

**Research Project:**

**Cumulative socioeconomic impacts  
of CSG Development in the Western Downs**

**DRAFT DATA REPORT**

**INDICATORS OF CHANGE  
IN  
TARA AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY**

Interviews March - April 2017

Statistical data updated in March 2017 (using 2016 data)

This version June 2017

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## **The Tara CSG-Development Story**

The 'Tara CSG-Development story' was developed in consultation with a small number of key members of the Tara and district community.

The individuals participating in this consultation were asked to discuss and comment on statistical data on 'indicators' of social and economic impact. These discussions provided a local point of view and insight into the 'Tara CSG-Development story', to be used in combination with the publicly available data. The following indicators were discussed:

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. Population   | 5. Training  |
| 2. Unemployment | 6. Top offences recorded by police                 |
| 3. Income       | 7. Staff availability / skills shortages for local |
| 4. Housing      | 8. Available tourist beds.                         |

The small agricultural and forestry town of Tara was one of the first to see CSG development in the region, although had previously seen the development of the Moonie oil field and associated pipelines in the 1960s. It is considered a "safe and good" community by its residents. Just outside the township of Tara, between Tara and nearby Chinchilla, a large area of relatively infertile land was sub-divided into smaller 'rural lifestyle' blocks in the early 1980s by developers. In the 2011 census, the population of the rural subdivision area was higher than the population of the Tara township itself. Some of the people living on the 'blocks' have been criticised publically for low standards of living and disengagement with the broader community (Makki and Van Vuuren 2015).

The subdivision area is adjacent to a large CSG infrastructure site and CSG development was strongly contested there. The area is known as the formative ground for the now well-established, although morphed, 'Lock the Gate Alliance' anti-mining lobby group. Despite some initial and high-profile opposition, other town residents were more positive about CSG development and the local benefits it could bring in terms of population and economic growth.

Benefits in these parameters are shown in the charts. Tara's town population was steadily declining until 2008-09. From then to 2012-13 the town resident population increased almost 20%. Population has remained at this level until 2016. Unemployment in Tara is typically higher than the Queensland rate. In the years 2008-09 and 2012-13 Tara's unemployment rate dropped to much lower than the Queensland, which coincides with the construction phase of CSG development. Since 2013, unemployment has since risen back to 8%, above the rate for Qld.

The average income also rose in 2012-13 although is returning to trend, and total amount earned in wages and salaries increased from 2009 to 2013 as did the number of wage-earners. Total business income received a significant boost - from around \$400K a year to 2012, to over \$6M in 2012-13. Although that peak has not been sustained, the total business income for Tara remained 8 times higher than that pre-CSG levels. Housing in Tara remained affordable, although rents peaked at \$240 per week in 2012-13.

This booklet provides detail on the aspects of the 'Tara story' based on the range of priority indicators that we tracked. We would like to thank members of the Tara community for their cooperation and the gift of their time. We hope that we have done justice to their contributions to this study.

*The UQ 'Cumulative Impacts' Research Team.*

## INTRODUCTION

The University of Queensland is conducting research into the social and economic impacts of coal seam gas (CSG) development. The project has focused on the combined impacts of the multiple CSG developments in the Western Downs region of Queensland as an initial case study. That focus has now expanded to include other local government areas – Maranoa, Toowoomba, and Isaac. In this document, we present findings on the town of Tara.

### Research project aims

- **Find key indicators** – we want to identify ways to calculate and report the impact of multiple CSG projects in terms of a few numbers that are important and credible, e.g., weekly rents.
- **Involve people from the community, government, and industry** – we are asking stakeholders to decide which ‘indicators’ are the most important to monitor. In working with stakeholders, we aim to help develop a shared understanding of social and economic development in the community and create a frame of reference for ongoing, collaborative decision-making in the region.
- **Lessons to help other regions** – we want to develop models and approaches that can be used to measure, track and analyse cumulative impacts in other regions.

### The research team

- Assoc. Prof. Will Rifkin, Industry Affiliate, former Chair in Social Performance, Centre for Coal Seam Gas (CCSG) and Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining (CSRM).
- Dr Jo-Anne Everingham, Senior Research Scientist, CSRM.
- Dr Katherine Witt, Research Fellow, CSRM.
- Ms Sherylee Johnson, Research Technician, CCSG (2013-2016).
- Prof. David Brereton, former Associate Director, Sustainable Minerals Institute (2012-2016).
- Dr Vikki Uhlmann, Research Manager, CSRM (2013 -2014).
- Ms Kylie May, Research Analyst, CSRM (2013 – 2014).
- Mrs Sarah Choudhury, Research Assistant (2017)

**Funding:** The project receives industry funding through the Centre for Coal Seam Gas (CCSG), which is within the University of Queensland’s Sustainable Minerals Institute. CCSG’s industry partners include QGC, Arrow Energy, Santos, and Australia-Pacific LNG. These organisations are providing valuable information on their operations. Researchers are employed by the U of Queensland.

**Collaborators:** We are getting help from - Queensland government agencies and CSIRO researchers funded by the Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance (GISERA).

**Community participation:** In March 2014, a small research team from UQ started to visit communities to introduce the project. We gathered information, mostly from government sources, on impacts that key stakeholders in these communities perceived to be important. We visit each community to discuss that data, to get their insights on what has been occurring.

**Reporting timeframes:** The data collection for the project has been occurring annually since 2013. Project outcomes, recommendations, and reports have been released periodically. This latest version includes information from the 2017 interviews. Updates are planned for 2018 (*i.e.*, the duration of the project).

Each report contains an updated version of data presented previously. We hope that each page can be read and understood without us being present.

**Ethics guidelines we follow:** This study has been cleared by the human research ethics committee of the University of Queensland in accordance with the National Health and Medical Research Council's guidelines (Research Ethics clearance approval no. 2013000587).

**Questions:** Contact the lead researcher, DR Katherine Witt, Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, SMI, The University Of Queensland, Brisbane, QLD 4072 , Ph: 0418 619 341, Email: [k.witt@uq.edu.au](mailto:k.witt@uq.edu.au), [www.csrsm.uq.edu.au](http://www.csrsm.uq.edu.au). If you would like to speak to an officer of the University not involved in the study, you may contact the Ethics Officer on 07 3365 3924.

