overall.

*(Note: Based on full time enrolments only. Rates for Queensland refer to state schools only. For Australia, rates for all students refer to government schools, while Indigenous rates refer to government and non-government schools.)*



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Schools, Australia, cat. no. 4221.0 and unpublished data; and Department of Education, Training and the Arts, Corporate Data Warehouse

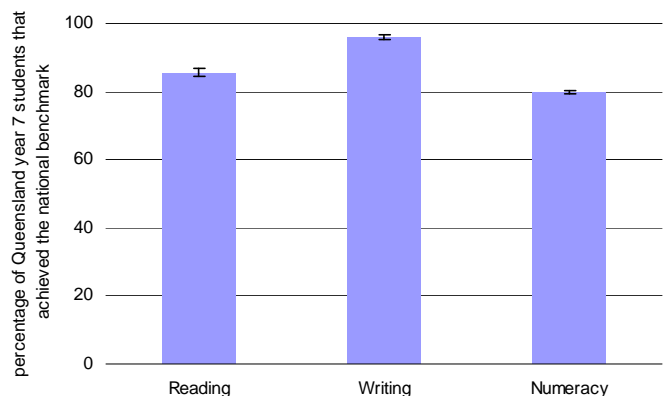
### Reading, writing and numeracy



Overall achievement of Queensland students in year 5 has been generally stable for the past five years.

In 2006, Queensland's year 5 student achievement remained stable with the exception of writing, where the results improved from 2005.

Source: Queensland Studies Authority

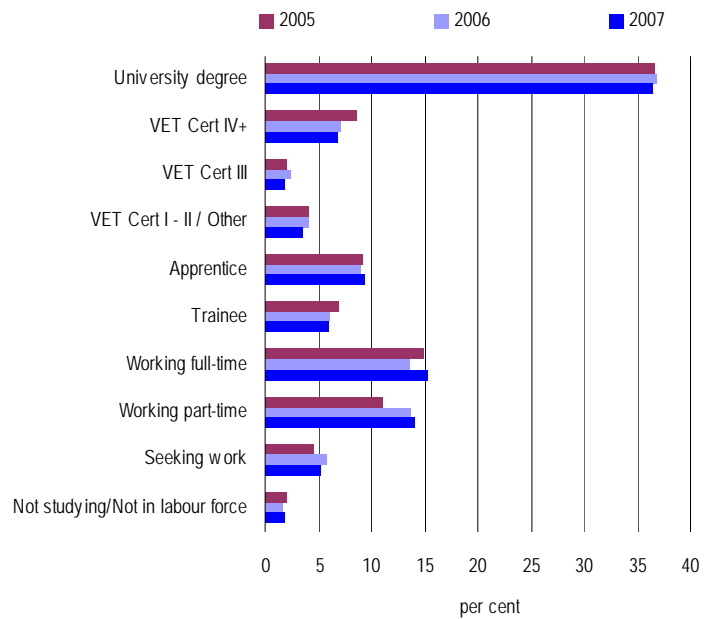


Queensland's year 7 students continue to achieve consistently well in writing. Achievement in numeracy further declined in 2006.

*(Note: The percentage of students achieving the benchmarks is a process of estimation, and therefore it is reported with a 95% confidence interval. For example, the percentage of year 5 students in 2006 achieving the national reading benchmark was 81.2% ± 3.1%.)*

**Post-school employment and education**

More than nine in ten (93.0%) of the almost 33,000 completers of year 12 in 2006 surveyed in 2007 were studying or in paid employment. Nearly two-thirds (63.6%) continued in some recognised form of education or training in the year after they left school. This comprised 36.5% who were undertaking a university degree and 27.1% who were engaged in vocational education and training.

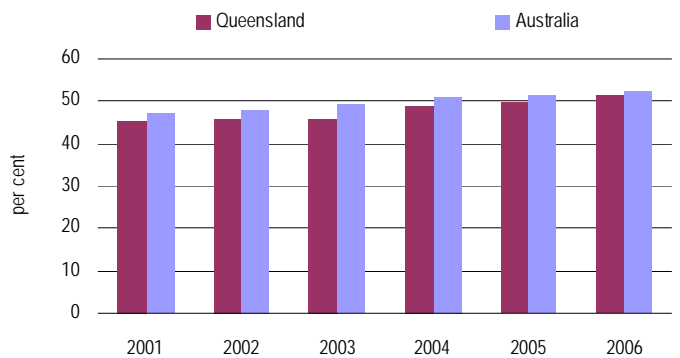


Source: Department of Education, Training and the Arts

**Non-school qualifications**

The proportion of Queenslanders between 15 and 64 years old with non-school qualifications grew from 45.4% in 2001 to 51.4% in 2006.

While Queensland remains below the Australian average in this area, the difference between national and state averages is getting smaller.



Source: Australia Bureau Statistics, Education and Work, Australia, cat. no. 6227.0 and unpublished data

More information on Queenslanders' levels of education, skills and knowledge can be found in the Department of Education, Training and the Arts' annual report available at [www.education.qld.gov.au](http://www.education.qld.gov.au).

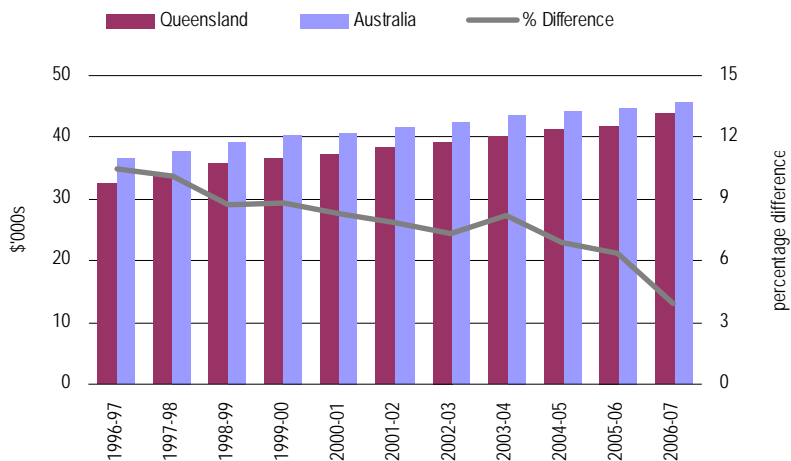
## Standard of living

While Queenslanders' per capita income remains lower than the Australian average, this is balanced by a cost of living that is generally lower than that of other states and territories.

