

OUR TOP10 **MORTGAGE STRESS REPORT**

Queensland

Q3 2026

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OUR TOP10

POWERED BY:
DIGITAL FINANCE ANALYTICS.

2026

00 — Q3 2026 AT A GLANCE • QUEENSLAND

Queensland *At a glance*

+9%RISE IN STRESSED HOUSEHOLDS THIS
QUARTER (TOP 10 POSTCODES)**+22%**

RISE OVER THE PAST 12 MONTHS

7/10RANKED POSTCODES ROSE THIS
QUARTER**≈75,400**STRESSED HOUSEHOLDS ACROSS THE 10
RANKED QLD POSTCODES**+156%**MANUNDA (QLD 4870) – QLD'S
SHARPEST QUARTERLY JUMP**+46%**BELLBIRD PARK (QLD 4300) – BIGGEST
RISE SINCE MARCH

WHAT STANDS OUT THIS QUARTER

Manunda is QLD's fastest riser. Postcode 4870 added 3,400 stressed households in three months, up 156%.

Toowoomba is still the biggest hotspot. Postcode 4350 has 14,853 stressed households, the most of any QLD postcode in the index.

Six months of pressure. Bellbird Park (4300) is up 46% since March, the biggest six-month rise in the state.

"Queensland added around 6,300 stressed households across its ten hardest-hit postcodes in three months, and 7 of the 10 rose. Manunda (4870) stands out, up 156% in a quarter. These are households whose bills now outrun their income every month."

Mansour Soltani, Head of Research, OurTop10

"Next time, we expect stress to go higher still and continue to spread. We are at a tipping point."

Martin North, Principal of Digital Finance Analytics

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01 — FOREWORD

OUR TOP10 MORTGAGE STRESS REPORT

Queensland • Q3 2026

Mortgage stress kept building across Queensland in the September quarter. The 10 hardest-hit QLD postcodes now hold around 75,400 stressed households, up 9% in three months and 22% over the year.

This state edition of the [OurTop10](#) Mortgage Stress Report, powered by Digital Finance Analytics, ranks the top 10 postcodes in Queensland with the highest levels of mortgage stress, tracks how they moved over the quarter and the year, and for the first time follows each postcode across the six months from March to September 2026.

Queensland's story is regional. Toowoomba is the largest stress hotspot in the country outside Sydney and Melbourne, and Cairns (Manunda) produced the biggest quarterly jump of any postcode in Australia.

QLD sits fourth of the seven reported markets in the national index by the number of stressed households in its ranked postcodes. Nationally, the 77 ranked postcodes hold around 450,500 stressed households, up 7.5% on the quarter.

MANSOUR SOLTANI

Head of Research, OurTop10



02 — FROM DIGITAL FINANCE ANALYTICS

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This past quarter has seen a marked rise in households experiencing mortgage stress across the country. In June 53.2% of households with a mortgage had greater regular outgoing, including mortgage repayments, than income, rising to 54.9% in September as higher interest rates and living costs outstripped income growth. Stress is spreading into more wealthy areas, who in theory have more buffers and options, but in practice have bigger living expenses, and bigger mortgages to match their bigger incomes. Next time, we expect stress to go higher still and continue to spread. We are at a tipping point.”

**MARTIN NORTH**

Principal of Digital Finance Analytics

DEFINITION:

Mortgage stress refers to households in negative monthly cash flow, where regular expenses exceed income, including owner-occupier mortgage repayments.



Note: Figures reflect Queensland's top 10 ranked postcodes for mortgage stress, which extend beyond the Brisbane metropolitan area where regional postcodes rank among the state's highest. State labels reflect the ranking group, not statewide totals.

03 — QUEENSLAND • TOP 10 POSTCODES

BRISBANE

MORTGAGE STRESS • QUEENSLAND

Queensland's top 10 postcodes hold 75,387 stressed households, about 6,300 more than in June. That is up 9.1% in three months and 21.7% over the year. Seven of the ten rose and three fell.

Manunda in Cairns (4870) went from 2,194 to 5,616, a 156% rise and the steepest of any postcode in Australia. McDowall (4053), in Brisbane, climbed 78% from 2,942 to 5,234.