## PRIORITY INDICATORS FOR TARA AND DISTRICT

### DEMOGRAPHICS OF TARA

Map of Tara and District

1. Population

### EMPLOYMENT, BUSINESS & INCOME IN TARA

2. Unemployment
3. Income

### HOUSING IN TARA

4. Median house prices
5. Median rents

### WELLBEING IN TARA

6. Selected offences

### EXOGENOUS FACTORS

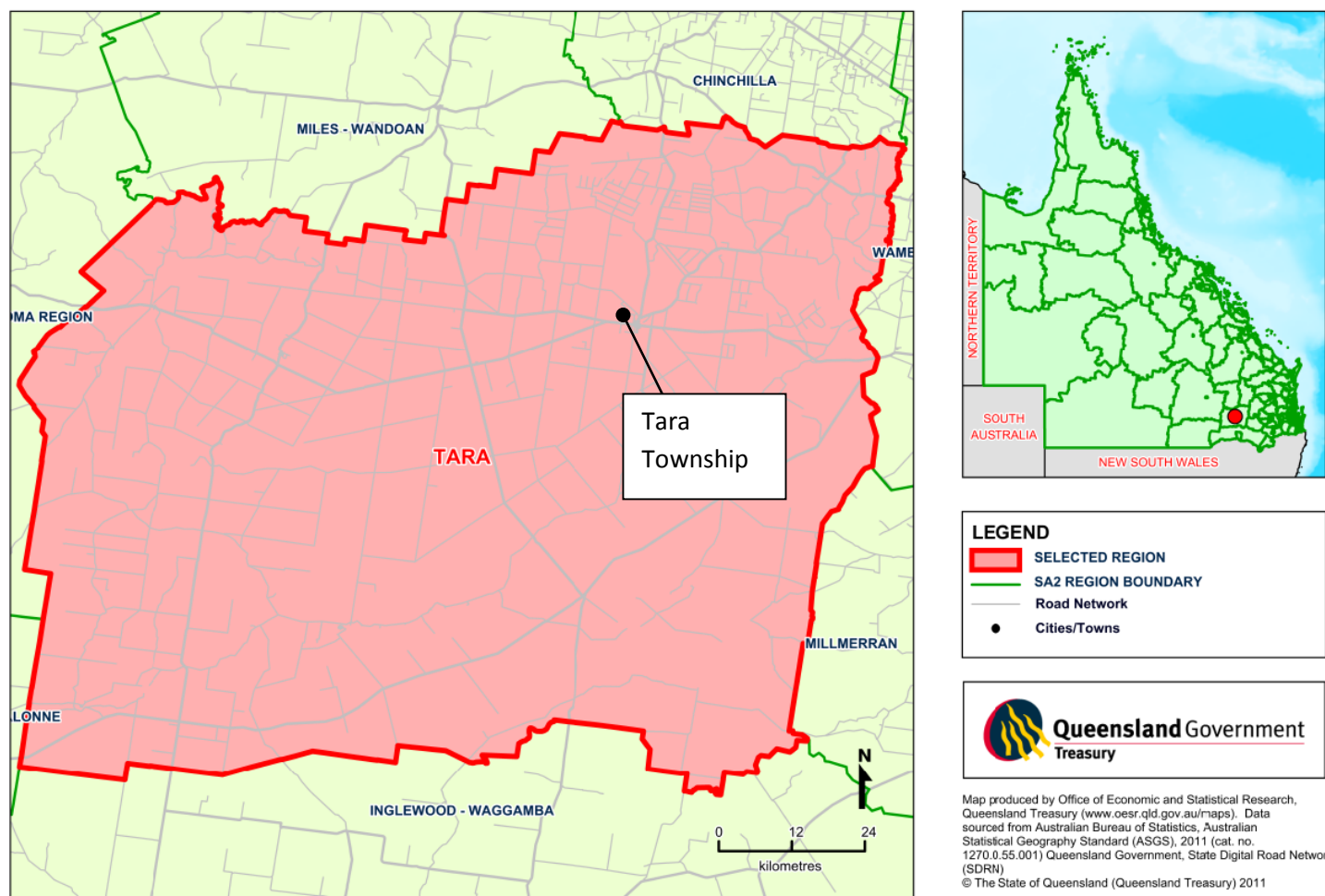
7. Rainfall
8. Petrol prices

### IMPACTS ON INDIGENOUS MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNITY

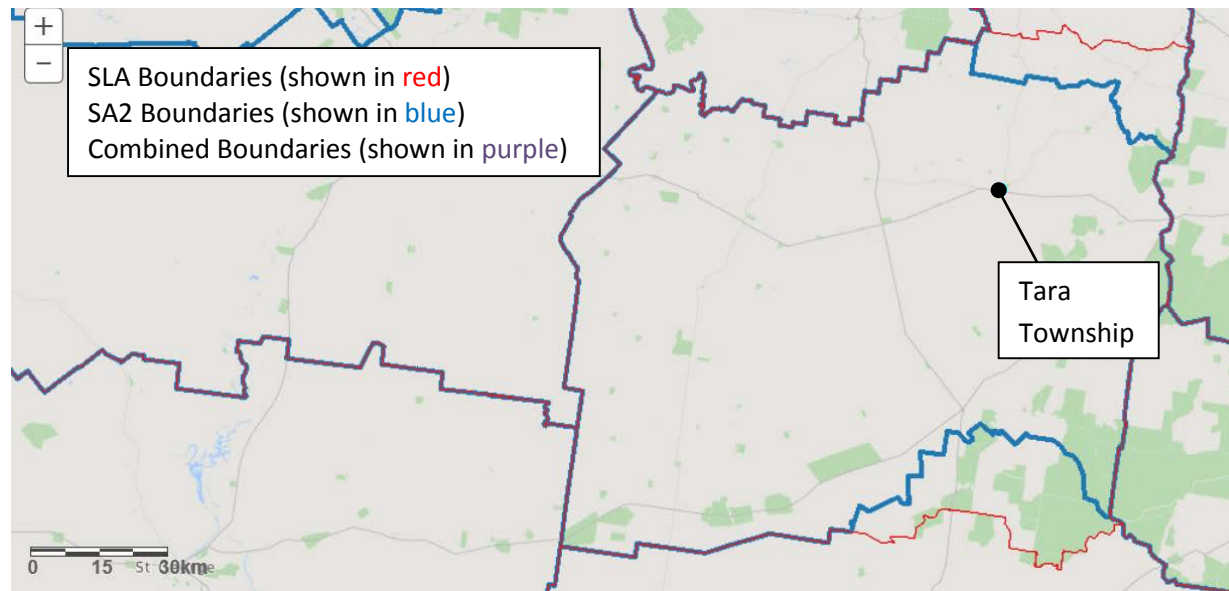
Efforts are ongoing to select the most appropriate indicators for measuring impacts on Indigenous residents and businesses in the Western Downs. A case study of the Aboriginal employment program of one proponent has been completed by UQ researchers. A UQ specialist has evaluated the Reconciliation Action Plan of a proponent. A UQ team has identified challenges in making and implementing agreements between Aboriginal groups and proponents in the coal seam gas arena (addressing issues like group politics and Native Title claims).

Other Indicators Examined for Tara	Indicator-related research being conducted
1. Business skills shortages	• Resilience; Community aspirations (CSIRO)
2. Training	• Public health – PhD study (UQ) • Health effects study design (UQ & CSIRO)
3. Tourism impacts	• Demographic & economic trends (CSIRO & UQ)
4. Governance: A. Council amalgamation B. DA approval trend	• Business (women in business) – PhD study (UQ)
	• Water Chemistry Atlas (UQ)
	• Agriculture & co-existence (UQ & CSIRO)
	• Environmental impacts – biodiversity (CSIRO)

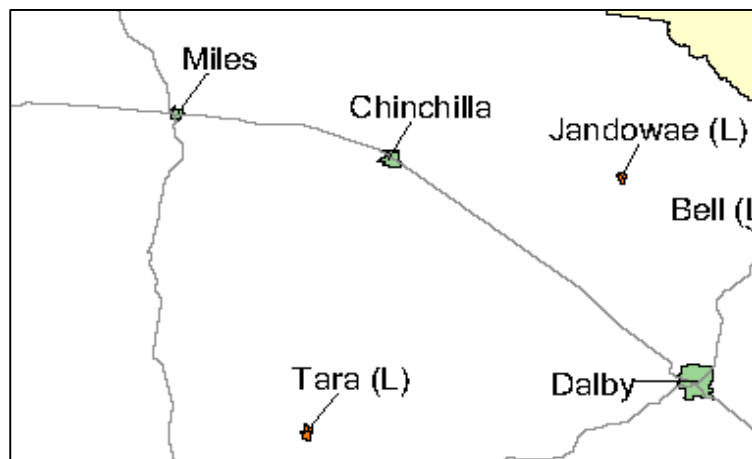
Queensland Statistical Areas, Level 2 (SA2), 2011 - Tara (ASGS Code 307011178)



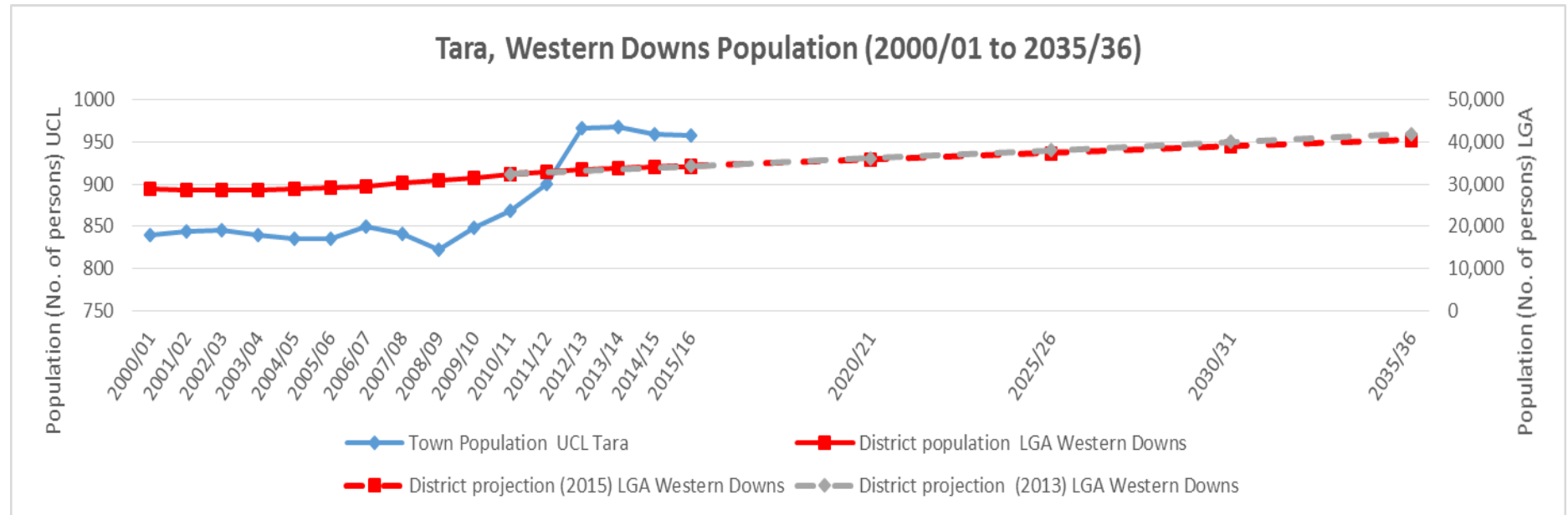
Tara SA2 and QLD location Map Source: <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/maps/qld-sa2-asgs-2011/index.php>