### Income per person

In 2006–07, the difference between the Queensland and national real income per capita reduced by 2.5 percentage points to 3.9%.

Real income per capita in Queensland has been historically lower than for Australia. However, the difference between state and national income is getting smaller.

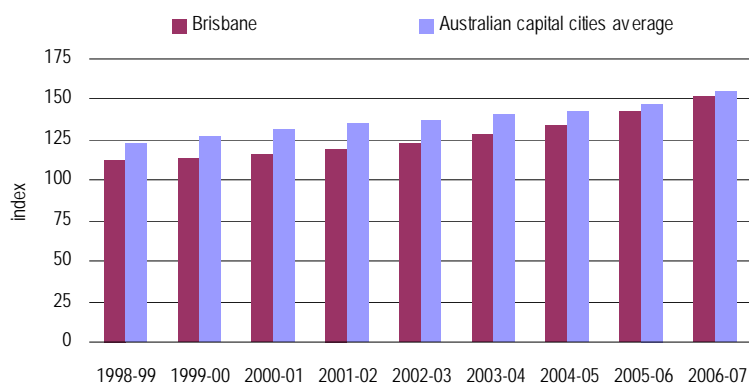


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Australian National Accounts, cat. no. 5206.0; ABS, Australian Demographic Statistics, cat. no. 3101.0; and Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland State Accounts

### Growth in rent prices

Average rent prices are growing more quickly in Brisbane than the average rents in other Australian capital cities. Over the year to June 2007, rents in Brisbane increased by 6.6% compared with 5.2% for all capital cities. However, the increase in rent in Brisbane has been lower than the average increase for all capital cities since 1989–90.

(Note: 1989–90 = 100. The lower the index, the lower the growth in rents since 1989–90.)

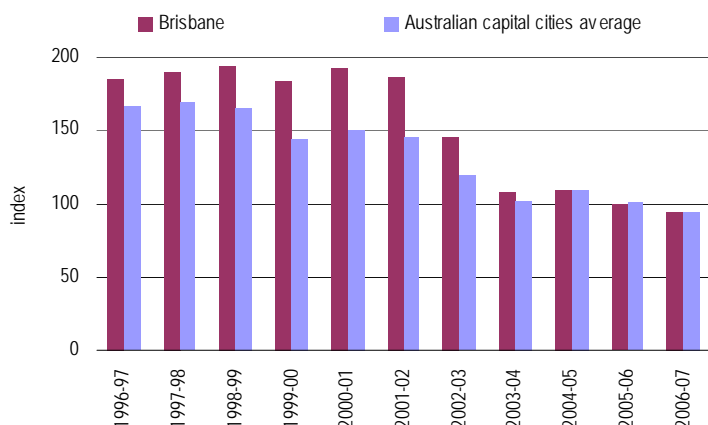


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, Consumer Price Index, Australia, cat. no. 6401.0

### Home purchase affordability

The difference between home purchase affordability in Queensland and the average affordability in Australian capital cities has evened out over time.

(Note: The home purchase affordability index is based on median first home dwelling prices, average household income and home loan interest rates. The higher the index, the greater the affordability. The Australian capital cities average excludes Darwin as it is not included in the CBA-HIA Housing Report.)



Source: Commonwealth Bank of Australia and Housing Industry Association, Housing Report

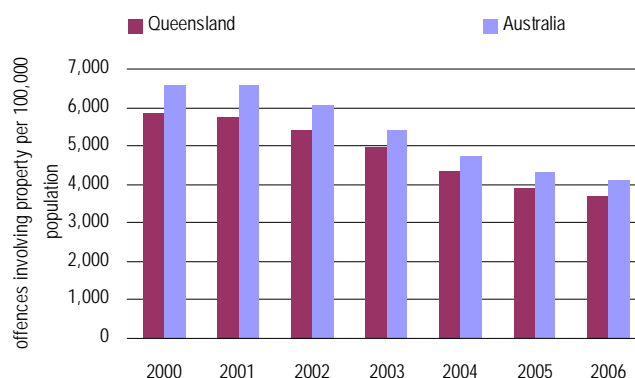
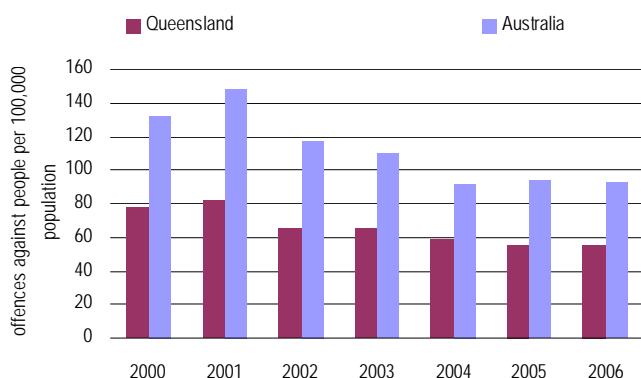
## Safety and security

Crime rates and transport fatalities continue to decline in Queensland. The rate of substantiated child abuse notifications has also fallen during 2006–07.

### Crimes against people and property

The rate of crimes against people (including homicide, kidnapping and abduction, robbery, blackmail and extortion) decreased slightly by 1.3% during 2006 and is below the Australian rate. The rate of crimes against property (including unlawful entry, motor vehicle theft, and other theft) decreased by 5.2% during 2006 and is below the Australian rate.

(Note: Data on assaults and sexual assaults are not comparable across states, and have therefore been excluded.)



