Hunter
Dynamic, innovative and outward-looking, the Hunter is Australia’s most populated regional centre and NSW’s largest regional economy.
The Hunter is the largest economy in Regional NSW contributing over A$34.7 billion to the NSW economy. Mining accounts for 38% of output in the region. The Hunter has a population of 740,676.

The Hunter has a diverse economy with strengths across advanced manufacturing, aerospace, defence, tourism and mining. With its increasing focus on the knowledge economy, a dynamic start-up sector has developed. NSW government investment in infrastructure and the rollout of Australia's most sophisticated 'Internet of Things' platform across the Newcastle CBD facilitates future expansion.
The Hunter combines an innovative economic and business environment with a high standard of living and proximity to Sydney. The University of Newcastle (a global top 350 university) provides access to a diverse talent pool and industrial research connections.

Tourism and the local wine and food industry are important contributors to the regional economy. Tourism injected nearly A$3.0 billion into the region in the year ending June 2019, with a 4.2% annual increase on average in visitor numbers since the year ending June 2010. The Hunter Valley is Australia's oldest wine growing region and remains one of its premier locations.
The Hunter has excellent connectivity to major markets via the Pacific Highway, the Sydney-Newcastle railway, Port of Newcastle and Newcastle Airport. 80% of the region’s households have internet access.

The Port of Newcastle is Australia's third largest port, the world's leading coal export port and the 24th largest in the world by trade volume, with commercial shipping lines to major ports throughout Asia and the Pacific.

Williamtown, located 20 minutes from Newcastle, is home to Newcastle Airport and RAAF Base Williamtown. RAAF Base Williamtown is Australia's primary defence Fighter Base and home to the country's new fleet of F-35 Joint Strike Fighters. Williamtown is fast becoming a world-leading innovation hub for defence and aerospace and is home to some of the world's largest defence primes including BAE Systems, Boeing, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon.

The University of Newcastle and local TAFEs offer international quality education.

Research centres include the CSIRO Energy Centre, the Port Stephens Fisheries Institute, the Hunter Medical Research Institute (HMRI) and the Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources (NIER). Major hospitals are located in Newcastle and surrounding areas.

HMRI is a world-class institute with 1500 medical researchers, students and staff striving to prevent, treat and defeat a multitude of serious illness.

Commercial real estate in Newcastle is on average A$220 per square metre for office rent per annum compared to A$695 in Melbourne's CBD, while industrial rent is on average A$130 per square metre in Newcastle.
Education

A quality network of tertiary education and research is centred on the University of Newcastle and the Hunter Innovation Network, closely connected to local industry.

Workforce

- 25,751 employed in education and training
58% of total workforce tertiary qualified

The largest centre of education employment in Regional NSW.

**Infrastructure**

- University of Newcastle’s five campuses offer 261 single undergraduate and postgraduate programs and 176 single PhD and Research Masters
- Growing cluster of innovation, technology, business, and research and development centres partnering with industry and government.

**Success**

- International students from over 100 countries studying at the University of Newcastle
- Newcastle Smart City Initiative maximises opportunities across technology, advanced manufacturing, the digital economy and creative industries
- Growth in R&D and innovation hubs including the:

  - Energy and Resources Knowledge Hub
  - CSIRO Energy Centre
  - Port Stephens Fisheries Institute
  - Eighteen04 (CleanTech incubator)
  - Newcastle Institute for Energy and Resources
  - Three76 Hub (Newcastle Innovation Hub)
  - Williamtown Defence Hub
  - Upper Hunter Innovation Hub
  - Dantia Smart Hub (DaSH) and Hunter Medical Research Institute.

For more information on Education, please refer to the [sector detail page](#).

**Defence**

RAAF Base Williamtown and the Singleton Military Area are supported by a strong and growing local defence industry.
Workforce

- Large available skilled workforce for aerospace, ship building, and naval and commercial vessel sustainment
- University of Newcastle’s I2N Hub Williamtown encourages engagement between the University and the defence, security and aerospace sectors.

Infrastructure

- Ideal coastal position for servicing defence maritime, land and aerospace projects
- Australian Army Singleton Military Area base for infantry and Special Forces training
- RAAF Base Williamtown, Australia’s main fighter and airborne early warning and control base employing 3,500 people.

Success

- Defence in the Hunter region contributes A$944 million to the NSW economy
- A$11.7 million investment by the NSW Government to support the defence and aviation sectors, and employment in Williamtown
- Upgrade ship repair facilities at Port of Newcastle, a joint venture by Thales and the NSW Government
- Established commercial relationships between local companies and global defence industry supply chains including Boeing, BAE Systems, Thales, Lockheed Martin and Raytheon
- Site of two major Australian Defence Force bases including NSW’s largest air force base, RAAF Base Williamtown.

For more information on Defence and Aerospace, please refer to the sector detail page.

Advanced manufacturing

Hunter’s developed advanced manufacturing sector continues to grow hosting companies across mining, defence, chemical processing, construction, and energy generation and distribution.
**Workforce**

- Almost 2,000 businesses employing 19,656 people
- Diverse manufacturing expertise in mining, defence, transport, chemical processing, construction, energy generation and distribution industries
- One in four adults have a science, technology, engineering or mathematics (STEM) education.

**Infrastructure**

- Close proximity to natural resources and export markets via the Port of Newcastle
- Supportive research and innovation infrastructure located at the University of Newcastle
- Easy access to Sydney via coastal rail and road infrastructure.

**Success**

- Advanced manufacturing contributes A$2 billion to the state economy—accounting for almost a third of output in Regional NSW and second only to Sydney
- Home to Eighteen04, a co-working space for cleantech and smart city infrastructure startups
- Home to HunterNet, a nationally recognised manufacturing network of over 200 manufacturing, engineering and specialist services companies.

For more information on Advanced Manufacturing, please refer to the sector detail page.

**Tourism**

Tourism continues to grow with a long-standing focus on coastal activities, and food and wine experiences. A dedicated cruise ship facility in the Port of Newcastle reflects the strength of the industry.

**Workforce**

- Over 2,200 businesses employing 25,000 people in the region
8% of the Hunter’s total employment.

Infrastructure

- Hunter Valley’s established wine and food tourism infrastructure
- Range of attractions including coastal areas, beaches and bushland areas

Success

- Home to Newcastle Airport, the second international gateway into NSW, offering direct connections to Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Auckland
- Tourism in the Hunter region contributes A$238.6 million to the NSW economy
- Growth in overnight visitor nights of 16.4% in year ended June 2013 to year end June 2019
- 8.1% annual increase on average in visitors since year ended June 2010 with 12.9 million international and domestic visitors in year ending June 2019
- Nearly A$3.0 billion spent to year end June 2019
- Internationally-recognised wine, food and tourism industry

For more information on Tourism, please refer to the sector detail page.
Mark McClean
Deputy Director for Hunter and Central Coast

Office contacts
Level 5, 26 Honeysuckle Dr
NEWCASTLE NSW 2300

CALL
EMAIL