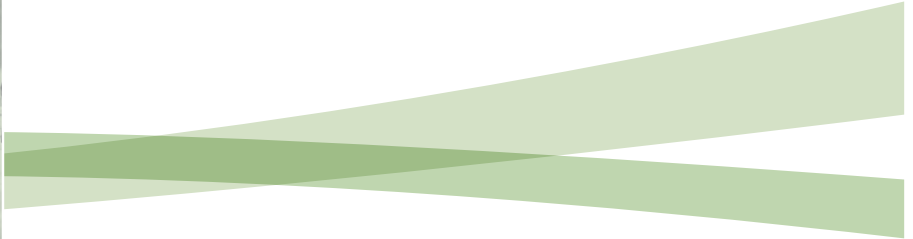




Annual Report

2012 – 13



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Guides to ABS services, and other selected documents, including a comprehensive range of ABS statistics, are available on the ABS website:
www.abs.gov.au

The 2012–13 ABS Annual Report can be found at:
www.abs.gov.au



Australian Statistician

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The Hon. Steve Ciobo MP
Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer

In accordance with the provisions of subsection 24(1) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, I hereby submit to you, for presentation to the Parliament, this report of the operations of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 2013.

This report complies with subsection 63(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, which requires that I, as Agency head, must give a report to the Agency Minister, for presentation to Parliament.

This report is dated on the day I approved the finalised text for printing.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Pink".

Brian Pink

9 October 2013

Contact details

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Access to all ABS documents (including the ABS Annual Report) and statistics is available through the ABS website: www.abs.gov.au.

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1300 135 070 (from Australia)
International clients may call **+61 2 9268 4909**

Alternatively, you can email your query to client.services@abs.gov.au

For media requests, contact ABS Communications and Ministerial Liaison on **1300 175 070**.

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New South Wales	Level 10 44 Market Street Sydney NSW 2000	GPO Box 796 Sydney NSW 2001
Victoria	7th Floor South Tower 485 La Trobe Street, Melbourne VIC 3000	GPO Box 2796Y Melbourne VIC 3001
Queensland	Level 3 639 Wickham Street, Fortitude Valley QLD 4006	GPO Box 9817 Brisbane QLD 4001
South Australia	Level 9 ANZ House, 11 Waymouth St, Adelaide SA 5000	GPO Box 2272 Adelaide SA 5001
Western Australia	Level 15 Exchange Plaza, Sherwood Court, Perth WA 6000	GPO Box K881 Perth WA 6842
Tasmania	200 Collins Street, Hobart TAS 7000	GPO Box 66A Hobart TAS 7001
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Australian Capital Territory	ABS House Ground Floor, 45 Benjamin Way, Belconnen ACT 2617	Locked Bag 10 Belconnen ACT 2616

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Section 1

OVERVIEW



Chapter 1

Australian Statistician's Review

Introduction



During 2012–13 the ABS continued to support decision making, research and discussion within governments and the broader community by providing trusted, high quality, objective statistics on key aspects of our population, society, economy, and environment. The ABS plays a key role in Australian society in providing a portfolio of trusted statistics across all four of these domains, as each contributes to the well-being of all Australians.

This year has seen the successful release of the second and third stages of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing data as well as the first release of data from the 2011–13 Australian Health Survey, the largest, most complex health survey ever conducted in Australia. We have been able to achieve these significant milestones due to the high level of trust and cooperation the ABS enjoys from Australian governments, businesses, non-government organisations and households.

As we seek to address the increasing demand for statistics and to reduce the cost of responding to our collections, I remain concerned about the wide range of ageing and fragile business processes and supporting infrastructure used by the ABS, our difficult capital position, which is barely adequate to 'keep the lights on', and the impact these are having on our costs and on our staff.

This situation has been exacerbated by further government-wide efficiency dividends over the past year which resulted in my decisions to cancel the Work, Life and Family Survey (WoLFS) and to change the Tourist Accommodation Survey from a quarterly to an annual collection. The overall situation has been progressively impacting on the time and effort required to produce key official statistics on time and to the quality expected by our users and now seriously compromises our longer-term sustainability.

In response to these pressures, which have been building over recent years, from early 2012 the ABS has self-funded the initial phase of an organisational transformation program (known as 'ABS 2017'). This transformation is both ambitious and essential and includes redevelopment of our business operations, information management systems and infrastructure. It will ensure that we can continue to provide timely, relevant and accessible statistics and services in an increasingly diverse, complex and connected digital world.

A critical part of the 2017 Program strategy involves seeking appropriate investment from government to:

- help us address these risks of ageing business processes and infrastructure
- support us in developing the new and innovative information solutions expected of a National Statistical Office in the 21st century
- better position the ABS to take advantage of the enormous potential of 'big data' derived from a variety of new digital sources
- enable us to provide a whole-of-government statistical capability to inform policy research, development and evaluation.

To date, the ABS 2017 program has implemented a number of initiatives that have either increased access to our statistics, or reduced the burden on providers. Early initiatives, such as e-forms for surveys, and innovative software that allows users to compile customised statistical tables from selected ABS datasets while preserving the confidentiality of data about individual respondents, are already delivering significant benefits to the broader community.

However, we now need support from government if the ABS is to avoid reducing the current range and frequency of statistical outputs in order to enable a larger share of the ABS's available resources to be redirected to completing the 2017 transformation program over the next few years.

In this context, I and my senior management team have recognised that to ignore the consequences of further delaying action to address the risks with, and constraints of, our ageing business processes and infrastructure, and as a consequence, our inability to support the ever-growing demand for more innovative, more timely and more user-friendly means of collecting, accessing and using our statistics at lower cost; would see the ABS no longer able to properly fulfil its mandated functions and responsibilities into the future as the trusted and respected statistical leader in Australia, providing critical data for informed decision making and research at all levels of society, and a highly regarded role model amongst the international community of statistical organisations.

In these very difficult circumstances, I am proud of the commitment and dedication of ABS management and staff, who continue to rise to the challenges now facing Australia's most professional, capable and respected statistical organisation. However, our constrained budget situation may require hard choices in the coming year as we ensure the next phase of our business and infrastructure transformation strategy, which is so critical to our future sustainability, proceeds in 2014–15.

Key achievements

Successful completion of the 2011 Census including the second and third release of data

The Census of Population and Housing is the ABS's largest and most important statistical collection. Its objective is to accurately measure the number and key characteristics of people in Australia on Census night, and the dwellings in which they live. This provides a reliable basis for the estimation of the population of each of the states, territories and local government areas, primarily for electoral purposes and the distribution of government funds.

The Census also provides a wealth of information on the characteristics of the Australian population and its housing within small geographic areas and for small population groups. Census data is used to support the planning, administration, policy development and evaluation activities of governments, business, researchers and a host of other users.

The second and third rounds of results from the 2011 Census were released throughout 2012–13 and planning and consultation has already begun for the 2016 Census.

We have also seen the preliminary release of 2011 based estimates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in August 2012 with high levels of public interest, particularly due to the large increase in the Census count of those identifying as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.

The ABS also provided Census data users with the Socio Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), a suite of four indexes that has been created from social and economic data derived from the Census which measures the extent to which every geographic area in Australia is relatively 'advantaged' or 'disadvantaged'.

The four indexes are:

- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage (IRSD)
- Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage (IRSAD)
- Index of Education and Occupation (IEO)
- Index of Economic Resources (IER).

The in-depth media coverage of SEIFA and other detailed outputs in these releases reflects the continuing value of the ABS and the Census to the community.

We have also undertaken a range of new approaches to communicate statistics to a broader audience. These include:

- a town planning 'game' for mobile devices called *Run that Town*, which was launched in May 2013
- engaging and educational Questacon exhibits
- a new version of the web application, Spotlight.

Spotlight takes data from the 2011 Census and turns it into a simple interactive movie, to show just a few of the interesting things that the Census can tell us about Australia's people and population.

Spotlight allows users to create their own infographics—a personalised snapshot of their own numbers, where they were born, where they live, who they are—that they can share with friends.

Since its initial launch, Spotlight has received over 15 national and international awards, including achieving excellence in the effectiveness of Government 2.0 tools, for creativity and for promotional effectiveness.

Statistical Longitudinal Census Dataset

During 2012–13, the ABS made substantial progress on the Statistical Longitudinal Census Dataset (SLCD) which brings together, through a statistical matching process, data from the 2006 and 2011 Censuses. This enables the ABS to build a picture of changes in society by comparing Census data characteristics for a sample of around one million people across the two Censuses.

The SLCD will enable governments and researchers to better understand how social and economic conditions change over time, as well as providing insight into how pathways vary for diverse population groups. The confidentialised version of the SLCD is expected to be available for public access in December 2013 using the ABS's Survey TableBuilder software. The SLCD represents:

- an enormously powerful enhancement to the evidence base available from the Census
- a significant and enduring return on the investment that is made in each five-yearly Census.

Data for the sample from future Censuses will be incorporated into the SLCD in due course.

First release of data from the 2011–13 Australian Health Survey

The first round of results from the 2011–13 Australian Health Survey (AHS) were released in October 2012. The AHS is the largest and most comprehensive health survey ever conducted in Australia and is designed to collect a range of information about health related issues, including health status, risk factors, actions, and socioeconomic circumstances.

The first round of results included information on:

- general health status measures
- health related aspects of lifestyle and other health risk factors
- long term health conditions.

The statistics presented in this first release are indicative of the extensive range of data available from the survey and demonstrate some of the analytical potential of the survey results.

Further results will be released progressively throughout 2013 and 2014 and will cover topics such as:

- health service use and other actions people had recently taken for their health
- detailed information on dietary intake
- comprehensive information on physical activity and sedentary behaviour
- information on biomedical health measures
- representative results for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

The 2011–13 AHS was developed with the assistance of an advisory group comprised of experts in health issues. Members of this advisory group were drawn from Commonwealth and state/territory government agencies, non-government organisations and relevant academic institutions. The invaluable contribution made by members of the survey advisory group is greatly appreciated.

However, the ultimate success of the 2011–13 AHS was dependent on the very high level of cooperation received from the Australian public. Their continued cooperation is very much appreciated; without it, the range of statistics published by the ABS would not be possible.

Information infrastructure for the future

ABS 2017

The ABS 2017 program is designed to modernise the business processes and information infrastructure of the ABS to ensure that our statistics and products continue to be of high quality, relevant and accessible. We have made some important progress toward this goal over the last year but this is only the first phase of a multi-year transformation program. For example, we have successfully implemented online forms for a number of collections:

- Labour Force survey (LFS)
- Quarterly Business Indicators Survey (QBIS)
- Capital Expenditure (Capex)
- Retail Trade Margins Index (RTMI)
- Survey of Tourist Accommodation (STA)
- Engineering Construction Survey (ECS)
- Internet Activity Survey
- International Trade in Services Coverage Survey
- Land Management Practices Survey (LaMPS) 2011–12
- Agricultural Resource Management Survey (ARMS) 2011–12.

The online forms have had good levels of take-up by providers. E-form capability is crucial for reducing the burden on providers and lowering some of the costs of collection.

We have successfully enhanced access to ABS microdata via the Remote Execution Environment for Microdata (REEM). The production release of Survey TableBuilder, as well as the evaluation release of DataAnalyser, are crucial developments in our efforts to provide access for researchers and policy makers to detailed microdata, whilst protecting the confidentiality of individual records.

The ABS's role in international collaboration

The ABS was a significant contributor to the internationally agreed model of common terminology and definitions used by National Statistical Offices to describe statistical metadata and information flows. This Generic Statistical Information Model (v1.0) was adopted as an international standard, after being endorsed by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) High Level Group in December 2012.

The growing importance of comparable regional data, both across Australia and the globe, is driving increasing demand to produce high quality, timely and consistent statistics. As Australian Statistician, I have taken a lead role in the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services (HLG), which was set up by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians in 2010 to oversee and coordinate international work relating to the development of enterprise architectures within statistical organisations.

More recently, I have been successful in obtaining agreement to the establishment of a similar group under the auspices of the Committee on Statistics of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP). This new group will work collaboratively with the HLG over the next few years as the international statistical community strives to drive down the costs of doing business and expand its ability to adapt and innovate in a rapidly changing information world.

Successful release of Essential Statistical Assets for Australia

The purpose of the Essential Statistical Assets (ESA) for Australia initiative is to allow for effective prioritisation of investment, focus and effort within the National Statistical Service, by identifying those statistical assets across Australia's somewhat fragmented information environment, that are critical to decision making in a complex and rapidly changing real world.

Following an extensive consultation process during 2012, which targeted a wide variety of stakeholders across the public and non-government sectors, the ABS released the *Essential Statistical Assets for Australia* (ABS cat. no. 1395.0) in March 2013.

The 2013 ESA list represents the first holistic assessment of the most essential statistics to meet current user requirements undertaken in Australia, and consists of 74 statistics that inform a wide range of economic, environmental and societal dimensions. These are supported by datasets held by a range of custodians across federal, state and territory governments, including the ABS. The ABS is proposing to review the 2013 list after two years, with future reviews to occur every three to five years to ensure it remains relevant.

Further phases of the ESA for Australia initiative will involve:

- a quality assessment process for a more in-depth consideration of each of the statistics on the 2013 list in order to understand how well the currently produced information meets the critical needs of users and to highlight gaps within existing statistics
- identifying the essential statistical infrastructure used to generate statistics that are critical to Australia's statistical system and the significant investment required to maintain these infrastructure assets, which is often unrecognised
- identifying enhancements to the longer term statistical governance mechanisms that would need to be progressed in order to generate real investment outcomes into the priority areas of Australia's statistical system. At a minimum, the ABS will use the outcomes from the ESA initiative to assist in setting strategic priorities for its own statistical work program.

Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP)

In recent years, interest in measuring progress beyond GDP has accelerated, with many commentators advocating for a broader range of social and environmental measures to be considered in addition to traditional economic measures.

Since its introduction in 2002, MAP has presented a suite of statistical indicators to help Australians determine whether life in Australia is getting better. It provides a selection of statistical evidence which Australians can use to form their own view of how our nation is progressing.

Since Australia pioneered the MAP concept, many other countries have adopted similar statistical dashboards to assess national progress. The global statistical community now faces the challenge of developing internationally comparable indicators to assess progress towards achieving sustainable development objectives as we move beyond the 2015 target date for the current Millennium Development Goals.

The statistical measures used in MAP demonstrate change taking place in a range of key areas and are grouped under three broad domains (or headings): the society, the economy and the environment.

The MAP 'Aspirations for our Nation Report' was released in November 2012 after an extensive consultation process over the previous 18 months with people representing a wide cross-section of Australian society. The process has provided key input as the ABS now focuses on the development of the release of MAP 2.0 in November 2013. The success of this process for MAP 2.0, which in particular saw the emergence of Governance as a fourth key domain, demonstrates the power of user consultation and strategic engagement with other producers and users of statistics.

The ABS will continue with the challenging task of developing an expanded set of MAP indicators in the fields of governance and the environment.

SOCIETY	ECONOMY	ENVIRONMENT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Health <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education and training <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Work <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Crime <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Family, community and social cohesion <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Democracy, governance and citizenship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National income <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National wealth <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Household economic wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Housing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Productivity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Land <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Inland waters <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Oceans and estuaries <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Atmosphere <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Waste

Legend:

- Progress has generally been made in this headline indicator compared with ten years ago.
- This headline indicator has generally regressed compared with ten years ago.
- There has been no significant movement in this headline indicator compared with ten years ago.
- There is either no headline indicator for this area of progress or no time series

NatStats 2013 conference

The third NatStats conference was held in Brisbane in March 2013, with the theme of *'A better informed Australia: the role of statistics in building the nation'*. The conference attracted 34 high-level speakers and over 350 delegates (36 international) from government, business, the media and academia.

The conference discussed how the business of statistics is changing, and the opportunities presented by big data to drive productivity and build a strong and vibrant nation.

Discussions focused on how big data (defined as administration, transactional, Web 2.0, sensor network, international and emerging datasets) can be used to inform decision making in the social wellbeing, economic and environment domains, as well as looking at the challenges of extracting knowledge from big data.

The conference was highly successful in recognising that big data provides an opportunity to enhance the broader Australian statistical system. Areas such as prioritising investment in the nation's most essential statistical assets, enhanced governance arrangements for the Australian statistical system, improving access to big data, and further embedding mathematics and statistical science into Australia's education system were highlighted and discussed.

Realising the potential of new data sources such as big data to shape our future will take time and we will need to collaborate as a statistical community to succeed. It will also require investment from governments over time if the potential of big data and other new data sources is to be realised for societal benefit.

Building statistical capability

Statistical Skills for Official Statisticians

Statistical Skills for Official Statisticians is a resource designed by the ABS to help all agencies of government, state/territory as well as Commonwealth, enhance their statistical capability.

Statistical Skills for Official Statisticians provides guidance on the range of statistical skills, knowledge and expertise needed to work effectively throughout the end-to-end statistical production cycle. It also explains the role of the ABS in official statistics, the policy and legislative environment governing statistical work, and the responsibilities and professional skills required of official statisticians.

It has been designed to enable statisticians to further develop their statistical careers and to assist others who may be seeking development opportunities in statistics.

CensusAtSchool

CensusAtSchool was originally conceived in New Zealand and was further developed by the Royal Statistical Society Centre for Statistical Education and the Office for National Statistics in the United Kingdom to improve statistical literacy in students. It has subsequently been adapted to suit many countries including South Africa, Canada and Australia. The Australian CensusAtSchool project is part of the global 'CensusAtSchool International' program.

The aim of CensusAtSchool is to spark students' interest in statistics. The project allows students across Australia to collect real data about themselves by completing the online questionnaire, then access these data from the online random sampler and prepared tables, to make comparisons between themselves and their peers. Once students are able to see and interact with the CensusAtSchool data, it helps them understand the importance and value of statistics in their lives.

CensusAtSchool is supported by a suite of free online resources. These assist teachers across school year levels to use relevant data in classrooms to teach statistical concepts. These resources are aligned to the new Australian Mathematics Curriculum, to further support teachers in enhancing students' statistical literacy.

Expanded regional assistance program in the Asia–Pacific region

The ABS continues its focus on collaborating with other Asia–Pacific statistical organisations in building capability in the region, and in leading work in the development of statistical standards and methodology within the global statistical community. ABS executive and senior personnel chair or actively participate in key international committees and working groups, providing leadership, influencing global standards and assisting regional outcomes.

We have continued our partnership with AusAID to deliver statistical programs for Indonesia, Timor-Leste and the Pacific region through leadership and technical capability building programs overseas, and by hosting development visits to the ABS.

In early 2013 the UNESCAP endorsed a core set of population and social statistics to be used as a framework for guiding capacity and capability development in Asia and the Pacific region. The endorsement is a global milestone because all countries in Asia and the Pacific have agreed to a set of statistics to guide capacity development. The ABS played a major role in this significant development for economic statistics in our region and is now working to achieve a similar outcome for social statistics.

UNESCAP also this year endorsed a resolution to implement the outcome of a High-Level Meeting on the improvement of civil registration and vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific. An effective and functioning civil registration and vital statistics system is an essential capability for high quality population and health statistics in any country. Without such a system, countries will lack credible and basic information such as population estimates, life expectancy and mortality rates. The ABS has played a major role in supporting the UNESCAP Civil Registration and Vitals program, particularly throughout the Pacific.

Acknowledgements

As always, my thanks go to all the Australian households and business that have participated in our surveys over the past year. Your support is crucial to our success in maintaining the breadth and high quality of our statistics portfolio.

I also extend my thanks to the members of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) who continue to provide expert advice to me on the strategies and work program of the ABS.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the support of the Hon Bernie Ripoll MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer. His support and representation has ensured the ABS continues to be an independent producer of relevant and high-quality statistics for all Australians.

Finally, I want to particularly acknowledge my management, office staff and interviewers for their hard work and dedication throughout the year in what is becoming, for all of them, an increasingly difficult, constraining and frustrating environment in which to operate. This is no better documented than in the most recent Australian Public Service-wide staff census, where only two per cent of ABS staff responses disagreed with the statement that 'to ensure the ABS remains relevant into the future, we need to change the way we currently do our business'. Without their continued dedication and support the ABS would be in an even more difficult situation.

Chapter 2

ABS at a glance



ABS at a glance



30

outposted officers to
other government
agencies



12,299,436

visits
to ABS
website



78

user groups
advising
the ABS



2,436,997

ABS
products
downloaded



12

ABS-hosted international
development and study
visits from other countries



1,370

organisations
registered for free
tablebuilder products



28,380

individuals registered
for free tablebuilder
products

The ABS mission

We assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.

Who we are

The ABS is Australia's official national statistical agency. It was established over 100 years ago as the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, following enactment of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. The agency became the Australian Bureau of Statistics in 1975 with the passing of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. This Act also established the role of the Australian Statistician and defined the functions of the ABS.

What we do

The ABS provides statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters, covering government, business and the community. It also has an important coordination function with respect to the statistical activities of other official bodies, both in Australia and overseas.

Where we are

The ABS has a central office in Canberra and regional offices located in eight state and territory capitals. Each regional office has some national statistical responsibilities.

Regional offices are also primarily responsible for the delivery of statistical services to their state or territory. These offices have ongoing engagement with state and territory governments on statistical services and priorities, generally through state and territory committees set up for that purpose.

All Regional Directors have a direct reporting line to a Deputy Australian Statistician (see organisational chart on page 14-15).

Our plan

The ABS Corporate Plan can be found on the ABS website at <http://www.abs.gov.au>. The plan presents the ABS's goals, strategies and outcomes to achieve its mission. It provides clear links between different elements of the ABS work program and our program of change, linking the work that staff do with the goals of the organisation.



Responsible minister

The ABS is an agency under the Treasury portfolio.

During 2012-13, the Hon Bernie Ripoll MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer, held responsibility for the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Authority and legislation

The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* provides the Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections and, when necessary, to direct a person or an organisation to provide statistical information. The Act imposes obligations on the ABS to publish and disseminate compilations and analyses of statistical information, and to maintain the confidentiality of information collected under the Act.

The *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* sets out the functions and responsibilities of the Statistician and the ABS:

- (a) to constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian Government and, by arrangements with the governments of the states, provide statistical services for those governments;
- (b) to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information;
- (c) to ensure coordination of the operations of official bodies in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information, with particular regard to:
 - (i) the avoidance of duplication in the collection by official bodies of information for statistical purposes;
 - (ii) the attainment of compatibility between, and the integration of, statistics compiled by official bodies; and
 - (iii) the maximum possible utilisation, for statistical purposes, of information, and means of collection of information, available to official bodies;
- (d) to formulate, and ensure compliance with, standards for the carrying out by official bodies of operations for statistical purposes;
- (e) to provide advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics; and
- (f) to provide liaison between Australia, on the one hand, and other countries and international organisations, on the other hand, in relation to statistical matters.

Section 6 of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*

Under the *Statistics (Arrangements with States) Act 1956*, Australian and state government statistical services have been integrated since 1958 (from 1924 for Tasmania). Although not covered by legislation, similar arrangements apply in both territories.

There were no amendments made to the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* or the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* during 2012–13.