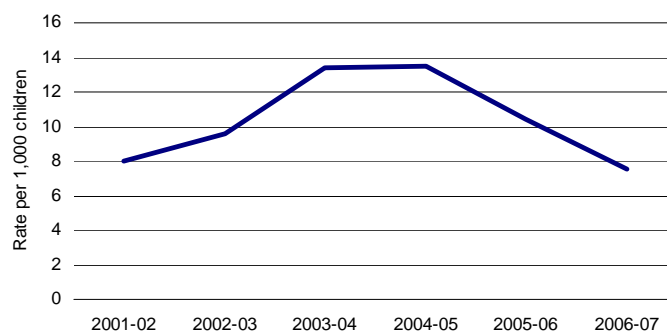
Source: Australian Bureau Statistics, Recorded Crime – Victims, cat. no. 4510.0

### Substantiated child protection notifications

The rate of substantiated notifications of abuse per 1,000 children reduced by 27.9% in 2006–07.

The overall reduction in the rate per 1,000 children in Queensland from 2001-02 to 2006-07 was 6.3%

(Note: 2006-07 figures are preliminary due to the transition in 2007 to a new information management system.)



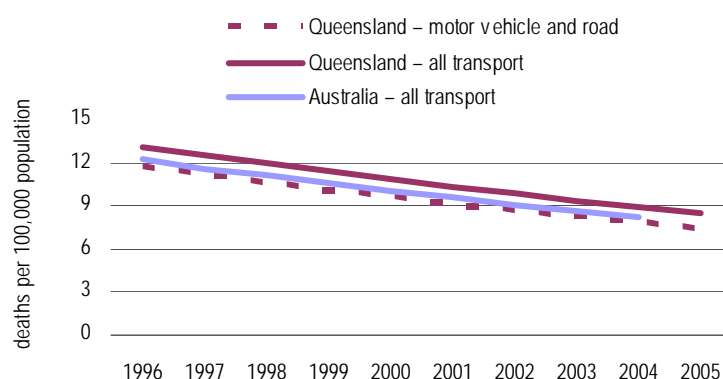
Source: Department of Child Safety

### Road and travel safety

Queensland's rate of death from transport injury in 2005 reduced by 4.5% from 2004.

Queensland makes up 20% of the national road toll.

(Note: Australian mortality data for 2005 was unavailable at the time of publication.)



Source: Australian Bureau Statistics, Australian Unit Record Mortality File and Health Information Centre, Queensland Health

## Health

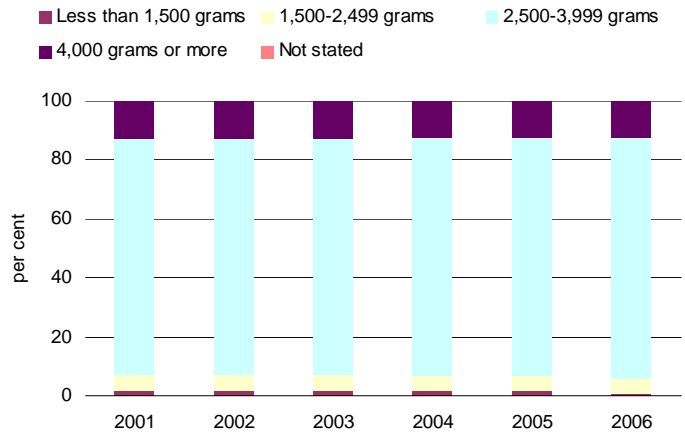
Queenslanders generally enjoy good health, but the size of the State, our widely dispersed population, rapid growth and ageing mean challenges for health and the provision of health services. The state of a person's health depends on their individual biology, as well as social, economic, cultural, environmental and behavioural factors. Education, employment, income, and social interaction are major determinants of health.

### Birth weight

Based on preliminary figures for 2006 the percentage of low and very low birth weight babies in Queensland decreased by 1.0% from 2005.

Birth weight is a key determinant of future health status. Babies' weight at birth affects their early development. Low birth weight is defined as being between 1,500 grams and 2,500 grams.

(Note: 2006 figures are preliminary)



Source: Queensland Health, Queensland Perinatal Data Collection

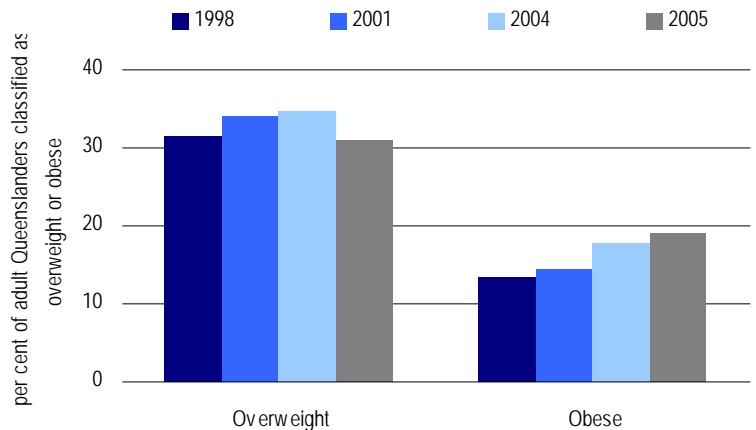
### Activity and obesity

The number of adults who are classified as obese has increased steadily since 1998.

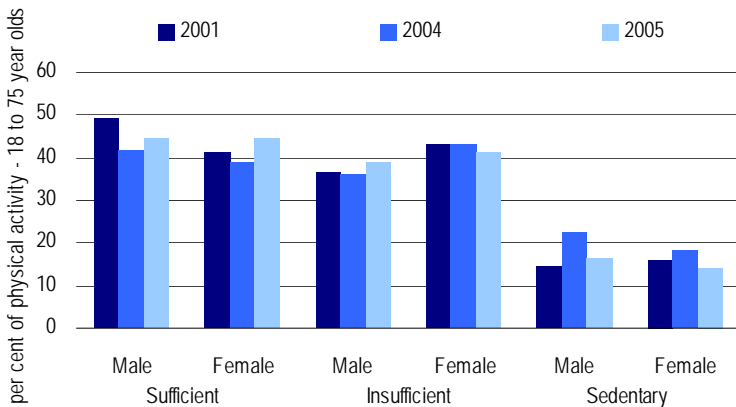
(Notes: Being overweight is defined as where a person's body mass index (BMI) is between 25 and 30. Obesity is defined as where a person's BMI is greater than 30.)

