

Mining activity sees vacancy rate drop in Bundaberg

By Glenn Dwyer

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The regional Queensland town Bundaberg has been recording lower vacancy rates thanks to its proximity to Gina Rinehart's mining activities.

According to the Real Estate Institute of Queensland, [Bundaberg](#) experienced a significant drop in vacancy rates, down to 0.8% from 2.4% last December and from 3.3% in March last year.

The shift was partly due to the floods caused by ex-tropical cyclone Oswald back in January 2013, although it's expected Bundaberg's vacancy rates could be further impacted after a recently discovered coking coal deposit measuring 28.5 million tonnes was found earlier this year in Avalon, 25 kilometres northwest of Bundaberg.

REIQ's March residential rental vacancy rate survey showed the influence resource companies can have on regional rental markets.

"Mackay and Gladstone both recorded significant increases in vacancy rates as at the end of March due to less demand for rental properties from mining companies, and an element of increases in the supply of rental stock," REIQ CEO Anton Kardash said.

With vacancy rates at 3% considered the general median for supply and demand, Queensland had four regional towns including Bundaberg that fell well below the average.

The rental market saw mixed results across Queensland for the first quarter of 2013.

The survey indicated Hervey Bay was down to 1.6% after a drastic drop from 4.3% and Gympie Regional saw a drop from 2.7% to 1.8% while the Toowoomba region retained its mantle as one of the tightest rental markets in the state at 0.8% down from 1.0% at the end of 2012.