Toowoomba (4350) is the largest hotspot with 14,853 stressed households, up 13% on the quarter. McDowall has grown fastest over 12 months, up 69%.

QLD'S BIGGEST RISER
POSTCODE 4870 • MANUNDA

+156%

QUARTERLY INCREASE

3 MOS AGO

2,194



NOW

5,616

TOP 10 QLD POSTCODES BY MORTGAGE STRESS – BIGGEST QUARTERLY RISERS FIRST • Q3 2026

#	CODE	H'HOLDS	BWR	STRESSED	3MOS AGO	12MOS AGO	%3MOS	%12MOS	SUBURB	LGA
01	4870	29,368	11,071	5,616	2,194	3,814	▲ +156.0%	▲ +47.2%	Manunda	Cairns
02	4053	19,563	8,455	5,234	2,942	3,102	▲ +77.9%	▲ +68.7%	McDowall	Brisbane
03	4305	25,929	10,147	8,151	6,832	6,411	▲ +19.3%	▲ +27.1%	Ipswich	Ipswich
04	4306	15,439	9,136	7,309	6,282	7,401	▲ +16.3%	▼ -1.2%	Pine Mountain	Ipswich
05	4350	48,135	16,910	14,853	13,178	11,700	▲ +12.7%	▲ +26.9%	Toowoomba	Toowoomba
06	4352	11,158	6,234	6,234	5,639	5,050	▲ +10.6%	▲ +23.4%	Highfields	Toowoomba
07	4034	19,268	7,858	7,858	7,655	6,578	▲ +2.7%	▲ +19.5%	Geebung	Brisbane
08	4300	23,852	12,573	7,838	8,034	5,882	▼ -2.4%	▲ +33.3%	Bellbird Park	Ipswich
09	4152	19,025	8,662	6,706	8,197	6,289	▼ -18.2%	▲ +6.6%	Camp Hill	Brisbane
10	4740	33,374	14,831	5,588	8,139	5,703	▼ -31.3%	▼ -2.0%	Mount Pleasant	Mackay

04 — SIX-MONTH TRACKER • MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 2026

WHERE STRESS IS *Growing*

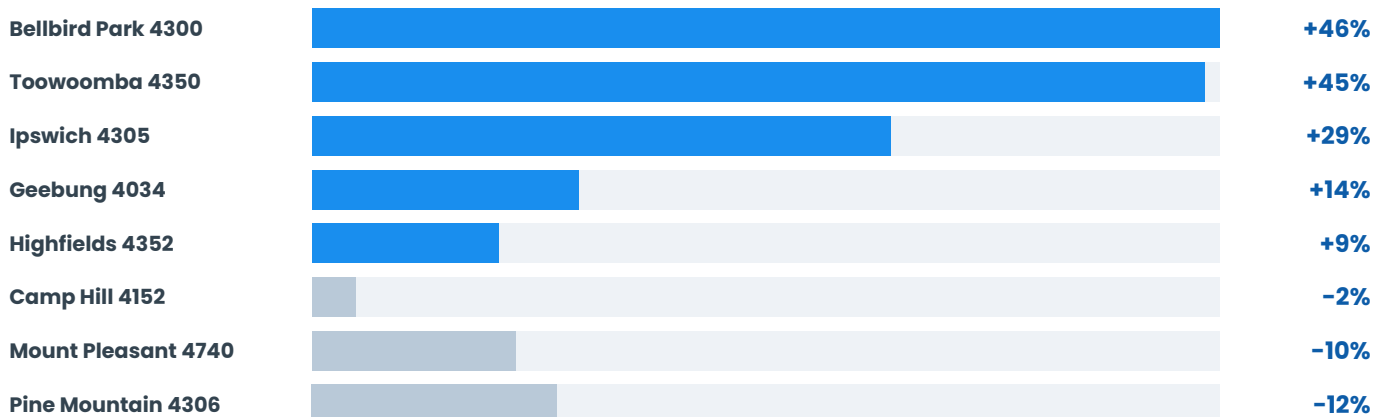
This table follows each of QLD's current top 10 postcodes back through the March and June reports. Across the 8 postcodes with a March figure, stressed households rose from 55,947 to 64,537 — up 15% in six months. 5 rose and 3 fell.