Tara SA2 and SLA Map Source: ABS ASGS Boundaries Online <http://stat.abs.gov.au/itt/r.jsp?ABSMAPS>



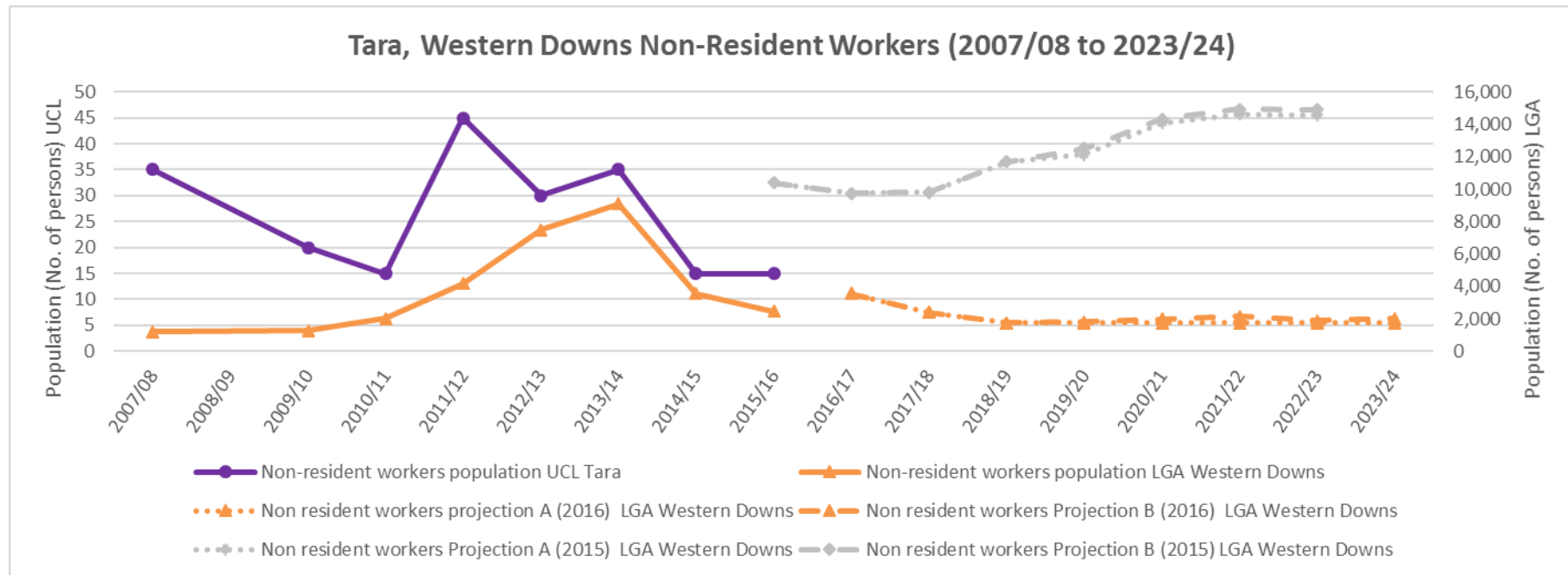
Tara UCL Map Source: <http://abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/1270.0.55.004July%202011?OpenDocument>



Data sources

- Population projections by LGA (2015 edition) from QGSO table 'Projected population (medium series), by local government area, Queensland, 2011 to 2036', Source: Qld Government population projections, 2015 edition; ABS Regional population growth, Australia 2013-14' (ASGC 2001) <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/tables/proj-pop-lga-qld/index.php>
- Population projections by LGA (2013 edition) from archived QGSO table 'Projected population (medium series), by local government area, Queensland, 2011 to 2036', Source: Qld Government (2014), Population projections by LGA, 2013 edition' (ASGC 2001)
- Population and non resident workers population estimates (LGA and UCLs) from the QGSO 'Surat Basin Population Report, 2016' (ASGC 2016), <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/surat-basin-pop-report/surat-basin-pop-report-2016.pdf>

## UQ Research Project: Cumulative socio-economic impacts of CSG development in Western Downs



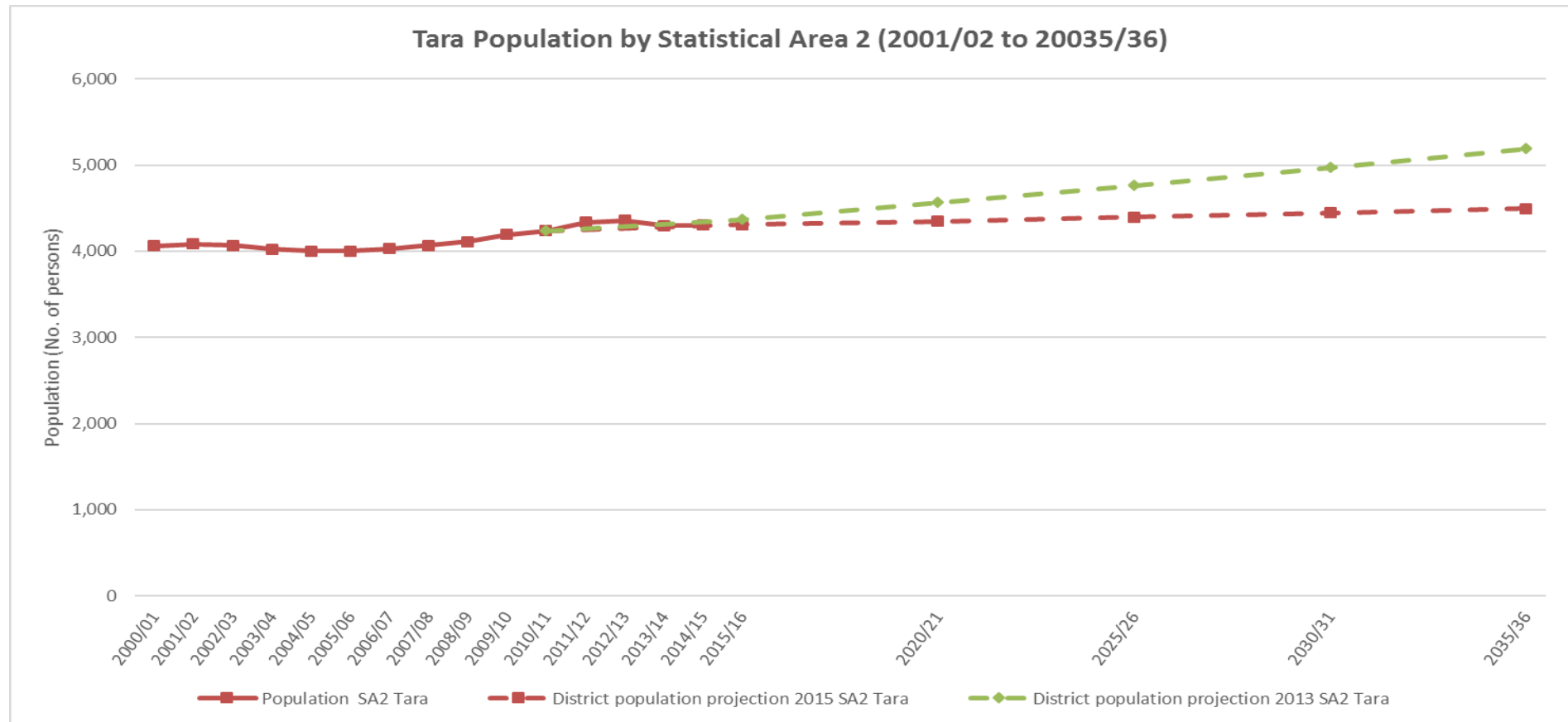
### Data sources

- Annual data ending in June are reported. Population and non resident workers population estimates (LGA and UCLs) from the QGSO 'Surat Basin Population Report, 2016'
- <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/surat-basin-pop-report/surat-basin-pop-report-2016.pdf>
- Non resident workers projections (2016) by LGA from QGSO table 'Surat Basin: Non-resident population projections, by local government area (LGA), 2016 to 2022'
- <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/tables/surat-basin-non-resident-pop-proj-lga/index.php>
- Non resident workers projections (2014) by LGA from QGSO report 'Surat Basin non-resident population projections: 2015 to 2021'
- <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/reports/surat-basin-non-resident-pop-proj/surat-basin-non-resident-pop-proj-2015-2021.pdf>