Organisational structure

The ABS is led by the Australian Statistician—a statutory office established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

The ABS produces and disseminates statistics under the following broad programs:

- Economic and Environment Statistics
- Population, Labour and Social Statistics.

These areas of statistics involve extensive data collection through censuses and surveys and from administrative data sources. The statistical programs are supported by services which deliver assistance and advice on statistical methods, data and metadata arrangements, information technology, data acquisition and collection, client management, dissemination, human resources and other corporate services.

The ABS 2017 Group was established in February 2012 as a strategic initiative to centralise large scale transformation of its business and information management, including the planning and implementation of the 2016 Census of Population and Housing. This Group provides a strong platform to drive change and better position the ABS to integrate a wide range of cross-cutting improvement projects for the future.

Australian Statistics Advisory Council

The Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) is the ABS's key advisory body and was established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. It provides valuable input to the directions and priorities of the ABS work program and reports annually to Parliament. The Council meets twice yearly.

As set out in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, the role of the Council is to advise the Minister and the Statistician in relation to:

- (a) the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia
- (b) annual and longer term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.

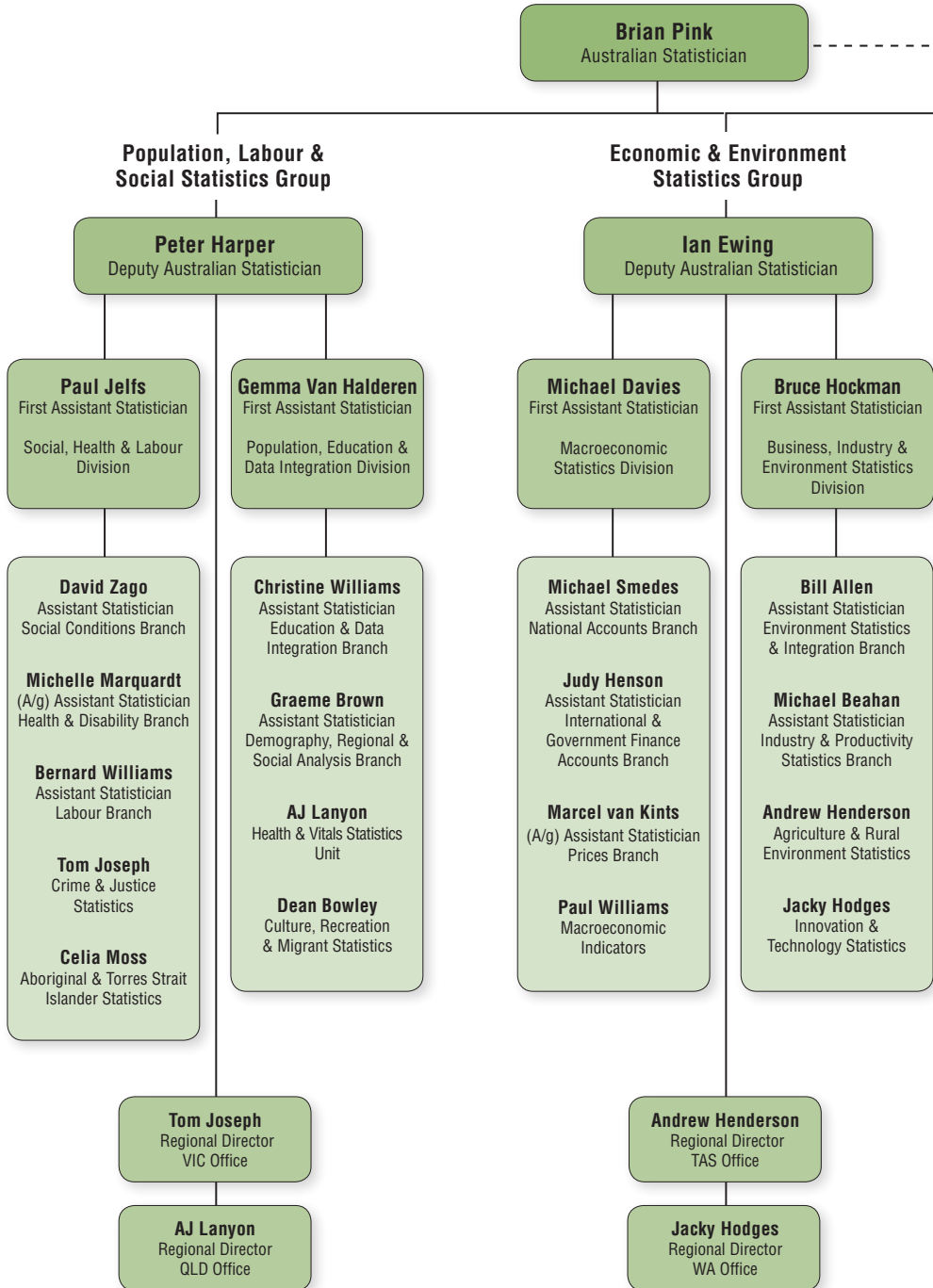
The Chairperson of the Council is Mr Geoff Allen, Director, The Allen Consulting Group. ASAC members include nominees from each of the state premiers and the territory chief ministers. The other members are appointed by the minister responsible for the ABS, and are chosen to represent a broad cross-section of perspectives, including business, government, academic and community interests.

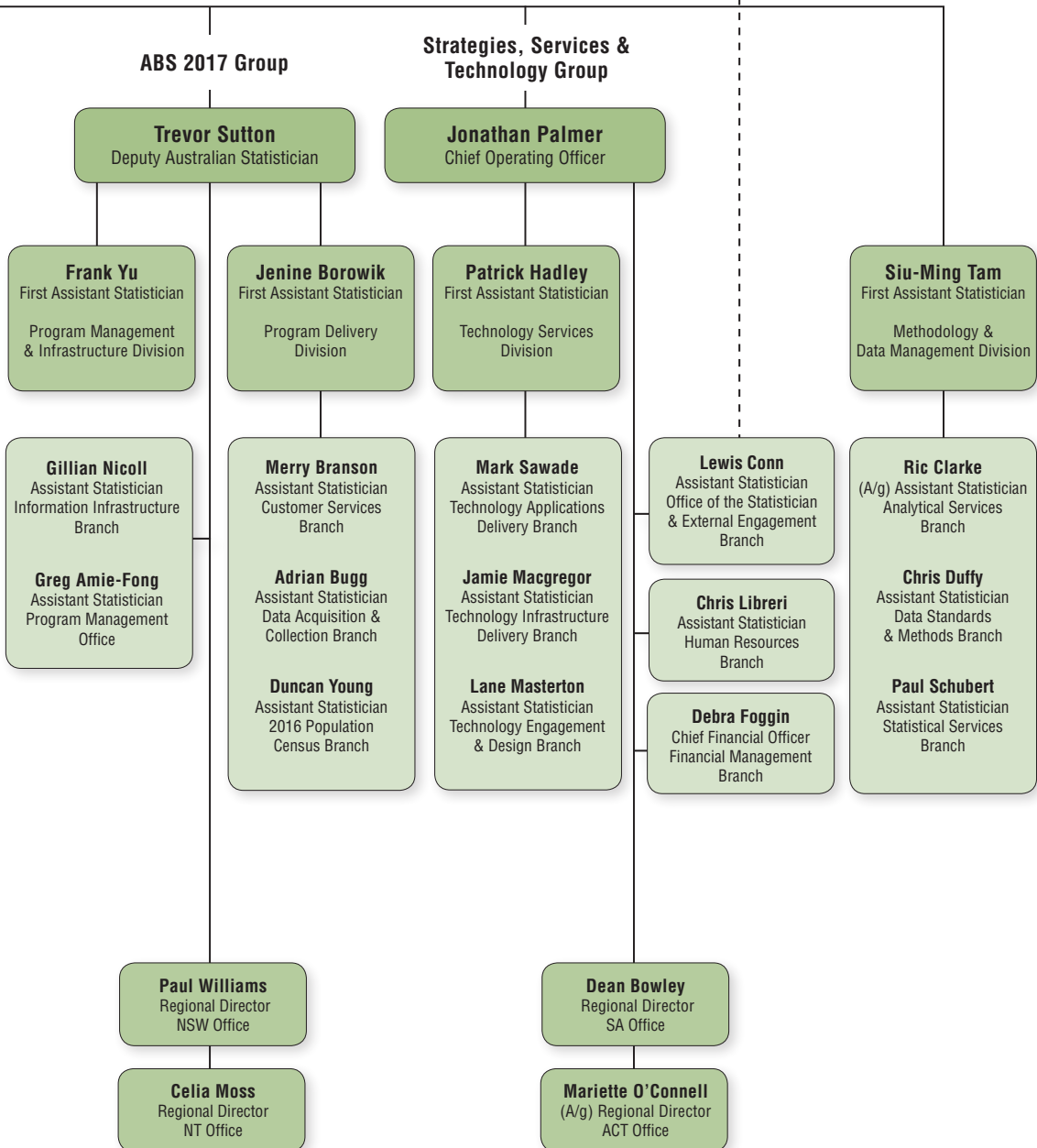
The Australian Statistics Advisory Council's mission

The Council's mission, in keeping with its statutory charter, is to ensure that the advice furnished to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury and the Statistician in relation to the collection and dissemination of statistics has due regard to the relative priorities, is objective, relevant, timely, constructive and practical, and that it is sensitive to the needs of both suppliers and users of statistical data.

Further information on the Australian Statistics Advisory Council can be found at <http://www.asac.gov.au> or by contacting the Secretariat by mail to: ABS, Locked Bag 10, Belconnen, ACT, 2616. The Council's annual report can also be found on its website.

Organisational structure
(as at 30 June 2013)





Outcome and Program structure

ABS outcome

In the Portfolio Budget Statements 2012–13, the ABS has one outcome:

Informed decisions, research and discussion within governments and the community by leading the collection, analysis and provision of high quality, objective and relevant statistical information.

ABS program

Within the context of the Portfolio Budget Statements, Program 1.1 (Australian Bureau of Statistics), the ABS produces and disseminates statistics to meet the above outcome.

Economic statistics are produced predominantly from the ABS business survey program. They include an extensive range of statistical outputs relating to the structure and performance of the Australian economy.

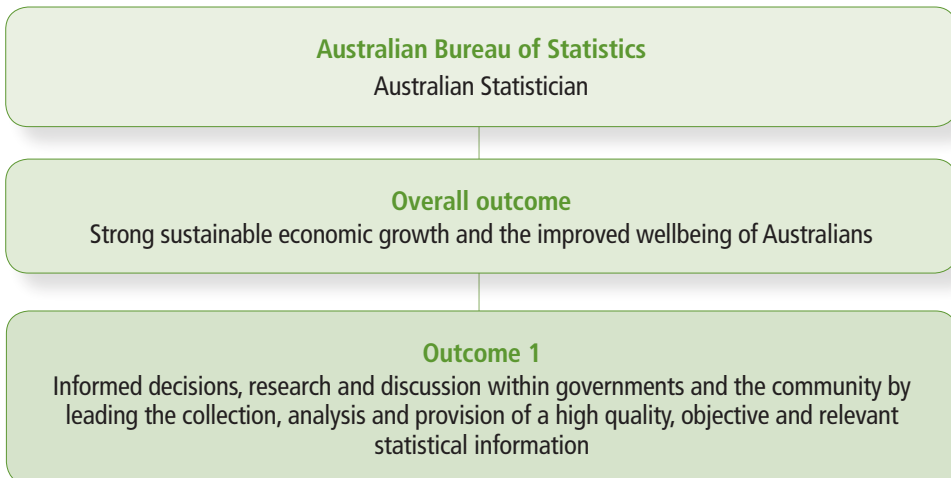
Population and social statistics are produced mainly through the ABS household survey program. They include statistical information relating to the Australian population, including census and demographic statistics, as well as information relating to the social and economic wellbeing of the population.

The Program 1.1—Australian Bureau of Statistics—provides an objective source of information that is used by governments and the community to inform their decisions. The provision of statistics involves extensive data collection through censuses, surveys and from administrative data sources.

The ABS statistical programs are supported by service and infrastructure areas that deliver assistance and advice on statistical methods, data and metadata management, information technology, client management, dissemination, human resources and other corporate services.

Financial position

Outcome



Financial position

As noted above, the ABS has one outcome. Table 2.1 provides, for 2012–13, a financial summary of the ABS outcome and the price of the outcome. The full financial statements are provided in Section 4.

Table 2.1: Summary of financial resources

	2012–13	2011–12
	\$m	\$m
Price of Departmental Outcomes		
Outcome 1	425.3	628.6
Total outcome	425.3	628.6
Revenue from government appropriations	312.5	548.6
Revenue from other sources	70.2	44.1
Total for Outcome 1	382.7	592.7

Table 2.2: Summary of financial performance

	2012–13	2011–12	Change
	\$m	\$m	\$m
Appropriation revenue	312.5	548.6	(236.1)
Other revenue and gains	70.2	44.1	26.1
Total income	382.7	592.7	210.0
Employee expenses	301.1	433.2	(132.1)
Supplier expenses	88.6	160.0	(71.4)
Other expenses	35.6	35.4	0.2
Total expenses	425.3	628.6	203.3
(Deficit)/surplus	(42.6)	(35.9)	6.7
Changes in asset revaluation reserve	0.0	5.5	(5.5)
Comprehensive income (loss)	(42.6)	(30.4)	12.2

In 2012–13, comprehensive income loss of \$42.6 million represents an approved operating loss of \$7.4m and a technical accounting loss resulting from unfunded depreciation.

Total income available in 2012–13 decreased by \$210 million, due mainly to the reduction in the cyclical Census of Population and Housing work program.

Table 2.3: Summary of financial position

	2012–13	2011–12	Change
	\$m	\$m	\$m
Financial assets (a)	40.4	76.1	(35.6)
Non-financial assets (b)	125.6	140.2	(14.6)
Liabilities (c)	139.5	165.7	(26.2)
Net assets (a+b-c)	26.5	50.6	(24.0)

The net asset decrease is due to the comprehensive loss offset by an equity injection.

The ABS's commitment to financial management is reflected through its unqualified financial statements. The ABS has continued its focus on compliance with the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, and is implementing systems and procedures to enhance its financial management and accountability compliance framework.

Agency resource statement and resources for outcomes

Agency resource statement

Agency resource statement 2012–13	Actual available appropriation for 2012–13	Payments made 2012–13	Balance remaining 2012–13
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	(a)	(b)	(a-b)
Ordinary Annual Services ¹			
Prior year departmental appropriation	67,093	67,093	-
Departmental appropriation Act 1	312,502	277,390	35,112
S.31 Relevant agency receipts	53,488	53,488	-
S.30 Repayments to the Commonwealth	2,191	2,191	-
Prior year departmental appropriation—DCB	3,452	3,452	-
Departmental appropriation Act 1—Capital Budget (DCB) ²	18,047	18,047	-
Total	456,773	421,661	35,112
Total ordinary annual services	456,773	421,661	35,112
Other services Departmental non-operating ³			
Prior year departmental appropriation	638	176	462
Departmental appropriation Act 2	429	429	-
Total	1,067	605	462
Total other services	1,067	605	462
Total net resourcing and payments	457,840	422,266	35,574

1 Appropriation Act (No.1). Includes prior year departmental appropriation, S.31 relevant agency receipts and S.30 repayments to the Commonwealth.

2 \$18m in 2012–13 for the Departmental Capital Budget. For accounting purposes this amount has been designated as 'contributions by owners'.

3 Appropriation Act (No. 2) 2012–13.

Resources for outcomes

Expenses for Outcome 1 ^A	Budget	Actual expenses	Variation
	2012–13	2012–13	2012–13
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
	(a)	(b)	(a-b)
Outcome 1			
Informed decisions, research and discussion within governments and the community by leading the collection, analysis and provision of high quality, objective and relevant statistical information			
Outcome 1			
Departmental expenses			
Departmental appropriation (Appropriation Bill No. 1)	350,205 ^B	381,761	
Expenses not requiring appropriation in the budget year	34,373	35,162	
Total Expenses for Outcome 1	384,578	416,923	32,345
	2011–12	2012–123	
Average staffing level (number)*	3,146	2,782	

Notes:

A The ABS has one outcome and one program, therefore this table should be used for both outcome and program purposes.

B Budget Source: 2012–13 Portfolio Budget Statements. Departmental appropriation combines 'Ordinary annual services (Appropriation Act No. 1)' and 'Revenue from independent sources (s31)' less a reduction to the Appropriation of \$1.481m by the Minister for Finance and Deregulation.

Note: The variance of \$32m is mainly due to:

Increase in revenue from independent sources \$ 32m

* Excludes DPC, Interviewers and Census Field Agents

Chapter 3

Special article: Essential Statistical Assets for Australia initiative



Introduction

On 14 March 2013 the ABS released the first list of Essential Statistical Assets (ESA) for Australia. This represented a significant milestone in the development of official statistics in Australia.

The availability of trusted official statistical information to inform public debate and enable decision making is fundamental to transparent government and democracy.

Official statistics are those produced by or on behalf of governments. They tell us how society is progressing and provide a window through which the impact of the work and performance of government can be evaluated and assessed—by government itself and more importantly by our community.

As the world becomes more complex and interconnected the importance of quality, accessible and timely information on Australia's changing circumstances increases. This presents a number of significant opportunities and challenges for producers of official statistics. Advances in technology, sensory data, as well as more digital and transactional data, have resulted in exponential growth of administrative information. Concurrently there has been a rapid growth in the demand for more timely and comprehensive data across the economy, environment and society to inform increasingly complex public policy.

As Australia's national statistical office, the ABS has a mandated role to lead the efforts of the National Statistical Service (NSS). The NSS is a community of Government agencies with responsibility for providing statistical information for the country.

The ESA for Australia list is a key NSS initiative to identify the essential indicators of the state of the nation. It is the first holistic assessment undertaken in Australia of the most essential statistics to meet current user requirements. This NSS initiative aims to ensure that as a nation we invest in the information that counts most.

Origin of the ESA for Australia initiative

In 2004 the Allen Consulting Group conducted a strategic review into the role of the ABS in the 21st century, and one key recommendation from this was:

The ABS should set out to identify, in a highly consultative way, the key national datasets that are the essential indicators of the state of the nation, regardless of which organisations produce them.

This recommendation is the cornerstone of the ESA for Australia initiative's primary objective. The ABS did not immediately act on this recommendation as significant preparatory work was required, and developing the ESA for Australia was dependent on progressing other recommendations from the review. In 2010 the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) endorsed the ABS to undertake identifying the list of ESA for Australia. ASAC is the peak body for advising the Australian government on the national statistical system.

Objectives of the ESA for Australia initiative

Essential statistical assets are defined as a small, core subset of official statistical assets that, due to their application and importance, should be given priority in order to provide a high quality and trusted statistical service. Distinguishing those statistical assets that are essential aims to identify where investment in the statistical system will yield the broadest benefit and this will help ensure their level of quality is maintained and enhanced over time.

The statistical assets include both the statistics as well as the datasets that they are drawn from (where they exist).

Developing a list of agreed essential statistical assets will enable the Australian Government, in partnership with state and territory governments, to pursue the following objectives:

1. Identification of critical information gaps, so these can be addressed
2. Ensuring that the critically important information (statistics/data) is of sufficient quality
3. More efficient use of government resources by identifying areas of duplication and underutilisation.

An early example of how the ESA for Australia initiative can support policy development is contained in the recently released update to the National Digital Economy Strategy by the Department of Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy¹. The update explicitly recognises the role of the ESA for Australia initiative in identifying priority statistics to support the evolving digital economy.

The advancement of the ESA for Australia initiative has also led to similar initiatives being set up to provide similar benefits with more specific areas of focus. One example is an initiative being led by the Tasmanian Government, through its Statistical Policy Committee, which has commenced work on identifying the most 'Significant Statistics for Tasmania', with a focus on those statistics required to meet its regulatory reporting requirements at a state and federal level. Another example is the Victorian Department of Justice which has also commenced a project to identify its most valuable statistical assets and improve the accessibility of its information assets for use by departmental staff for research and planning purposes.

Why is the ABS leading this initiative?

The ABS is not the only producer of official statistical information for purposes such as policy formulation and evaluation, and effective delivery of community services. Demand for, access to, and usage of, the wealth of administrative data collected and held by government bodies has resulted in the involvement of other departments and bodies in the production of statistical information.

The ABS, however, has an important leadership and coordination role in relation to the statistical activities of other official bodies that is mandated in its legislation (the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, Section 6(1)(c)), and which applies both within Australia and internationally. Statistics are a national asset, and so need investment and protection. The NSS, as a community of government agencies, looks to the ABS to lead the way statistically, and the ESA for Australia is a practical application of the ABS's role.

Continuing to promote collaboration between official bodies, the 2013 list of ESA for Australia was developed in consultation with other producers of statistics and with a wide range of government and non-government users of statistics, prior to its endorsement by ASAC.

¹ <http://www.nbn.gov.au/nbn-benefits/national-digital-economy-strategy/>

The successful release of the 2013 list of ESA for Australia on the 14 March 2013 also represented a significant achievement in terms of external engagement outcomes for the ABS. There was an overwhelmingly positive response from external stakeholders to the tangible outputs released, and to the way in which the ABS consulted on the aims of the initiative, acted on feedback received and demonstrated a strong commitment to ensuring the final product was representative of the process undertaken. The ESA for Australia initiative enabled an opportunity for wide-spread engagement with external stakeholders on a purposeful, focused and tangible NSS initiative.

What are the phases of the ESA for Australia initiative?

The development of a list of essential statistical assets alone would be unable to address all of the objectives. Accordingly, the initiative has a broader scope with four distinct phases:

- Phase 1: Developing the 2013 list of ESA for Australia
- Phase 2: Assessing the quality of the assets present on the list of ESA for Australia
- Phase 3: Developing a list of Essential Statistical Infrastructure
- Phase 4: Identifying and pursuing future investment priorities.

The ABS has established a framework for official statistics that is presented in Figure 3.1. It is anticipated that through the ESA for Australia initiative, all official statistical assets will be classified according to this framework, based upon both their level of importance as well as their level of quality.

Figure 3.1 Framework of official statistics

	Essential Statistical Assets for Australia	Other official statistics
Exist	Meets quality standards	Self-select to meet standards
	Do not yet meet quality standards (investment priority)	All other existing statistics
Do not exist	Statistical gap (investment priority)	Statistical gap

The ABS is proposing to review the 2013 list of ESA for Australia after two years, with future reviews to occur every three to five years to ensure that the list remains relevant. The timing of the initial review is intended to allow for advancements in complementary whole-of-government initiatives to be incorporated, to allow for refinements to be applied based on the outcomes of the subsequent phases of the initiative, and to allow for changes in the demand for statistical information that inevitably occur over time. There are some emerging fields of statistics that are currently under conceptual development, nationally and internationally; some specific examples that arose during the consultation process, which will be revisited in the next review of the list of ESA for Australia, include statistics relating to governance, subjective wellbeing and the impact of the evolving digital economy on all aspects of Australian society.

Phase 1: The 2013 list of ESA for Australia

Criteria used to determine the 2013 list of ESA for Australia

A set of criteria was established to act as a guide for the creation of the preliminary list, and to add clarity and direction to the consultative process. Acknowledging that the ABS is not always aware of the full range of uses of each statistic, the criteria succeeded in guiding the feedback during the consultation process towards the reasons why each individual statistic is considered essential, and ensured the discussions with stakeholders added extra detail where required.

