POPULATION AND COMMUNITY

Estimated Resident Population (ERP) 2016

Source: ABS Regional Population Growth 2015-2016

Projected Population Growth 2016–2031

WSM Total population loss = -1,296

Source: Vic Futures 2016

Immigration – Born Overseas

Source: ABS Census 2011 and 2016

Fertility Rates

Source: ABS 3301.0 Births, Australia, 2015

Indigenous Population

Source: ABS Census 2016

Unemployment Rate

Source: Small Area Labour Force SALM March Quarter 2017

Regional Priority A: Early Years and Access to Education

Early Years Services, 2017

1. Kaniva Kindergarten
2. Goroke Kindergarten
3. Edenhope Kindergarten
4. HDKA Natimuk
5. Goodstart Early Learning
6. HDKA Laharum
7. Marrang Kindergarten
8. Aussie Kinders
9. St Arnaud Children’s Precinct
10. Rupanyup Pre-school
11. Murtoa Pre-school
12. Minyip Pre-school
13. Warracknabeal Pre-school
14. Bueulah Pre-school
15. Hopetoun Pre-school
16. Rainbow Kindergarten
17. Jeparit Kindergarten
18. Nhill Kindergarten
19. Dimboola Kindergarten
CHILD INDICATORS
— EARLY YEARS POPULATION

Population aged 17 or under
WSM 18.5% Victoria 21.8%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Range</th>
<th>% of total WSM Population</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0-6</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>8.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7-17</td>
<td>11.8%</td>
<td>13.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>11.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
<td>32.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Estimated Resident Population 2016

The Australian Early Development Census (AEDC) is a measure of how young children are developing in different domains. Higher percentages indicate higher vulnerability in the domain.

FAMILY INDICATORS

Family Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family composition</th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
<th>Regional Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Couple family</td>
<td>34.5%</td>
<td>25.0%</td>
<td>30.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(no children)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Couple family</td>
<td>52.2%</td>
<td>61.4%</td>
<td>54.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(with children and dependents)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole parent family</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>13.6%</td>
<td>14.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Census 2011

Percentage Low income families

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: ABS Census 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Family Violence Reporting to police (per 100,000 population)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2,263 per 100,000 WSM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,285 per 100,000 Victoria</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teenage Fertility Rate (15-19 years)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: VCAMS 2012, Data for Yarriambiak and West Wimmera not available</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoria 10.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsham 27.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh 28.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Grampians 22.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Immunisations of Children at 60 months

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: VCAMS, 2014/15, aggregated by local government area</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>97.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

SOcioeconomic disadvantage (SEIFA – IRSD)

SEIFA is a measure of relative disadvantage where a score of less than 1,000 indicates that a community is relatively disadvantaged compared to other communities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>2011 Score</th>
<th>2006 Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>987</td>
<td>993</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh ($)</td>
<td>947</td>
<td>955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Grampians</td>
<td>938</td>
<td>946</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wimmera</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>981</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarriambiack</td>
<td>952</td>
<td>953</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: SEIFA IRSD 2013 and 2008

Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source: ABS Census 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary Qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Technical Qualification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Priority B: Secure Vibrant Community Infrastructure

PIVOTAL ROLE OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Local Government
- Facilitators of investment
- Advocates for key regional projects
- Owners/managers/maintainers of community infrastructure

Regional recognition of shared social service infrastructure
- Use of schools by community
- Management of public halls
- Integrated local / state government infrastructure planning
- Public use of CFA facilities

Source: Social Services in the Grampians Region 2030

Local government has a key role in transport infrastructure
- Provision of ‘C’ Class roads
- Management of airport/airstrips
- Active transport routes
- Advocacy of regional rail and road projects


REGIONAL INVESTMENT

4 key measures for WSM

Jobs
- Diversification
- Promote agriculture as viable career choice
- Increased vocational training

Investment
- Agribusiness and value adding
- Promotion of regional infrastructure needs

Exports
- Increase production prior to exports particularly grains

Opportunities
- Increase access to technology across all sectors
- Improved digital connectivity

Source: WSM Regional Investment Plan, 2017

2016 WSM Investment Plan outcomes
- Improved Weather Data ($8.25mill State and Federal)
- Wimmera Cancer Centre ($3.5mill State and Federal, $1mill community)
- Silo Art Trail ($400k State and Federal)