### Notes about Non resident workers projections (2016) by LGA

- The projection series are largely based on the status of projects in the environmental impact statement (EIS) process at the time of preparation (March 2016). The projections also include some projects outside the approvals process.
- Series A projection is based on the number of non-resident workers on-shift who were engaged in existing resource operations and associated infrastructure activities in the area at June 2015. The projection takes into account future changes to those operational workforces as advised by resource company sources, as well as the estimated non-resident construction and operational workforces of Category A projects (i.e. those that had reached final investment decision (FID)) at the time of preparation.
- Series B projection includes the Series A projection plus projected growth in the non-resident population arising from Category B projects (those that have an EIS approved but have yet to reach FID).

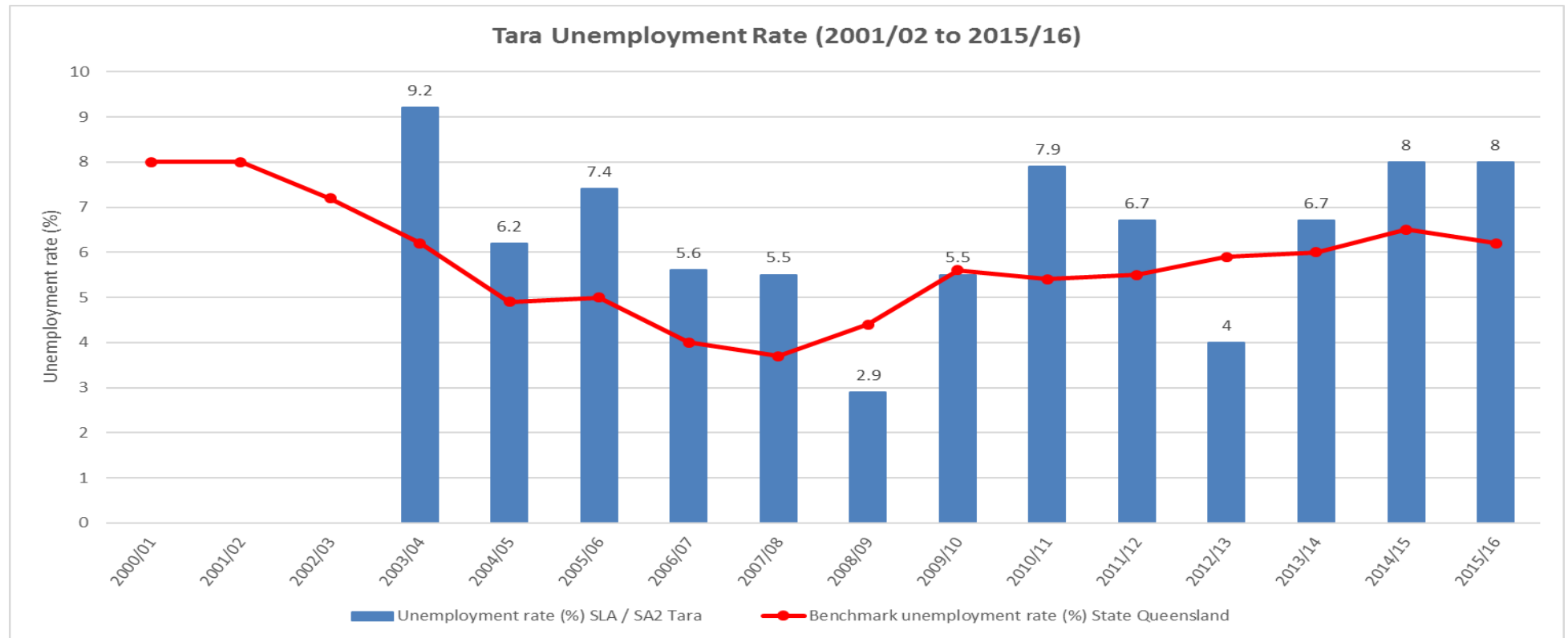




Data sources:

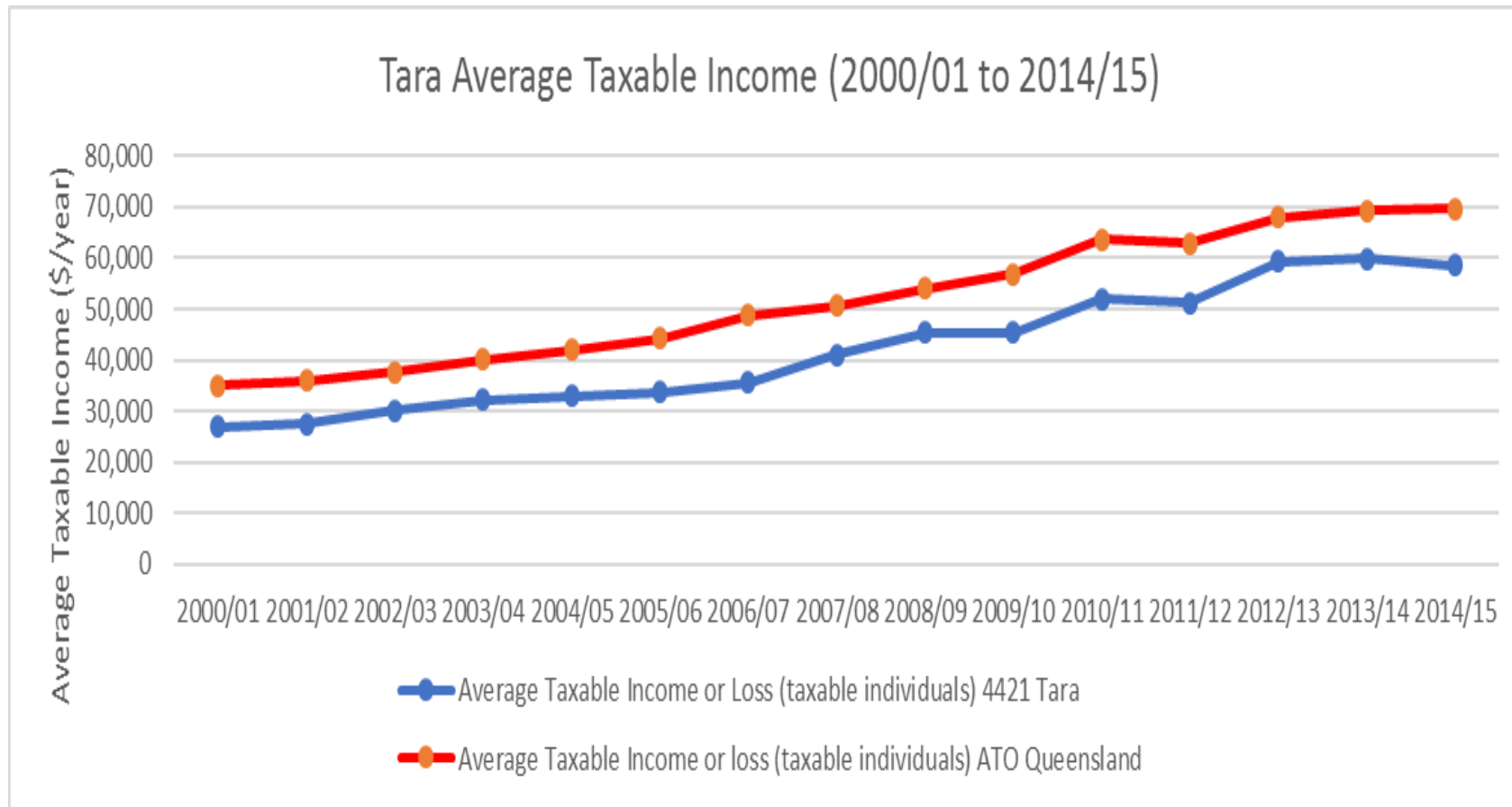
- Population estimates (SA2) from QGSO table 'Estimated resident population by statistical area level 2 (SA2), Queensland, 2005 to 2015p', <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-estimates/tables/erp-sa2-qld/index.php>
- District population projection (2015) by SA2 from QGSO table 'Projected population (medium series), by statistical area level 2 (SA2), SA3 and SA4, Queensland, 2011 to 2036', <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/subjects/demography/population-projections/tables/proj-pop-medium-series-sa2-sa3-sa4-qld/index.php>
- District population projection (2014) by SA2 from archived QGSO table 'Projected population (medium series), by statistical area level 2 (SA2), SA3 and SA4, Queensland, 2011 to 2036'