Data for 1998 are for all ages; 2001, 2004 and 2005 data are for persons aged 18-75 years.

No 2006 data were available at the time of publication.)



Source: Queensland Health, 1998 Statewide Health Survey and Omnibus Survey 2001, 2004, and 2006



Source: Queensland Health, 2001, 2004 and 2006 Omnibus Survey and Health Information Centre

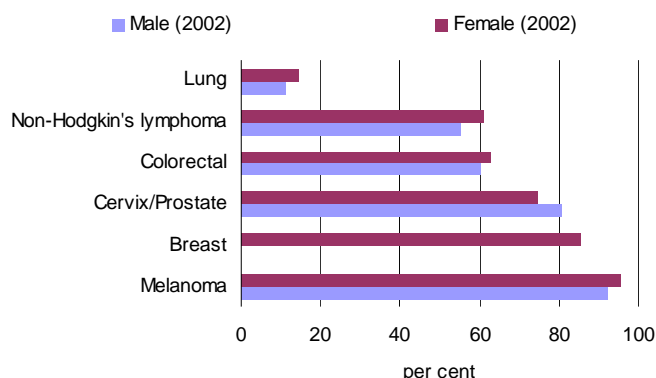
The proportion of 18 to 75 year old females undertaking sufficient physical activity has increased since 2001, while for males it has decreased. However, a higher proportion of females have insufficient activity. The difference between males and females is reducing over time.

### Cancer survival

The rate of survival from cancer has improved significantly over time. Five year relative survival rates for melanoma are almost 94%, and are better than 85% for breast and 80% for prostate cancers.

The prognosis for lung cancer, however, remains poor, with fewer than 15% of sufferers surviving five years after diagnosis.

*(Note: Compares cancers diagnosed from 1982 to 2000, with follow-up to December 2002. Data for 2002 are the most recent available.)*

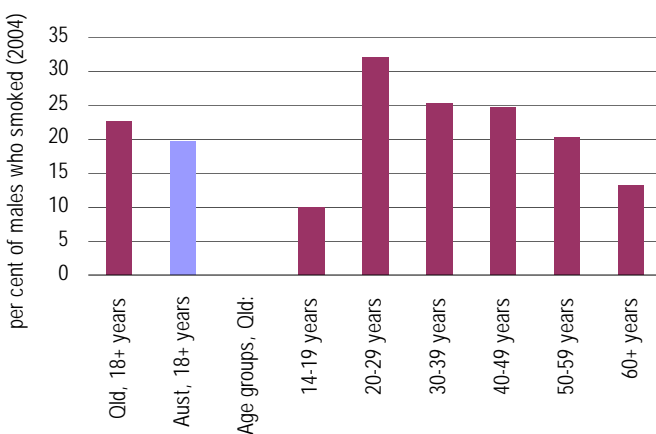
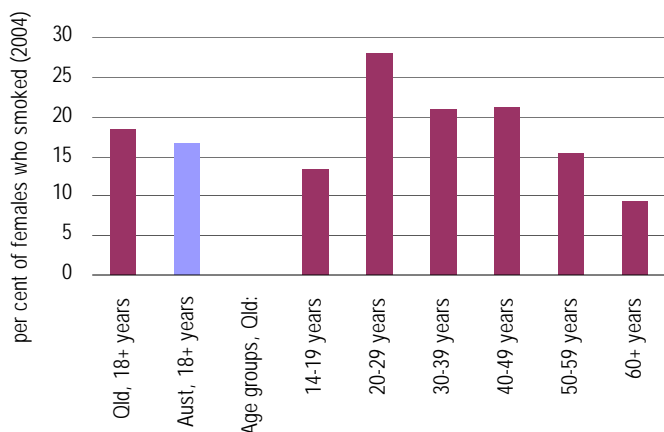


Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics; and Health Information Branch, Queensland Health

### Smoking

In 2004, 22.7% of Queensland males aged 18 years and over smoked, higher than the Australian rate.

Smoking is the largest single contributor to preventable disease in Australia. It is strongly associated with increased levels of heart disease and stroke, lung and other cancers and chronic respiratory conditions.



The rate for females was 18.5% and is also higher than the rate for females across Australia. A higher percentage of females aged 14 to 19 years smoke than males in the same age group.

Source: Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, 2004 National Drug Strategy Household Survey, State and Territory Supplement, Canberra, 2002, cat. no. PHE 61

## Fairness, social wellbeing and culture

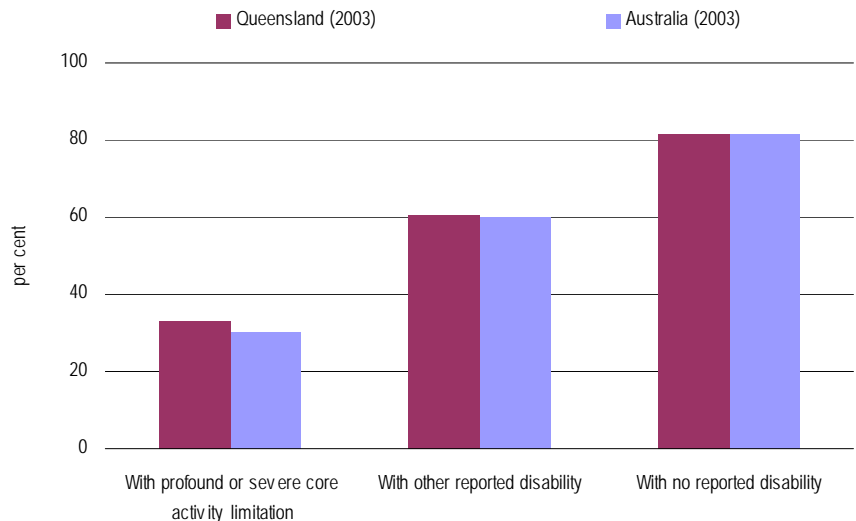
The Government, together with Queensland communities, develops and implements policies and programs to improve the social and economic wellbeing of all Queenslanders, especially those from disadvantaged groups, such as people with a disability and Indigenous people.