Source: WSM Regional Investment Plan, 2017

Snapshot of projects from WSM Regional Investment Plan 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Project Description</th>
<th>Proposed Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh</td>
<td>Wimmera River Discovery Trail</td>
<td>$3.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Albacutya Bridge</td>
<td>$3.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nhill Library</td>
<td>$1.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>CBD Revitalisation</td>
<td>$6.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WIFT Precinct Development</td>
<td>$2.4m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indoor sports stadium</td>
<td>$6.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Grampians</td>
<td>Halls Gap Tourist Resort town revitalisation</td>
<td>$10.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stawell Innovation and Employment Zone</td>
<td>$7.0m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>St Arnaud Civic Precinct</td>
<td>$1.2m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wimmera</td>
<td>Edenhope Cultural and Community Hub</td>
<td>$1.8m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kaniva Community and Cultural Precinct</td>
<td>$1.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C Class Roads</td>
<td>$15.6m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarriambiack</td>
<td>Woomelang Community Units</td>
<td>$0.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Minyip St Arnaud Rd</td>
<td>$4.5m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warracknabeal and Hopetoun Aerodrome Upgrades</td>
<td>$5.0m</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regional Priority B: Secure Vibrant Community Infrastructure

**Improved Infrastructure Investment by LGA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LGA</th>
<th>Project Cost $mill</th>
<th>Funding Ask $mill</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh</td>
<td>26.34</td>
<td>20.015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>29.609</td>
<td>16.285</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Grampians</td>
<td>35.561</td>
<td>18.216</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wimmera</td>
<td>20.364</td>
<td>15.728</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarriambiack</td>
<td>13.676</td>
<td>12.008</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total estimated</strong></td>
<td><strong>125.55</strong></td>
<td><strong>82.252</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: WSM Regional Investment Plan 2017

Local government is directly funding 34.5% of total project cost.

**IMPROVED TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE**

**Improved Passenger Rail/Coach Services**

**Stage 1.** 2017–2019:
- increased Ararat to Melbourne Train services from 3 to 4 daily
- strengthening of connecting coach services to Wimmera Southern Mallee

**Stage 2.** 2021–2026:
- reinstate rail passenger services to Horsham and Hamilton commencing 2023
- Ballarat and Ararat 88km railway converted from broad gauge to standard gauge between 2021 and 2026.

Source: Grampians and Barwon South West Region Passenger Services Feasibility Study, 2017

**KEY COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE ISSUES**

**Skilled workforce retention**
- aging workforce
- out-migration of young people
- creating attractive job opportunities
- provision of quality education and training services
- developing cultural asset
- emphasis on rural lifestyle

**Impacts of declining population and servicing small dispersed settlements**
- shared social service models
- role of Horsham as the regional centre
- effective transport links

**State and Federal infrastructure funding channelled to urban centres and high or growing populations**
- competitively securing funding for infrastructure
- making an economic case for funding regional Victoria

**Limits to establishing a more diversified local economy**
- declining population
- strong connection to existing agricultural industry
- links to global economy
- decline in younger working age population
- growth in dependent population
- maintaining infrastructure

**Proposed transport infrastructure upgrades**
- Duplication of Western Highway to the SA border $320 million. (Priority: Ararat to Stawell)
- Horsham bypass. $165 million.
- Bypass for towns between Ballarat and SA border $420 million.
- Henty Highway improvements – access Port of Portland
- Upgrade ‘C class’ roads
- The Grampians Way Ring Road $8 million
- Five new passing loops for rail freight: $25 million.

Source: Wimmera Southern Mallee Regional Investment Plan 2017
Regional Priority C: Mobile and Digital Connectivity

**KEY ISSUES:**
- loss of productivity
- loss of innovation potential
- becoming non-competitive due to poor digital access to information, services, work and entertainment
- risk management for emergency services
- education services need effective ICT services to grow

**INTERNET ACCESS**

**Trend:** WSM has a lower level of household internet access when compared to Regional Victoria, and Victoria. Household internet access rates are particularly low in the Wimmera.

