

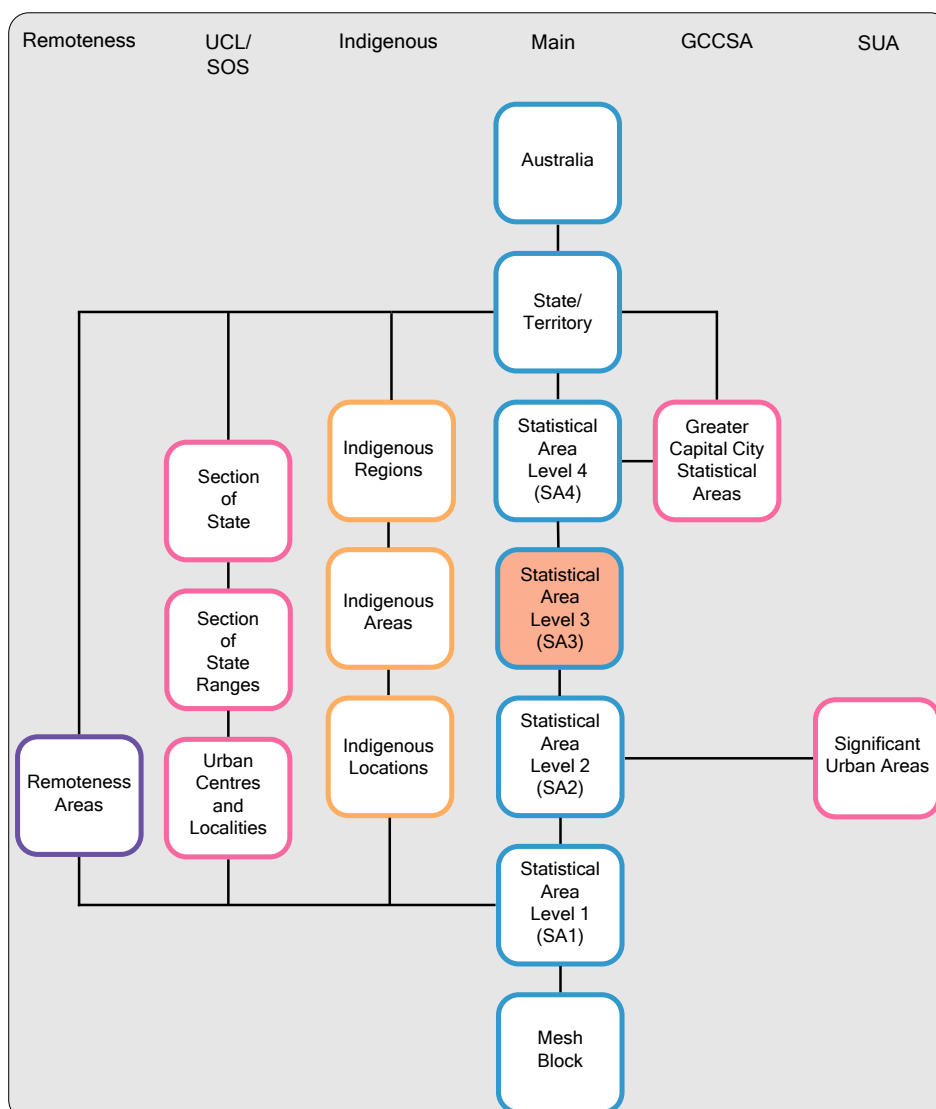
STATISTICAL AREAS LEVEL 3 (SA3s)

What are SA3s?

Statistical Areas Level 3 (SA3s) are geographical areas that will be used for the output of regional data, including 2011 Census Data. There is no equivalent unit in the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). The aim of SA3s is to create a standard framework for the analysis of ABS data at the regional level through clustering groups of SA2s that have similar regional characteristics.

There are 351 SA3s covering the whole of Australia without gaps or overlaps. They are built up of whole SA2s. Whole SA3s aggregate directly to SA4s.

Diagram 1: ASGS ABS Structures



What criteria were used to define the SA3s?

SA3s are designed to provide a regional breakdown of Australia. They generally have a population of between 30,000 and 130,000 people.

In the major cities, they represent the area serviced by a major transport and commercial hub. They often closely align to large urban local government areas. E.g. Parramatta, Geelong.

In regional areas, they represent the area serviced by regional cities with a population over 20,000 people.

In outer regional and remote areas, they represent areas which are widely recognised as having a distinct identity and have similar social and economic characteristics.

There are a small number of "zero SA3s". These have an effective design population of zero and represent very large National Parks close to the outskirts of major cities.

What data will be available on SA3s?

A range of Census products is available at SA3 level, and a range of other ABS data published at SA2 level could also be published at SA3 level or aggregated to SA3.

Where can I get the SA3 boundaries?

The SA3 boundaries are available in MapInfo Interchange and ESRI Shapefile formats and can be downloaded from the '**ABS Geography Publications**' chapter of the ABS Statistical Geography website: <http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>

Alternatively, SA3 digital boundaries are available through the '**Downloads**' tab of the ASGS Main Structures online publication: [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2011](#) (cat. no. 1270.0.55.001).

The publication includes a manual, maps of the main structure regions SA2 and above, and complete lists of the various regions of the ASGS and their hierarchical relationships.

Where can I get further information?

A detailed discussion of SA3s and the criteria used in their design can be found in the online publication: [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\): Volume 1 - Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Areas, July 2011](#) (cat. no. 1270.0.55.001).

More information on the ASGS and ABS Statistical Geography can be found by visiting the ABS website: <http://www.abs.gov.au/geography>

Any questions or comments can be emailed to geography@abs.gov.au