To determine the 2013 list of ESA for Australia, the following criteria were used (in order of importance):

1. Application in public policy and service delivery
2. Importance to key national progress measurement
3. Domestic legislative requirement
4. International reporting obligation and/or critical for international comparability.

Consultation process

The preliminary list of ESA for Australia was released for external consultation in May 2012, initiating a six-month consultation period. During this period there was a significant program of engagement and consultation led by ABS senior executives who targeted data custodians and key users across the public services of the Australian Government and state and territory governments, as well as statistical governance forums and user groups, and members of the public.

Nearly 100 submissions were received from a range of organisations through these mechanisms, with feedback addressing aspects of the initiative, including the content of the list itself as well as the use of the criteria in the process, and broader issues relating to the initiative overall.

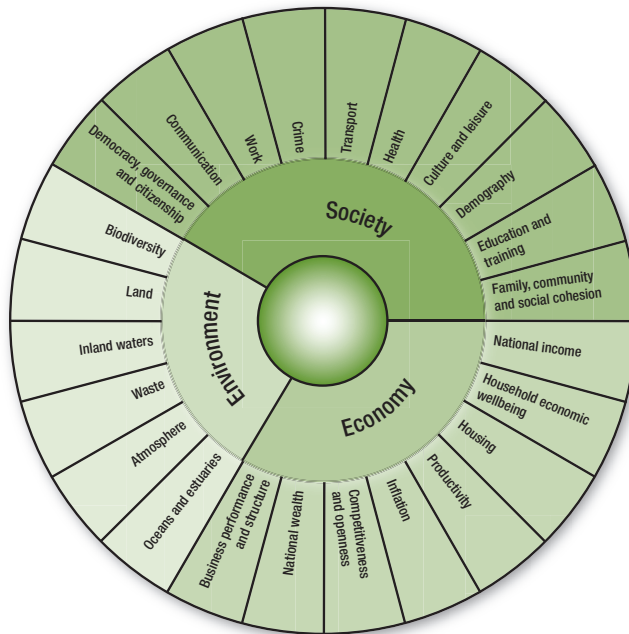
This consultative process influenced the 2013 list of ESA for Australia, providing the essential information base which, along with subsequent phases of the initiative, will support the realisation of all three objectives. The consultation process also identified critical information gaps, particularly where there is currently no data to support a particular statistic.

An important aspect of the consultation process was assuring other data custodians that there was no cost or other obligation to them as a result of their statistics/datasets appearing on the list. Inclusion on the list highlights the importance of their statistics for decision making and service delivery, and will generally raise awareness of the availability of their statistics. Data custodians, like other stakeholders consulted, were very supportive of the ESA for Australia initiative.

ESA for Australia organising framework

To guide the organisation and presentation of the statistics in the ESA for Australia list, the ABS has developed an organising framework based on three pillars: economy, environment and society. Figure 3.2 shows the multiple dimensions which make up each pillar. These dimensions are not mutually exclusive—it is possible that statistics are used to inform multiple pillars and dimensions, reflecting the ability of statistics to inform a range of policy domains and decision-making purposes.

Figure 3.2 ESA for Australia organising framework



Summary of the 2013 list of ESA for Australia

The 2013 list of ESA for Australia consists of 74 statistics, containing a total of 178 distinct datasets. These are made up of different sources, across all levels of government. Seventy-six of the datasets (43%) are held by the ABS, whilst 84 (47%) are held by other Australian Government agency custodians. Eighteen datasets are the combination of state and territory datasets, and whilst no datasets are currently in the custody of local government agencies, some result from local government collected data.

The ABS datasets have a slightly stronger focus on the economy pillar, whilst the environment pillar has a larger representation from other Australian Government agencies. The state and territory datasets are more heavily focused on the social pillar, with the majority of them informing social statistics.

For more detail on the 2013 list, please refer to the publication *Essential Statistical Assets for Australia, 2013* (ABS cat. no. 1395.0) and the related data cube available at www.abs.gov.au.

Next phases of the initiative

With the first phase of the initiative complete, the next priorities are to progress Phase 2—Quality assessment of the ESA for Australia list, and Phase 3—Identifying Australia’s essential statistical infrastructure, which will run in parallel.

Phase 2—Quality assessment process

The quality assessment process will provide for a more in-depth consideration of our essential statistical assets in order to understand how well the currently produced information meets the critical needs of users, and highlighting gaps within existing statistics. This will allow prioritisation of effort to address key gaps in required statistical information—a primary aim of the ESA for Australia initiative.

How the assessment will be undertaken

The quality assessment will look at all statistical assets, including the datasets used in its production. This will enable ABS to identify any duplication of statistics across government, as well as areas of underutilisation. This is important for unlocking the potential of our national statistical assets.

A quality assessment tool is being developed to assess each statistical asset against each of the seven dimensions of quality as identified in the ABS Data Quality Framework: institutional environment, relevance, timeliness, accuracy, coherence, interpretability, and accessibility. The ABS Data Quality Framework is already being used by a number of government agencies in the preparation of data statements to inform users of the quality of their statistics. Where possible, existing data quality statements will be used to support the quality assessment process in order to reduce provider burden.

Based on the availability or otherwise of the critical information, each statistic will be rated against each of the quality dimensions, enabling statistics to be compared easily in a visual format, and aid identification of those quality dimensions on which the current statistics score highly, and which should be a focus for improvement.

Phase 3—Identifying Australia’s essential statistical infrastructure

The purpose of Phase 3 is to identify the underlying statistical infrastructure used to generate statistics, as this represents an area of possible investment and improvement in Australia’s statistical system, and to highlight the often unrecognised significant investment required to maintain these infrastructure assets.

During the development of the preliminary list of ESA for Australia, several supporting elements of statistical infrastructure were identified as essential for the creation of statistics on the list. As they did not fit into the scope of the ESA for Australia initiative (which focuses on statistics and datasets), the need for a list of supporting essential statistical infrastructure was identified and endorsed by ASAC at its November 2012 meeting.

Such statistical infrastructure can include:

- principles, policies and legislation
- frames and registers
- frameworks (e.g. System of National Accounts, Balance of Payments Manual)
- standards and classifications (e.g. ANZSIC, ANZSCO)
- analytical tools and systems that are critical to the collection and dissemination of statistical information (e.g. Survey Tablebuilder).

All these tools support the operation of our statistical system. They do this by helping to organise the statistical system, improving efficiency, adding value, creating new outputs or simply performing tasks within the system. Therefore it is imperative we continue to support the protection and investment in such infrastructure for the benefit of the ABS and the wider community. Essential statistical infrastructure is defined as a sub-set of official statistical infrastructure that is fundamental to the creation of high quality statistics.

Phase 4: Determining priorities for investment

Naturally there is a question of how the information generated through the first three phases can be used to achieve real investment outcomes and who would be involved in this decision-making process. ASAC has a mandated role to advise the minister responsible for the ABS on the broad priorities for the NSS. Given the recognition that high quality social, economic and environmental official statistics are fundamental to government and the community, ultimately it is hoped that the ESA for Australia initiative will guide government decision making on further priority investments in our statistical system.

The ABS hopes that the ESA for Australia initiative will also work to facilitate more collaborative initiatives with other agencies at both the Australian Government and state and territory levels, to strengthen Australia's statistical system. The consultation process that has been carried out through Phase 1 provided a platform for the ABS to discuss other important statistical issues with stakeholders, such as the public release of information and data access, data integration and confidentiality principles, statistical infrastructure and statistical capability. These are important priorities, which the ABS is committed to pursuing with willing partner agencies.

Further information

For more information about the Essential Statistical Assets for Australia initiative or other National Statistical Service programs please visit www.nss.gov.au.

Chapter 4

Special article: Big data and official statistics



Introduction

The modern world is characterised by rapidly increasing volumes of data, generated with increasing frequency by a range of new technologies. The term 'big data' is used to describe these high-volume data holdings.

Gartner defines big data as 'high-volume, high-velocity and high-variety information assets that demand cost-effective, innovative forms of information processing for enhanced insight and decision making' (<http://www.gartner.com/it-glossary/big-data/>). These so-called 'three V's' of big data—volume, velocity and variety—are often complemented by two other v's: value (potential to gain powerful new insights) and veracity (reflecting the uncertain quality of big data sets).

Big data is generated by governments, by the science and research sectors, commercial enterprises, and by citizens. Sources of big data include:

- digital descriptions of the physical environment (geography, geology, buildings, maps, environment, weather)
- sensors and other devices (GPS, asset tags, phones, flow meters, temperature sensors, medical instruments) which constantly generate data about the state of the environment and the movement and status of objects and people
- communications networks
- logging and tracking of individual's behaviour and the information they create and use (email, tweets, social network interactions, phone calls, web page visits and clicks)
- digitisation of commerce and supply chains (asset movements, orders, inventory, payments), financial assets and transactions.

Big data will provide significant new opportunities to expand the range of official statistics and, through this, the effectiveness of decision making in Australia.

The ABS and big data applications

The ABS is Australia's national statistical office. Its role is to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistical information for the benefit of Australian governments and for the broader community. The mission of the ABS is to assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service. Big data could potentially be used to produce cheaper, more timely, and higher quality statistics. It could also be harnessed to produce new statistics to inform areas that are currently not covered by official statistics.

The possible areas in which big data could be used to produce statistics cover economic, social and environmental themes, reflecting both the pervasiveness of big data across most aspects of human activity and in the bio-physical world, as well the growing number of big data sources driven by new technological developments.

Without limiting the full potential of big data for official statistics, promising areas include:

- demography, migration and tourism statistics, particularly for small areas, by using mobile phone and similar devices to understand where people are, over small time intervals
- traffic and transportation statistics, by using information from GPS and other tracking devices
- economic activity statistics, through using transactional data captured via electronic payment systems
- prices statistics, through the use and analysis of prices collected on the internet, as well as through the use of scanner and other point-of-sale data
- social sentiment statistics, through the analysis of social media activity, including search activity
- information and communication technology usage statistics, by monitoring internet traffic flows
- agricultural statistics, by using satellite observations
- environmental statistics, through the use of sensors.

The ABS has commenced work to investigate the potential in most of these areas and in some areas, such as the use of scanners and data captured via electronic payment systems, work is well advanced.

Integration of big data across sources and with survey data

The opportunities presented by big data are of interest to governments, scientists, researchers, private businesses, and the general public. While many of these opportunities can be realised by each sector analysing its own big data holdings, many high-value applications of big data will only occur when data sets from different sources are drawn together.

Realisation of this greater benefit requires 'information brokers', whose role it is to bring together data from one or more sources and to make it available to a broad range of data users. In this regard, as the pre-eminent information broker in Australia, the ABS has a key role to play in making effective use of big data.

Because any acquisition and use of big data by the ABS would be protected by the secrecy provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the ABS is uniquely placed to be a trusted integrator of big data.

The ABS possesses, in the form of five-yearly Census of Population and Housing data, a unique and rich picture of the total Australian population. The blending of big-data with 'traditional' census/sample survey or administrative data would enable the strengths of the various data sources to complement one another. For example, data collected through surveys can be defined quite precisely and in a very structured way, and surveys can be used to collect information that could not otherwise be captured through big data sources. The strength of these collections could enable them to be used to calibrate big data sources and to inform statistical modelling of big data. In doing so, statistics could be produced that maintain the qualities of traditional statistical data with the power of near real-time measurement.

Relevant expertise

While the ABS is not yet a major user of data that is really massive in volume and velocity, it is a long-standing user of large data. The use of censuses, surveys and administrative data sources by the ABS, some of which involve millions of records, could be considered the twentieth century's 'big data'. In recent times, the ABS has begun to explore the use of transactional data, such as the use of supermarket scanner data in the compilation of prices statistics and it has begun to bring together data from different data sources through statistical data integration, unlocking additional value from the underlying data sets.

Accordingly, the ABS has developed significant expertise in collecting and processing large amounts of data—some of it through indirect sources not directly controlled by the ABS such as administrative data—and producing statistics from them. It is well-placed to take advantage of the emerging twenty-first century big data sets.

ABS areas of expertise that are relevant to big data include:

- an ability to collect and process large quantities of data, enabled by sophisticated computer systems
- expertise in taking 'dirty' data, including data collected by others, and in 'cleansing' it to produce high-quality statistics
- expertise in a wide range of standards and frameworks covering economic, social and environmental statistics, which help give meaning to complex and unstructured data
- expertise in bringing together data from different sources and integrating it to produce coherent statistics
- expertise in a vast range of methodological techniques to extract maximum statistical benefit from datasets
- a strong analytical capability for extracting key messages from complex statistical information
- a sophisticated, web-based dissemination system so that statistical information can be made available to a wide-range of users in a variety of formats
- expertise in understanding and presenting the quality of statistical information so that users can judge the 'fit for purpose', using the ABS's Data Quality Framework
- expertise in assisting others in producing and using statistics—not all statistics that can be produced from big data will be produced by the ABS and the ABS can help others; also users will need to understand how to best use statistics produced from big data not just by the ABS but by others.

Unique capability

While others may reasonably lay claim to big data expertise and capability, the ABS is uniquely positioned to generate value from big data. In addition to its trusted position as a data integrator and secure custodian, the ABS is:

- empowered under its legislation to compel the provision of information for the purposes of producing official statistics
- an integrating authority accredited to undertake high risk data integration projects under the Commonwealth arrangements for data integration Involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes
- uniquely positioned to assess the quality and 'representativeness' of big data sources by comparing big data to high quality census and survey data

- able to produce statistics that are of high quality—and describe the quality so that users can be assured that the information they are using is fit for purpose
- independent, high-integrity and impartial. The ABS publishes its concepts, sources and methods, publishes results of all collections, and provides ‘level playing field’ access to all users of ABS statistics.

The ABS’s role in quality assurance

One potentially significant role that the ABS could play in statistics produced from big data is that of quality assurance, even if ABS did not produce the statistics itself. Such a role could be important, because the uncertain quality of much big data means that users of big data will need to have confidence in the information they are using. The ABS could seek to ‘certify’ statistics that have been produced by others, perhaps by re-publishing the statistics under the ABS brand, or auditing the compilation of the statistics, or through certification of the process of producing the statistics. This would be a new role for the ABS, and one that would have to be considered carefully. While it would offer advantages to users, it would also involve the ABS making judgements about the statistical processes of other organisations that could have significant consequences for those organisations. A lighter-touch approach would be for the ABS to provide standards for the compilation of statistics from big data that could be used by other producers, but not determine whether or not the standards had been followed, other than to encourage the producers to be open about their compilation processes.

Issues and challenges

While big data presents many opportunities, there are issues and challenges that need to be dealt with before it can be used to produce official statistics:

- big data is often inherently uncertain—sources may change over time, sometimes in an evolutionary manner, sometimes disruptively
- big data may be subject to biases which may be unknown or, if known, difficult to quantify
- big data may be of varying accuracy, reliability and ‘truthfulness’, which impacts on quality
- big data is often dirty, and cleansing it can require significant resources as well as strong expertise
- big data is often inherently unstructured, which means that innovative exploration, capture and analysis methods are required
- big data may provide only an approximate representation of the statistical item of interest, and therefore require modelling to produce statistics, which in turn requires modelling techniques, expertise and data to inform the development of models
- big data, because of its volume, requires extensive computing power and storage to collect, compile statistics and analyse results
- big data requires costly and sophisticated computer systems for processing
- big data raises issues of ownership (and custodianship) that could provide barriers to access, including commercial considerations when the data sources are held by businesses or other private owners
- big data raises issues of privacy and confidentiality (although any acquisition and use of big data by the ABS would be protected by the secrecy provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*).

None of the above-mentioned is insurmountable. However, they all require effort and resources to work through, as well as the development of new systems and processes. (In regard to the latter, the ABS has commenced a business transformation program that is aimed at developing the systems and processes that are required for a statistical agency in the twenty-first century, including those that can be used for big data; however at present this work is essentially un-funded.)

As well as up-front research and development costs, there will also be ongoing costs associated with collection from big data sources, and the subsequent compilation, analysis and dissemination. While there may be occasions where big data sources are a direct replacement for existing collections, and possibly cheaper to conduct, no statistical data is costless. Moreover, it is likely that most of the potential of big data will not be realised through direct replacement of statistical collections, but as a complement to existing statistical processes. This may lead to some changes to existing collections that may reduce costs, but it is possible that any savings may be less than the additional costs incurred in accessing and processing the big data sources, meaning that additional resources will be required to fully exploit the potential of big data.

In an environment of tight resources, the ABS cannot pursue big data opportunities as quickly as it would otherwise like. The ABS will seek to focus on those opportunities with the greatest potential benefit for official statistics. To enhance the effectiveness of its limited resources, the ABS will work with statistical offices in other countries, which are facing similar opportunities and challenges with big data, as well as with relevant Australian initiatives such as the Australian Government's big data strategy.

Conclusion

Big data offers exciting, numerous, and varied possibilities for official statistics. The ABS is well-placed, through the expertise it has developed over many years, and its unique position as a trusted custodian and integrator of sensitive data, to take advantage of these opportunities.

The ABS is actively exploring many areas where big data could be used to improve or enhance Australia's official statistics. However, there are significant challenges and costs. New methodologies and techniques will be required. While big data may lead to efficiencies in the production of some existing statistics, it is most likely that big data will complement current statistical activity and not lead to resource savings.

To realize the benefit of big data, the ABS will need to build on the trust held in it by the Australian community. With so much big data in private hands, the ABS will need to present a compelling case by demonstrating how significant public value can be unlocked while protecting both private interests and the confidentiality of individuals.

Notwithstanding these challenges, it is likely that over the next five years there will be a significant reshaping of Australia's official statistical activities to realise the benefits of big data.



Section 2

REPORT ON PERFORMANCE



Chapter 5

Key performance indicators



The ABS is required to report against the outcome and key performance indicators specified in the 2012–13 Portfolio Budget Statements, presented to the Parliament in May 2012.

The Treasury's Portfolio Budget Statements set out the performance indicators used to evaluate the Program 1.1: Australian Bureau of Statistics, against its one outcome.

Table 5.1: Outcome and key performance indicators for the ABS

Outcome 1: Informed decisions, research and discussion within governments and the community by leading the collection, analysis and provision of high quality, objective and relevant statistical information.	
ABS key performance indicators	
1. An objective statistical service as demonstrated by	1.1 Release of reliable and accurate statistics
	1.2 Transparent statistical process
	1.3 Trust and cooperation of providers
2. Statistical output which meets the needs of key users of economic and social data in terms of	2.1 Support for decision making
	2.2 A high level of use
3. Appropriate use of statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies by	3.1 Leading the development of national statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies, and their implementation within the broader Australian statistical system
	3.2 Contributing to the development of key international standards, frameworks and methodologies, and implementing them as appropriate

1. An objective statistical service as demonstrated by

1.1 Release of reliable and accurate statistics

To ensure the continued high-level accuracy of statistics, the ABS continues to monitor risks and implement risk mitigation strategies to ensure that survey methodologies and processes are sound, and any weaknesses are addressed. Statistical release incidents—where reissues of statistics occur due to errors, or where advertised dates of releases are not met or are changed—and quality incidents and investigations into particular areas of concern are monitored quarterly by the Senior Management Group of the ABS to identify any systemic quality issues that require additional strategies to mitigate future quality risks. Major quality risks facing ABS statistical collections are reviewed annually by each of the strategic management committees—on economic and environmental statistics, and on social statistics—and relevant mitigation actions are identified and implemented.

Throughout 2012–13 the ABS continued a systematic process for assuring the quality of business surveys and household surveys. The strategy, which is known as ‘quality gates’, involves explicit assessment of the statistical risks at strategic points in the survey process. The adoption of quality gates is gradually becoming more widespread across the ABS.

Statistical data, before they are disseminated, go through a rigorous clearance process. This involves looking at a number of quality measures to ensure the compilation has been correctly carried out, and confronting the data with other relevant sources to ensure the results are plausible.

‘Non-sampling error’ is a general term that describes all sources of error other than the error introduced by the sampling process. Some sources of non-sampling error that are most relevant to statistical surveys include: non-response bias; errors in identifying and contacting the population of interest for a survey; errors introduced by the questionnaire design, such as misunderstanding or inadvertently missing questions, or phrasing questions that predispose a respondent to answer in a particular way; and data capture, processing and coding errors.

The ABS minimises the impact of non-sampling errors in its own surveys by the use of best practice procedures in questionnaire design, interview procedures, data validation and repair, and processing. Any significant changes to questionnaire wording or data collection methods are carefully trialled and evaluated before they are implemented.

Measure: Relative standard errors

The accuracy of statistical information is one dimension of quality, and assesses the degree to which the information correctly describes the phenomena it was designed to measure. ABS surveys are designed to meet pre-specified levels of accuracy for key data items at important levels of dissemination (e.g. national, state, industry), which are determined in consultation with major users. These accuracy levels of statistical estimates are presented in ABS publications in terms of measures of sampling error, such as relative standard errors (RSEs).

The magnitude of RSEs varies between collections and between data items within a collection due to factors such as the responding sample size and the nature of the data item. The RSE is a useful indicator for comparing the accuracy of estimates between surveys. Table 5.2 presents a summary view of the estimated RSEs for key statistics from a number of major ABS surveys. Further detailed information is included with each ABS publication, as well as in the concepts, sources and methods publications released by the ABS.

Table 5.2: Relative standard errors (RSEs) for selected indicators ^(a)

Publication	Indicator	RSE (%)	RSE (%)	RSE (%)
		2012–13	2011–12	2010–11
Retail Trade, Australia (ABS cat. no. 8501.0)	Total turnover for the retail industry, Australia	0.8	0.8	0.7
Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia (ABS cat. no. 5625.0)	Actual private new capital expenditure, Australia	1.1	1.1	2.5
Business Indicators, Australia (ABS cat. no. 5676.0)	Company gross operating profit, Australia	1.1	1.1	1.1
Building Activity, Australia (ABS cat. no. 8752.0)	Value of building work done, Australia	0.7	0.7	0.7
Average Weekly Earnings, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6302.0)	Full-time adult ordinary time earnings, Australia	0.6	0.8	0.7
Job Vacancies, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6354.0)	Job vacancies, Australia	5.2	5.2	4.7
Labour Force Australia (ABS cat. no. 6202.0)	Total number of persons employed (aged 15 and over), Australia	0.3	0.4	0.4

(a) RSEs presented are the average achieved during each year for surveys conducted in respect of the reference periods for 2010–11, 2011–12 and 2012–13

The reduction in RSEs in the ‘Actual private new capital expenditure’ since 2010–11 are largely a result of a change in the method behind sizing businesses, which leads to a more efficient sample design.

Table 5.3 provides an international comparison of Australian RSEs for two key statistical indicators with those of selected countries.