**Proportion of Households with Internet**
- Horsham 75.2%
- Hindmarsh 70.5%
- Northern Grampians 71.9%
- West Wimmera 71.2%
- Yarriamback 71.0%

Source: ABS Census 2016

**Key Benefits of Improved Mobile Phone and Internet Coverage**
- Better, faster broadband,
- Improved access to tele-services (health and education)
- Critical to maintain population
- Increased upload and download speed
- More comprehensive and reliable mobile coverage
- Productivity gained for business
- Region remains competitive
- Improved livability

Source: Wimmera Southern Mallee ICT Survey Results 2010

**Mobile phone coverage**
- 448 mobile blackspots in Grampians Region
- 210 located in Mallee electorate
- New tower funding for 21

Source: Regional Development Australia Member Briefing Update on Mobile Black Spot Funded Programme 2017

There are many mobile phone ‘blackspots’ in WSM where coverage is routinely not available.

**Phone Blackspots in WSM Region**

**LEGEND**
- Location with poor or no mobile coverage – “blackspot”
- Planned mobile base upgrade (Round 1 and Round 2)

Wimmera Southern Mallee locations shown only. Built using data from Department of Communications and the Arts, “Mobile Black Spot Database of Reported Black Spot Locations”, Updated 26 February 2016.


**Barriers to ICT use in WSM**
Regional Priority C: Mobile and Digital Connectivity

**NBN Network**
- Large sections of the region don’t have access to the NBN network and higher speed internet connections.

**WSM NBN Coverage**

![WSM NBN Coverage Map](source)

**Free WIFI Access**
- Horsham is well-served for free WIFI in its urban areas.
- Elsewhere in the region there are very few, if any, free public WIFI services.

**4G Network**
- 4G mobile phone network is significant for technological innovation.
- Farming businesses in particular require reliable 4G network coverage in remote areas.

[Telstra 4G network](image)  [4Gx network](image)

**5G Network**
- Telstra has commenced rollout of 5G networks in Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane locations resulting in super-fast gigabit networks.

**DIGITAL AGRICULTURE**

- WSM primary producers use of digital agriculture:
  - 70% primary producers using smartphones, tablet PCs and apps (above national average)
  - 76% (of survey respondents) use some form of precision agriculture include remote monitoring

  *(Source: Remote Data Use in Agriculture WDA 2013)*

- Benefits of ICT to WSM Broadacre Farming = productivity gains

- For significant productivity benefits WSM farmers need:
  - public access to data on soil maps,
  - timely public access to high density weather data,
  - comprehensive mobile telecommunications networking throughout the whole cropping region.
  - presence of large scale commercial agribusiness service providers.

- Access and speed critical issues.
  - Internet connections with data transfer speeds of less than 1.5 megabits per second are not able to transmit even relatively small yield monitor data files

**BENEFITS AND OPTIONS FOR DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY**
- High up take of digital technology by primary producers
- Link to productivity in broadacre farming
Regional Priority D: Encouraging a Diversified Economy

KEY WSM INDUSTRIES

Agricultural sector accounts for

- 25% WSM jobs
- 47% All businesses

Employment is projected to grow in health care and social assistance.

Employment in agriculture, forestry and fishing projected to decline by -0.4%.

Top Five Employment Sectors

- Agriculture, forestry, fishing
- Construction
- Manufacturing
- Retail trade
- Transport, postal, warehousing

Source: ABS Census 2011

Agriculture is set to remain the largest employer in the WSM region for the foreseeable future. It is important to note that in the North West of Victoria, the fastest growing employment sectors to 2020 will be Health Care and Social Assistance, Accommodation and Food Services, Retail Trade, Education & Training and Transport & Postal.

Projected Employment Growth North West ('000) 2020

- Health Care and Social Assistance
- Accommodation and Food Services
- Retail Trade
- Education & Training
- Transport Postal


NB - data applies to North West Victoria - SA4. This includes the Wimmera Southern Mallee, as well as the Local Government Areas of Ararat, Gannawarra, Bultoke, Swan Hill, and Mildura.

TOP FIVE INDUSTRIES BY NUMBER OF BUSINESSES IN WSM REGION

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top five industries</th>
<th>No of businesses</th>
<th>% of all businesses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Forestry and Fishing</td>
<td>2,758</td>
<td>46.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>542</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rental, Hiring, &amp; Real Estate Services</td>
<td>411</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Retail trade</td>
<td>331</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial &amp; Insurance Services</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Data by Region 2016