### Participation in the workforce for people with a disability compared to total population

Queensland's workforce participation for people with a disability (53.7%) compared favourably with that of Australia as a whole (53.2%).

People with a disability are less likely to participate in the workforce than the general population. In Queensland in 2003, 81.5% of the population without a disability participated in the workforce, compared with 60.3% of people with a core activity limitation that is not profound or severe and only 32.9% of people with a profound or severe core activity limitation.

(Note: Participation in the workforce includes people in employment or actively seeking employment.)



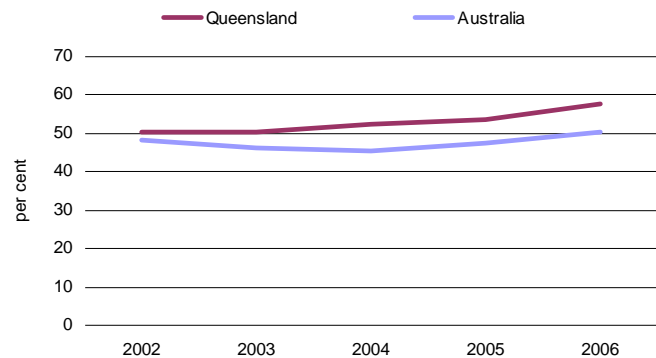
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia, Summary of Findings, 2003, cat. no. 4430.0*

### Indigenous employment

A higher percentage of Indigenous people are employed in Queensland (57.6%) than in Australia as a whole (50.4%).

Generally, Indigenous people aged 15 years and over in Queensland are less likely to be employed (either full time or part time) than non-Indigenous people.

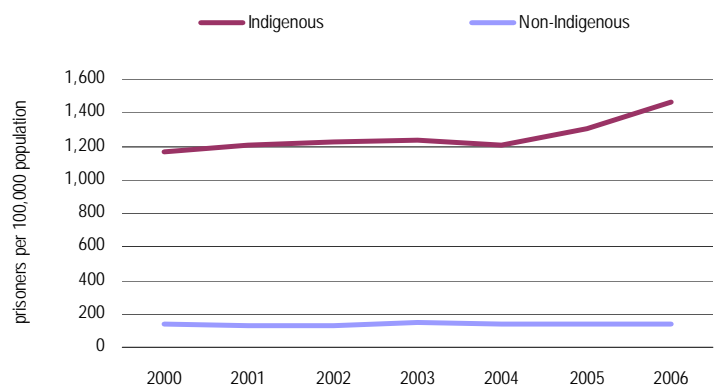
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Labour Force Characteristics of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Experimental Estimates from the Labour Force Survey, 2006, cat. no. 6287.0*



### Indigenous versus non-Indigenous imprisonment rates

Indigenous people continue to be over-represented in Queensland's correctional facilities. In 2006, the age standardised imprisonment rate for Indigenous adults in Queensland has risen to 10.6 times higher than that for the non-Indigenous population.

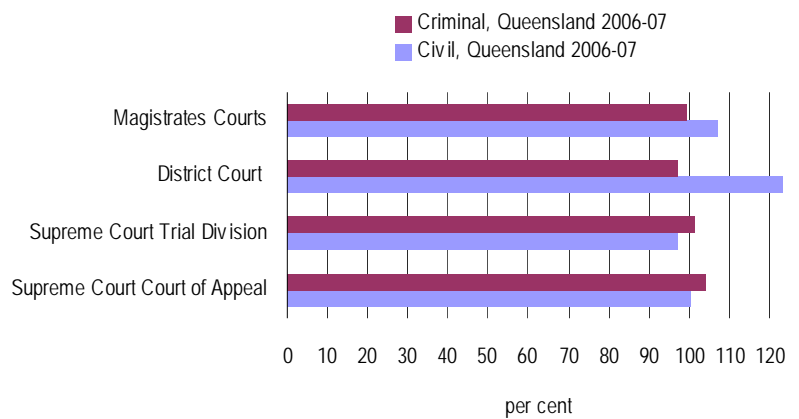
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics, *Prisoners in Australia, cat. no. 4517.0, unpublished data*



**Timeliness of court matters**

Court clearance rates show general improvement over 2005–06 results. Both civil and criminal courts in Queensland continue to maintain high finalisation rates.

The clearance rate compares the number of matters lodged with the courts to the number of matters finalised during the period. A rate above 100% indicates the court is reducing a backlog of cases.

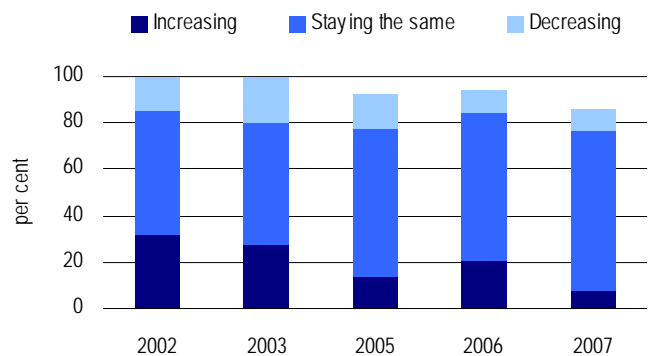


Source: 2006-07 Department of Justice and Attorney-General Annual Report

**Acceptance of differences**

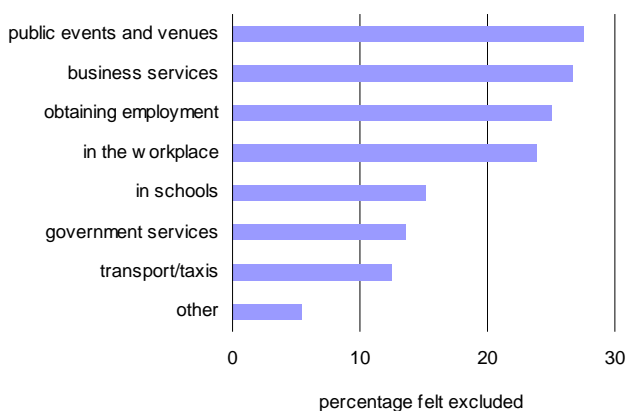
In 2007, 10% of Queenslanders believe that individuals or groups are excluded from participating in the community less frequently than previously. Most believe it is much the same. Less than 8% believe it is increasing, down from 32% in 2002.