Table 5.3: Relative standard errors (RSEs) for selected indicators, with selected international comparisons

Publication	Indicator	RSE (%)	RSE (%) for comparable indicator in selected countries	
		Australia	New Zealand	United States of America
Retail Trade, Australia (ABS cat. no. 8501.0)	Total turnover for the retail industry, Australia	0.8	1.1	0.4
Labour Force Survey (ABS cat. no. 6202.0)	Total number of persons employed (aged 15 and over), Australia	0.3	0.5	0.2

(a) Source: Statistics New Zealand: *Retail Trade Survey: March 2013 quarter* (http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/industry_sectors/RetailTrade/RetailTradeSurvey_HOTPMar13qtr.aspx)

(b) Source: Statistics New Zealand: *Household Labour Force Survey: March 2013 quarter* (http://www.stats.govt.nz/browse_for_stats/income-and-work/employment_and_unemployment/HouseholdLabourForceSurvey_HOTPMar13qtr.aspx)

(c) Source: US Bureau of Census *Monthly Retail Trade Survey, figures revised June 13, 2013* <http://www.census.gov/retail/mrts/www/data/text/nrelys.txt>

(d) Source: Bureau of Labour Statistics *Current Population Survey* (www.bls.gov/bls/empitquickguide.htm)

1.2 Transparent statistical process

The ABS statistical system is open to outside scrutiny. Its methodologies are based on sound statistical principles and practices. Information on the statistical methods for individual statistical collections is available from the *Explanatory Notes* tab of each statistical publication on the ABS website. For more detailed information, *Statistical concepts, sources and methods* manuals associated with particular subjects of statistics can also be found on the ABS website, e.g. through the *Related Information* tab of each statistical publication.

The key forum for peer expert review of methodological developments in the ABS is the Methodological Advisory Committee (MAC). MAC meets twice a year, and consists of professional statisticians, and economic and social analysts external to the ABS, i.e. from universities and other research organisations. Most MAC papers are published on the ABS website, where they can be located from the *Methods & Classifications* page. Topics presented in the past year include:

- disclosure-protected regression coefficients with linked microdata
- data confrontation-reconciling aggregates from surveys and administrative collections
- propensity score matching: an application using the ABS Business Characteristics Survey
- microsimulation of household interviewer travel cost to optimise sample design and operations
- robust modelling of design effects for household survey samples
- disclosure-protected frequency tables from linked microdata
- methodology architecture
- socio-economic indexes for households.

1.3 Trust and cooperation of providers

The ABS recognises its obligation to respondents in statistical collections. The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* requires the ABS to publish and disseminate compilations and analysis of statistical information, and to maintain the confidentiality of information collected under the Act. The ABS meets the confidentiality requirements of the Act by ensuring that information provided is securely maintained, used only for statistical purposes, and used only in aggregated tables and unidentifiable microdata files to support research and analysis. In addition, the ABS ensures that identifying information provided by a household is not revealed.

ABS Surveys Charter

In recognition of its obligation to those who provided information for statistical collections, the ABS has produced a service charter covering both business and household surveys.

The charter includes information on how surveys are conducted, and outlines the rights and obligations underpinning the relationship between the ABS and those who participate in surveys. The charter explains what people can expect when dealing with the ABS and ABS interviewers, including expected standards for the ABS in managing complaints.

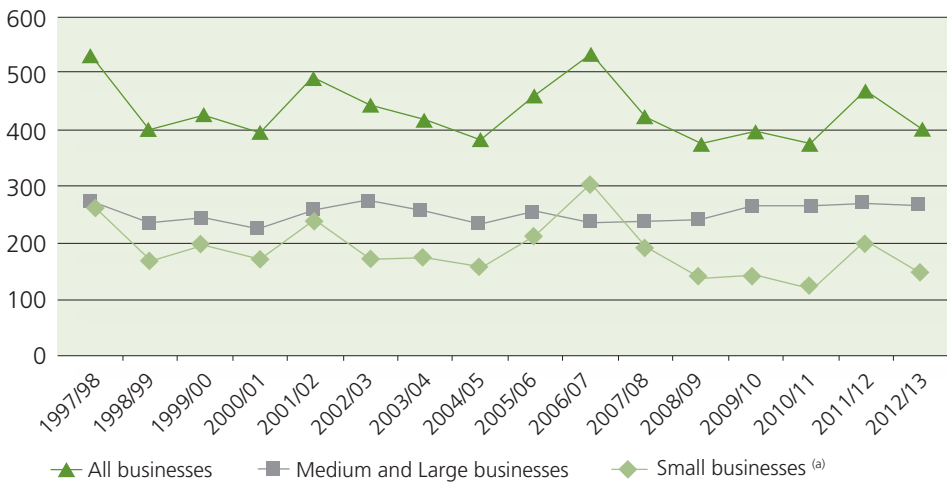
The ABS Surveys Charter is available on the ABS website at www.abs.gov.au. Translation services are also available.

Measure: Provider load in business surveys

In 2012–13 the total number of hours taken by all ABS providers to complete all ABS business survey forms was 405,000 hours, a decrease of 66,000 hours since 2011–12. This 2011–12 provider load was high due to the five-yearly Agricultural Census which was conducted in 2011–12.

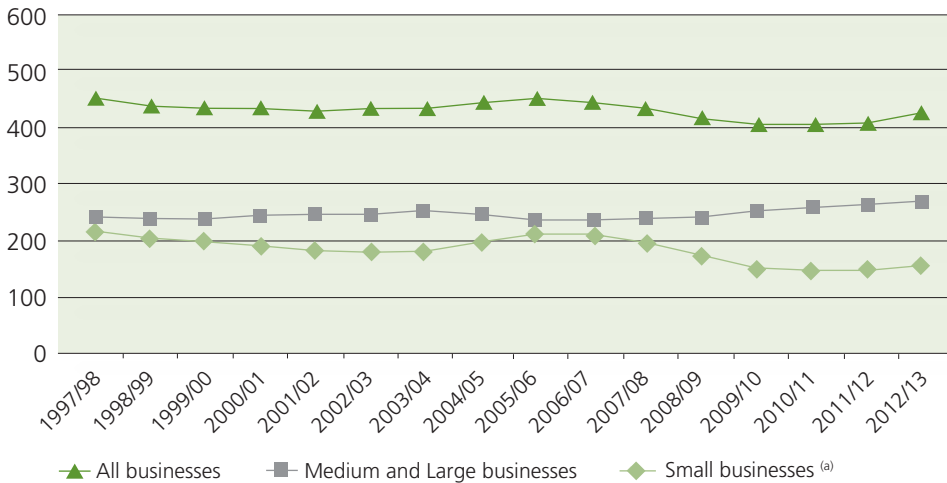
Provider load figures from 1997–98 to 2012–13 have been calculated using an 11-term Henderson moving average to reveal the underlying trend. This process smooths the effect of irregular and regular contributors to provider load, such as the five-yearly Agricultural Census. The trend estimate shows an increase of 15,000 hours between 2011–12 and 2012–13, 10,000 hours for small businesses and 5,000 hours for medium and large businesses.

Figure 5.1: Actual provider load (thousands of hours)



(a) Businesses with less than 20 employees

Figure 5.2: Trend estimate of provider load (thousands of hours) ^(a)



(a) Smoothed using an 11-term Henderson moving average

(b) Businesses with less than 20 employees

Measure: Response rates for selected surveys

Every business or household selected for an ABS survey, whether large or small, plays an important role in contributing to ABS statistics at the national and state and territory levels. Each one represents a number of other businesses or households with similar characteristics to their own, which is why every response is important.

Continuing high response rates demonstrate a good level of cooperation by providers.

The ABS sets very high target rates for collections to ensure surveys are representative of the whole population and also to reduce the required sample size. The achieved results can be attributed to the high regard the business community has for the ABS, and the follow-up procedures used by the ABS to help providers. However, it is becoming more difficult and expensive to contact businesses using traditional means.

Maintaining high response rates is also a major focus for the household survey program. This is becoming more and more difficult due to the increased tendency for all members of the household to be working away from home, and hence not available for interview. To reduce provider burden and improve the flexibility to respond, the ABS has introduced e-forms into a number of collections with strong take up and positive feedback from households and businesses.

Overall, the ABS continues to achieve very high response rates for both household and business surveys, as shown in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Response rates for selected surveys ^(a)

		Target response rate (%) ^(b)	Final Response rate 2012–13 (%)	Final Response rate 2011–12 (%)	Final Response rate 2010–11 (%)
Business Surveys	Retail Business Survey	95	95 ^(c)	95 ^(c)	95 ^(c)
	Quarterly Business Indicators Survey	85	86 ^(c)	87 ^(c,f)	84 ^(c,f)
	Capital Expenditure Survey	90	92 ^(c)	94 ^(c)	94 ^(c)
	Economic Activity Survey	90	85	86	89
	Survey of Tourist Accommodation	90	93 ^(c)	93 ^(c)	90 ^(c)
	Business Characteristics Survey	95	97	95	95
	Vineyards Survey	85	86	88	88
	Survey of Average Weekly Earnings	98	98 ^(c)	98 ^(c)	97 ^(c)
	Survey of International Trade in Services	90	95 ^(c)	95 ^(c)	95 ^(c)
Household Surveys	Labour Force Survey	97	96	96	97
	Multi-purpose Household Survey	80 ^(d)	79 ^(d)	80 ^(d)	87 ^(d)
	Longitudinal Study of Australian Children	93	87	^(e)	86
	Survey of Disability and Carers	87	90	^(e)	^(e)
	Household Energy Consumption Survey	87	79	^(e)	^(e)
	Personal Safety Survey	70	65	^(e)	^(e)

(a) Response rates apply to the period in which the data are collected

(b) Method of measuring target response rates can vary by survey (e.g. a form receipt rate or a live response rate)

(c) Average response rate over the year

(d) The Multi-purpose Household Survey covers a number of individual topics, enumerated monthly. Response rates are a simple average across all topics

(e) Survey not conducted during the year

(f) Figures were incorrectly reported in previous annual reports.

Measure: Provider correspondence

The majority of businesses and households selected in ABS surveys understand and support the need for high quality statistics. Only a very small percentage (less than 0.5%) of the 200,000 businesses and 150,000 households selected in ABS surveys each year write to the ABS to question or complain about their participation in an ABS survey.

Households and businesses have a number of avenues available to them if they have queries or complaints about being selected in a survey or about the processes involved. Freecall (excluding mobile phones) contact numbers are provided with all information sent to survey participants and, for the majority of cases, when participants call these numbers their concerns are resolved by the ABS officers receiving the calls.

For 2012–13, the ABS received a total of 849 queries or complaints from businesses. This is an increase of 179 (27%) compared to the number reported for the previous year and an increase of 20 (2.4%) compared to 2010–11.

The majority of these approaches to the ABS were businesses seeking exemption from the requirement of ongoing participation in the ABS Business Survey Program. The ABS does at times provide general exemptions from surveys to certain small businesses in exceptional circumstances. Providers are also granted temporary exemptions on compassionate grounds.

The ABS received 777 requests for exemption during 2012–13, of which 227 compassionate and 142 general exemptions from surveys were granted. The remaining 408 requests were denied as they failed to meet the ABS exemption criteria.

Twelve complaints about business surveys were submitted to the ABS Complaints Review Officer. The majority of complaints to the ABS Complaints Review Officer were a second request for exemption after the first had been denied. In responses to businesses, the ABS advises that the ABS Complaints Review Officer can be contacted if the business is not satisfied with the outcome.

Table 5.5: Written correspondence from businesses and households selected in ABS surveys, 2012–13^(a)

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
Correspondence directly to ABS—Total Numbers ^(a)				
Business surveys and censuses	791	829	670	849
Requests for exemption ^(b)		779	609	777
Other complaints and queries ^(b)		50	61	72
Household surveys	49	73	119	86
Requests for exemption ^(b)		23	45	44
Other complaints and queries ^(b)		50	74	42

(a) Excludes correspondence to politicians (ministerial correspondence). These are detailed in table 5.6

(b) Breakdown of correspondence by requests for exemption from surveys vs. complaints and other queries not available prior to 2010–11

Table 5.6: Correspondence to politicians (ministerial correspondence), 2012–13

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
Business surveys and censuses	12	3	3	10
Household surveys	31	23	34	25

Measure: Provider correspondence resolution

Every item of provider correspondence is responded to either in writing or by telephone contact as outlined in the ABS Surveys Charter. Performance against the standards for managing correspondence from businesses is summarised below in Table 5.7.

Table 5.7: Performance against ABS Surveys Charter complaint resolution standards for 2012–13: targets and actual performance

Performance standard—responding to correspondence from businesses	Target (weeks)	Actual performance (average days)	Actual performance (% of total where target achieved)
Sent written acknowledgement	1	1	98
Sent written advice of outcome	4	27	67

Measure: Notices of Direction and prosecution actions

Under sections 10(4) and 11(2) of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the Australian Statistician may, by notice in writing, direct a person/business to complete a survey form or answer a question that is necessary to obtain statistical information.

Under section 14 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, a person/business commits an offence if they fail to comply with a Notice of Direction (NoD). The penalty for this is set at one penalty unit (\$170 in 2012–13) in respect of each day after the NoD is served until the person/business complies with the direction. The application of this penalty is at the discretion of the court.

These provisions are used sparingly, as the ABS prefers to seek the willing cooperation of respondents. However, it is sometimes necessary to use the legislative provisions, in order to maintain the integrity of ABS statistics.

The number of NoDs issued and the number of prosecution actions approved in recent years are shown in Table 5.8. The number of NoDs and prosecution actions approved is higher every five years, when the Census of Population and Housing is conducted (as shown for 2011–12).

Table 5.8: Notices of Direction issued and prosecution actions approved

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
Notices of Direction issued	79	188	1,495	120
Census of Population and Housing	-	-	1,282	-
Household surveys	62	163	210 ^(a)	111
Business censuses and surveys	17	25	3	9
Prosecution actions approved (b)	0	0	78	0
Census of Population and Housing	0	0	78	0
Household surveys	0	0	0	0
Business censuses and surveys	0	0	0	0

(a) The increase in the number of NoDs issued to household survey respondents reflects improved processes and an increased effort in seeking compliance from households

(b) Approved by the Australian Statistician for referral to the Commonwealth Director of Public Prosecutions. Any particular prosecution approval may relate to a number of NoDs. Each prosecution action approval is counted in the year in which the corresponding NoDs are issued. Not every prosecution action approved proceeds to court

2. Statistical output which meets the needs of key users of economic and social data in terms of

2.1 Support for decision making

Measure: Outposted officers for key clients

The National Statistical Service is the community of government agencies, led by the ABS as Australia's national statistical organisation, building a rich statistical picture for a better informed Australia.

To enhance engagement with users and producers of statistics, the ABS outposts statistical officers in selected Australian and state and territory government agencies.

The purpose of the outposted officer program is to assist in ensuring a strong and effective working relationship between the ABS and government agencies. The outposted officers contribute to informed decision-making by harnessing ABS resources, where appropriate, to address the host agency's information needs.

The primary objectives of longer term outpostings are to:

- facilitate strategic engagement and identify opportunities for the ABS to assist the host agency in identifying and providing information for policy development, implementation or evaluation purposes
- promote and enhance statistical capability in government agencies, to improve understanding and the effective use of statistics in evidence-based decision making
- support the National Statistical Service by promoting the use of shared statistical infrastructure including standards, classifications, and data policies to encourage coherence between complementary data assets
- build strong partnerships with agencies to support, develop, share and use public information assets to meet current and emerging requirements
- keep the ABS informed about emerging information and analytical priorities to ensure the ABS forward work program remains relevant.

In addition, ABS outposted officers assist with coordinating statistical activities, including collection and dissemination of data, so that duplication is reduced and quality is improved. Outcomes of coordination include reduced cost and provider load associated with information collection, as well as improved comparability of data.

Table 5.9: Number of outposted officers by Government Agency, 2012–13

Level of Government	Number 2011–12	Number 2012–13	List of agencies with outposted officers in 2012–13
Australian	13	17	Australian Business Register (4 outpostings for 3 months)
			Australian Taxation Office
			Australian National Preventative Health Agency
			Bureau of Meteorology
			Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (2 outpostings)
			Department of Health and Ageing
			Department of Immigration and Citizenship
			Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport
			Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities
			Disability Care Australia
			Productivity Commission
			National Health Performance Authority (2 outpostings)
State and Territory	15	13	New South Wales Department of Finance and Services
			New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet and
			New South Wales Department of Treasury (joint)
			New South Wales Department of Premier and Cabinet
			New South Wales Office of Environment and Heritage
			Queensland Registry of Births, Deaths and Marriages
			South Australian Department for Education and Child Development
			Tasmanian Department of Premier and Cabinet
			Victorian Department of Justice
			Victorian Department of Transport, Planning and Local Infrastructure
			Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet and Victorian Department of Treasury (joint)
			Victorian Department of Human Services
			Western Australia Department of Health
			Western Australian Premier and Cabinet and Treasury

To guide the work program and ensure that statistics are relevant, the ABS regularly consults with a range of user groups including all levels of government, industry, researchers, policy makers and community organisations. A full list of user groups active in 2012–13 appears in Chapter 10—Statistical and Topic Advisory groups advising the ABS.

2.2 A high level of use

ABS data is accessed by a broad range of organisations and individuals including government, businesses and the community. The ABS website contains a wide range of freely available statistics. Key users of ABS statistics include the Department of Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, financial institutions, the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), many Australian government departments—including the Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA); the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FAHCSIA); the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C); and the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR)—state and territory governments, employee organisations, the media and academia. The ABS provides free and charged information and consultancy services to support informed decision making.

Measure: Service delivery

National Information and Referral Service

The National Information and Referral Service (NIRS) provides integrated support for users to ABS products and services and ABS switchboard functionality. The NIRS has evolved to support a wide range of products and services as well as inquiries of increasing complexity.

The number of calls answered by NIRS as shown in Table 5.10 increased by 25% between 2011–12 and 2012–13. This increase is also attributable to NIRS being the first point of telephone contact for Census support as part of the release of 2011 output and the completion of handover of switchboard functions to NIRS. The number of emails received by NIRS in 2012–13 decreased by nearly 7% from the previous period.

ABS website

The ABS website is a primary access point for the majority of users of ABS information. There were 12.3 million website visits in 2012–13, an increase of approximately 1 million on the previous year (2011–12). In the period 2009–10 to 2012–13, visits to the website have increased by almost 5 million. The number of products downloaded continues to steadily increase with the number of downloads up by 265,000 in the last 12 months. Table 5.10 details the number of accesses over a four-year period by the type of access.

ABS Stats iOS app

In July 2012 the ABS released ABS Stats, an iOS app which aims to provide key statistics to users on mobile devices in a fast, flexible and easy to use format. Since its release there have been over 12,000 downloads and the app reached the number 1 downloaded utility application in Australia less than one week after release.

The app provides users with key indicator data, 2011 Census information, and the current Australian population count. It demonstrates innovative use of technology and is helping enhance the way the ABS communicates official statistics.

In June 2013, the ABS Stats app was a runner-up in the 2013 Excellence in eGovernment Awards. A freelance technology journalist summed it up well, stating that 'ABS Stats is a great example of how government agencies can unlock data and really engage with the public on a new level'.

ABS use of social media

Over the last 12 months the ABS has continued to explore the use of Facebook and Twitter and has been expanding its reach in both of these channels.

ABS Facebook posts have been wide ranging, covering information on graduate recruitment

through to infographics on participation in sport by women and young people's internet usage. The most popular post in the last year related to the population clock which reached 23 million in April 2013. This post generated a larger number of shares and responses than in the past and illustrates how government can generate engaging content for different audiences.

The ABS Twitter account continues to be popular with over 11,300 followers. Tweets are produced for major statistical releases as well as engaging our users by providing interesting facts with links back to the ABS website for those seeking more information.

This multi-channel approach for disseminating data and engaging users is contributing to the ABS commitment of a better informed Australian community.

ABS.Stat

On 14 December 2012, ABS.Stat Beta was released for public access as an interactive free online tool that presents data in a searchable, flexible and dynamic way, taking the first step toward the future of making aggregated data available via web services and web browsers. Launching with nine datasets, the ABS.Stat beta release allowed users to try ABS.Stat and provide feedback, recognising that work was still to be done on enhancing the tool through ongoing development phases and acknowledging some important issues remained to be resolved. The product has expanded to seventeen datasets and has progressed to an average of 1,900 users per month.

Customised and microdata delivery

In 2012–13, the number of completed consultancies experienced a decline from previous years; however the size and complexity of jobs increased. This trend is expected to continue as simpler jobs are serviced by channels such as TableBuilder. The Census of Population and Housing and International Trade continue to be the major areas for requests. The 2012–13 financial year saw an increase in requests for other topics such as births, deaths, marriages, overseas arrivals and departures, and employment. The International Trade subscriptions service continues to be popular, servicing over 600 clients.

TableBuilder

TableBuilder provides a valuable tool for tabulating data which includes an innovative approach with a routine that dynamically confidentialises tabular output using perturbation techniques prior to results being returned to the user. The primary advantage of this technique is that the impact on overall data quality of the confidentialisation routine is minimised by applying the necessary modifications only to the final output and not to the underlying data source. This allows ABS to make the power of the full unit record files available whilst protecting the confidentiality of the data. TableBuilder is available with Census 2011 data as well as microdata from several surveys.

Confidentialised Unit Record Files

CURFs consist of records of individual responses to ABS surveys from persons, households or organisations. These records have been modified to protect respondent confidentiality. In all cases, information such as names and addresses has been removed, and a variety of statistical techniques has been applied to further ensure respondent confidentiality is maintained.

Table 5.10 : Number of accesses by type of access 2008–09 to 2012–13

Type of Access	2008–09	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
Website					
Visits to website	-	7,451,497	8,352,307	11,271,540	12,299,436
Pages viewed ^(a)	50,907,654	54,983,668	52,646,145	70,295,257	67,766,597
Pages published	45,371	84,716	96,513	133,798 ^(a)	232,602 ^(b)
Products downloaded ^(a)	1,479,636	1,823,852	1,767,282	2,171,665	2,436,997
National Information and Referral Service					
Emails ^(c)	-	8,446	10,217	11,728	10,946
Calls completed	50,716	55,893	51,039	45,053	56,302
ABS.Stat Dec 2012—May 2013) (d)					
Visits to ABS.Stat (no.)					17,238
Pages viewed (no.)					61,334
Information Consultancy Service					
Consultancies dispatched	2,968	2,396	1,958	3,098	1,174
Remote Access Data Laboratory					
Organisations active on RADL	73	70	67	68	68
Individuals active on RADL	189	254	248	251	194
Statistical programs executed	16,160	28,849	34,771	48,073	24,337
TableBuilder (paid products)					
Organisations registered		n/a	n/a	101	143
Individuals registered		n/a	n/a	n/a	2,722
Number of datasets available		1	1	4	15
TableBuilder (free products)					
Organisations registered		n/a	n/a	n/a	1,370
Individuals registered		n/a	n/a	n/a	28,380
Number of datasets available		1	1	1	2

(a) Includes 70,000 Census 2011 pages

(b) Includes 150,703 Census 2011 pages

(c) All data for Emails is revised to remove counts for spam messages

(d) ABS.Stat Beta system release for public access in December 2012

Measure: Service delivery

The ABS *Service Delivery Charter* outlines the ABS's commitment to providing quality customer service, and describes the products and services that users can expect when they approach the ABS for information. The charter offers guidance to customers wishing to provide compliments, or register complaints, on any aspect of customer relationships or service. The Customer Services program report in Chapter 5 contains further information on ABS initiatives to improve the distribution of and engagement with ABS products.

