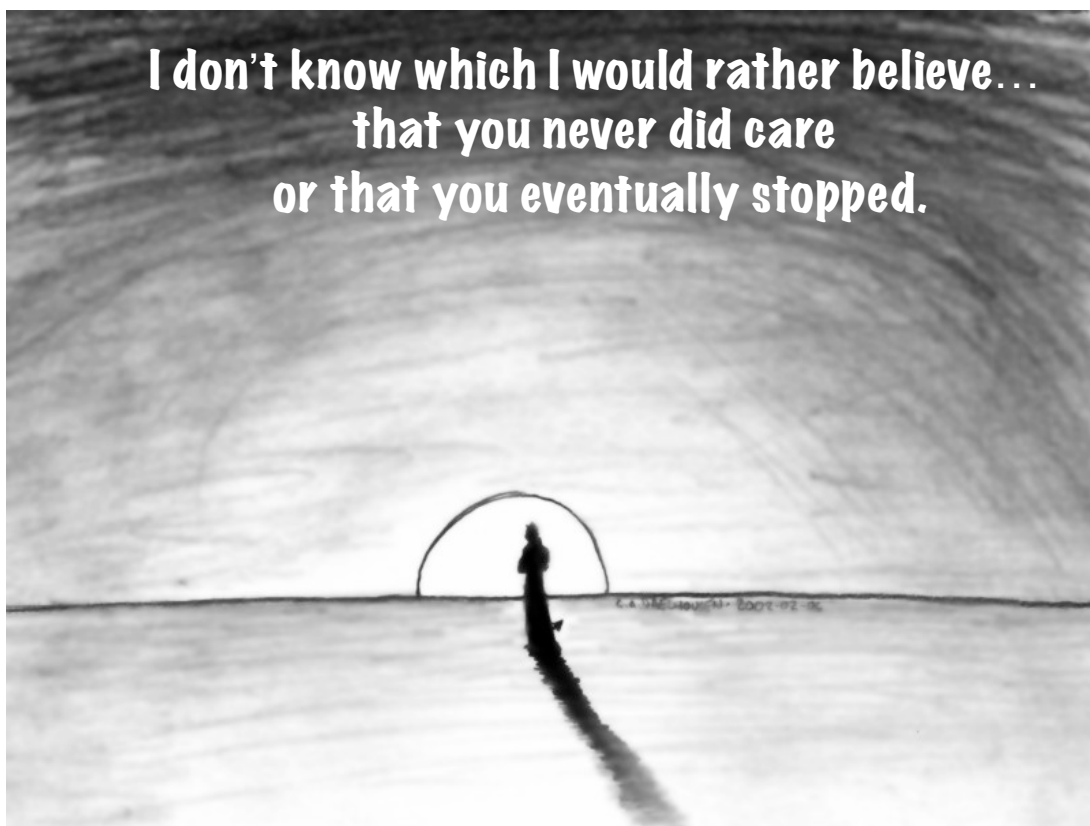Let's "Raise A Glass" to those

OUT OF SIGHT
and
OUT OF MIND

The plight of isolated War Veterans and Widows in regional Australia

The difficulty, logistical and financial of servicing rural and remote clients of the DVA and ESO's.

1st October 2018

Distribution of Disadvantage

The concept of 'social disadvantage' that we are considering here refers to the range of difficulties that block life opportunities and which prevent clients from participating fully in society.