Bellbird Park (4300) is the standout, up 46% from 5,370 in March to 7,838 in September. Toowoomba (4350) followed, up 45%.

STRESSED HOUSEHOLDS BY POSTCODE • MARCH → JUNE → SEPTEMBER 2026 • BIGGEST SIX-MONTH RISERS FIRST

#	CODE	SUBURB	LGA	SEP 2025	MAR 2026	JUN 2026	SEP 2026	6-MONTH CHANGE
01	4300	Bellbird Park	Ipswich	5,882	5,370	8,034	7,838	▲ +46%
02	4350	Toowoomba	Toowoomba	11,700	10,228	13,178	14,853	▲ +45%
03	4305	Ipswich	Ipswich	6,411	6,302	6,832	8,151	▲ +29%
04	4034	Geebung	Brisbane	6,578	6,922	7,655	7,858	▲ +14%
05	4352	Highfields	Toowoomba	5,050	5,694	5,639	6,234	▲ +9%
06	4152	Camp Hill	Brisbane	6,289	6,857	8,197	6,706	▼ -2%
07	4740	Mount Pleasant	Mackay	5,703	6,229	8,139	5,588	▼ -10%
08	4306	Pine Mountain	Ipswich	7,401	8,345	6,282	7,309	▼ -12%
09	4870	Manunda	Cairns	3,814	–	2,194	5,616	n/a*
10	4053	McDowall	Brisbane	3,102	–	2,942	5,234	n/a*

SIX-MONTH CHANGE IN STRESSED HOUSEHOLDS • MARCH TO SEPTEMBER 2026



* No March 2026 figure is available for Manunda (4870), McDowall (4053) — these postcodes entered the ranked list after March. March figures come from the March 2026 extract or, where a postcode was not ranked in March, from the June extract's prior-quarter column. The September 2025 column shows whether a six-month rise is new pressure or a recovery of an earlier fall.

05 SEVERE MORTGAGE STRESS

SEVERE *Mortgage stress*

MORTGAGE STRESS

The household's regular monthly expenses, including the home loan repayment, add up to more than its income. It is running at a cash-flow loss, but is usually still making repayments — by cutting spending, drawing down savings or using credit.

SEVERE MORTGAGE STRESS

The same cash-flow gap, but much deeper and persistent. These households can no longer paper over it: they are behind on repayments, trying to refinance, seeking hardship help from their lender, or putting the property on the market.

Every household in severe stress is also counted in the mortgage stress figures on page 5. Severe stress is the group most likely to default over the next few years.

In QLD the fastest-growing severe-stress postcode this quarter is Mermaid Waters (4218), up 111% from 244 to 515 households. Miami (4220) holds the largest count at 810.

TOP 10 QLD POSTCODES BY SEVERE STRESS – BIGGEST QUARTERLY RISERS FIRST • Q3 2026

#	CODE	SUBURB	LGA	SEVERE NOW	3MOS AGO	12MOS AGO	%3MOS	%12MOS
01	4218	Mermaid Waters	Gold Coast	515	244	–	▲ +111.1%	n/a*
02	4007	Ascot	Brisbane	392	209	–	▲ +87.6%	n/a*
03	4567	Sunrise Beach	Noosa	631	767	–	▼ -17.7%	n/a*
04	4220	Miami	Gold Coast	810	–	–	n/a*	n/a*
05	4216	Paradise Point	Gold Coast	758	–	–	n/a*	n/a*
06	4573	Yaroomba	Sunshine Coast	721	–	–	n/a*	n/a*
07	4553	Mooloolah Valley	Sunshine Coast	628	–	–	n/a*	n/a*
08	4568	Pomona	Noosa	329	–	–	n/a*	n/a*
09	4069	Chapel Hill	Brisbane	264	–	–	n/a*	n/a*
10	4116	Calamvale	Brisbane	243	–	–	n/a*	n/a*

Note: postcodes with no prior-period severe-stress reading show n/a*; movements off small bases can be volatile.