Informing Decisions—Australian Bureau of Statistics Service Delivery Charter (ABS cat. no. 1007.0) outlines the service standards for the ABS, and can be accessed from the ABS website www.abs.gov.au. Performance against these service standards for 2012–13 can be found in Table 5.11.

Table 5.11: Target and actual performance against service standards for 2012–13

Performance Standard	Target (%)	2010–11 Actual Performance (%)	2011–12 Actual Performance (%)	2012–13 Actual Performance (%)
General enquiries				
Answer 85% of calls to the telephone enquiry service within 30 seconds (between the hours of 9.00am and 5:00pm (EST), Monday to Friday)	85	85	86	81
Acknowledge the receipt of 99% of email enquiries within five working days	99	99	99	99
Respond to 90% of Enquiry Form correspondence within five working days	90	99	99	99
Consultancy services				
Provide 90% of quotes for information consultancy services within three working days of receiving the customer's final specifications	90	94	91	70
Provide 90% of information consultancy services within five working days, or to a timeframe negotiated between the customer and the consultant	90	77	79	77
Complaints				
Acknowledgment of a service delivery complaint within one working day of receipt	100	88	95	100
Response from the Director, Customised and Microdata Delivery in the relevant ABS office, within five working days	100	77	100	100
Website				
Commence publishing to website at 11:30am (EST) Monday to Friday	100	100	100	100
Ensure the website is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, subject to events out of ABS's control	100	100	100	100
Advertise website unavailability for maintenance purposes one working day prior to the website being unavailable	100	100	100	100
Fix 99% of broken web page links within 3 working days of notification by a customer	99	100 ^(a)	99 ^(a)	99 ^(a)
Refer 99% of requests for translation of any web product which is not suitably accessible for visually impaired users to an appropriate translation service within three working days	99	n.a. ^(b)	n.a. ^(b)	n.a. ^(b)
Microdata				
Acknowledge the receipt of 99% of microdata enquiries within one working day	99	98	98	99
Provide a full response to 85% of microdata enquiries within five working days	85	95	96	94
Dispatch 90% of CURF microdata products within 15 working days of receipt of the completed application form	90	100	96	94
Provide 90% of new CURF users with access within five working days to a CURF already approved for use in that organisation	90	100	99	98

(a) Fixed or referred to content owner

(b) No requests received

3 Appropriate use of statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies

3.1 Leading the development of national statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies, and their implementation within the broader Australian statistical system

The ABS develops national statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies which are applied, as appropriate, to all ABS statistical collections, including business and household surveys. The ABS takes a leading role by encouraging other Australian state and territory government agencies to adopt these standards, frameworks and methodologies in their statistical activities. The ABS also works closely with other agencies involved in the development of standards and frameworks.

These standards are developed and implemented on the basis of consultation and input from a range of stakeholders and interest groups in the statistical and user communities.

During 2012–13 the ABS undertook development, review or revision of a number of standards, frameworks and methodologies as described below.

'Classification' reviews

The ABS completed the following reviews in 2012–13:

- **Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO)**, for use in classifying Australian and New Zealand occupation data. The revised classification was released in June 2013.
- **Australian and New Zealand Standard Industry Classification (ANZSIC)**, for use in classifying Australian and New Zealand industry data. The revised classification was released in late June 2013.
- **Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia (SESCA) 2008**, for use in classifying Australian Economic Sector units. The classification has undergone a major review to incorporate the new Business Register Economic Units Model (EUM). A minor review of the classification content clarifying differences to 2008 SNA was also undertaken. The SESCOA 2013 classification will be released in September 2013.
- **Central Product Classification (CPC)**. A review to identify the alignment of existing ABS product classifications was undertaken to test the suitability of this international classification for eventual ABS usage. This review is ongoing.

'Standard' reviews

Economic:

- **Standard Question Wording**. Standard Question Wording details the question wording to be used on collection instruments for measuring economic concepts. A review was undertaken with a minor update released in July 2013.

Social:

- **Indigenous Status**. The Indigenous Status standard review began in April 2012. The National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (NCATSIS) has produced an issues paper which focuses on improving the question for Indigenous identification. The review will now be completed by June 2014.
- **Family, Household and Income Unit Standards (Living Conditions)**: Relationship in Household, Family Composition, Relationship Between Families, Income Unit Composition, Household Composition, Registered Marital Status, Social Marital Status, Overview of Family, Household and Income Unit Composition.

The Living Conditions Section commenced a review of the Family, Household and Income Unit Standards in June 2012. These standards were last updated in 2005.

Internal consultation on this group of standards commenced in June 2012 with the formation of an internal stakeholders group. The group raised a number of common operational issues with the current coding rules and variations in output standards for different products. Given that the testing program for the 2016 Census will be influential in the outcome of the Family, Household and Income Unit Standards Review, it is not expected that the review will be finalised before June 2014.

- **Income Standards (Living Conditions):** Total Income, Sources of Income, Equivalised Household Income, Main Source of Income

The Living Conditions Section is currently conducting a minor review of the household income standards, due for completion by the end of 2012–13. The existing standards were endorsed by the Strategic Committee on Social Statistics (SCoSS) in February 2010 following an extensive review to align the Australian standards to new international standards and to address a wide range of income data reporting and collection issues in ABS household collections.

- **Housing Standards (Living Conditions):** Dwelling Structure, Number of Bedrooms, Tenure Type, Landlord Type

The Living Conditions Section is conducting a minor review of the Housing Standards. Work to date has included reviewing previous work on these standards, current uses of the standard, departures from standard, and real world changes. Much of the work will be bringing the standards in line with current best practice already used in the Survey of Income and Housing. A discussion paper was finalised in late 2012 for internal consultation to take place in 2013. External consultation will follow in 2013 after the completion of internal processes.

- **Ancestry and Australian Citizenship Standards.** The review of the Ancestry standard commenced in May 2012 and the review of the Australian Citizenship standard commenced in June 2012. For both standards the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics—National Migrant Statistics Unit (NMSU) has rebuilt stakeholder lists, researched international and domestic definitions and measurement issues, conducted stakeholder consultation and compiled and evaluated feedback. The NMSU has also prepared a draft of the standard and prepared a draft update paper for the SCoSS. There are no major issues with the standards and the review was completed in June 2013.
- **Year of Arrival (Standards and Classifications).** The review of the Year of Arrival Standard commenced in October 2012. Work to date has included background research into departures and international and domestic practices for collecting data about this topic, and searches of internal correspondence which are either in progress or completed. Stakeholder consultation commenced on 7 December 2012. Finalisation of the review is not expected until late 2013.
- **Sex (Standards and Classifications).** The review of the Sex Standard commenced in July 2012. Work to date has focused on internal consultation, research and question development. Questions are likely to be tested in late 2013 as part of the Census Testing. The review is on schedule for completion in 2014.
- **Age (Standards and Classifications).** The review of the Age Standard commenced in October 2012. Work to date has included background research into departures, definitions and searches of internal correspondence which are either in progress or completed. Stakeholder consultation commenced on 7 December 2012. Finalisation of the review is not expected until late 2013.
- **Proficiency in Spoken English (Standards and Classifications).** The review of the Proficiency in Spoken English Standard commenced in November 2012. Work to date has

focused on background research into departures and a search of internal correspondence is in progress. Stakeholder consultation commenced on 7 December 2012. Finalisation of the review is not expected until late 2013.

- **Education Standards:** Highest Year of School Completed, Main Field of Highest Educational Attainment, Main Field of Highest Non-School Qualification, Year Non-School Qualification Completed, Level of Highest Educational Attainment, Level of Highest Non-School Qualification

A review of the Education Standards has very recently commenced and the standards have been added to the review schedule for 2012–13. The National Centre for Education and Training Statistics (NCETS) aims to complete the reviews by late 2013—early 2014.

Measure: Labour Force standards

The suite of Labour Force Standards currently comprises:

- Labour Force Status
- Hours Worked
- Full-time/Part-time Status
- Duration of Unemployment
- Status in Employment.

These standards capture some of the core elements of Labour Force statistics, most notably Labour Force Status which defines the populations of people employed, unemployed, and the labour force, which are used to derive key labour market indicators.

The ABS standards are based on standards set out by the International Labour Organisation. The international standards are currently being reviewed and the ABS is contributing to this review through working group participation.

A review of the first four standards was completed in 2012–13, with the review of Status in Employment continuing into 2013–14. It is expected that these revised standards will be introduced in the ABS Labour Force Survey from July 2014.

The review resulted in minimal change to both the Labour Force Status and Full-time/Part-time Status standards. The Hours Worked standard now more clearly articulates the different concepts of hours worked (actual hours, usual hours and hours paid for) and presents more streamlined output categories. The review of Duration of Unemployment resulted in a minor definitional change to be more consistent with the Labour Force Status standard.

Measure: Upgrading classification coding infrastructure

Next Generation coders

Coding survey responses is an essential component of producing statistics. For complex topics such as occupation and industry, the existing coding tools currently code between 65% and 70% of Census responses automatically. The remaining 30% to 35% of responses require human intervention to code, and this is a costly and time-consuming process.

The ABS is investing in a project to upgrade its existing classification coding infrastructure (which dates back to the mid 1990's) to increase the level of automatic coding, whilst maintaining or improving coding quality.

Evaluation of a Next Generation autocoder prototype undertaken for Census 2011 for occupation and industry showed automatic coding rates of up to 90% are achievable at a small cost to overall coding quality. Work will progress to determine the optimal balance between automatic coding rates and quality, and to extend the NextGen autocoder to other topics such as qualifications.

Measure: Data Quality Online

The Data Quality Online (DQO) tool is a free online assistant available on the NSS website (<http://www.nss.gov.au>), to assist data producers and users in applying the seven quality dimensions of the ABS Data Quality Framework when preparing data quality statements. The tool can be applied to assess the data quality of administrative datasets and survey collections as well as for COAG performance indicators. In 2012–13 the ABS worked in collaboration with the Productivity Commission to update the DQO tool to reflect changes to the COAG performance indicators in the National Agreements.

Measure: Governance and institutional arrangements for statistical data integration

As Secretariat for the Cross Portfolio Data Integration Oversight Board, the ABS has continued its leadership role in providing a safe and effective environment for data integration. The Board is chaired by the Australian Statistician and includes Secretaries from FAHCSIA, DoHA and the Department of Human Services (DHS). DHS and ABS, in collaboration with other Australian Government departments, developed the *High Level Principles for Data Integration Involving Commonwealth Data for Statistical and Research Purposes* which were endorsed by Portfolio Secretaries (the predecessor to the Secretaries Board) in 2010. Institutional and governance arrangements to support the implementation of these principles, including the establishment of the Cross Portfolio Data Integration Oversight Board, were endorsed by the Secretaries Board in 2010.

A significant milestone was achieved in 2012–13 with the release of an online public register of Australian Government data integration projects for statistical and research purposes. The late 2012 release of the online public register, which also includes a public feedback mechanism, on the NSS website implements one of the governance and institutional arrangements.

The Secretariat continued to promote implementation of the Australian Government governance and institutional arrangements through attendance at conferences, presentation of seminars, and through meetings with stakeholders. The release of a draft series of best practice guidelines for consultation and comment by other Australian Government departments was achieved in late 2012, and the guidelines are now being finalised for progressive release over the medium term. An additional topic in the Confidentiality information series, *How confidentiality affects research*, was released in early 2013.

3.2 Contributing to the development of key international standards, frameworks and methodologies, and implementing them as appropriate

The ABS is at the forefront of National Statistical Offices (NSOs) in developing and adopting international standards, frameworks and methodologies. This has been achieved by working collaboratively with international partners, and by directly adopting published international standards or by developing Australian derivatives which facilitate international comparability. All national statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies can be aligned with international equivalents.

In 2012–13, the ABS continued its efforts in developing key frameworks and standards, as outlined below.

Measure: International collaboration effort and information management transformation

The ABS continued working with strategic partners to enhance collaboration on statistical infrastructure, tools and supporting statistical standards. The ABS took an active leadership role for both the Statistical Network and the United Nations Economic Commission (UNECE) for Europe High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services (HLG).

The ABS has continued to lead and support the Statistical Network—a network of NSOs from Australia, Canada, Sweden, Norway, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Italy. The Network seeks to improve statistical information management through a series of practical collaborations. The goal of the Network is ‘Harmonising statistical methods, systems and capabilities across statistical agencies’.

The ABS provided the secretariat function for the Network, developing governance and operating guidance to facilitate effective collaboration. In addition, the ABS contributed to Statistical Network projects on business architecture, collection and dissemination of data, and the processing of administrative data.

The ABS was a significant contributor to the successful delivery of the Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM) V1.0 in December 2012. GSIM is a reference framework of internationally agreed definitions, attributes and relationships that describes the pieces of information (called ‘information objects’) that are used in the production of official statistics.

The ABS contributed to the development of ‘Common Statistical Production Architecture’ for the world’s official statistical industry. This is often referred to as a ‘plug and play’ architecture, as the aim is to make it easier for each country to combine the components of statistical production, regardless of where the components were developed, based on common standards. The ABS participated in the first multidisciplinary working group to develop the architecture during 2013–14.

The ABS has influenced the development of a range of frameworks and standards which are required to share infrastructure internationally. The ABS continues to sit on international working groups for the Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM), Data Documentation Initiatives (DDI) and Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX).

Australia/New Zealand classifications

The ABS and Statistics New Zealand are co-owners of two major statistical classifications, ANZSIC and ANZSCO.

The ABS meets with Statistics New Zealand regularly to ensure that the classifications remain relevant to the economies of both countries. Updates of these classifications were undertaken during 2012–13. In addition, best practice on the development and implementation of classifications and standards is also shared between the two organisations.

Measure: Macroeconomic statistics

The ABS was actively involved in the development and implementation of macroeconomic standards, frameworks and methods during 2012–13. The ABS contributed to:

- three proceedings on Financial Intermediation Services Indirectly Measured (FISIM):
 - an OECD led task force developing standards for measuring financial services output, particularly the output paid for by interest margins
 - an international audience at the University of NSW Economic Measurement Group on the convergence of theory and practice in the measurement of FISIM
 - the OECD FISIM Task Force, by conducting empirical tests of alternative reference rates in the measurement of FISIM
- the International Monetary Fund (IMF) led international standards for reducing data gaps identified by G20 finance ministers
- the IMF Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) and the 'SDDS plus' additions to the standards
- the OECD standards project on the use of household survey data in national accounts
- the revision of the IMF Government Finance Statistics Manual (GFSM)
- the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board alignment of the International Public Sector Standards with government finance statistics
- the co-hosting with the IMF of the AusAID funded Fiji workshop on debt statistics for Pacific Island countries
- the hosting of a high level Indonesian delegation for discussions on the ABS experience with government finance statistics
- the United Nations (UN) Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts and the OECD Working Group on International Investments on the measurement of derivatives in the domestic and international financial accounts
- the OECD Working Party on National Accounts, particularly on the nature of capital services and their statistical treatment
- the UN Ulaanbaatar working group developing methodological and practical guidelines to track mining industry activities and accurately measure the industry's contribution to the economy
- the OECD report on harmonisation and integration of financial and economic measures of multinational enterprises.

Measure: Microeconomic household statistics

OECD Expert Group on Household Income, Consumption and Wealth Statistics

The ABS took the lead for an OECD Expert Group on Household Income, Consumption and Wealth Statistics, established by the OECD's Committee of Statistics (CSTAT) in early 2011.

The ABS drove the completion of the key deliverables of the Expert Group, which were published on 12 June 2013:

- *Framework for statistics on the distribution of household income, consumption, and wealth*, available at www.oecd.org/statistics/ICW-Framework.htm
- *Guidelines for micro statistics on household wealth*, available at www.oecd.org/statistics/guidelines-for-micro-statistics-on-household-wealth.htm.

Measure: System of Environmental-Economic Accounting

Environmental-economic accounting brings together economic and environmental information in a common framework to measure the contribution of the environment to the economy and the impact of the economy on the environment.

The System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) consists of three parts:

- Part 1 Central Framework
- Part 2 Experimental Ecosystem Accounts
- Part 3 Applications and Extensions.

The SEEA Central Framework was adopted as an international statistical standard by the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) in February 2012 and provides an internationally agreed set of recommendations expressed in terms of concepts, definitions, classifications, accounting rules and standard tables.

Following on from the adoption of the SEEA and the ABS publication and conference called *Completing the Picture: Environmental Accounting in Practice* (ABS cat. no. 4628.0.55.001) in May 2012, environmental accounting was included in the 'Australia in the Asian Century' White Paper. In March 2013, the ABS followed this with the Information Paper *Towards the Australian Environmental-Economic Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 4655.0.55.002).

The work on SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting and SEEA Applications and Extensions was welcomed by the UNSC in February 2013. The SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting was published in June 2013 and the SEEA Applications and Extensions are expected to be published by the end of 2013. Over 2012–13 the ABS continued its contribution to this work through major contributions in drafting and reviewing text for the SEEA Parts 2 and 3, chairing the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEAA), participating in the SEEA Editorial Boards, the Policy and Technical Committee of the World Bank's Wealth Accounting and Valuation of Ecosystem Services program and contributing to international expert group meetings (e.g. the Oslo and London Groups).

Chapter 6

Program reports



Introduction

The Australian Statistician is responsible for determining the ABS work program which must align with the ABS's mission, its legislative mandate and its values. The ABS seeks to provide an appropriate level of service across all legislated functions within available funding.

Ensuring that resources are used to the maximum benefit of governments and the broader community, the ABS takes account of the value of the information being sought, the extent to which undertaking the activity is consistent with the ABS's legislated mandate and with community expectations, and the costs that the activity would impose upon the ABS, providers, and the broader community.

Details of the key achievements and performance of each program during 2012–13 are presented in more detail in this chapter.

Population, Labour and Social Statistics

Social Conditions

The Social Conditions Program provides statistical leadership, standards development and information for a broad picture of the economic and social wellbeing of the Australian population. Statistics cover a range of topics including income, expenditure, wealth, housing, superannuation, families, gender, violence, time use, work and family balance, volunteering, homelessness and social capital.

The program provides design, development, data collection and processing service to support the Growing up in Australia Study (Longitudinal Study of Australian Children), in partnership with the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

The program's statistics are used to support policy development, program delivery and program evaluation of key government agencies involved in income support and other government assistance, taxation, housing, homelessness, community and family services, and issues related to older people, children, youth, men and women.

Key achievements

- The 2012 Household Energy Consumption Survey was conducted for the first time, following rapid development of this new collection to meet emergent information needs in relation to household energy use in Australia.
- Following extensive community consultation and with the support of the Homelessness Statistics Reference Group, the ABS produced the most comprehensive and comparable definition of homelessness in the Information Paper A Statistical Definition of Homelessness, 2012 (ABS cat. no. 4922.0). Future ABS surveys and the Census will adopt this definition in the collection and output of current and past experiences of homelessness.

- The first official ABS estimates of homelessness from *Census—Estimating Homelessness, 2011* (ABS cat. no. 2049.0) were released, replacing previous series produced under the Census Analytical Program.
- Fieldwork for the fifth wave of the Longitudinal Study of Australian Children was successfully completed, with the study continuing to enjoy the support of participant families and children.
- The program continued to contribute to international developments in micro household income, consumption and wealth statistics through the OECD expert groups. In particular, the ABS chaired an expert group to develop a new statistical framework and guidelines for household level income, consumption and wealth, and new standards for household level wealth statistics.

Health and Disability

The Health and Disability program develops, compiles and disseminates information about the health of the Australian population. It does this through a range of health information collections including:

- Causes of Death collection
- Australian and National Health Surveys
- Patient Experience Survey
- Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
- Private Health Establishments Collection.

Information is extracted and analysed from these data collections to understand patterns of health risk factors, health service usage, health outcomes, the experience of patients in using health services and the pattern of disability in the community.

The information is used by Australian and state and territory governments to identify public health and disability issues, assess their magnitude and distribution, assess health system performance, develop health policies and undertake program evaluation. The information is also used by community groups; by academics to better understand the health outcomes of the population and their drivers; and by the general public and media to better understand health risks and issues.

Key achievements

- The 2012–13 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers was conducted; this is now undertaken on a triennial basis.
- The 2012–13 Australian Health Survey, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander collection was completed.
- A range of results from the Australian Health Survey was released relating to health risk factors, health service usage and health-related actions.
- The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander disability results were released from the 2009 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers.
- An improved range of suicide data is available, in response to the recommendations of the Senate Community Affairs References Committee report *The Hidden Toll: Suicide in Australia*.
- The 2012 Australasian Mortality Data Interest Group meeting was successfully hosted in Sydney involving, 100 delegates and 26 presentations.

Labour

The Labour Statistics Program provides evidence to support labour market, economic and social analysis through the provision of high quality labour statistics in a timely, efficient and effective manner. The program provides information about the structure and performance of the labour market, including statistics on labour supply (such as labour force participation, employment, hours worked, unemployment and labour underutilisation); labour demand (job vacancies); employment conditions and working arrangements; employee earnings and labour costs; and workplace relations.

Key achievements

- Regular re-benchmarking of the Labour Force Survey commenced, ensuring that the data reflects the latest available population estimates and significantly improves coherence between the Estimated Resident Population, Labour Force estimates and National Accounts.
- The November 2012 issue of a biannual Average Weekly Earnings series was successfully introduced. The change from quarterly to biannual collection was one of the recommendations from a 2010 review of the Labour Employer Surveys, undertaken to assess costs, business practices and outputs.
- The first release of a Longitudinal Labour Force Survey Confidentialised Unit Record File (CURF) was issued in December 2012. The file provides details on labour market participation and Australians' transitions into and out of employment over a three-year period, providing insights into how the labour market has changed over time. Information has been included from over 150,000 households, resulting in over 1.8 million records.
- The program contributed to the work of the groups assisting the International Labour Organisation with the revision of standards for statistics on work and the labour force. The revised standards will be considered at the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in October 2013.
- The article 'Estimating Jobs in the Australian Labour Market' was released. The estimates presented in the article complement other regular indicators of the state of the labour market.
- Labour Topics @ a Glance web pages were significantly improved in relation to design, layout and usability.

Crime and Justice

The Crime and Justice Statistics program leads national statistical activity aimed at developing and improving information available in this field. The program covers the activities of the National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics (NCCJS), which includes three separate user-funded statistical units: the National Crime Statistics Unit; the National Criminal Courts Statistics Unit; and the National Corrective Services Statistics Unit. These units compile and publish national statistics on recorded crime, courts and corrections, and work to improve the quality of these collections in cooperation with statistical practitioners in the jurisdictions.

The ABS also oversees a survey program in the field of crime and justice statistics. This includes both special purpose surveys aimed at producing rates of victimisation for personal and household crimes, and information on the experience and consequences of crime, as well as more general surveys aimed at understanding the experience of crime within a broader social context.

The main clients of this program include the Australian Attorney-General's Department and the state and territory agencies responsible for police services, courts administration and corrective services. Agencies responsible for criminal justice research and policy are also significant users of program outputs.

