

## About the data

Travel Zones (TZs) are the spatial unit of geography for Transport for NSW (TfNSW). The TZ spatial layer is applied to data sources used by TfNSW for transport modelling and analysis, including the Travel Zone Projections and key transport models such as the Strategic Travel Model (STM).

The [Australian Statistical Geography Standard \(ASGS\) Edition 3](#) boundaries provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) form the foundation of the Travel Zone geography. Generally, a TZ is an aggregation of whole ABS Mesh Blocks. The ASGS are based on population counts, whereas TZ boundaries are defined using population, employment, housing and transport infrastructure, with consideration for planned future changes in land use. Some of the State's greenfield growth areas have deviated from using whole Mesh Blocks. Instead, Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) growth area precincts have been used to create more functional TZs in those areas (for example, the Aerotropolis).

TZs are designed to have standardised trip generation levels across all zones. This causes zones to be different sizes across NSW. As with many other spatial boundaries, TZs tend to be small in areas with high land-use densities and larger in areas of lower density.

As areas and transport infrastructure change over time, TfNSW creates new Travel Zone geography in line with each ABS Census of Population and Housing, the latest being 2021.

## Some facts about the Travel Zone 2021 Geography

- Travel Zone 2021 geography covers all of NSW with a total of 4,236 TZs
- 3,378 TZs in the Greater Metropolitan Area (GMA) – the extent of the STM
- 3,337 TZs in the Six Cities with 2,690 TZs in the 3 Sydney Cities and 647 TZs in the outer metropolitan Cities

## Historical summary of the number of TZs in NSW

	2006	2011	2016	2021
Number of TZs in NSW	3,369	3,514	3,758	4,236

TfNSW undertook a complete boundary review to arrive at the Travel Zone 2021 (TZ21) Geography. This involved realigning TZs to the updated ABS geography, splitting zones, realigning zones in growth areas to DPHI precincts and an extensive review of regional TZs to resolve some known problems. The goal was to allow for more detailed analysis of land use, transport networks and travel behaviour at a TZ level.

The guidelines for creating the 2021 boundaries are to:

- Create TZs using whole Mesh Blocks where possible
- Have consideration for Statistical Area Level 1 (SA1) geography
- Align or aggregate to Destination Zone and SA2 boundaries
- Include only one train station or interchange per TZ
- Contain only one commercial centre
- Account for planned or future developments, as a guide:
  - Population/Employment 2021 < 4,500
  - Population/Employment 2046 < 6,000

The TZ21 Geography spatial files and concordances to other geographies can be found on the [TfNSW Open Data platform](#) (search 'Travel Zone'). Historic geography and the Travel Zone projections can also be viewed on the portal.

## Map example of an SA2 and its TZs