(Note: This question was not asked in the 2004 Queensland Household Survey.)

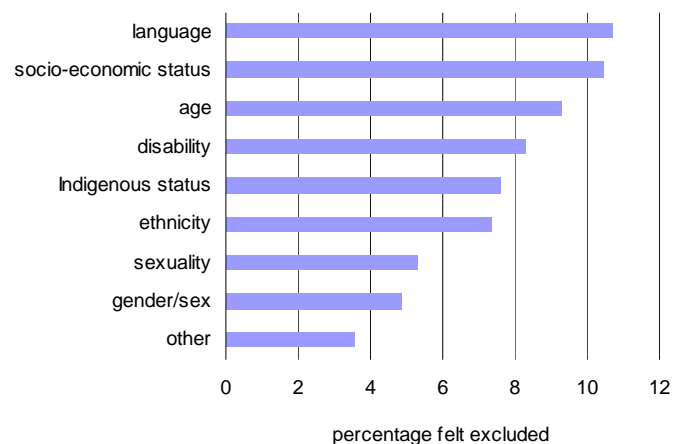


Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Household Survey, May 2001–2007

The most common place that people see or experience exclusion is at public events and venues.



The most common reason for exclusion is poor English language proficiency.



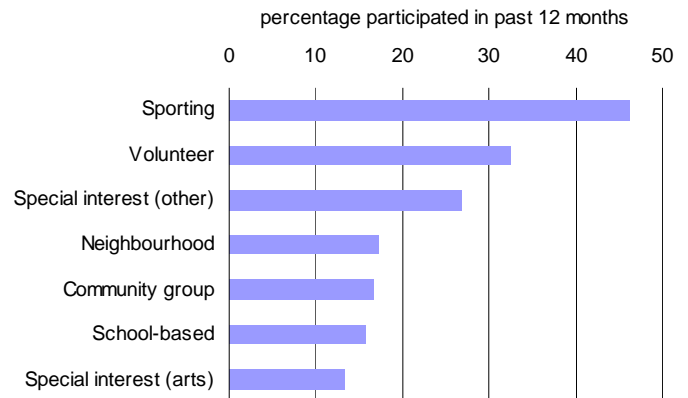
Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Household Survey, May 2007

### Involvement in the community

The most common community activity in which Queenslanders participate is sporting groups, with over 46% of Queenslanders getting involved in sport in the past 12 months.

The extent to which people volunteer or otherwise participate in community groups and activities demonstrates individuals coming together to form a cohesive community group.

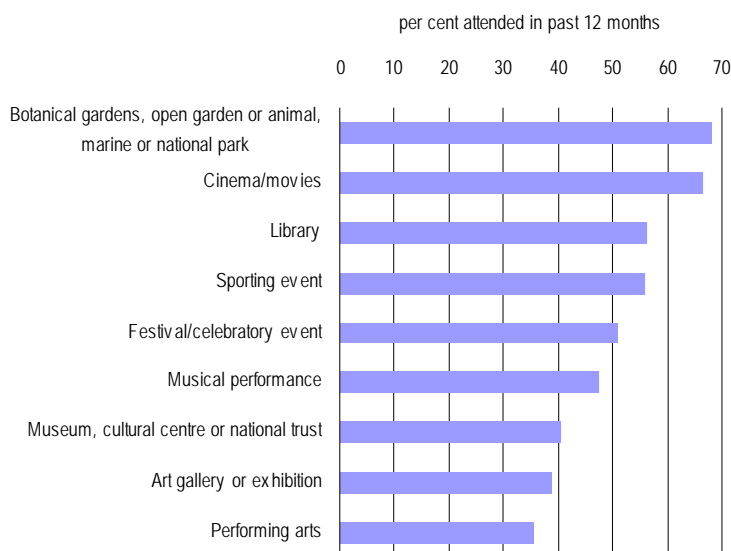
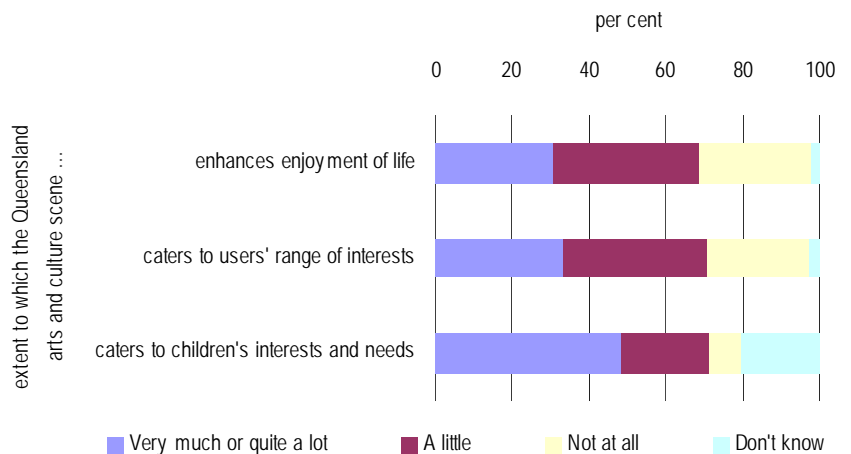
Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Household Survey, May 2007



### The arts and culture

Queensland adults consider arts and culture to be important to their own enjoyment of life, and to children's development.

Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Household Survey, May 2007



The most common arts or cultural activities that Queenslanders attended in 2006 are gardens, animal, marine or national parks, followed by the cinema.