06 — METHODOLOGY

METHODology

The data behind this report comes from research carried out by **Digital Finance Analytics (DFA)** and is based on a simple idea: what matters isn't how much of your income goes to your mortgage, it's whether you have any money left at the end of the month.

Mortgage stress refers to households in negative monthly cash flow, where regular expenses exceed income, including owner-occupier mortgage repayments. Income is weighed against all regular expenses, not just loan repayments. That includes essentials like utilities, insurance, transport and day-to-day living costs. If a household is consistently spending more than it earns, it's classified as being in 'mortgage stress'. The data applies to owner-occupiers only.

That's a different lens to the usual '30% of income' rule, and it tends to reflect real pressure more accurately. Plenty of households sit under that threshold and still struggle once everything else is factored in.

The data in this report was captured from a rolling survey of around 4,500 households each month, which is scaled up to reflect the broader population. It's been running consistently for years and is aligned with Census and lending data to keep it grounded.

The analysis is done at a postcode level, not suburb, and smaller areas can be less reliable simply because there are fewer households to draw from. It also relies on self-reported information, which is filtered for outliers but can't be independently verified.

The six-month tracker in this edition joins the March, June and September 2026 extracts postcode by postcode. Where a postcode was not ranked in March, its March figure is taken from the June extract's prior-quarter column; where neither exists it is shown as n/a.

Note: suburb and LGA pairings are representative localities. DFA's geographic mapping is derived from detailed ABS statistical zones (around 28,000 nationally), which split across adjacent postcodes — postcodes and LGAs are not a 1:1 match.

06 — FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

FAQs

Why might Digital Finance Analytics (DFA) mortgage stress results differ from other publicly available datasets?

DFA's mortgage stress model measures household financial pressure at a cash-flow level. It assesses whether regular income is enough to cover all ongoing expenses, not just mortgage repayments. Unlike traditional measures, DFA does not rely on the common rule that defines mortgage stress as spending 30% or more of gross household income on home loan repayments. Instead, it focuses on whether households are running at a cash flow deficit after accounting for all major living costs.

Is the mortgage stress data based on actual household data, modelling, or both?

Both. Around 4,500 households are surveyed each month, a rolling base of about 52,000 or roughly 0.5% of households, optimised using Census data, migration trends and postcode-level demographic updates. Results are scaled to Australia's roughly 10 million households and benchmarked against Census and RBA lending data.

Why do some postcodes show close to 100% of mortgaged households in stress?

As a postcode approaches the upper bound, the model reports approximately 100% (with a margin of roughly $\pm 2\%$ depending on sample size). In real terms it is possible for nearly all mortgaged households in an area to be cash-flow negative, though with varying severity. In those postcodes the quarterly change tracks the change in the number of borrowing households.

What is the difference between mortgage stress and severe mortgage stress?

Mortgage stress means a household's monthly outgoings, including the mortgage, exceed its income — it is cash-flow negative but generally still paying. Severe mortgage stress means that gap is deep and ongoing, and the household has already fallen behind on repayments, is trying to refinance, has asked its lender for hardship help, or is selling. Severe stress is a subset of mortgage stress, and the group most likely to default.

Why is the list for Queensland not limited to Brisbane itself?

The ranking covers the whole state or territory. Where a regional postcode has more stressed households than a metropolitan one, it ranks ahead of it. That is why centres such as Toowoomba, Cairns, Launceston, Bunbury and Tamworth appear in their state lists.

How reliable is the data at postcode versus suburb level?

Results are reported at postcode level because the sample is more statistically reliable there, particularly in smaller population centres. Suburb-level data is not used, as sample sizes would often be too small to produce dependable results.

ABOUT *OurTop10*

OurTop10 is an Australian comparison and research platform dedicated to helping consumers identify leading mortgage brokers, accountants, conveyancers and buyer's agents across Australia's major cities.

Our mission is to simplify the research process, reduce decision-making friction, and provide Australians with trusted rankings of top-performing professional service providers.

In addition to comparison services, OurTop10 delivers market research, property insights and industry news to support informed financial and property-related decisions.



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