

**Notes from the Editors**

In this edition, the Journal continues its two-fold objectives of presenting quality Regional Science research papers while also ensuring that the content will have wide applicability to Australia's diverse regions and to our readership.

Again, we thank contributors and particularly our reviewers whose input, though remaining anonymous, is critical to the journal's ongoing success and sustainability.

As well as the new research papers, this edition includes a literature review of an important area of regional science studies, that being regional comparative advantage. We believe its inclusion provides our readership and particularly our academic community with an important, contemporary platform upon which more specific research papers can later be based.

While such a review is unusual for this journal, we believe that the occasional inclusion of such generic contributions in key areas is something that should be considered for further editions.

In summary of specific papers in this edition, the research by Clarke and Burns considers the use of joint-use (shared) facilities in the roll out of specific health service programs. It is based on the evaluation of a program in the sensitive and very topical area of mental health, drawing examples from regional Victoria. There are hopefully important lessons in this for the delivery of comparable services elsewhere, in the face of growing and diverse regional demands mixed with the realities of limited budget allocation.

The paper by Cameron and Cochrane suggests a quantitative approach to address the commonly encountered problems of matching the scale of the data with the (often smaller size) of the area or population under investigation.

Fleishman et al.'s paper highlights the growing importance of creative industries in the development of new, knowledge based sectors in regional areas. Anecdotally, these sectors are often associated with major city/inner city land uses, physical precincts and clusters. This paper, based on the experience in Townsville, North Queensland, argues that the emergence of these activities are not simply the domain of densely populated, inner-urban locations in the state capitals. While such regional nodes are not without specific challenges, the paper identifies how such 'new wave' businesses do emerge, based on the evolution of a number of existing and new service and professional firms and networks.

Powell et al.'s paper recognises the observation that, in regional economies particularly, there can be important co-relationships between

sectors and business activities which, on first observation, would appear to have little in common. In this case, the paper investigates the surprisingly strong and multi-faceted relationship between high growth rates of prepared food outlets of various types and the mining boom in Western Australia over recent years. Using input-output analysis, the study establishes a high correlation and then ponders the post-mining boom environment now being experienced.

As regards natural resources and policies governing their use, Rochford's paper considers changing water usage and its evolution in the face of dwindling populations in certain regional locations. Any subsequent realignment of water usage and its infrastructure needs to take a longer term and strategic view to demand changes which will almost certainly change again into the future.

The Editors.