Key achievements

- The Information Paper *Defining the data challenge for family, domestic and sexual violence* (ABS cat. no. 4529.0) was released in February 2013. This is the first of a series of releases on the development of statistical information about family, domestic and sexual violence in Australia. This initiative supports the National Data Collection and Reporting Framework for the National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children (2010–22).
- ‘Victims of Personal Fraud: A Statistical Snapshot’ was released as part of the *In Focus: Crime and Justice Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 4524.0) series. The analysis explored the relationships between socio-demographic characteristics and fraud victimisation in the areas of credit card fraud, identity theft and scams. This additional analysis complements data from the 2010–11 Personal Fraud survey, which presents data from the second national survey of Australians’ experiences of personal fraud.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics program provides information essential to monitoring the social and economic circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Information is used by governments to inform policy development and evaluation, and by the community to improve understanding of the overall wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The program aims to improve the quality, timeliness and relevance of social, demographic and economic information on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. Key elements include: assessing and improving the quality of statistics available from the Census, surveys and administrative data sources; broad consultation and engagement with government and non-government stakeholders, as well as at the community level; analysis and reporting to explain and improve understanding of data; and development of strategies to maximise the effectiveness and efficiency of data collection and reduce respondent burden on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

Key achievements

- Commitment to local level facilitation and engagement, to ensure continued cooperation and high quality data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, was demonstrated. The ABS Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy is a critical aspect—Indigenous Engagement Managers employed in the regional offices work closely with communities and organisations.
- The ABS Round Table for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics was established. Members are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who provide ‘grass roots’ advice and feedback to ABS on survey concepts and field procedures, to ensure the relevance of ABS data to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Statistical leadership to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics on population, mortality, health, housing, community services, education, employment, and law and justice included: conduct of the 2012–13 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS); development of the 2014–15 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS); release of statistics on health and wellbeing from other ABS surveys, such as the Survey of Disability and Carers; provision of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population estimates and associated life-expectancy estimates; and dissemination of Census of Population and Housing counts and characteristics, available to a small area level.
- The program contributed to the development and provision of indicators for relevant national reporting agreements.

Education Statistics

The Education program produces statistics on early childhood education and care, schooling and further education. The program also provides statistical leadership in the education and training sectors.

Key elements of the program include management of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection and the National Schools Statistics Collection; and the regular conduct of a number of surveys related to education, training and work. This information is used by Australian and state and territory governments for performance assessment and policymaking, by organisations involved in educational research and analysis, and by the community to inform decision making.

The program provides national leadership towards the Transforming Education and Training Information in Australia (TETIA) initiative, which involves engaging with stakeholders to develop a vision and strategy for coordinating continued improvements to cross-sectoral early childhood education, higher education and training information. This initiative aims to provide the foundation for a longitudinal and outcomes-focused view of Australian early childhood development, education and training for all Australians.

Key achievements

- Results from the third cycle of the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection were published. They support assessment of the Australian Government's commitment to universal access to early childhood education for all children in the year before formal schooling under the National Partnership Agreement for Early Childhood Education.
- Results from the annual National Schools Statistics Collection were published, supporting a range of national reporting mechanisms.
- Australian data will be used in all tables of the OECD Report on its Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies, to be published on 8 October 2013. This report assists governments in assessing, monitoring and analysing the level and distribution of skills among their adult populations as well as the utilisation of skills in different contexts.
- Data and advice were provided for the fifth cycle of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) reporting under the National Education Agreement and National Agreement for Skills and Workforce Development.
- Results from the latest cycles of the Childhood Education and Care Survey, Survey of Education and Work, and Learning and Work Survey were released.
- The TETIA proposal was developed on behalf of the Strategic Cross-sectoral Data Committee (SCDC) for Early Childhood, Education and Training, based on stakeholder consultation. It was endorsed by the Standing Council on School Education and Early Childhood, and the two Senior Officials Committees responsible for the early childhood development, school education, tertiary education, skills and employment sectors.
- A research paper assessing the quality of linking school enrolment records to 2011 Census of Population and Housing data was released, and three feasibility studies using school enrolment data to assess different linkage methodologies when undertaking longitudinal analysis were completed. These studies are a key component of the TETIA initiative.

Data integration conducted by the ABS

Data integration is the joining of data from different sources to develop new datasets. The ABS undertakes data integration for statistical and research purposes. Combining high value data sources, previously used in isolation, to generate an expanded range of statistics provides the opportunity to support policy development, research and discussion more effectively in areas such as societal wellbeing, economic resources, social inclusion and healthy environments. For this reason, data integration is an area of significant growth across the ABS.

The ABS Centre for Data Integration has been established within the ABS Population, Labour and Social Statistics Group to develop and undertake data integration projects managed by the ABS in consultation with custodians of datasets and potential users. It supports best practice in the conduct of data integration projects across the ABS through the development of internal infrastructure, resources and tools. Acknowledging that data linkage is a very sensitive activity that requires a high level of community trust, the ABS Centre for Data Integration is also responsible for internal policy and governance arrangements to support the safe conduct of ABS statistical data integration activities. This ensures the ABS is able to meet its obligations as an accredited Integrating Authority, able to undertake high risk integration projects, including those involving the linkage of sensitive data.

Key achievements

- The ABS Centre for Data Integration was established.
- New governance arrangements and internal policies for managing the processes and risks associated with data integration activities were implemented.
- A Data Integration Steering Committee was formed to oversee all ABS data integration projects.
- The linkage phase of data integration projects using death registrations, migrant settlement information and education enrolments as part of the 2011 Census Data Enhancement work program was progressed.
- First results from the Education Census Quality Study linking government school enrolments to the 2011 Census were released.
- The range of administrative data available for data integration and analysis through formal agreements with the Australian Government and state and territory governments was expanded.

Demography, Regional and Social Analysis

Demography

The Demography Program provides estimates of the recent and projected future population, structure and geographic distribution and reports analysis of components of population growth and related demographic trends.

The program also produces population estimates and projections for households, families and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations, as well as fertility, mortality and overseas and internal migration statistics.

These statistics are produced to meet a range of legislative requirements that refer to population estimates. Demographic data assists in the formulation of government policies, and in the planning and administration of government programs. This information enables planning, analysis and research by all those interested in the causes and consequences of population change. These include governments, businesses, community organisations and academic institutions.

Key achievements

- Final re-based population estimates, based on the *2011 Census in Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0), were released.
- With key stakeholder consultation, recent methodological improvements were incorporated into the most recent 20 years of population estimates.
- Preliminary estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous populations were released.
- Improvements to overseas arrivals and departures data were implemented, to deliver better preliminary estimates of net overseas migration which will be published in early 2013–14.

Geography

The Geography Program publishes and maintains the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) which is used by the ABS to publish and compare small areas' statistics. It provides support for geographical processes (address coding, workload design, and cartography) to internal areas of the ABS, undertakes geographic analysis to support the production of statistics and advises external stakeholders and the general public on statistical geography issues.

Key achievements

- A Program review for the United Nations Statistical Commission on 'developing a statistical-spatial framework in national statistical systems' was successfully undertaken. The review was endorsed at the forty-fourth session of the Commission in February–March 2013.
- The Statistical Spatial Framework (SSF) was initialised. The importance of statistics for small areas of Australia has increased in recent years in Australian and state and territory governments. The ABS has proposed a framework for guiding the appropriate and consistent creation of small area statistics to support the national statistics infrastructure. The SSF is published on the National Statistical Service website (www.nss.gov.au).
- Volumes 4 and 5 of the ASGS were published during 2012–13, which finalised the production and publication of the ASGS. The ASGS forms a major component of the SSF.
- The Land Account, Victoria, including geospatial data designed to be viewed in Google Earth was released.
- Support was provided for the Department of Finance and Deregulation to assist with spatial coding of the federal budget, using the ASGS Remoteness Structure.

Regional statistics

The Regional Statistics Program aims to understand and support high priority emerging needs for regional statistics through providing relevant analyses, products and services. Activities undertaken under the program include improving access to, and dissemination of, ABS data and data from other sources, and developing new indicators. The program assists policy analysts and researchers to understand the characteristics of regions and change in regions across Australia, with current issues centring on regional population sustainability, local economic development, and service or infrastructure access in regions.

Key achievements

- The National Regional Profiles on the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) were released with a new map interface. Progress has been made on planning for future enhancements to improve access.

- Progress has been made in developing regional economic indicators which will contribute to publication of a general guide to regional economic data.
- Significant support to the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport (DRALGAS) has been made through the services of an ABS Outpost Officer.
- Two ABS submissions were made to the House of Representative Standing Committee on Regional Australia Inquiry into the use of 'fly-in, fly-out' (FIFO) workforce practices in regional Australia, and ABS participated in an Australian Government FIFO Working group.

Social and Progress reporting

The Social and Progress Reporting Program informs government and the community about wellbeing and progress in Australia. It draws together data and analysis both from within the ABS and from a range of other sources, and produces reports covering a wide range of social and other issues. The reports provide information on the wellbeing of the population, the extent of need and disadvantage in society, contemporary social issues, the interrelationships between economic, social and environmental aspects of life, and whether life in Australia is getting better.

Key achievements

- A significant period of consultation with the Australian public about Measures of Australia's Progress was completed, culminating in the publication of the landmark report *Measures of Australia's Progress—Aspirations for our Nation: A Conversation with Australians about Progress, 2011–12* (ABS cat. no. 1370.0.00.002).
- A new, comprehensive set of indicators of progress were developed, drawing upon the conceptual framework which emerged from the conversation with Australians about their aspirations. These proposed indicators were released in an information paper on 28th June 2013.
- The Australian Social Trends series changed from quarterly issues to three major releases per year, including an April 2013 release highlighting findings from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.
- Significant support to the production of the Sustainable Australia Report 2013 by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities was achieved through the services of an ABS Outpost Officer and ex-officio membership of the National Sustainability Council.

Culture, Recreation and Migrant Statistics

The National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics (NCCRS) leads and coordinates the national statistical program for culture, sport and leisure. The National Migrant Statistics Unit (NMSU) is responsible for the Migrant Statistics Program and leads and coordinates the national statistical program for migrant settlement outcomes. The responsibilities of these two areas include understanding current and emerging policy issues and debates, and determining, in consultation with other agencies, what statistics might be appropriate to inform their decision making. These areas maintain expertise on collection, classification, standards and data analysis of relevant data to inform governments and the community about culture, sport and leisure statistics, and migrant settlement outcomes.

The key cultural, recreation and sports clients are DRALGAS Office for the Arts and Office for Sport, the Cultural Ministers Statistics Working Group, the Australian Sports Commission and all state and territory arts and sports agencies.

The Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) is the major client for migrant statistics.

Key achievements—Culture Recreation and Sport

- The 2011–12 Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation Survey was released, using an innovative new communication campaign. A CURF was also released to support detailed analysis.
- *Sports and Physical Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia, 2012* (ABS cat. no. 4156.0) was released.
- A feasibility study, defining the cultural and creative sectors, has been completed and was released in June 2013. This is expected to support policy development for future investment in these sectors.
- Findings of the 2010–11 Cultural Funding by Government survey were released, including state and local government level data. Previously only national data had been released.

Key achievements—Migrant Statistics

- A project to link the ABS's Population Census with data from DIAC's Settlement Database was completed. This linkage is expected to increase the statistical and research value of both datasets.
- A feasibility study to link the DIAC Settlement Database with the Australian Taxation Office's Personal Income Tax data was commenced. The project will assess the feasibility and utility of linking two administrative data sets with a limited range of variables. The project is expected to be completed by December 2013.

Economic and Environment Statistics

National Accounts

The National Accounts program provides data about the level of and growth in economic activity. It also provides data about the structure of the Australian and state and territory economies. These statistics systematically and comprehensively summarise the economic transactions that take place within the Australian economy and between Australia and the rest of the world.

National accounts information is used to formulate and assess government macroeconomic policies, both fiscal and monetary; assist in allocating Australian government funds to state and territory governments; formulate industry development policies; measure productivity; undertake financial and business planning; and facilitate international economic comparisons.

The main clients of the program are the Australian and state and territory governments, the Reserve Bank of Australia, international organisations such as the OECD, private sector analysts, the media and academics.

Key achievements

- An updated National Accounts Concepts, Sources and Methods (CSM) was published. This CSM reflects current practices including the introduction of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 and System of National Accounts (SNA) 2008. It also includes, for the first time, a description of the compilation of productivity estimates.
- Greater detail on the mining industry was published, including gross value-added data for iron ore mining and separately published mining inventories. This provided users with improved capability to analyse the impacts of mining activity in the economy.
- An improved methodology for calculating contributions to growth was published; this ensures the additivity of the expenditure components of GDP.
- Increased liaison, both formal and informal, was achieved with key users of national accounts data and economic analysts. Information provided was used to assess the coherence of estimates with real world developments.

International Accounts

The International Accounts Program provides statistics on Australia's Balance of Payments, International Investment Position, Merchandise Trade, and International Trade in Services. The statistics are compiled from a range of surveys and administrative data sources with merchandise trade statistics derived from records lodged with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service.

The statistics are used to analyse Australia's external performance; formulate and evaluate macroeconomic policy (including trade policy, trade treaties and foreign investment policy); analyse trends in income, capital flows and patterns of investment into and out of the economy; and undertake international comparisons. The International Accounts are inputs to the Australian National Accounts, providing the external transactions accounts and the external asset and liabilities components of the national balance sheet.

Key achievements

- The four-yearly Survey of Foreign Currency Exposure was re-developed and conducted.
- To improve data timeliness, a new publication which contains preliminary quarterly estimates of selected international trade in goods and services components on a balance of payments basis was developed and released.
- Web form collection was introduced for the International Trade in Services Coverage Survey, providing flexibility in business reporting and improving timeliness.
- Estimates of international direct investment income by industry were published for the first time.
- Contribution to the improvement of statistical capability in the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was achieved through the provision of expert advice to a series of workshops on compiling Trade in Services Statistics.
- Methodological improvements to Balance of Payments estimates were introduced as a response to the ever-changing real world and the complexities of administrative data.
- Changes to classifications in merchandise trade and balance of payment statistics were implemented, resulting from amendments to Customs legislation covering concessional rates of import duty.

Public Sector Accounts

The Public Sector Accounts Program provides government finance statistics (GFS) in respect of the Australian Government, state and territory governments and their public non-financial and public financial corporations, universities and local governments. The statistics are compiled predominately from government accounting systems.

GFS are used to monitor the financial performance of governments, to inform on the economic impact of government activities, and as an important input to Australia's national accounts. They are also used to assist in the distribution of Australian government grants to state governments.

Key achievements

- Emissions Reduction Schemes (Renewable Energy Certificate (REC) and Carbon Tax) data were implemented in ABS statistical outputs, including:
 - publication of an Information Paper, *Recording Emissions Reduction Schemes in ABS Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 5257.0.55.001)
 - GFS annual and quarterly outputs
 - publication of an Information Paper, *Amendments to Australian System of Government Finance Statistics, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (ABS cat. no. 5514.0).

- There has been a successful transition of the Public Finance Business Statistics Centre from the ABS central office in Canberra to the Queensland office while maintaining business continuity.
- A significant improvement was made to the measurement of GFS in Pacific Island countries through joint International Monetary Fund/ABS workshops; in the Solomon Islands and Fiji through the provision of GFS technical assistance; and in Indonesia by hosting two delegations to discuss GFS.
- Contribution to international standards was achieved through membership of the international Government Finance Statistics Expert Group. This group has guided the development of the International Monetary Fund's GFS Manual, due for release in late 2013.

Prices

The Prices program compiles a number of main economic indicators that measure changes in a set of prices over time. This includes the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the House Price Index (HPI), the Wage Price Index (WPI), and a range of Producer Price Indexes (PPIs) and International Trade Price Indexes (ITPIs). The program also produces Selected Living Cost Indexes (SLCIs) for select household types, including a Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index (PBLCI).

The main clients for the program's outputs are the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Treasury, Australian and state government agencies, economic analysts, and the general business community.

Key achievements

- The outcomes of a major review into the Producer and International Trade Price Indexes were published in September 2012. The review determined that the principal purpose of these indexes is to measure inflation by industry to support the compilation of the Australian National Accounts and Balance of Payments. Implementation of the review's recommendations will improve the quality of macroeconomic statistics, now and into the next decade.
- The Consumer, Producer and International Trade price index series were re-referenced to a common index reference period of 2011–12 =100.0. These series were published on the new index reference period from the September quarter 2012.
- A significant contribution was made, through missions and technical assistance, to the development of statistics in the Asia–Pacific region. This included the review and re-weight of the Timor-Leste CPI, coordinating the participation of Pacific Island countries in the 2011 International Comparison Program, and undertaking key macroeconomic statistics review programs in Indonesia.

Macroeconomic Indicators

The Macroeconomic Indicators Branch consists of the Financial Statistics Program, the Building and Construction Program and the Business Indicators Program.

The Financial Statistics Program compiles statistics on the financial assets and liabilities of financial institutions, and on the stocks and flows of finance for sectors of the economy. The statistics are sourced from several ABS statistical surveys and other data sources including the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) and the Australian Taxation Office.

The Building and Construction Program compiles construction statistics on activity levels in residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction. It also compiles building approvals data in the form of expected construction of dwellings, and expected construction activity collected from approving authorities.

The Business Indicators Program is responsible for the provision of a range of sub-annual economic indicators. The indicators include:

- monthly statistics of turnover by selected retail industries and the takeaway food services industry
- quarterly statistics of company profits, inventories, sales and labour costs
- quarterly statistics of actual and expected new capital expenditure
- quarterly statistics of actual and expected mineral and petroleum exploration
- biannual statistics of expected mineral and petroleum expenditure.

These data are essential inputs to the compilation of quarterly and annual National Accounts.

The main clients of the branch include the Australian government and state government treasuries, the Reserve Bank of Australia, various state and territory departments, banks, industry associations, and other financial analysts and commentators. These clients use the statistics to analyse economic activity and as partial indicators of the National Accounts. Construction statistics are used for construction industry, finance and investment sector analysis; and in understanding population change, an essential input to regional planning.

Key achievements

- National Accounts measures of household final consumption expenditure were improved through new collections covering electricity, gas and telecommunications.
- The quality of building approval statistics was improved through ensuring the administrative by-product from local government and other reporting authorities is collected in a consistent way.
- Increased collaboration with the APRA and the Reserve Bank has led to a targeted joint program to reduce provider burden and improve data quality for financial statistics.
- Respondent burden was reduced by introducing internet-based survey forms for collecting key data for the compilation of macroeconomic indicators.

Environment Statistics and Integration

The Environment Statistics and Integration Branch produces statistics on both the environment and business demography.

The Environment Statistics Program contributes to meeting the demand for comprehensive and coordinated information about Australia's environment, focusing on key themes such as water, energy, land and waste management. The complex inter-relationships between the environment, society and the economy require integrated information, which is a key focus of the program. The program actively engages with partners to understand information needs and coordinate the development of statistics.

The Business Demography program is responsible for the provision of information about the structure, characteristics and performance of businesses in the Australian economy and conceptual developments regarding business definitions and classifications. This information is part of a consistent framework for all ABS business statistics.

Key achievements

- The ABS continued its strong relationship with the international statistical community in the development of the System of Environmental–Economic Accounting (SEEA), particularly in regard to ecosystem services.
- An Information Paper which showcases the range of environmental accounts produced by the ABS and describes the potential of these accounts in informing environmental and socio-economic policy was released: *Towards the Australian Environmental–Economic Accounts, 2013* (ABS cat. no. 4655.0.55.002).
- Experimental environmental economic accounts were produced: *Victorian Land Account* (ABS cat. no. 4609.0.55.02), *Waste Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4602.55.005) and *Environmental Taxes in Australia—Experimental New Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 4629.0.55.001).
- Production of annual environmental economic accounts continued according to the SEEA framework: *Energy Account, Australia* (ABS cat. No. 4604.0) and *Water Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0).
- A number of enhancements were incorporated into *Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits, 2008–2012* (ABS cat. no. 8165.0.0), including using ABS.Stat to improve data accessibility.

Industry and Productivity Statistics

The Industry Statistics program provides information about the structure, financial operations, performance and production of Australian industries. The information is used to monitor the economy and the business cycle, and to support compilation of the Australian National Accounts and Environmental-Economic Accounts.

The program consists of an annual economy-wide financial statistics collection, a rolling collection program that covers specific industries in more detail, and modelling and analytical work covering specific industries or activities.

The Transport Statistics program provides statistics on transport and transport-related activities. It also provides statistical leadership in transport statistics by, for example, chairing the Australian Transport Data Action Network.

The Tourism Statistics program conducts the Survey of Tourist Accommodation (STA) and compiles the Australian Tourism Satellite Account (TSA). Tourism-related data produced by other areas of the ABS includes overseas arrivals and departures data, tourism-related exports and imports indicators, and data collected under the Industry Statistics program.

The Economic Analysis and Reporting program encompasses macroeconomic statistics research, economic analysis and reporting, and economic integration functions. This consolidated set of functions is designed to improve the ABS's capability to produce high quality macroeconomic statistics in the longer term, while addressing emerging priorities in the short term. Analytical activities in the program range from research projects to improve the accuracy and coherence of existing economic statistics and develop new statistical products, through to operational efforts to increase the efficiency of statistical operations. The program compiles and publishes aggregate market sector and industry-level multifactor productivity (MFP) statistics and conducts research into the measurement and interpretation of these statistics.

Key achievements

- As part of the Australian Government funded program to compile the Non-Profit Institutions (NPI) Satellite Account, the development work for the 2012–13 NPI Survey was completed.
- A study of the industry sources of Australia's productivity slowdown was conducted. A research paper was presented at the Second World KLEMS Conference at Harvard University in August 2012.
- Industry-level, quality-adjusted labour input measures were released in the Industry MFP Datacube (ABS cat. no. 5260.0.55.002) and a research paper has been accepted by the 2013 Australian Conference of Economists
- Together with the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport, and Regional Economics, the ABS secured support for developing a new road freight module for the 2014 Survey of Motor Vehicle Use. Development work on the survey has commenced.
- The Tourism Satellite Account 2011–12 (ABS cat. no. 5249.0) was published. The publication presented the contribution of tourism to major economic aggregates, such as GDP.

Rural Environment and Agriculture Statistics

The Rural Environment and Agriculture Statistics program provides reliable, relevant and timely information on the social, economic and environmental characteristics of the agricultural industry. This includes:

- natural resource and land management practices undertaken on farms
- agricultural commodities produced on farms and the associated value
- farmer demographics
- structural information about the industry including the number, size and industry of farm businesses
- the level of foreign ownership of agricultural businesses, land and water assets.

Information from the Program supports informed decision making by government, industry and community at national and regional levels.

The main collections include an annual survey of agricultural commodities and land management practices, a five-yearly Agricultural Census, and a range of other surveys covering specific aspects of agriculture and related activity

Key achievements

- The 2010–11 Agricultural Census small area data was released successfully in the latter half of 2012. This constituted the largest ever release of Agricultural Census data, and was accomplished 12 months sooner than the small area data release for the previous Agricultural Census.
- In addition to the annual agricultural collection for 2011–12, a biennial Land Management Practices Survey (LaMPS) has also been undertaken for the 2011–12 reference period to support evidence-based policy and decision making with regard to the Australian Government's Carbon Farming Initiative. Results from both these surveys were released in May and June 2013.
- Development work for the 2012–13 Rural Environment and Agricultural Commodity Survey (REACS) and the 2013 Agricultural Land and Water Ownership Survey (ALWOS) is underway. Both surveys will be despatched in 2013 with results available from mid-2014.