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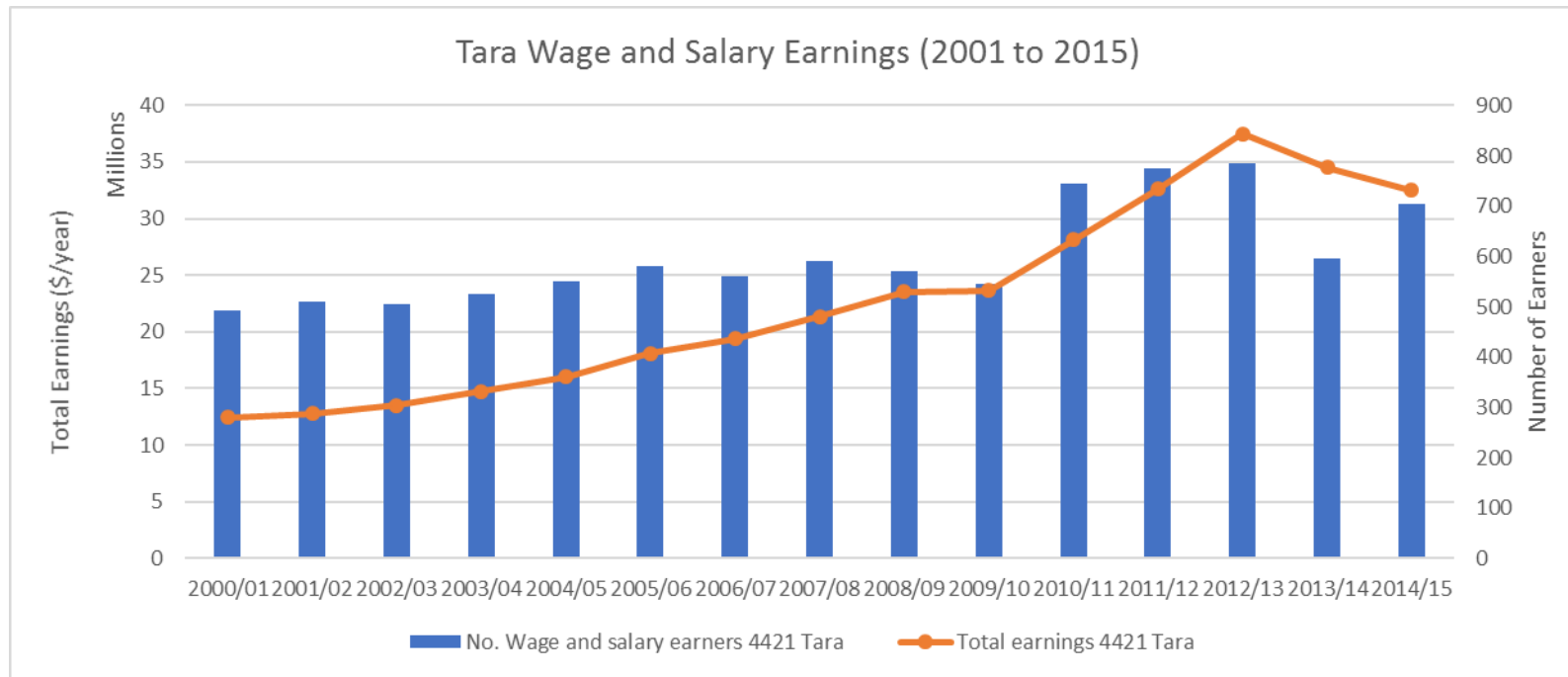


### Data sources

- Jun2003-Jun2008 SLA from QGSO Regional Database Archived dataset 'Labour Force - Small Area (Qtr Ended 31 Dec 2002 to Qtr Ended 31 Dec 2008)' [DEEWR, Small Area Labour Markets Australia] (ASGC 2001)', <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php>
- Jun2009-Jun2010 from DEEWR file 'Unemployment salm\_data\_files\_2008-2013'
- Jun2010-Jun2016 SA2 from QGSO Regional Database dataset 'Labour Force - Small Area (Qtr Ended 31 Dec 2010 to Qtr Ended 30 Sep 2016)' [Department of Employment, Small Area Labour Markets Australia] (ASGS 2016)', <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php>

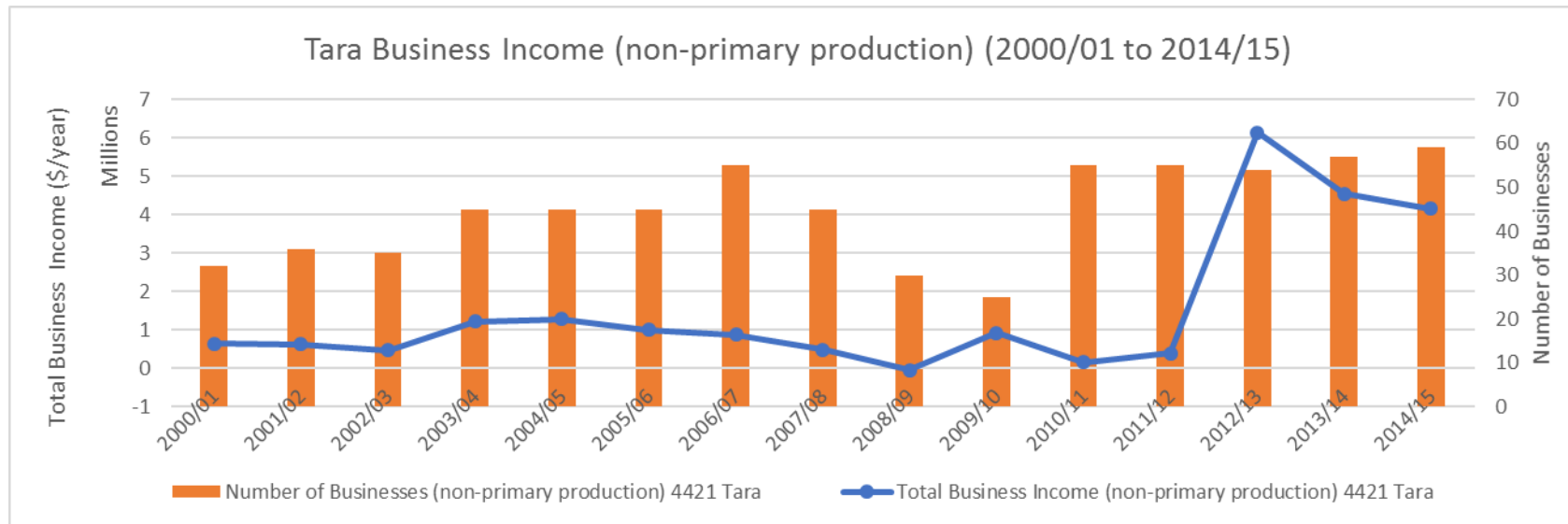


- Original data - No discounting applied
- Source: ATO 'Average taxable income of individuals, for selected Queensland postcodes, 2000–01 to 2014–15 income years' Australian Taxation Office, Research and Statistics (<https://www.ato.gov.au/>)
- All statistics for 'Taxable individuals only' were sourced from the relevant years' Taxation statistics publication, and therefore include individual income tax returns processed by 31 October of the year after the end of the income year. For example, the 2014–15 statistics include data up to 31 October 2016.

