

Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) remoteness classification (ASGS-RA) X

Identifying and definitional attributes

Metadata item type:	Value Domain
Synonymous names:	PBS remoteness area; PBS remoteness structure
METEOR identifier:	613722
Registration status:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Commonwealth Department of Health, Standard 17/12/2015

Definition: Australian Statistical Geography Standard-Remoteness Area (ASGS-RA) is a geographical classification which defines locations in terms of remoteness, i.e. the physical road distance of a location from the nearest Service Centre (a populated locality where the population is greater than 1,000 persons), within population size categories.

Context: Geographic remoteness is essentially a measure of a physical location's level of access to goods and services. Large population centres tend to have a greater range of goods and services available than small centres. Typically, a population centre is not likely to provide a full range of goods and services until its population reaches around 250,000 people.

The measures of remoteness used by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) are based on population estimates obtained from the Census of Population and Housing, conducted every 5 years. Remoteness measures are calculated using Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+) scores, which are based on the distance of geographic locations from the nearest population centre in various size ranges. The lower the ARIA+ score for a location, the better its level of access to goods and services.

Information in relation to how remoteness is defined and calculated is available from the Geography portal on the ABS website.

Information in relation to how ARIA+ scores are calculated for physical locations is available from the Australian Population and Migration Research Centre (APMRC) website.

Representational attributes

Classification scheme:	Australian Statistical Geography Standard 2011
Representation class:	Code
Data type:	String
Format:	X
Maximum character length:	1
Permissible values:	

Value	Meaning
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1	Major cities of Australia
2	Inner and Outer regional Australia
3	Remote and Very remote Australia

Supplementary values:	U Unknown
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Collection and usage attributes

Guide for use:

This value domain is intended exclusively for use in the analysis of data relating to the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

In the context of PBS data, the allocation of remoteness categories is based on the postcodes of patients, prescribers or pharmacies, as appropriate. Postcode areas are converted to Statistical Area Level 1s (SA1s) which are then used to allocate remoteness categories.

CODE 1 Major cities of Australia

'Major cities of Australia' includes postcode areas that correspond with SA1s with an average Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA+) index value of 0 to 0.2.

This code approximates Code 1 in the more widely used value domain [Remoteness classification \(ASGS-RA\) N](#).

CODE 2 Inner and Outer regional Australia

'Inner regional Australia' includes postcode areas that correspond with SA1s with an average ARIA+ index value greater than 0.2 and less than or equal to 2.4.

'Outer regional Australia' includes postcode areas that correspond with SA1s with an average ARIA+ index value greater than 2.4 and less than or equal to 5.92.

This code approximates Codes 2 and 3 in the more widely used value domain [Remoteness classification \(ASGS-RA\) N](#).

CODE 3 Remote and Very remote Australia

'Remote Australia' includes postcode areas that correspond with SA1s with an average ARIA+ index value greater than 5.92 and less than or equal to 10.53.

'Very remote Australia' includes postcode areas that correspond with SA1s with an average ARIA+ index value greater than 10.53.

This code approximates Codes 4 and 5 in the more widely used value domain [Remoteness classification \(ASGS-RA\) N](#).

Collection Methods:

In this value domain, physical distance is defined in terms of ARIA+ index values, rather than a simple linear distance between points.

Comments:

Prior to 2011, ARIA+ scores were calculated for individual Census Collection Districts (CCDs). Following the phasing out of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) and the introduction of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) by the ABS in 2011, ARIA+ scores are calculated for individual Statistical Area Level 1s (SA1s).

Source and reference attributes

Submitting organisation:

Department of Health

Steward:

[Department of Health](#)

Origin:

Publications detailing the ASGS remoteness classification are available free of charge from the ABS website:

Australian Bureau of Statistics 2013. 1270.055.005 - Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS): Volume 5 - Remoteness Structure, July 2011. Viewed 15 July 2013, <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@.nsf/DetailsPage/1270.0.55.005July%202011?OpenDocument>

Reference documents: Information relating to the development of the ARIA and ARIA+ scores by the National Centre for Social Applications of Geographic Information Systems (GISCA) is available from the APMRC website:

Australian Population and Migration Research Centre (APMRC) 2013. ARIA (Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia). Viewed 15 July 2013, http://www.adelaide.edu.au/apmrc/research/projects/category/about_aria.html

Relational attributes

Related metadata references:

See also [Admitted patient care remoteness classification \(ASGS-RA\) N](#)

- [ACT Health \(retired\)](#), Candidate 09/08/2018
- [Health](#), Superseded 06/09/2018

See also [Medicare remoteness classification \(ASGS-RA\) N](#)

- [Commonwealth Department of Health](#), Standard 14/10/2015

See also [Remoteness classification \(ASGS-RA\) N](#)

- [Health](#), Superseded 06/09/2018

See also [Remoteness classification \(ASGS-RA\) N](#)

- [Australian Teacher Workforce Data Oversight Board](#), Incomplete 07/09/2022
- [Health](#), Standard 06/09/2018
- [Housing assistance](#), Standard 10/05/2019

Data elements implementing this value domain:

[Person—geographic remoteness, PBS classification \(ASGS-RA\) X](#)

- [Commonwealth Department of Health](#), Standard 17/12/2015

[Pharmacy—geographic remoteness, PBS classification \(ASGS-RA\) X](#)

- [Commonwealth Department of Health](#), Standard 17/12/2015

[Prescriber—geographic remoteness, PBS classification \(ASGS-RA\) X](#)

- [Commonwealth Department of Health](#), Standard 17/12/2015

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