- ABS Rural Environment and Agriculture Statistics Branch have supported a number of visiting delegations from countries across the Asia–Pacific region. This has been in support of the capacity-building initiatives outlined in the *Global Strategy to Improve Agriculture and Rural Statistics*. The ABS has also submitted two abstracts for papers to the Sixth International Conference on Agricultural Statistics to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in October 2013.

Innovation and Technology Statistics

The Innovation and Technology program provides data to assist understanding of the impact of research and experimental development, innovation and new technologies on economic growth, productivity and wellbeing. In advanced industrial economies, science, technology and innovation have been the principle sources of long-run economic growth and increasing social wellbeing. Innovation is a key component in making Australia more productive and more competitive. Information and communication technologies (ICT) are important enablers of innovation and contribute to productivity growth. Research and experimental development (R&D) activity is a subset of overall innovative activity.

The program provides:

- measures of the penetration and use of selected new technologies, particularly ICT, within Australia, for both businesses and households
- measures of R&D undertaken by businesses, governments, higher education institutions and private not-for-profit organisations
- measures of innovation for Australian businesses
- the Business Longitudinal Database which is a tool for understanding business activity and microeconomic drivers of business performance and productivity.

The statistics on R&D expenditure produced by the program are important inputs to Australia's national accounts. The program also contributes to the work of national and international agencies, through input into the review and development of statistical standards and frameworks in relevant fields of statistics.

Key achievements

- A Research Paper, *Business Innovation and the Use of Information and Communications Technology—An Update, May 2013*, was released.
- The next iteration of the Business Longitudinal Database CURF was released, including a number of enhancements for detailed analysis and research.
- Contributions were made to two OECD working groups in order to improve the measurement and international comparability of broadband and R&D statistics.

ABS 2017

Information Infrastructure

The Information Infrastructure program is responsible for designing and developing the next generation of statistical information infrastructure which, once implemented across ABS collections, will allow ABS to transform the way business is undertaken. The program will deliver a coherent and integrated environment for the life-cycle management of data and metadata.

The objective of the Information Infrastructure program is to lead the design, development and implementation of:

- information management governance, infrastructure and standards
- metadata-driven processes that encompasses the life-cycle management of data and metadata assets.

Key achievements

- In 2012–13 the program progressed towards foundational information infrastructure for an improved approach to managing the ABS's information assets. The program:
 - developed a version of the metadata registry and repository (MRR), which allows statistical metadata to be stored, registered, catalogued, discovered and accessed
 - implemented a business process management system which will underpin a future system to manage the workflow for the production of statistics within the ABS
 - demonstrated feasibility of the MRR through two successful pathfinder projects relating to web data collection and process management. The MRR design was reviewed by external consultants who endorsed the core design
 - drew up a road map for the ABS's development of an enterprise data warehouse—a coordinated, metadata-driven approach to managing statistical data for end-to-end statistical processes. A request for expression of interest was successfully concluded leading to an improved understanding of options available from the market.
- The program contributed to the Generic Statistical Information Model v1.0 (GSIM). The ABS was a significant contributor to the internationally agreed model of common terminology and definitions used by NSOs to describe statistical metadata and information flows. This GSIM v1.0 was adopted as an international standard, after endorsement by the UNECE High Level Group in December 2012.
- The program supported the Statistical Network, including the provision of secretariat services. The Network continued to collaborate on collection; administrative data; dissemination; and enterprise architecture.

Program Management

The Program Management Office (PMO) is responsible for providing centralised and coordinated support to the ABS 2017 Group to ensure successful delivery of business process and information management transformation objectives.

The PMO aspires to provide excellence in the areas of project management and business process analysis and re-engineering as well as providing program support in resource management and change management. The PMO works to ensure:

- alignment between strategies, programs and projects
- change governance
- visibility of program management information, including tracking realisation of the business benefits

- consistent application of methodologies, standards, frameworks, processes and tools
- robust business analysis and process re-design
- coordinated delivery of change across the organisation
- efficient utilisation of allocated resources.

Key achievements

- A successful 1st Pass Critical Statistical Infrastructure Program Business Case was submitted to government and accepted. The 1st Pass Business Case includes seed funding to further develop the 2nd Pass Business Case arguing for the major investment required to transform and future-proof the organisation.
- Successful management of a Gateway Gate 0 Review resulted in an Amber assessment for the ABS.
- An endorsed ABS 2017 Transformation Program Change Management Framework was delivered. The Change Management Framework identifies the key principles which support a major change program.
- The endorsed ABS Project Management & Investment Governance Framework was implemented. Work to implement the new governance framework included establishment of the committees, their Terms of Reference, and completion of the first round of project investment reviews.
- An endorsed High Level Enterprise Architecture was delivered. The Enterprise Architecture includes a conceptual model of the organisation, key decision and design principles for the desired 'to be' state, and a conceptual model for ABS's interactions with clients, other government agencies, and international organisations and partners.

Customer Services

The Customer Services Branch (CSB) supports the ABS corporate mission to assist and encourage informed decision making by providing high quality communication and dissemination services to clients. The program seeks to utilise leading edge technology and aspires to showcase best practice communication of official statistics.

CSB provides a range of information solutions, catering for a wide-ranging customer base. These include self-service statistics and other information on the ABS website and social media. CSB operates the free national information and referral service, user-pays information consultancies and provides support for the complex needs of researchers through streamlined access to, and use of, microdata.

A focus in 2012–13 has been improving client access to richer and more flexible macrodata and microdata, including the capability to deliver data through machine-to-machine web services. CSB are utilising a number of approaches to improve the focus on the ABS's customers, understanding and responding to their current and emerging needs.

Key achievements

- Strong ongoing business delivery was achieved with products and services provided to a wide range of ABS clients, including:
 - a large volume of successful statistical releases through online channels
 - numerous queries answered by telephone and e-mail
 - basic CURFs and expanded CURFs
 - increased numbers of datasets in TableBuilder
 - tailored consultancies and subscription services.

- ABS.Stat Beta was released with a wide range of rich data sets loaded, including CPI, Labour Force and National Regional Profile.
- The ABS iPhone and iPad application ABS. Stats was released. There have been over 12,000 downloads of this application.
- More effective search engine optimisation and contextual navigation was implemented in the website to help users search and filter their search results.
- A 2013 extension to the ABS/Universities Australia Agreement for access to microdata and related services was negotiated
- There has been strong engagement with the international collaboration community to enhance the .Stat product, focusing on helping the collaboration community to progress thinking towards a more industrialised approach, including a higher level of strategic planning, improved governance and a more formal funding model.
- There has been strong engagement with the Statistical Network Innovation in Dissemination international collaboration community.
- Increased capability in the South Pacific region was achieved through delivery of training programs in Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

Data Acquisition and Collection

The Data Acquisition and Collection Branch (DACB), part of ABS 2017 Program Delivery, provides a comprehensive statistical data collection and dissemination service for the ABS that also encompasses administrative data acquisition. The Branch is leading the Acquire@ABS program to transform collection operations through introduction of an online reporting capability that will include the first digital Census in 2016. In doing so, it supports the ABS corporate mission and objectives by providing a high quality, timely and cost effective service while maintaining the trust and cooperation of providers through a range of measures, including:

- undertaking data collection operations for households and businesses
- integrating and transforming ABS data collection systems and processes
- continually developing processes and instruments to improve provider experience
- developing and maintaining a skilled and committed field and office-based interviewer workforce
- collaborating internationally to drive, develop and adopt the world's best practice in data collection
- upholding the confidentiality of information provided to the ABS.

Key achievements

- Collection operations were delivered on time and to quality.
- The largest ever household survey work program was delivered through successful workplace and field force management.
- Online reporting was implemented for the Internet Activity Survey, Quarterly Business Indicators Survey, Capital Expenditure, Retail Trade Margins, Survey of Tourist Accommodation and Engineering Construction Survey.
- Online reporting capability was implemented for the Monthly Population Survey (MPS) from December 2012 and roll-out for MPS and Multipurpose Household Survey (MPHS) for 2013–14 commenced.
- Strategy was developed to achieve benefits from e-form implementation under Acquire@ABS; this will provide savings to the ABS from 2013–14.
- Five-yearly household surveys sample frame revision was introduced.

- Under the ABS Future Organisational Sustainability (AFOS) initiative, new Provider Contact Units (PCUs) were established in Western Australia and Queensland, and a Northern Territory Population Survey Operations (PSO) presence was created.
- The Statistical Data Collection working group for the International Statistical Network was established and chaired.
- A successful workshop for Blaise training, support, implementation and collaboration was hosted in May–June 2013.

2016 Population Census

The Census Program undertakes the ABS's largest and most important statistical collection—the Census of Population and Housing. Its objective is to accurately measure the number and key characteristics of people in Australia on Census night, and the dwellings in which they live. This provides a reliable basis for the estimation of the population of each of the states, territories and local government areas, primarily for electoral purposes and the distribution of government funds.

The Census also provides the characteristics of Australian population and housing within small geographic areas, and for small population groups. Census data is used to support the planning, administration, policy development and evaluation activities of governments, businesses, researchers and many of other users.

Censuses are conducted in Australia every five years and the last Census was held on Tuesday, 9 August 2011. Preparation has commenced for the next Census to be held in August 2016.

Key achievements

- A very successful 2011 Census output program was concluded with the release of the second and third release data. The full range of Census products, including Tablebuilder, were available much earlier than after the 2006 Census, and have been well received by clients.
- New approaches to communicating statistics to broader audiences have been undertaken, including a town planning mobile game 'Run that Town', engaging and educational Questacon exhibits and a new version of the web application Spotlight. Spotlight has received multiple awards, including excellence in the effectiveness of Government 2.0 tools, for creativity and for promotional effectiveness.
- A program has been initiated to deliver improved quality, coverage and efficiency for the 2016 Census, as well as improving the sustainability of the Census and wider ABS.
- Public consultation for the 2016 Census content and procedures has been undertaken with the recommendations due to go to Cabinet in August 2014.
- An international working group of Census teams will be facilitated and chaired to share experiences, developments and concepts for the next Census cycle.
- Advice, quality assurance and supporting capability development was provided as a member of the International Advisory Board for the 2014 Census of Population and Housing in Myanmar.

Strategies, Services and Technology

Technology Services

ICT is fundamental to the ABS achieving its mission of leading a high quality and responsive national statistical service. Effective management of information technology allows the ABS to continually improve access to statistical data and services, while maintaining security and integrity standards. The Technology Services Division (TSD) supports all areas of the ABS in the delivery of business outcomes through the effective and innovative application of information technology.

In 2012–13 TSD continued to support existing statistical programs, balanced with some strategic technology investments in enabling infrastructure to support future directions and the ABS's 2017 transformation program. ICT services are delivered nationally, to staff in the ABS's central and regional offices, to ABS interviewers who work from home and in the field, and to ABS data providers and clients.

A key focus has been on partnerships between TSD and business areas and with the 2017 Program team to prioritise the ICT work program within tight fiscal constraints. External engagement with ICT government communities and international statistical organisations has been directed towards best practice approaches, continued standards development and opportunities for collaboration.

To support ABS transformation, TSD has begun to build capability in the delivery of enterprise solutions, establishing a Service Oriented Architecture Competency Centre, services catalogue and Enterprise Solutions portal; and completing a number of proof of concept 'services'. Together with training in Agile methods, this will facilitate improvements in the design and delivery of enterprise technology solutions. A risk assessment of the current applications portfolio was completed, and the applications and technology architectures progressed in support of the ABS Enterprise Architecture.

There continue to be a number of issues, risks and challenges to the forward ICT work program. The risk profile of the current technology environment and business continuity is increasing and the very tight fiscal environment requires sharp prioritisation to maintain existing statistical programs with insufficient investment for transformation and future requirements. TSD is also challenged in its ability to maintain the range of technology skill sets required for support and to build new capabilities for the future, including addressing growing requirements for effective security measures in the face of more sophisticated cyber security threats.

Key achievements

- Two privacy-preserving analytical tools to enable increased access to data by researchers, the Remote Execution Environment for Microdata (REEM) Data Analyser and REEM Survey Tablebuilder, were released.
- A corporate e-form capability and environment was delivered, to enable respondents to report electronically and reduce their reporting burden.
- Two mobile applications were released, to improve accessibility and understanding of statistics in the community: a consolidation of Key Statistics; and 'Run that Town'—an interactive application utilising Census data.

- Following work in collaboration with ABS 2017 to update the ABS Enterprise Architecture, a Service Orientated Architecture (SOA) competency centre was established to develop capabilities in enterprise-wide approaches to ICT systems and service. Census 2011 outputs using Census Tablebuilder were delivered.
- Improved efficiencies and flexibility for ABS staff were achieved through the delivery of mobile technology devices (iPhones and iPads), deployment of the ABS WiFi network and the ability for users to login from home or on mobile devices via Connect@ABS.
- Videoconferencing facilities were upgraded and innovative desktop video conferencing was implemented to improve productivity.
- Electronic Protective markings for the Protective Security Policy Framework Classification System were implemented.
- A new internal Pay and Leave system was delivered and implemented with improved security and efficiencies. A number of legacy systems were remediated and decommissioned.
- Infrastructure upgrades were implemented, including wide area network (WAN) and internet service provider (ISP) links, gateway and database operating systems.
- Changes were made to the ICT business model , including new structures, a more strategic budgeting and control mechanism for ICT services and a new model for applications support.

Corporate Services

Corporate Services provides leadership and strategic support to assist the ABS and its employees to meet business objectives. They provide services direct to employees as well as those which involve a support and coordination role, such as policy advice, framework development and internal consultancy. Within an environment of continuous improvement, Corporate Services:

- provides timely, relevant, high quality corporate services to meet the changing needs of internal and external clients
- provides leadership to the ABS in the areas of culture, leadership capability development and financial and people management, including provision of high quality and timely management information
- positions the ABS to meet its current and future workforce needs, by providing a full range of services to support the Human Resources life cycle, from recruitment through to retirement
- provides leadership, support and guidance to ensure the ABS is maximising individual employees' potential
- engages and influences stakeholders to ensure the ABS's interests are accommodated, including in whole-of-government initiatives
- offers services to support the physical working environment, including implementing changes associated with the strategic use of property and space management
- provides leadership and consultancy on workforce planning, budgeting, business continuity and financial reporting, financial policies and support
- maintains and develops corporate support systems and services.

Key Achievements

- Implementation of a range of workforce strategies: the implementation of the workforce planning framework; the establishment of the HR Affordability module; the introduction of the new ABS Workplace Diversity Action plan to support all forms of Diversity; and the Reconciliation Action Plans, demonstrating ABSs commitment to reconciliation. Both these plans have been integrated with the ABS People Plan.
- Development of a pilot ABS People Capability Framework (PCF) tool linked to the ABS Development and Performance Framework to facilitate workforce development.
- Release of the Statistical Skills for Official Statisticians resource which describes the various skills of different statisticians in the ABS. This resource is used to identify capability gaps in the business areas and for staff to identify development areas based on their career plan. This resource is also available to the public via the ABS website.
- Development of the Australian Statistician's Fellowship Program designed to attract and rapidly develop high calibre candidates at an early stage of their career. This program forms part of a continuous strategy to build core capability and strengthen the future leadership base of the ABS.
- Implementation of an ABS wide Innovation Framework providing staff with a clear understanding of the ABS approach and commitment to innovation and a tool to foster innovation more widely across the ABS.
- Staff readily adapting to significant business processes as a result of the Implementation of a new internal Pay and Leave system.
- Participant in the Australian Public Service Telework Trial involving ABS staff with NBN or equivalent internet connections working from home at least one day per week for a period of 6 months.
- The third NatStats conference was successfully held in March 2013. The theme of Natstats 2013 was 'A better informed Australia: the role of statistics in building the nation'. The conference officially launched the 2013 International Year of Statistics in Australia and attracted 34 high level speakers and over 350 delegates, including 36 international delegates.
- The ABS has enhanced its engagement with the Australian public through a greater use of social media channels such as Facebook and Twitter. These channels increase access to ABS statistics through the use of engaging infographics helping to improve statistical literacy and understanding and also support greater two-way communication with the community.
- After initially supporting work on the Business Activity Survey in Timor Leste, the ABS facilitated a strategic planning workshop with Timor-Leste's General Directorate of Statistics. This led to a proposal for a 4-year program currently being considered by AusAID to support key outcomes such as statistical leadership, governance, institutional strengthening, human capital and statistical capability development.

Methodology and Data Management

Analytical Services

Analytical Services Branch is responsible for developing new analytical methods, procedures and products, and for providing analysis services to producers and users of statistics. Its major focus areas in 2012–13 were microdata access and confidentiality, time series analysis, data linkage, small area estimation, analysis of business microdata, assessment of the quality of administrative datasets, econometric and demographic modelling, and the construction of socioeconomic indexes.

Key achievements

- *Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia, 2011* (ABS cat. no. 2033.0.55.001) was released, containing a range of key small area data. To assist users, documentation including multimedia and mapping support was also released.
- Demographic analysis of the increase in Census count of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons, and the development of a Family Tree Method for examining interrelationships in Census data were achieved.
- The association between health and labour force participation using pooled National Health Surveys data was analysed. A synthetic Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers panel data was created to examine disability and unmet needs.
- Business microdata was used to examine firm entry and exit contribution to productivity growth, modelling of National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting, energy gap and physical water use in survey gap years, and time series methods and agent-based simulation were used in business energy consumption modelling.
- Together with technology, new privacy-preserving dissemination infrastructure (REEM TableBuilder and DataAnalyser) were released, including an evaluation of the 2011–12 Australian Health Survey and 2010–11 Learning and Work Survey datasets.
- An internal training course on time series methods and a series of external courses to build data interpretation skills in external agencies were established. Continued time series sessions were presented for the Maths in Schools program.
- SEASABS 2.9, the ABS seasonal adjustment system, was released to provide time series analysts and clients with improved efficiency, quality management and usability.
- The Statistical Longitudinal Census Dataset (SLCD) was created. The SLCD brings together data from the 2006 Census with data from the 2011 Census and future Censuses to build a picture of how society moves through various changes.

Data Standards and Methods

The Data Standards and Methods Program provides conceptual and infrastructure support that underpins the ABS mission. The program is responsible for facilitating the comparability, integration, coherence and quality of ABS statistics, through the use of standard concepts, definitions, classifications, collection methods and procedures. The program aims to support the statistical collection process, mitigate statistical risk, enhance capability, and provide statistical information management leadership across the organisation.

The program seeks to achieve this by:

- setting and reviewing ABS policies and principles for key statistical collection methods, standards and classifications
- providing leadership and expertise in the development of statistical and data management standards, practices and procedures within the ABS and National Statistical Service
- building capability in standards, concepts and classifications within the ABS and National Statistical Service
- leading the organisation in the preparation of statistical metadata in readiness for the new statistical infrastructure that aims to improve statistical outcomes
- building capability and knowledge of questionnaire design.

Key achievements

- A proof of concept trial of Next Generation coding (or Support Vector Machine coding) for both industry and occupation responses was conducted successfully, demonstrating the viability of adopting this technology to enhance the quality and efficiency of future coding.
- Minor reviews of both ANZSIC and the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) were undertaken to help ensure that both classifications are contemporary reflections of the Australian and New Zealand markets.
- The ABS Methods and Classification pages on the ABS website were enhanced to provide improved access to national standards and classifications.
- Over 300 submissions to reviews of religion, sex, gender and country were assessed in preparation for Census 2016.
- Support was given to reviews of classifications and standards undertaken by custodian areas including Indigenous Statistics, Living Conditions and Census 2016.
- The ABS Metadata Transformation Strategy and Program Plan was endorsed. This plan will improve statistical outcomes and prepare statistical frameworks, concepts, standards and classifications for the future information infrastructure.

Statistical services

The Statistical Services program has specific responsibilities for methods used in the statistical collection and production process. It provides advice on and methods for the most efficient and effective ways of meeting information needs—whether that be through administrative data, sample survey data or integrated data. It has a role in alerting the organisation to areas of risk to quality of statistical outputs, and in promoting tools and methods for managing and assessing quality. The program undertakes research on statistical and operational research methods to improve the efficiency and accuracy of ABS work, and provides leadership in developing the future methodological infrastructure of the ABS.

The program also administers the Statistical Clearing House, to improve quality and minimise respondent burden in business surveys conducted by Australian Government agencies.

Key achievements

- Process and principles of a Methodology Architecture were developed; this will define the methods needed to support future ABS statistical collections and products.
- A new, more flexible master sample, from which samples for individual household surveys will be drawn, was developed.
- A strategy was developed for measuring the statistical impact of the introduction of electronic questionnaires into the Labour Force Survey
- An enhanced workload allocation tool for household survey interviewers was developed.
- A two-stage aggregation process for price indexes was presented to the United Nations Expert Working Group on Consumer Price Indices in March 2013.
- The program assessed the fitness-for-purpose of the design of and responses from electronic questionnaires for several business surveys, suggesting a number of improvements to design
- The processes and practices of release of lists of names and addresses of businesses and organisations to Australian Government departments for statistical purposes, were assessed.
- A simulation was conducted to demonstrate how survey response modelling can target non-response follow-up strategies to reduce the cost of data collection without large impacts on data quality.

Chapter 7

National Statistical Service



Introduction

Official statistics are fundamental to good government, to the delivery of public services and to decision making in all sectors of society. In an increasingly complex and fast-moving world, Australia requires a contemporary national statistical system that can adapt and respond to Australia's growing information needs.

The National Statistical Service (NSS) is a community of government agencies working to build a rich statistical picture in order to better inform Australia. The NSS embraces all levels of government, and includes all official bodies involved in the production and use of official statistical assets.

The NSS exists as part of a broader Australian statistical system. The Australian statistical system includes all users and producers of statistics in non-government sectors such as businesses, not-for-profit organisations, research institutions and members of the Australian public, as well as users and producers in government bodies.

Objectives of the NSS

The NSS aims to improve the quality and usefulness of official statistical assets. Its objectives are:

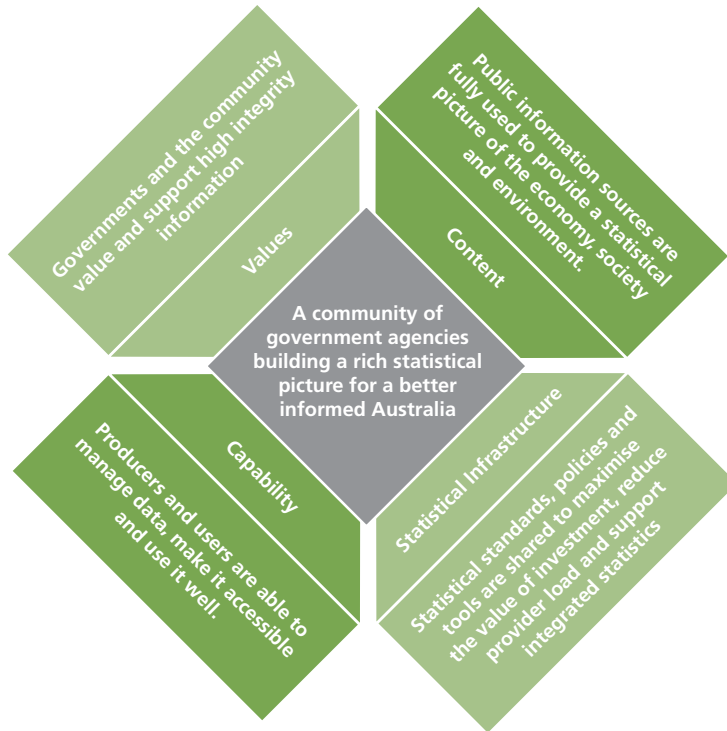
- optimising and improving Australia's essential statistical assets for evidence-based policy development, evaluation and research
- improved and more effective statistical infrastructure and services
- increased statistical capability of producers and users of statistics.