The disadvantaged, in this instance, War Veterans and Widows, tend to be over-represented in smaller towns and in geographically isolated communities. Information on this social inequality and levels of disadvantage according to where people live, be it urban, rural or remote parts of Australia, can allow for better targeting of assistance. This reasoning is validated by the multi-billion dollar aid packages the Federal Government has been targeting these areas with in recent years.
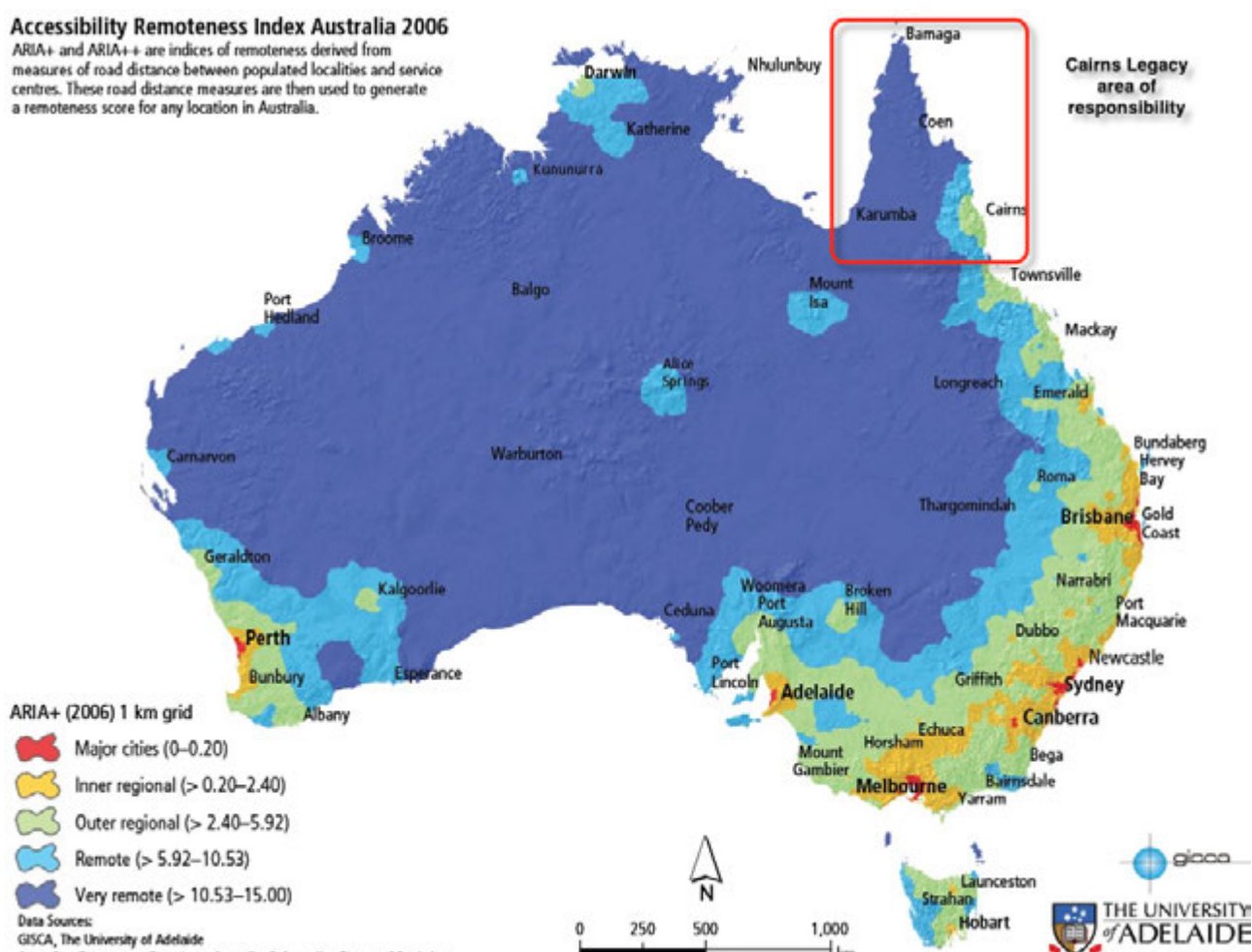

image courtesy The University of Adelaide

Abstract

When social disadvantage becomes entrenched within a limited number of localities the restorative potential of standard services and ESO interventions can diminish. A disabling social climate can develop that is more than the sum of individual and household disadvantages and the prospect is increased of disadvantage being passed from one generation to the next.

Ergo - **Intergenerational transfer of disadvantage.**

This is manifestly a huge responsibility to bear but one that must be discharged. A prerequisite of remedial action by Government is the identification of localities that fit the foregoing description and increasing our understanding of the main dynamics associated with the onset and maintenance of geographically concentrated disadvantage such as we experience in Far North Queensland.

Despite the funding being channeled into rural Australia by the Federal and State Governments compared with city dwellers, populations in rural and remote areas have traditionally been disadvantaged especially for our Veteran clients in the provision of welfare services and assistance. Even international attention by human rights groups has focused on the Social Disadvantage of these Australians. Despite this, key services continue to be withdrawn from non-metropolitan Australia.

Consider rural and remote disadvantage as it relates to:

1. **Social Distress:**

   Low family income

   Rental stress

   Home purchase stress

   Lone person households

2. **Health:**

   Low birth-weight

   Childhood injuries

   Deficient immunisation

   Disability / sickness support

   Mortality (life expectancy)

   Mental health patients treated in hospitals / the community

   Suicide

3. **Community safety:**

   Confirmed child maltreatment

   Criminal convictions

   Prison admissions

   Domestic violence

4. **Economic:**

   Unskilled workers

   Unemployment

   Long term unemployment

   Dependency ratio

   Low mean taxable income

   Computer use / access to the internet

5. Education:

Non-attendance at preschool

Incomplete education

Early school leaving of local population

Post-schooling qualifications

6. Community engagement:

Membership of local groups

Membership of groups that tackle local problems

Local volunteering

Help from neighbours when needed

Feel safe after dark

Trust people

Attendance at local community events

Feel valued by society

Thank you for your consideration

Keith Enno