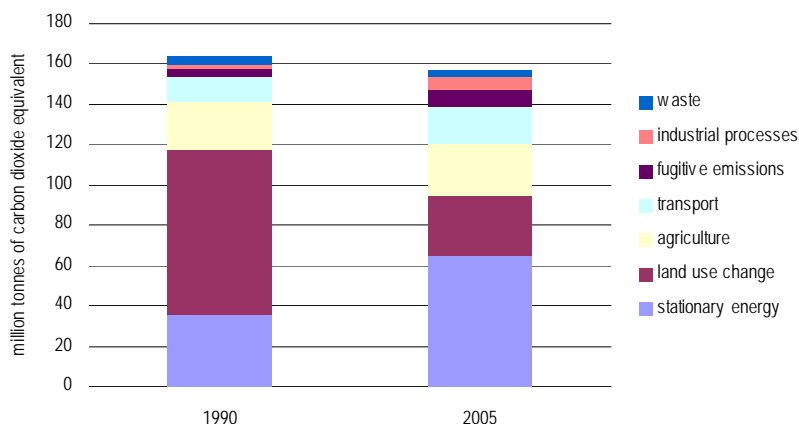
More Queenslanders reported visiting a library in the 12 months to May 2007 (56.4%) than in the previous 12 months (52.3%).

## The environment

Population and economic growth, particularly in the south-east, puts pressure on natural resources and increases the risk of damage to the environment through factors such as greenhouse gas emissions.

### Greenhouse gas emissions

Queensland's net greenhouse gas emissions totalled 157.0 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent in 2005, down from 163.7Mt in 1990. The State's share of national emissions fell from 29.9% to 28.1% over this period. The State's total emissions fell during this period due to the one off effect of the decision to end broadscale clearing of native vegetation. However, other sectors have grown significantly, particularly stationary energy and transport. Economic and population growth is continuing to increase demand for electricity, and is contributing to a high growth in emissions from the transport sector – particularly in south-east Queensland.

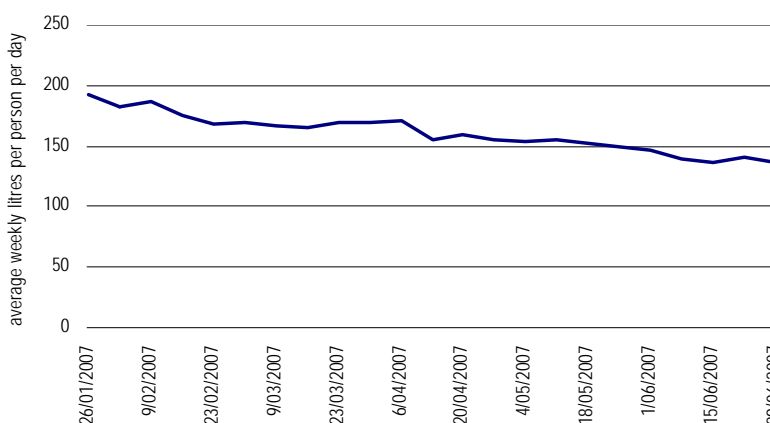


Source: Australian Greenhouse Office

### Water consumption

Water use in south-east Queensland continues to fall in line with the target usage of 140 litres per person per day. For 29 June 2007, average weekly consumption per person per day in south-east Queensland was 137 litres.

Measures such as the introduction of water restrictions are designed to manage demand for water, particularly in light of the current drought conditions in south-east Queensland.

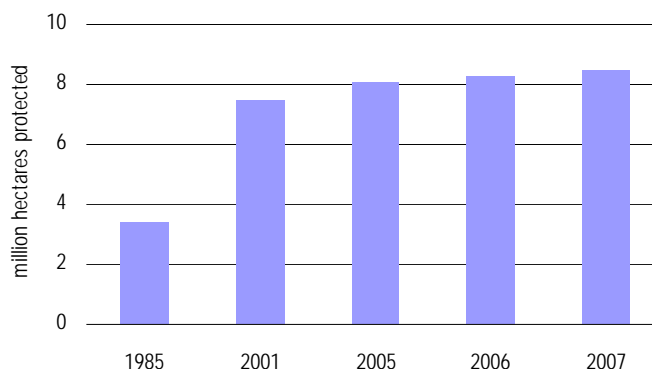


Source: South East Queensland Water Commission

### Maintenance of biodiversity

Protected areas in Queensland have increased from 3.4 million hectares in 1985 to 8.5 million hectares in 2007.

Queensland is home to more than 200,000 species of plants and animals, many of which are found nowhere else in the world, and they are still being discovered. In 2006, Queensland had 1,351 regional ecosystems, of which 744 were classified as “no concern at present”, 511 were as “of concern” and 96 as “endangered”.



Source: Environmental Protection Agency

## The Government's response to climate change

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Climate change presents a continuing significant social, environmental and economic risk to Queensland. Effects such as decreased rainfall, increased rainfall intensity, longer dry periods within a season and increased risk of drought are expected. Stream flow and groundwater levels may also be adversely affected. There will be more cyclones in the more severe categories but possibly fewer cyclones. The occurrence and intensity of wildfires will increase, storm surges, higher sea levels and more intense weather systems will be experienced. The physical impacts also include changes in species distribution patterns and potential inability for re-establishment of threatened species with limited range.

ClimateSmart 2050 — Queensland Climate Change Strategy 2007: a low-carbon future articulates the Government's long term commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 60% below 2000 levels by 2050 and preparing Queensland communities and industries for the inevitable impacts of climate change. The strategy established a comprehensive policy platform, supported by 24 initiatives, including:

- supporting Queensland communities reduce their carbon emissions and undertake practical projects, such as demonstrate hydrogen fuel cells
- helping business save an estimated 3,280 kilotonnes in greenhouse gas emissions and an estimated \$78 million in energy costs
- promoting research and development into renewable energy and committing to a Renewable and Low Emissions Energy Target of 10% by 2020
- helping people living in remote areas to install greenhouse friendly hot water systems, more efficient refrigeration and insulation
- increasing the percentage of energy generation being produced by gas from the current 13% to 18% by 2020
- introducing new planning standards for commercial buildings by 2010 and phasing out electric storage hot water systems
- requiring that all Queensland Government office buildings be carbon neutral by 2020, and
- paying people whose home solar systems put power into the system.