GROSS REGIONAL PRODUCT

$3.0 Billion WSM Region

$337.6 Billion GSP Victoria

Source: NIEIR 2017

SOCIO-ECONOMIC PROFILE

Estimated Resident Population 2016 = 47,277

The table below shows the Estimated Resident Population (ERP) for each LGA in WSM, the population change in the 2015-2016 year and the population change between 2006-2016.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Local Government Area</th>
<th>2016 no.</th>
<th>2015-2016 %</th>
<th>2015 no.</th>
<th>2006-2016 %pa.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Horsham</td>
<td>19,801</td>
<td>-0.3%</td>
<td>19,872</td>
<td>1,031 0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindmarsh</td>
<td>5,446</td>
<td>-1.7%</td>
<td>5,567</td>
<td>-673 -1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern Grampians</td>
<td>11,471</td>
<td>-0.8%</td>
<td>11,565</td>
<td>-624 -0.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Wimmera</td>
<td>3,855</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>3,916</td>
<td>-684 -1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarriambiack</td>
<td>6,704</td>
<td>-1.5%</td>
<td>6,813</td>
<td>-905 -1.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total WSM ERP</td>
<td>47,277</td>
<td>-0.6%</td>
<td>47,277</td>
<td>-1,855 -0.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Regional Population Growth 2015-2016

NB - data applies to North West Victoria - SA4. This includes the Wimmera Southern Mallee, as well as the Local Government Areas of Ararat, Gannawarra, Bultoke, Swan Hill, and Mildura.
Regional Priority D: Encouraging a Diversified Economy

WSM Median Age by LGA

Source: ABS Census 2011

**Working Age Population** = the number of people in age group 15 - 64

% of working population

WSM = 59.6%

Victoria = 66.2%

Source: ABS Census 2011

WSM RAINFALL

Lower than average rainfall compared to Victorian Reference Period (660.2)

Mean annual rainfall for major WSM towns (100 year average)

Source: BOM 2017

NB: Town choice reflects weather stations with longest recorded history

AGE PROFILE

Trend: Older median age across all LGAS when compared to Regional and State estimates.

WSM has a smaller % of people of a working age population compared to Regional and State estimates.
GRAIN SECTOR VALUE

WSM is a major producer of Victoria’s grain
- In 2012-13, the gross value of Victoria’s grain production was $2.31 billion.
- Victoria’s grain exports were valued at $1.96 billion.

- Victoria’s grain growing areas are mainly located in western and northern Victoria, predominantly in the Mallee and Wimmera regions.
- Estimated 20 wholesale / retail grain and produce businesses located in WSM (source: Sensis 2017)
- Significant portion of the gross value of grain production attributable to WSM.

Wimmera Southern Mallee has significant grains research and development infrastructure

Some of the key infrastructure includes:

DEDJTR Horsham Grains Innovation Park (GIP)
- National centre for breeding pulses
- Research laboratories, glasshouses and infield research facilities
- National genetic resource management
- Genome analysis and modification in cereals (wheat)
- Managing climate variability
- Australian Grains Genebank (National Plant Genetic Resource Centre)
- Collaborative research links to AgriBri Centre

Bayer CropScience
- Partnership with Longerenong College
- Wheat and oilseed breeding centre

Longerenong College
- Training and education programs
- Cropping program to grow cereals, pulses and oilseeds
- Growing focus on precision agricultural techniques and crop variety

- Commercial focus
- Research and extension programs / partnerships – GIP and Bayer CropScience

Birchip Cropping Group
- Focus on broadacre farmers through applied science based research
- Not for profit agricultural research and extension organisation led by farmers from WSM region
- Adoption of new agronomic technologies and farming practices
- Field research and trials drive farm based agricultural research

Federation University Australia (CeRDI)
- eResearch applied to digital agriculture
- Data access for growers
- Partnership based research

Grains Research and Development Corporation
- Invest in projects and partnerships improve productivity and efficiency in grains industry.
- Pulse development identified as research gap

MAJOR GRAIN PRODUCING AREAS IN VICTORIA

Source: Grains Industry Profile 2014 DEDJTR
Regional Priority D: Best Model for Tourism Development

GRAMPIANS TOURISM REGION = LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS

Wimmera
Central Highlands
Western Grampians

Potential Project - Grampians Cycling
Potential Project - Grampians Peak Trails Accommodation
Potential Project - A range of Aboriginal Cultural Tourism Opportunities

Pyrenees
Ararat
Northern Grampians
Southern Grampians
Horsham
West Wimmera
Yarriambiack
Hindmarsh
Buloke

ESTIMATED ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF TOURISM IN GRAMPIANS REGION 2016