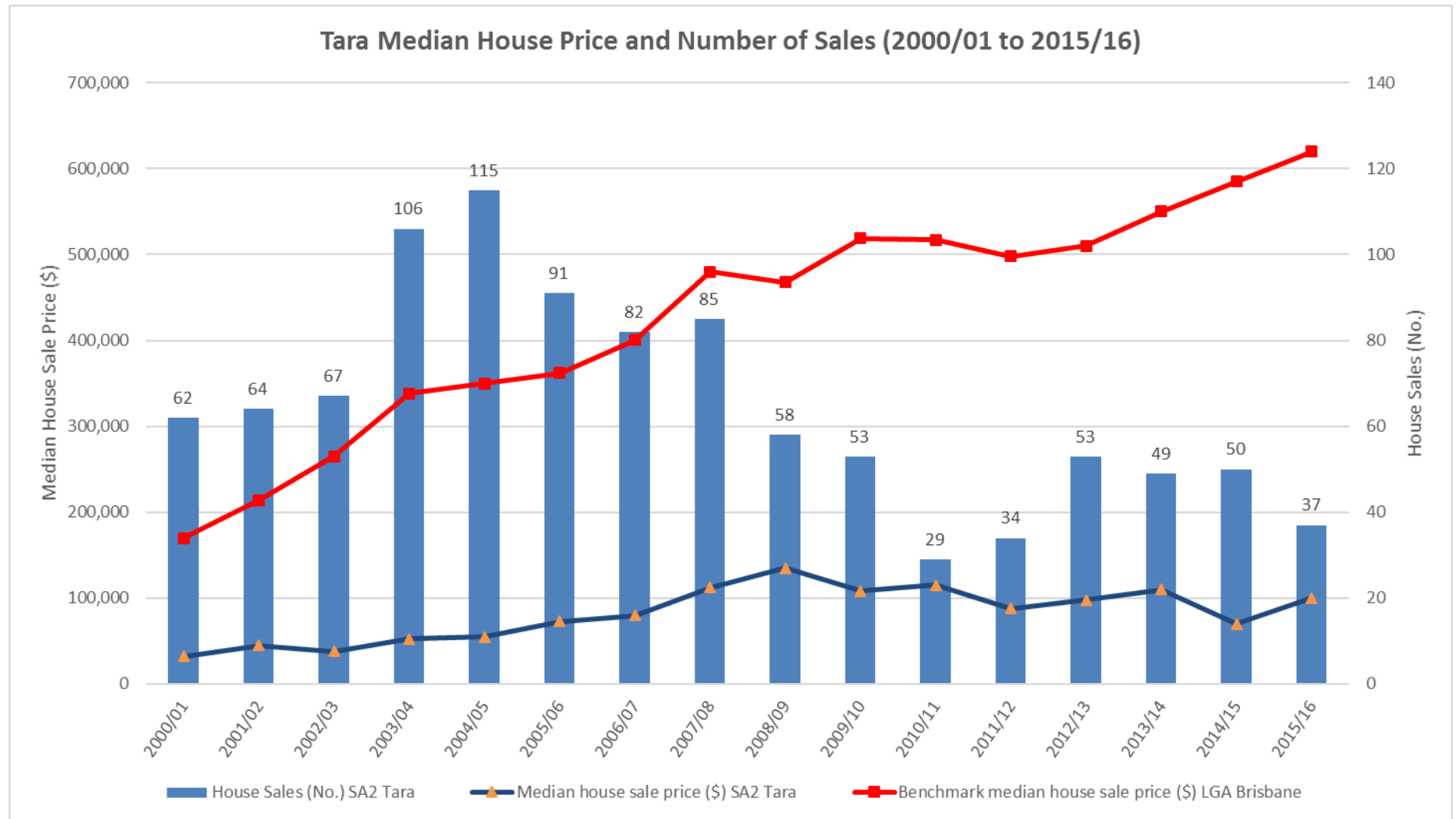


- Original data - No discounting applied
- Sources: Australian Taxation Office, Research and Statistics (<https://www.ato.gov.au/>)

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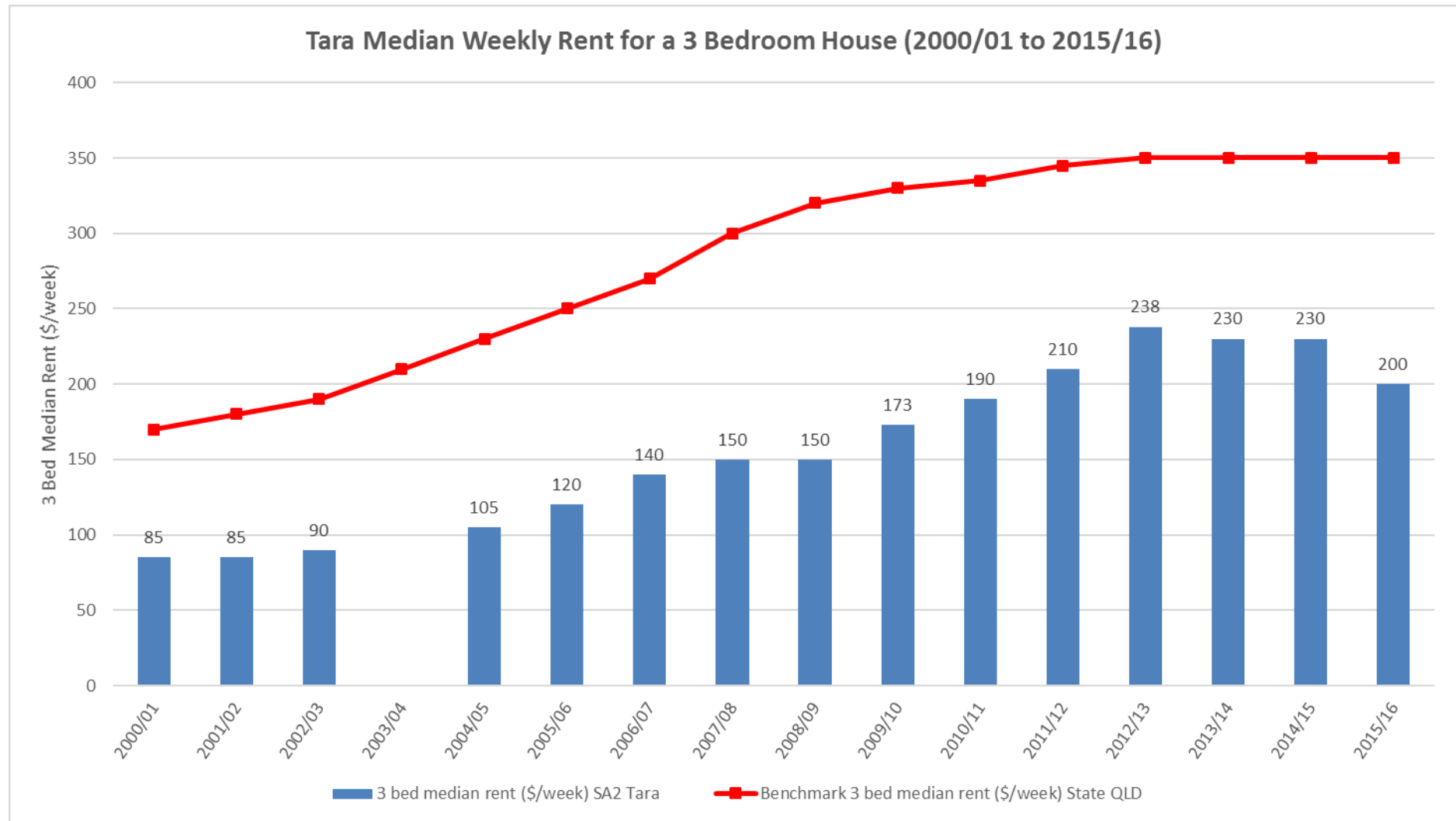


- Original data - No discounting applied
- Sources: Australian Taxation Office, Research and Statistics (<https://www.ato.gov.au/>)



