# Postcodes to 2011 Remoteness Areas

*Notes on using the attached index (Postcodes\_alloc\_to\_RA\_2011.csv) to assign postcodes to remoteness areas defined in the 2011 ABS Remoteness Classification*

The ABS 2011 Remoteness Classification was built by amalgamating 2011 Statistical Areas Level 1 (SA1s) into five classes of remoteness based on access to services, namely Very Remote Australia, Remote Australia, Outer Regional Australia, Inner Regional Australia and Major Cities of Australia.

The postcode boundaries used for reference are those purchased by the ABS from Pitney Bowes dated December 2012. An additional list of postcodes not covered by the Pitney Bowes list was derived from a complete list of 3312 current postcodes downloaded from the Australia Post website https://auspost.com.au/forms/postcode-data-registration.html.on 25 Jan 2013 and dated 29 Nov 12. These extra codes are typically post boxes and special purpose postcodes and since they have no spatial representation in Pitney Bowes’ postcode boundaries dataset they have been manually assigned by the ABS for completeness.

Postcodes are, in Australia Post's words, “*maintained solely for mail processing purposes”*. They do not follow the ABS's 2011 SA1 boundaries very well. Therefore around the edges of ABS's remoteness areas a decision has been made where to allocate a split postcode, based on population distribution determined by the 2011 Census dwelling count of underlying ABS mesh blocks. If, for example, the dwelling count in the portion of the postcode overlapping the Major Cities of Australia area exceeded the dwelling count in the Inner Regional Australia area adjoining, the postcode was deemed to be within the Major Cities remoteness area.

This results in some postcodes being categorised as, say, Major Cities when significant parts of them are outside. An example is postcode 4510 in Queensland. Furthermore, Australia Post postcodes are sometimes not contiguous which results in discrete parts of postcodes being a considerable distance away from the allocated remoteness area, or in the worst case, covering several (up to four) remoteness areas. An example is postcode 4702 in Queensland.

Examples are given in Queensland here to illustrate these situations in reasonably close proximity to each other. These cases, however, occur commonly around the boundaries of remoteness areas in all states and territories.

**The above limitations and assumptions should be taken into consideration when using this index.**

**Sources of difference between this 2011 allocation and the previously released 2006 one**

One hundred and sixteen postcodes differ in their allocation from the previous file.Differences in allocation can derive from several sources of change:

1. Remoteness Areas 2011 are built from aggregations of SA1s, a unit from the ABS’s new ASGS geographic classification. 2006 Remoteness Areas were built from CDs, a unit of the now superseded ASGC classification. SA1s and CDs, while broadly similar in size, have mismatching boundaries in most cases.
2. Postcode boundaries themselves can change over time. New postcodes are created and old ones are removed from use. Australia Post controls these changes.
3. Population growth can affect the relative distribution of dwellings in postcodes that cross Remoteness Area boundaries.

**Explanation of column headings**

**POSTCODE** is the Australia Post postcode derived from Pitney Bowes boundary data at December 2012 and from a download of current postcodes from the Australia Post website on 25 January 2013.

**RA\_CODE\_2011.**  The two-digit code refers to the state/territory code and the remoteness category.

The first digit relates to the standard ABS state codes, namely 1 = NSW, 2 = Vic, 3 = Qld, 4 = SA, 5 = WA, 6 = Tas, 7 = NT, 8 = ACT, 9 = Other Territories.

The second digit refers to the ABS Remoteness Structure (2011) where 0 = Major Cities of Australia, 1 = Inner Regional Australia, 2 = Outer Regional Australia, 3 = Remote Australia, 4 = Very Remote Australia, 5 = Migratory.

The allocation means the whole or the majority of the Census 2011-recorded dwellings in the postcode are within the state/territory and remoteness area classification shown.

**RA\_NAME\_2011** is the name of the remoteness area as above.

**STATE\_CODE** refers to the standard ABS state codes as above. Note the Other Territories of Cocos Keeling and Christmas Islands have WA postcodes (6799, 6798 respectively) and Jervis Bay Territory is included in NSW (2540) but all three are given the state code of the remoteness area to which the postcode is allocated rather than the state indicated by the leading digit of the postcode.

**STATE\_NAME** is the state/territory name within Australia. In cases where there is a conflict it refers to the S/T of the allocated remoteness area rather than the nominal S/T of the postcode’s leading digit.

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