$1.044 billion
Gross Regional Product generated by tourism industry in Grampians (2013-14)

$325 million
Domestic Visitor Expenditure in Grampians

9,200
Number of people employed in the tourism industry in Grampians (2013-14)

1,202,000
Domestic Day Trip Estimates to Grampians

818,000
Domestic Overnight Visitor Estimates to Grampians

57,200
International Overnight Visitor Estimates to Grampians

WSM Local Government Tourism Investment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Investment Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitor / Tourism Services</td>
<td>$908,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Tourism Planning</td>
<td>$41,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitor signage</td>
<td>$62,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events and festivals</td>
<td>$258,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Membership of tourism bodies</td>
<td>$100,028</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other tourism expenditure</td>
<td>$457,097</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$1,826,725</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

EFT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Category</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Visitor Tourism services staffing</td>
<td>9.27 EFT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Events and Festivals staffing</td>
<td>4.40 EFT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WSM TOURISM PROFILE AND PRODUCT

Significant product

Event based tourism is a significant drawcard across WSM (Broad range of music, cultural, fishing, food, sporting, agricultural events)

Estimated Visitor Numbers to WSM events range from 2,500 to 25,000

Nature based experiences that include rock climbing, bird watching, bush walking, 4WD, desert experience (appeal to domestic and international visitors)

Historic, cultural and “product specific” touring routes... self drive experiences eg. Silo Art Trail

Camping, Parks and Lakes ... diverse product range across WSM

Rural natural attractions, historic town experiences ... walking, cycling, self drive tours

Future Tourism Development Needs

Investment in enabling infrastructure and tourism product which spreads economic benefits

Better structural co-ordination of WSM tourism

Co-ordinated product development and marketing strategies

Better gauge of visitor numbers and profiles relevant to WSM

Source: Drawn from interviews with LGA tourism / Eco Development staff 2017.

WSM Local Government Tourism Investment

Regional Tourism Expenditure Model (REX), September 2016, Tourism Research Australia. (2016).
Regional Priority E: Energy & Environment

RENEWABLE ENERGY

WSM suitable for three major renewables:

- Wind
- Solar
- Biomass

Five Wind Farms & Three Major Solar projects under consideration in the WSM.

Future renewable projects limited by:

- Amount of power that powerlines can carry.
- A lack of infrastructure & network capacity.
- Current network was designed to ‘send power out’, not for ‘decentralised’ power generation- current thinking.
- No major Interconnector running ‘east west’ across Wimmera.
- Main transmission line for the WSM feeds from Ballarat, to Horsham, then to Mildura, where it joins the Murraylink Interconnector.
- Southern Interconnector runs along the coast, to Portland, then to SA.

Opportunities

- Vic Govt committed to 25% renewable energy target (RET) by 2020 & 40% by 2025.
- Resulting in $2.5 billion of direct investment in Vic (DELWP).
- Western Vic seen as key to Vic Govt fulfilling it’s RET.
- Region’s weather conducive for both wind & solar.
- High levels of investment flowing into renewables globally.
- Region has large expanses of land with small populations.
- A large-scale battery storage project is currently planned at Bulgana (Great Western)
- Two small communities are exploring ways of providing renewable power to towns and farms - Natimuk and Harrow

A way forward

Establish a third Victoria-South Australia interconnector, from Horsham to Keith, via Nhill & Kaniva, this would:

- Open up new locations for large scale renewable projects in Vic & SA,
- Create extra redundancy & energy security for SA,
- Create an extra 220-440 MW of power,

Alternatively, upgrade power lines across region to double their capacity.

Map shows transmission lines in Western Victoria (greater than 66 kV).
Please note this is only a small snapshot of data relating to the WSM’s vast and varied environment. Aspects covered in this snapshot includes: area burnt and number of fires, soil moisture and soil cover, precipitation and temperature and inflows into storages over time.

**FIRE**

Figures include fires within public land (Little Desert & Grampians NP, State Forest and Reserves). And some major fires on private land (Moyston 2015). 2005 - 2016 saw marked increases in the size and numbers of fires in the region compared to the past 30 year average. This period also recorded the largest fires on record (records date back to the early 1900’s), and some seasons with the highest number of fires.

In the 8 year period, 2006-2014, 85% of the Grampians NP was burnt by bushfire. Large areas of public land in the Grampians and Little Desert NP have been burnt within a relatively short period and correlates with an extended drought across the region. Many large fires have come ‘on the back’ of record breaking heatwave events, raising questions about how predicted climate change may influence the likelihood and severity of bushfire in our region (DELWP).

