



# Media Release

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## Five-yearly Australian Census is essential for growth areas

Australia's growing outer suburbs will be further disadvantaged if the Commonwealth Government cancels the five yearly Census, according to the National Growth Areas Alliance (NGAA). The NGAA, which represents 24 outer suburban growth municipalities nationally, is urging the Government to continue the five yearly Census of Population and Housing.

Mayor Glenn Docherty, Chair of NGAA, said outer growth suburbs house over 4 million people and are growing at double the national rate. "We rely on the Census, which is the most important evidence base we have to effectively plan services and infrastructure for our rapidly expanding communities. The long term ramifications of less reliable data will come at a massive cost and communities will pay the price."

Specifically, our Councils rely on the five yearly Census:

- to ensure we effectively allocate resources. This is particularly important for areas like ours which are undergoing rapid change.
- for reliable demographic data on small areas and small population groups. Without it our ability to understand and address the challenges associated with population growth will be seriously diminished.
- for its dwelling 'stock take'. Understanding local housing supply is fundamental to measuring and managing population growth.
- for understanding local economies and developing economic development strategies. The Census journey-to-work data set provides us with the only reliable snapshot of economic profiles at the small geographic level (suburbs and towns). We need this to plan for much needed economic growth and jobs in our areas.
- for the certainty that the Census offers in its regularly updated data.

"The NGAA considers the proposal to undertake a ten-yearly Census with intra-Census surveys as a huge backwards step. We strongly urge both ABS and the Australian Government to continue to undertake a five-yearly Census."

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### KEY FACTS

- NGAA areas grew at double the national rate 2006-11 3.2 per cent
- NGAA areas absorbed one third of Australia's growth between 2006 -11
- Another 1m jobs are needed in NGAA areas by 2026 just to maintain the status quo.