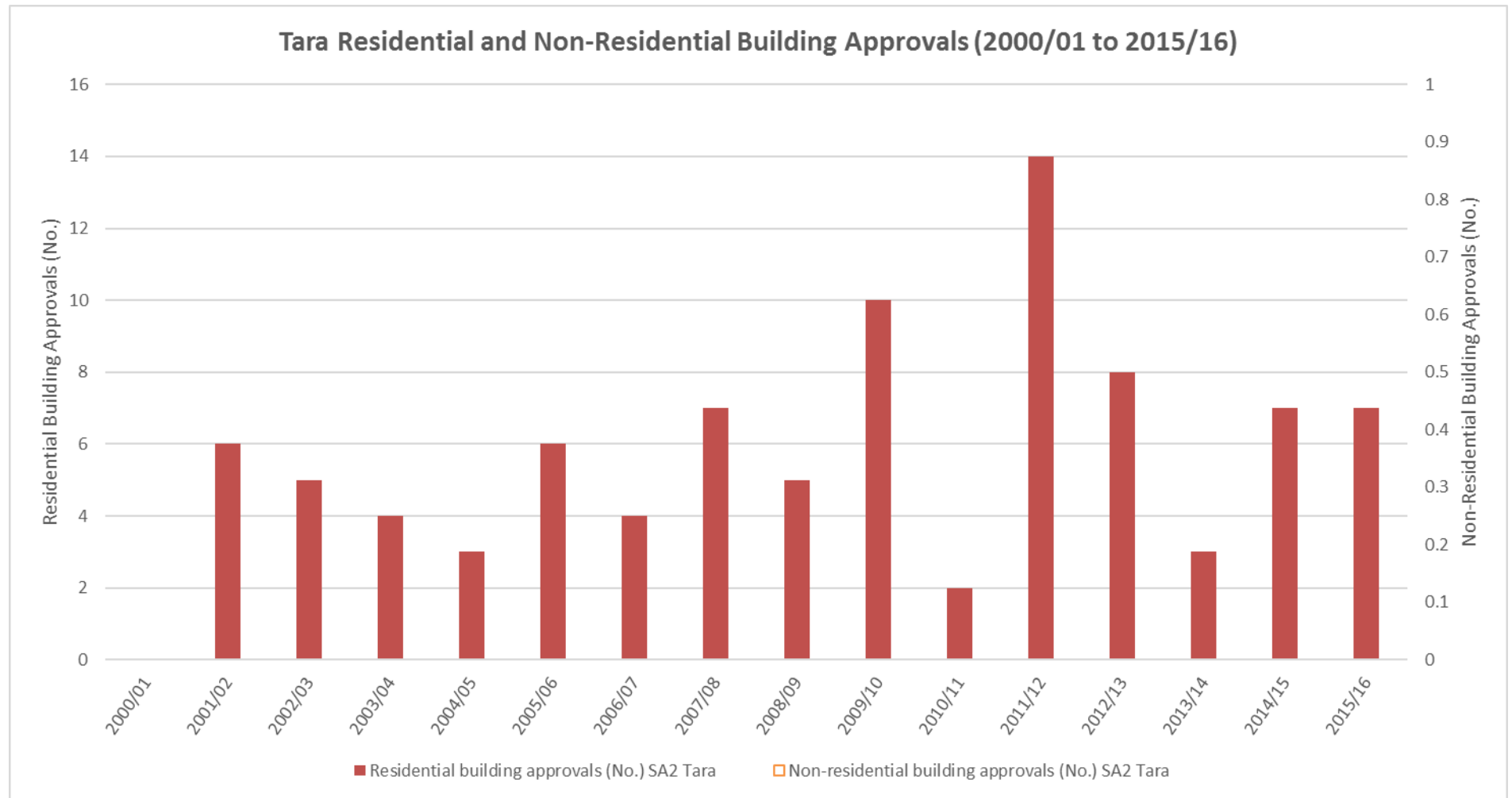
Data sources

- Median house sale price and hose sales from QGSO Regional Database dataset 'Residential land and dwelling sales (Year Ended 30 Sep 2000 to Year Ended 30 Jun 2016) [DNRM] (ASGS 2016)', <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php>



Data sources

- 3 Bed Median rent from QGSO Regional Database dataset 'Median rent (Year Ended 30 Sep 1990 to Year Ended 31 Dec 2016) [RTA] (ASGS 2011)', <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php>



#### Data sources

- Residential and non-residential building approvals from QGSO Regional database dataset 'Building Approvals (Jul 2001 to Dec 2016) [ABS 8731.0] (ASGS 2016)', <http://www.qgso.qld.gov.au/products/tables/qld-regional-database/index.php>

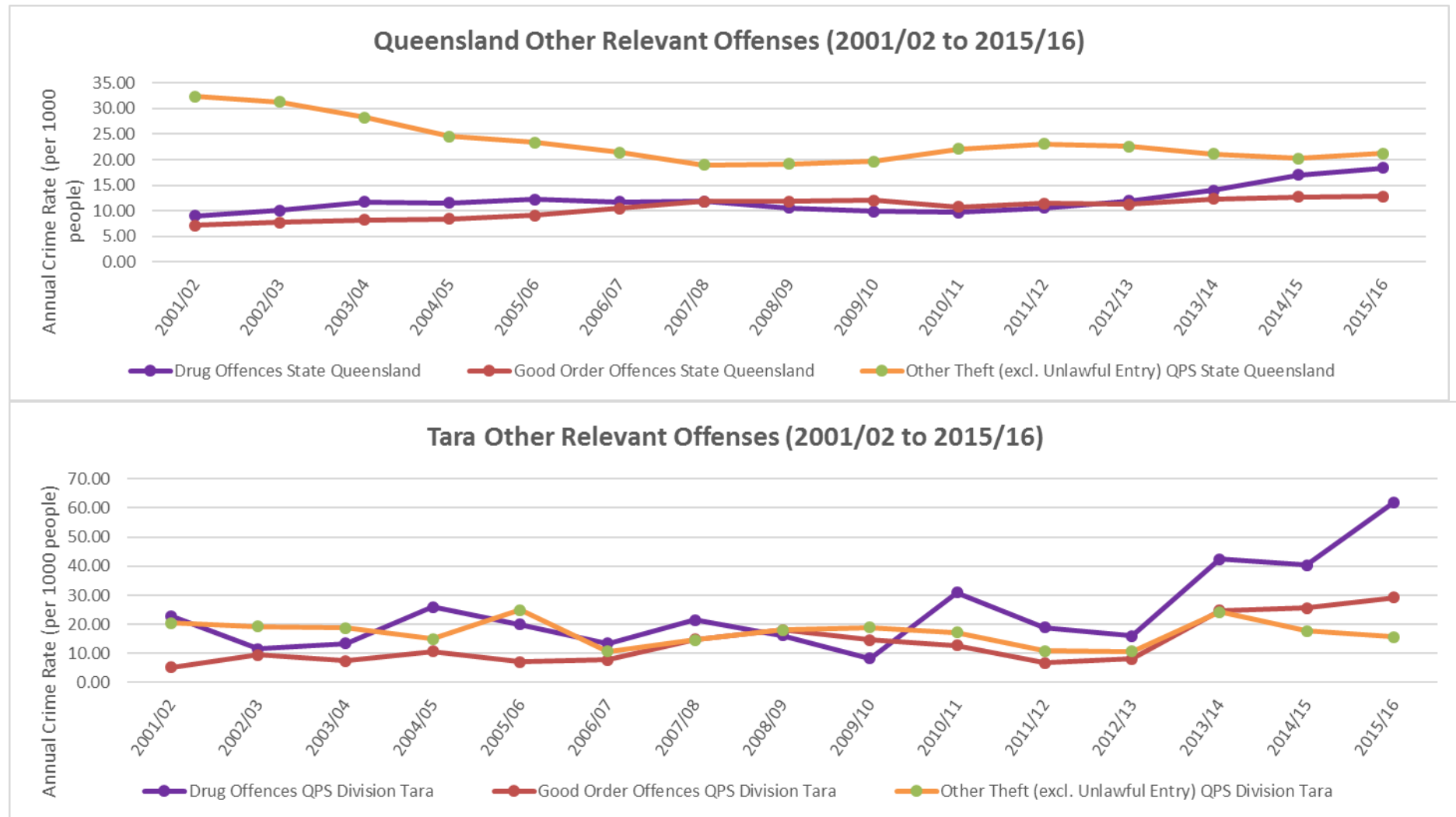




Data sources

- Crime data rates (per month per 100,000 people) obtained by Queensland Police Service (QPS) Division and Queensland State , <https://www.police.qld.gov.au/online/data/>
- Data was adjusted to be presented as annual data per 1000 people