**WIMMERA PUBLIC LAND BUSHFIRES 2006-2016**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Hectares Burnt</th>
<th>Number of Fires</th>
<th>Season</th>
<th>Hectares Burnt</th>
<th>Number of Fires</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005-06</td>
<td>141,685</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2011-12</td>
<td>2,087</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-07</td>
<td>19,969</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>2012-13</td>
<td>41,741</td>
<td>101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007-08</td>
<td>22,180</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2013-14</td>
<td>59,264</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008-09</td>
<td>4,875</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>2014-15</td>
<td>32,434</td>
<td>104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-10</td>
<td>2,281</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2015-16</td>
<td>435</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010-11</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>2016-17</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Data supplied by Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP)

**SOIL HEALTH, MANAGED LAND AND IN FLOWS**

Exposed soil means the % of soil that is unprotected by living vegetation or litter as mapped from MODIS satellite imagery following CSIRO’s methodology.

**Percentage of exposed soil in the Wimmera.**

Overall there was an increase to land managed under covenant of 85 hectares and an increase of 1,700 hectares of land managed under contracts between landholders and Wimmera CMA.

**Area of land protected and managed under agreements.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Protection type</th>
<th>Area covered (hectares)</th>
<th>Additional area 2015-16 (hectares)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>National parks</td>
<td>192,000</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State parks</td>
<td>83,900</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trust for Nature covenants</td>
<td>14,730</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landholder agreements</td>
<td>17,600</td>
<td>1,700</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Wimmera CMA

**PRECIPITATION & TEMPERATURE**

**2016 Australian Rainfall decile map.**

Australian rainfall deciles for 1 January- to 31 December 2016 (Bureau of Meterology). Note above average fall across whole WSM.

**2016 Australian mean Temperature decile map (BoM)**

Although the WSM experienced above average rainfall in 2016, it also experienced ‘very much above average’ mean temperatures for the year.
AGEING POPULATIONS

Dependent Populations
These are the age groups who are below and above ‘working age’ and seen as dependent on the working age population.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Under 15</td>
<td>18.2%</td>
<td>17.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Over 65</td>
<td>23.5%</td>
<td>15.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: ABS Census 2011

Service delivery

Issues of relative isolation and population dispersal create service delivery challenges around social welfare, community and health.

Specific challenges presented include:
- working towards better use of existing infrastructure
- coordination of future investment
- provision of a better service experience to service users

Source: Social Services in the Grampians 2030 Project, 2015

Children and Youth Area Partnership Services

Children and Youth Area Partnerships have been established across the state to address the systemic and local factors that contribute to the vulnerability of children, young people and their families. The DHHS and DET Western District of Victoria, which includes the Wimmera Southern Mallee, is one of two key areas NOT covered by a Children’s and Youth Area Partnership, despite the region’s poor early years statistics.

Family and Domestic Violence

Multi-year data for domestic violence incident rate in key regional locations. WSM populations have higher than average incident rates – this creates service delivery challenges.

**Regional Priority F: Social Welfare, Community and Health**

**SOCIAL WELFARE, COMMUNITY AND HEALTH**

**Young People’s Wellbeing**

Proportion of young people who are bullied 2015

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grades 5 – 6</td>
<td>18.1%</td>
<td>15.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Years 7 – 9</td>
<td>21.0%</td>
<td>18.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VCAMS 2017 aggregated LGA Data

**Substantiated cases of child abuse 2010/2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.2 per 1,000</td>
<td>6.72 per 1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VCAMS 2017 aggregated LGA Data

**Child protection orders 2010**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.5 per 1,000</td>
<td>5.4 per 1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VCAMS 2017 aggregated LGA Data (excluding West Wimmera)

**Children in out of home care 2011**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10.9 per 1,000</td>
<td>4.6 per 1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VCAMS 2017 aggregated LGA Data (excluding West Wimmera)

**Immunisation of Children at 6 months 2014/2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>97.1%</td>
<td>92.6%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VCAMS 2017 aggregated LGA Data

**Proportion of Children in first year primary school assessed by a school nurse 2015**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WSM</th>
<th>Victoria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>94.0%</td>
<td>82.9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: VCAMS 2017 aggregated LGA Data