More information on the condition of Queensland's environment can be found in the *State of the Environment Report*, available at [www.epa.qld.gov.au](http://www.epa.qld.gov.au).

## Responding to the community

Responsive government relates to how the Government goes about fulfilling its service delivery obligations to Queensland communities while maintaining sound fiscal management.

### Connecting Government and communities

Community Cabinet meetings are held throughout the State and provide Queenslanders with opportunities to experience the Cabinet process and to raise their concerns with Cabinet members. The total number of formal deputations since 1998–99 is 8,012.

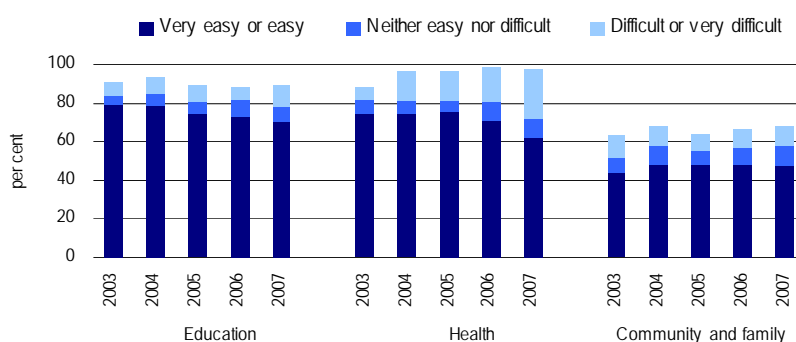
	1998-99	1999-00	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05	2005-06	2006-07
Number of meetings	14	14	11	12	10	12	10	12	13

Source: Department of the Premier and Cabinet

### Providing access to services

Queenslanders generally believe that it is more difficult to access government services today than it was in 2003.

This is especially the case for health services. Perceptions have worsened in the past 12 months.

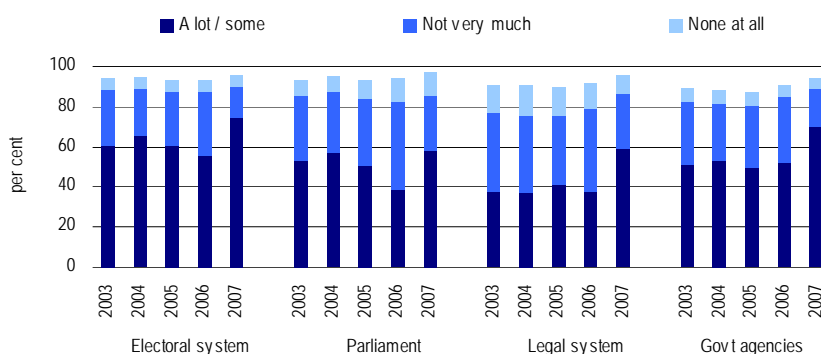


Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Household Survey, May 2003–2007

### Confidence in Government

People in Queensland have more confidence in government processes and institutions than they had in 2003, and this has improved in the past year.

Queenslanders are most confident that the electoral process is working well. They also have confidence in government agencies. They have least confidence in Queensland's legal system.



Source: Office of Economic and Statistical Research, Queensland Treasury, Queensland Household Survey, May 2003–2007

## Performance at a glance

Indicator	Performance over time	Comparison with other Australian jurisdictions
Growth in gross state product	Stronger growth after slower growth in 2005–06	Consistently outperforms national growth
Unemployment	Improving in both short and long term	Now below national figures
Employment by industry	All industries have increased in the long term and most in the short term	Not available
Value of interstate and overseas exports	Increased over previous years	Outperformed rest of Australia in 2004–05 and 2005–06
Business expenditure on research and development	Improving since 1999–2000	Lower than the national results
Budget outcomes	Continued surplus combined with AAA credit rating	Vary from state to state
State school retention rates	Reasonably stable	Consistently outperforms national results
Reading, writing and numeracy	Stable	Slightly lower than national average
Post-school employment and education	Reasonably stable	Not available
Non-school qualifications	Steady improvement	Below national average, but difference is reducing
Real income per capita	Steady growth over time	Below national average, but difference is reducing
Growth in rent prices	Growing more quickly in recent years	Growing more quickly than capital cities' average
Home purchase affordability	Decreased over the past three years	Similar to capital cities' average
Substantiated child protection notifications	Dropping after a peak from 2003 to 2005	Not available
Crimes against people and property	Falling steadily	Consistently lower than national results
Rate of death from transport injury	Falling steadily	Above national average
Percentage of low birth weight babies	Decreased marginally	Similar to national average
Adults' activity levels and obesity	Both increasing	Similar to national average
Cancer survival	Generally improving	Similar to national rates with some regional variations
Smoking	Has improved over the long term	Worse than national average
Participation in the workforce of people with a disability	Not available	Outperforms national participation
Indigenous employment	Improving	Above national average
Indigenous versus non-Indigenous imprisonment rates	Differential is currently increasing	Not available
Timeliness of court matters	Most clearance rates improved since 2005–06	Not available
Acceptance of differences	Improving	Not available
Extent to which people volunteer or participate in community groups	Not available	Not available
Perceived value of the arts and culture	Not available	Not available
Participation in arts and cultural experiences	Increasing overall	Not available
Greenhouse gas emissions	Down from 1990 figures	State's share down from 1990
Per capita water consumption (south-east Queensland)	Decreasing, and within targets	Not available
Maintenance of biodiversity	Protected area estate is increasing	Not available
Number of community cabinet forums/deputations	Reasonably stable	Not applicable
Perceived ease of access to services	Declining	Not available
Confidence in Government institutions	Improving	Not available



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**Service Delivery and Performance Commission Act 2005**  
<http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au/LEGISLTN/ACTS/2005/05AC052.pdf>