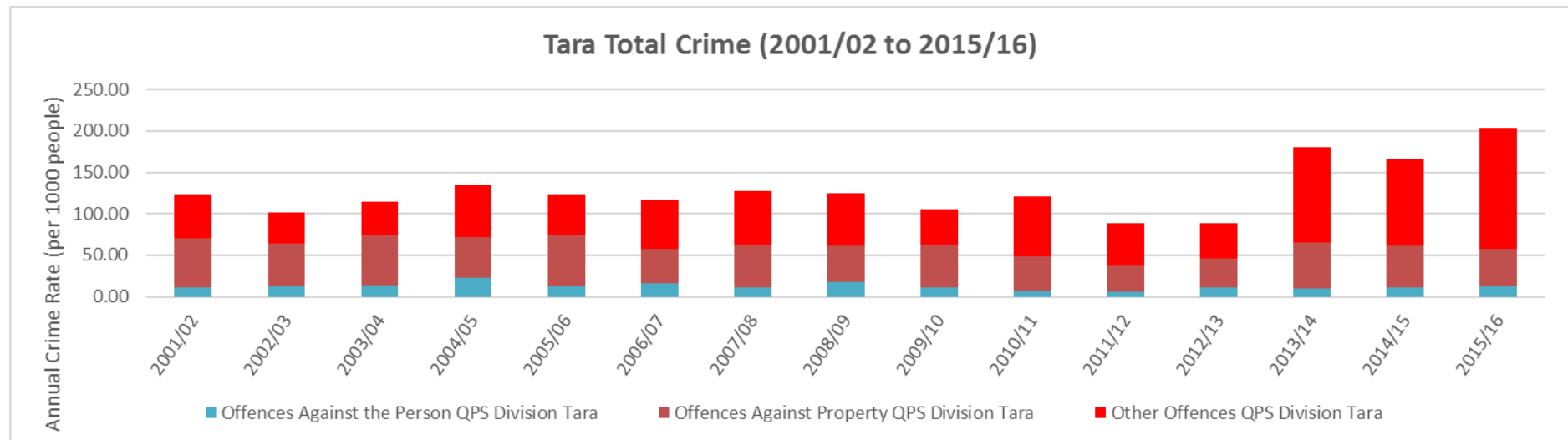
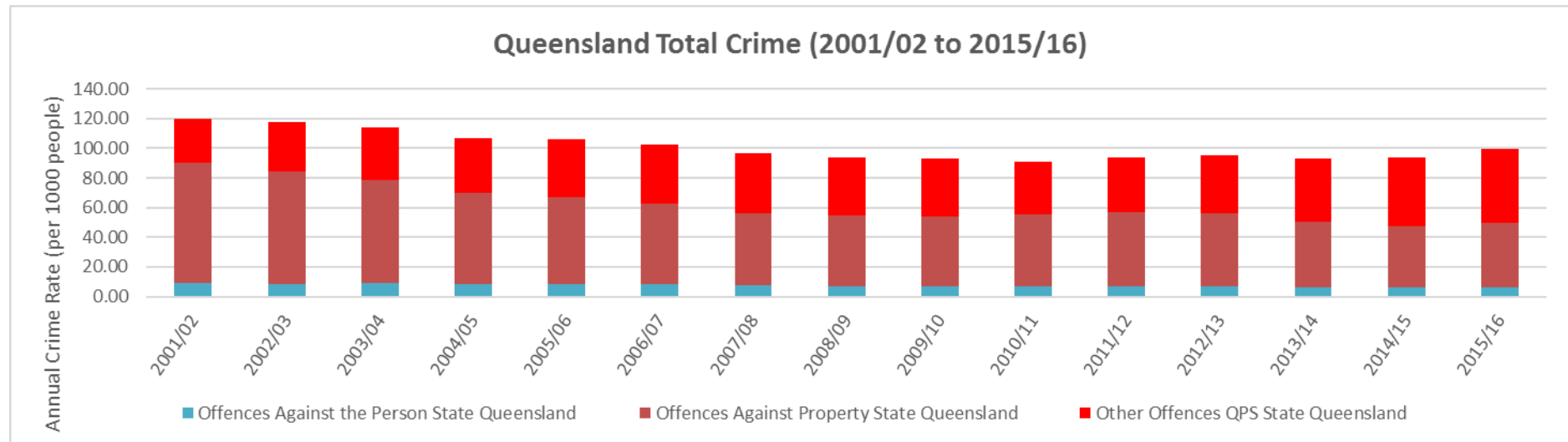
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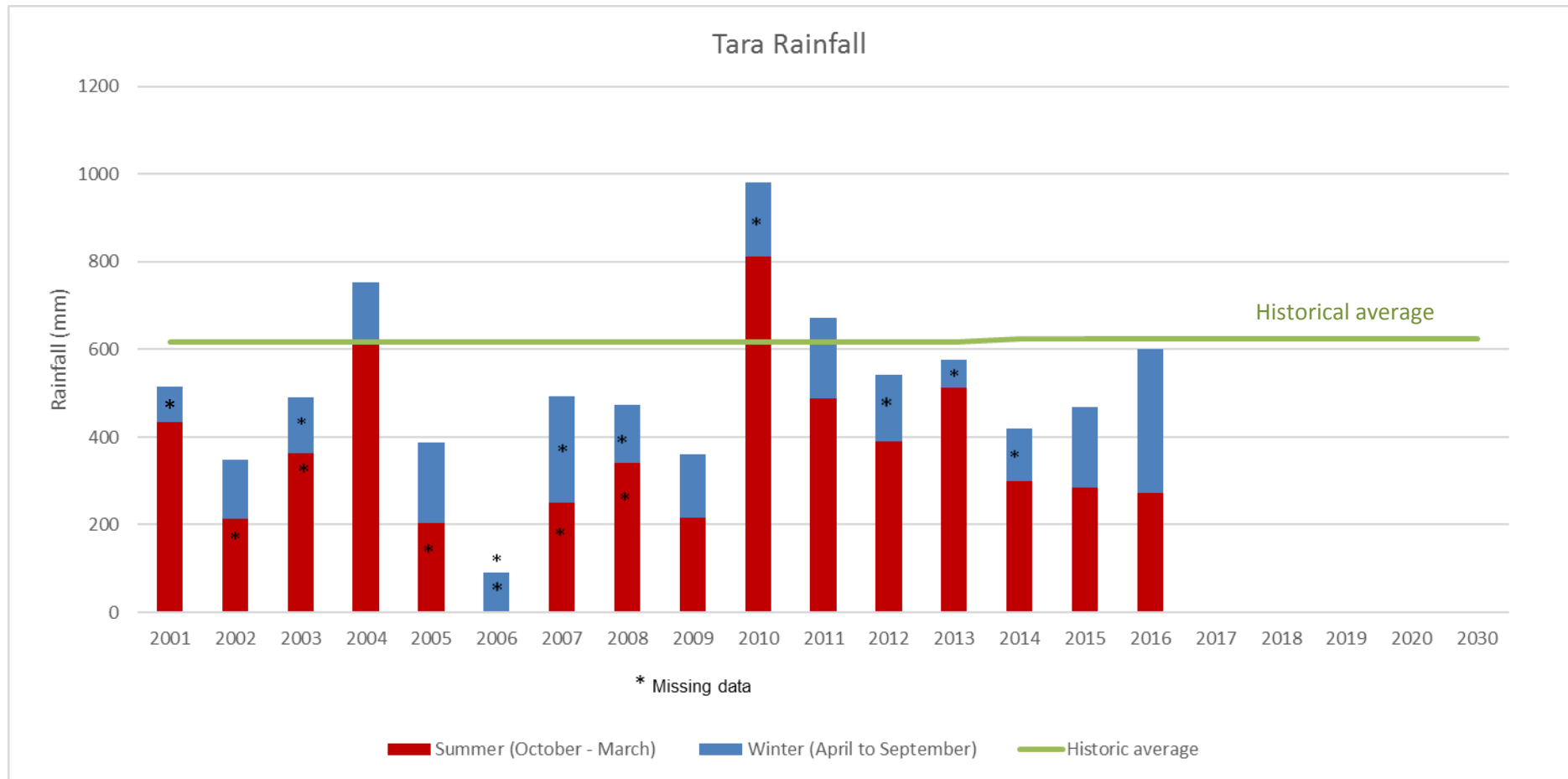
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Source: Bureau of Meteorology Clime Data online <http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/data/>