Elements of the NSS

The ABS has identified four essential elements of a successful NSS: valuing statistics, statistical capability, statistical infrastructure and statistical content. The NSS outcomes for each element are:

- Valuing statistics: Governments and the community value and support high-integrity information.
- Statistical capability: Producers and users are able to manage data, make it accessible and use it well.
- Statistical infrastructure: Statistical standards, policies and tools are shared to maximise the value of investment, reduce provider load and support integrated statistics.
- Statistical content: Public information sources are fully used to provide a statistical picture of the economy, society and the environment.

Elements of the NSS



National Statistical Service initiatives

Over the course of 2012–13, the ABS has undertaken a range of activities to expand and improve the NSS including the NatStats 2013 conference and the release of the Essential Statistical Assets (ESA) for Australia initiative.

Valuing statistics

Council of Australian Governments

The ABS has been active in supporting the reporting requirements of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) for the National Agreements on Healthcare, Indigenous Reform, Affordable Housing, Skills and Workforce Development, Education and Disability.

These agreements specify the performance outcomes and benchmarks that the Australian, state and territory governments have set.

The ABS is working in collaboration with other agencies across government to supply data, refine measures, improve datasets, and address measurement issues and data gaps relating to key COAG performance indicators.

Strategic engagement with NSS stakeholders

Recognising that enduring partnerships are crucial to building a strong NSS, the ABS has continued on a program of strategic engagement and staff outposts with key stakeholders.

Activities undertaken as part of this program include bilateral discussions with Commonwealth and state and territory governments, as well as increasing the coordination and strategic focus of existing forums. In addition to developing strong relationships with NSS partners, these engagement activities have led to the identification of opportunities for increased collaboration and progression of NSS priorities across government.

NatStats 2013 Conference

The ABS held the third successful NatStats Conference in March 2013, at the Brisbane Convention and Exhibition Centre. This has now become a flagship event for promoting the objectives of the NSS. The Conference theme, 'A better informed Australia: the role of statistics in building the nation', explored how the nature of statistics is changing, and the opportunities and challenges presented by big data (defined as administrative/transactional, Web 2.0, sensory networks, international and emerging datasets) to drive productivity as well as building a strong and vibrant nation.

NatStats 2013 also officially launched the 2013 International Year of Statistics in Australia, celebrating the power and impact of statistics on all aspects of our society.

The Conference attracted over 350 delegates including 34 high profile presenters from both users and providers of data in government, business, the media, academia and the wider community to consider how big data might improve Australia's statistical system. During the conference, discussions focused on how big data can be used to inform decision making in the social wellbeing, economic and environment domains, as well as looking at the challenges of extracting knowledge from big data. Conference participants recognised that the potential of big data to shape our future will take time and we will need to work together as a statistical community to secure the benefits. A focused agenda and investment from governments will also be required if the potential of big data is to be realised.

In 2013–14, preliminary work will start for a NatStats Conference in 2016, to coincide with the 2016 Census of Population and Housing.

Conference Communiqué

The Conference was designed to have an increased level of interaction at concurrent sessions. Following plenary speakers, delegates participated in round table discussions conducted by professional facilitators. Electronic voting was used in the concurrent discussions to determine priority areas for the Conference Communiqué, which was a key Conference outcome. The Communiqué identifies the major themes, presentations and discussions and highlights that, as an NSS community, we need to focus on developing big data strategies to shape the future of Australia's statistical system.

NatStats 2013 Conference Communiqué

Defining big data

The conference recognised that big data means different things to different people, and throughout the sessions several interpretations were provided. That said, there was agreement that big data can be characterised by the '5 Vs': high volume, high velocity, and high variety information assets that represent high value and veracity for users of statistics. These can include, but are not limited to, accessing administrative datasets and by-product data not originally intended for statistical use, to harnessing the informative content from social media and sensory networks.

Ros Harvey, Director of Tasmania's SenseT Project, said during her presentation, 'We are awash with data. The challenge is how we distil its value'.

Discussions highlighted the value of big data in providing opportunities and benefits for government, the community and the private sector.

How the data game is changing

The presentations on the first day highlighted that big data can provide opportunities to enhance our picture of the everyday experiences and activities of Australians, individually and as a community. It also highlighted the opportunity for businesses to use this information to adapt and innovate in the 21st century.

However, to exploit the benefits of big data, we need to address some challenges associated with converting big data into knowledge for decision making. The skill sets needed by those involved in the collection of the data, the data scientists engaged in extracting knowledge from the data and by users in making best use of that knowledge will need to continue to evolve from current levels to meet the demands of tomorrow.

As noted by Alan Smith from the UK Office of National Statistics on day two of the conference, 'The emergence of big data in everyday society is not in itself the current revolution, but rather the revolution is in the recognition of the potential value of big data assets'.

Throughout the conference, there was strong recognition that the 'big data deluge' is changing the information landscape and that we need a focused agenda in order to harness its potential across private and public sectors, nationally and globally.

Where are the big data opportunities?

During the afternoon of the first day, delegates discussed the big data opportunities in more detail, focusing on how they can improve policy development, service delivery and productivity. The areas of Education, Health and Relative Disadvantage were identified as key opportunity areas where big data, including longitudinal data, has the potential to help answer complex social wellbeing questions. In the area of productivity, measurements of human capital were voted as most likely to benefit from exploiting the potential of big data. Meanwhile, establishing stronger links between bio-physical, economic and social data sets were seen as the biggest area of potential for utilising big data in supporting environmental policy development.

The opening sessions of the second day provided the opportunity for delegates to consider some of the challenges in converting big data into knowledge. The rapid evolution in data visualisation techniques and the growth in demand for them as a

contemporary tool to distil knowledge from data were highlighted as key enablers for the statistical community in extracting statistical stories and understanding from big data.

The importance of allowing the data to be analysed and working with key partners was discussed. One example was the role of the media as 'retailers' of the knowledge inherent in statistics as a critical link in ensuring that the value of statistics is fully realised. This reminded us about the importance of ensuring that audiences can relate to the information being conveyed beyond the facts of any numbers being presented.

What are the big data challenges?

Delegates then took the opportunity to consider some of the challenges associated with big data in more detail and consider priorities for future focus.

Maintaining confidentiality and privacy will always be a primary criterion for ensuring ongoing access to these valuable assets. In considering confidentiality and privacy issues, community trust and restrictions imposed by legislation were identified as the most significant challenges.

Currently other key barriers to extracting maximum value from existing big data assets include the costs or lack of funding associated with data collection and shortages in both people and technology capability. In considering knowledge and capability issues, the convergence of analytical, statistical and technical skill sets into 'data scientist' capabilities was raised as a key future need. Enhancing information management capability and the statistical literacy of end users of statistics were also identified as priority areas.

How can big data enhance Australia's statistical system?

The expectations and complexity of users' needs are increasing, and traditional statistical systems often fail to deliver the answers needed, or deliver them too slowly or in insufficient detail, the outcome being increased uncertainty in decision making. The conference highlighted the wide range of opportunities and challenges that big data provides for data custodians, producers and users of statistics.

There was strong support for the need for a combination of approaches in addressing confidentiality and privacy issues, including: more effective community engagement on the benefits of data integration; investment in standardised tools to support confidentialisation of data; and adoption of agreed data integration principles across sectors.

There was also recognition that big data provides an opportunity to enhance the broader Australian statistical system. Priority areas highlighted by delegates included investment in the nation's most essential statistical assets, enhanced governance arrangements for the Australian statistical system, improving access to big data, and further embedding mathematics and statistical science into Australia's education system.

The Australian Statistician closed the conference by stating that realising the potential of big data to shape our future will take time and we will need to collaborate and work together as a statistical community to succeed. It will also require investment from governments over time if the potential of big data is to be realised for societal benefit.

International Year of Statistics

Throughout 2013, the ABS participated in the 2013 International Year of Statistics, a worldwide celebration of the power and impact of statistics on all aspects of society; this has strong ties to the value element of the NSS.

Throughout this year-long celebration, hundreds of participating organisations around the world have collaborated to:

- increase public awareness of the power and impact of statistics on all aspects of society
- nurture statistics as a profession, especially among high-school and college students
- promote creativity and development in the sciences of probability and statistics.

The ABS has coordinated a number of events in 2013 to support the International Year of Statistics, including:

- the NatStats 2013 Conference which brought together Australia's statistical community around the theme of 'A better informed Australia: The role of statistics in building the nation'
- release of the *2013 List of Essential Statistical Assets for Australia* (ABS cat. no. 1395.0)
- launch of Measures of Australia's Progress
- the National Statistical Service Seminar Series
- updates to the Understanding Statistics Statistical Literacy web pages
- coordinating and sponsoring the national phase of the International Statistical Literacy Project Poster Competition
- provision of CensusAtSchool resources for inclusion on the Teacher Resources page of the International Year of Statistics website.

Participating in the International Year of Statistics enables the ABS to continue celebrating the important role statistics play in building a better nation for all Australians. The ABS is proud to be providing Australians with high quality statistics necessary for informed decision making, and has been doing so for over 100 years.

GovHack 2013

For the first time the ABS participated in GovHack as an opportunity to highlight the role of all government agencies in sharing public information assets, a key NSS priority. This event was held across Australia in June 2013, and brought together over a thousand people to work on public government data. ABS participated as a Gold Sponsor.

GovHack was an excellent opportunity for the ABS to be part of an event that draws together people from government, industry, academia and the general public to mash up, reuse, and remix government data. GovHack is about finding new ways to do innovative things with data, encouraging open government and open data.

To promote the use of ABS.Stat datasets, the ABS sponsored two award categories: Open Government and Data Journalism.. ABS.Stat provides data users with the capability to disseminate multi-dimensional data sets to users through SDMX web services and a browser interface.

Over 40 high quality entries were developed and submitted. Open data was presented by data visualisations and mash ups and was pooled with other official datasets to present engaging applications and tell statistical stories for the Australian community.

The ABS will be participating in the GovHack event in 2014.

Statistical capability

Statistical governance

Australian Statistics Advisory Council

The Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) is the ABS's key advisory body and has a diverse membership covering government, business, academic and community interests. ASAC provides valuable input to the directions and priorities of the ABS work program (including statistical capability) and reports annually to Parliament. During 2012–13, ASAC was involved in the ABS's *Essential Statistical Assets for Australia* initiative and some ASAC members were also involved in the NatStats 2013 Conference. In addition, ASAC was consulted on the Statistical Spatial Framework, improving the collection and coordination of firm level data, and the ABS's statistical infrastructure transformation program.

Consistent with their legislated mandate, the Council was also briefed on a range of strategic directions for the ABS work program. ASAC continued to progress its plans to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of Australia's official statistics and also held informal discussions with its counterpart organisation in New Zealand regarding the role and function of New Zealand's Advisory Committee on Official Statistics.

State Statistical Forum

Each year the ABS hosts two meetings of the State Statistical Forum (SSF). At these meetings the Australian Statistics Advisory Council state and territory government members come together to discuss their statistical priorities. During 2012–13 the SSF continued to focus on previously agreed priority areas: geospatially enabling data; statistical data integration; local level economic data; and performance reporting. Watching briefs, reporting on significant activities within the jurisdictions, were in place for: improving statistics about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples; children and youth statistics; and local level demography issues. The SSF also considered the strategies being used to support the increasing demand to build statistical capability across state and territory governments.

Australian Government Statistical Forum

The Australian Government Statistical Forum (AGSF) brings together senior staff of Australian government agencies who are important partners in the NSS. The AGSF aims to: promote NSS initiatives among agencies; identify and promote partnerships and collaborations; and encourage best practice in data collection and management. The AGSF meets biannually to discuss key national and international statistical developments. During 2012–13, the meetings considered a number of issues related to statistical capability and literacy, and whole-of-government developments in spatial statistics.

Australian Community Indicators Network

In the past decade there has been strong and growing interest in community indicators across governments and communities at all levels. The Australian Community Indicators Network (ACIN) is a group of professionals working together to build a national dialogue and knowledge base across community indicator policy, research and practice. With the support of the ABS, the ACIN has continued to hold national seminar events to share information on community indicator development and applications. In the last year ACIN has begun to develop its own website where seminar information and recordings will be stored.

Other initiatives to progress statistical capability

ABS officer outposts

The ABS outposts statistical officers in selected Australian and state and territory government agencies to assist in ensuring a strong and effective working relationship between the ABS and the agencies. Primary objectives of outposting are to facilitate access to statistics, enhance statistical capability, provide data quality advice and strengthen statistical coordination with host agencies.

During 2012–13, the outposted officers network was integrated into the NSS work program to improve strategic coordination. Outposted officers have also been actively involved in host agencies, undertaking activities including promotion and delivery of relevant training courses, as well as supporting collaboration between the ABS and host agencies in progressing a range of specific NSS priorities such as the consultation process for the Essential Statistical Assets for Australia initiative. Outposted officers have also been instrumental in developing networks of data users and producers in host agencies as well as supporting senior level bilateral engagement activities with the ABS.

For a full list of ABS outposted officers please refer to Table 5.9.

Statistical capability development

Statistical training forms a key element of the ABS strategy to enhance the statistical capability of those who need to collect data, manage their own data holdings, or analyse and communicate data. During 2012–13, the National Statistical Training Institute within the ABS conducted more than 50 training sessions, which were attended by 620 participants, mostly from government.

Complementing the formal training program is a suite of web-based resources known as Understanding Statistics. During the year, these resources were enhanced to improve the relevance and discoverability of the information contained.

Work has also begun on a plan to transform the delivery model of future statistical capability building activities. This plan includes the creation of broader learning pathways and more online and blended learning options.

Statistical infrastructure

ABS 2017

The ABS 2017 Group seeks to modernise the capacity of Australia's official statistical system, so that it can continue to provide an evidence base for the increasingly complex decision making of Australian governments and the community into the future.

Initially, ABS 2017 will position the ABS to sustain its ongoing statistical services and work programs, while also providing the impetus for a business and information transformation which will support the statistical demands of the future. This Group is leading a 'big step' transformation that will change the way ABS collects, collates, manages, uses, reuses and disseminates statistical information. This will provide the foundation for establishing an environment in which Australian governments and the community can more easily find, access, and combine statistical information.

The core of the initiative involves the introduction of a robust information management framework and supporting infrastructure in the ABS, and transforming the 2016 Census to be the first large scale digital Census. In later phases, the program will seek to position ABS to provide specialist statistical and information management expertise backed by supporting infrastructure to assist other government agencies.

Arrangements for data integration involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes

Integrating datasets in the economic, social and environmental fields provides expanded information for decision making, research and discussion. Data integration is a cost-effective way of obtaining longitudinal and small area data. While the benefits are clear, data integration also has risks. Consistent governance, methods, policies and protocols around data integration are needed for the effective and safe use of available data, whilst protecting the privacy of individuals and organisations providing the data.

As Secretariat for the Cross Portfolio Data Integration Oversight Board, the ABS has continued its NSS leadership role in promoting the establishment of a safe and effective environment for data integration. The Oversight Board is chaired by the Australian Statistician and includes Secretaries from the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; the Department of Health and Ageing; and the Department of Human Services. The Department of Health and Ageing and ABS, in collaboration with other Australian Government departments, developed the *High Level Principles for Data Integration Involving Commonwealth Data for Statistical and Research Purposes* which were endorsed by Portfolio Secretaries (the predecessor to the Secretaries Board) in 2010. Institutional and governance arrangements to support the implementation of these principles, including the establishment of the Cross Portfolio Data Integration Oversight Board, were endorsed by the Secretaries Board in 2010.

The Oversight Board met twice in 2012–13 to progress the development of the Commonwealth arrangements, including issues related to scope, risk, privacy, and the accreditation of integrating authorities.

Accredited Integrating Authorities

The Australian Government *High Level Principles for Data Integration Involving Commonwealth Data for Statistical and Research Purposes* require that an integrating authority be nominated to manage every data integration project. An accredited integrating authority must be used to undertake high risk data integration projects. In order to be accredited, an integrating authority must meet eight accreditation criteria which are assessed by an independent audit. The final decision on accreditation is made by the Cross Portfolio Data Integration Oversight Board. ABS was the first organisation to be granted accreditation in April 2012.

Key achievements in 2012–13

- In December 2012, the register for data integration projects involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes was released on the (www.nss.gov.au). The register, which also includes a public feedback mechanism, is one of the governance and institutional arrangements which supports transparency (one of the high level principles for data integration involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes).
- Various presentations were given at conferences and seminars across Australia to communicate information about the governance arrangements for data integration involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes to a range of government and non-government stakeholders.
- An addition to the Confidentiality Information Series 'How confidentiality affects research' was published on the NSS website.

Data Quality Online

Launched in March 2010, the Data Quality Online (DQO) tool expands on the ABS Data Quality Framework to assist data users and producers in assessing the quality of their data. It helps users to clearly communicate the key characteristics of the data which impact on quality through the drafting of a Data Quality Statement. This free tool is available on the National Statistical Service website (www.nss.gov.au) and is based on a series of prompting questions for each of the seven quality dimensions.

The DQO tool supports the creation of draft Data Quality Statements for reporting COAG National Agreement performance indicators, as well as supporting general purpose statements for a variety of data sources (including survey, administrative and multiple sources).

In 2012–13, the ABS worked in collaboration with the Productivity Commission to update the DQO tool to reflect changes to the COAG performance indicators in the National Agreements.

Statistical Clearing House

The Statistical Clearing House (SCH) was established in response to a recommendation in 1996 by the Small Business Deregulation Task Force. A central clearance process was established for business surveys conducted by the Australian Government to ensure that surveys are necessary, well designed and place minimum burden on business respondents. All surveys conducted by, or on behalf of, any Australian Government agency (including the ABS) and directed to business, are subject to clearance by the SCH. In view of its statistical expertise and statutory coordination role, the ABS is empowered to administer this clearance process.

The SCH pays particular attention to eliminating duplication and ensuring that business surveys conducted by Australian Government agencies follow sound statistical methodologies and practices. In 2012–13, there were 128 surveys submitted to the SCH for clearance. Of these, 82 were in scope for SCH review, 25 were out of scope, 16 were classified as 'In scope—not to be reviewed' and 5 were cancelled by agencies after submission. Of the 82 surveys in scope, 57 were approved and 25 were in various stages of review at the end of June 2013. Seventy-six surveys were approved in 2012–13 including 19 surveys submitted in the previous financial year. Surveys categorised as 'In scope—not to be reviewed' are those where the respondent burden is minimal, and total time taken to complete the survey is considered low.

The SCH is a successful NSS initiative in improving statistical coordination and reducing provider burden. During the 2012–13 year the SCH has implemented the following to help survey managers to undertake their role:

- a six monthly newsletter sent to commonwealth agencies to share information and updates between SCH Advisory Forum meetings
- additional practical examples added to the website to assist in the usability of the Sample Size Calculator.

The SCH has also led a review of the ABS Release of List process and assisted in shaping web forms for ABS business surveys.

Through focused engagement with key clients, the SCH has strengthened relationships resulting in proactive management of business surveys, better understanding of client business requirements and time frames, and improved responsiveness.

Statistical content

Essential Statistical Assets for Australia

In November 2010, ASAC endorsed the ABS, as part of its legislated role to coordinate the provision of official statistics across the National Statistical Service, to 'set out to identify, in a highly consultative way, the Essential Statistical Assets for Australia, regardless of which organisations produce them'.

During 2012–13, the ABS undertook an extensive consultation process which led to the release of the 2013 List of Essential Statistical Assets for Australia, which represents the first holistic assessment of the most essential statistics to meet current user requirements undertaken in Australia. The list is contained in the publication (ABS cat. no. 1395.0) *Essential Statistical Assets for Australia*, and a special article focusing on this key corporate initiative, including the future phases planned to complement the list, has been published in Chapter Three of this Annual Report.

Connecting people with place—Statistical Spatial Framework

'The work on global geospatial information management over the past two to three years has confirmed that one of the key challenges is a better integration of geospatial and statistical information as a basis for sound and evidence-based decision-making.'

The Secretary General of the UN Economic and Social Council 2012.

The ABS has recognised this challenge by making this issue an NSS priority and has responded by developing the Statistical Spatial Framework. This framework will provide Australian and international data producers with a common approach to connecting people-centric (socioeconomic) information to a location, and improve the accessibility and usability of this location-enabled information. The framework will have applicability in any organisation wanting to understand people, society and the economy in the context of place. (See information box p.91 for details.)

There has been strong international interest in the Statistical Spatial Framework, with quick acceptance obtained for the concept and recognition for its need internationally. As a result, the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) requested the ABS to prepare an International Geospatial Program Review, titled 'Developing a statistical-spatial framework in national statistical systems'. This program review was presented at the 44th United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) meeting in February 2013. The UNSC agreed with the review's recommendations and praised the ABS's efforts in conducting the review. The ABS will now work with the UNSD to create an Expert Group and to organise an international conference to begin development of an international version of the framework.

During 2012–13, the ABS finalised and validated the conceptual model for the framework, engaging domestically with statistical and geospatial user and producer communities. This engagement produced three notable outcomes:

- Discussions with ANZLIC—the Spatial Information Council and the Office of Spatial Policy ensured that ANZLIC's new ANZ Foundation Spatial Data Framework integrates Statistical Spatial Framework concepts, including incorporation of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) as the core statistical boundary set. The ANZLIC framework also acknowledges the important role that statistical information plays in geospatial analysis.

- At the Spatial@Gov Conference in November 2012, the ABS received strong support for and acceptance of the Statistical Spatial Framework concept and was acknowledged for its leadership on this topic.
- The ABS increased its level of participation in state and territory spatial councils with invitations to formally participate in the NSW Location Leadership Group and the Tasmanian Spatial Information Council.

The ABS has also begun the process of assessing requirements for implementing the framework within ABS statistical processes and collections. For example, the ABS provides a one-stop shop for regional socioeconomic data through its National Regional Profiles; recent enhancements to this service have provided an opportunity to employ some of the principles and standards contained in the framework.

Using the material the ABS is currently developing to support its own Statistical Spatial Framework implementation and incorporating material from other organisations, the ABS will produce detailed guidance material to support organisations seeking to implement the framework. This guidance material will be developed and released progressively during 2013–14, adding to the existing guidance material already available on the NSS website (www.nss.gov.au).

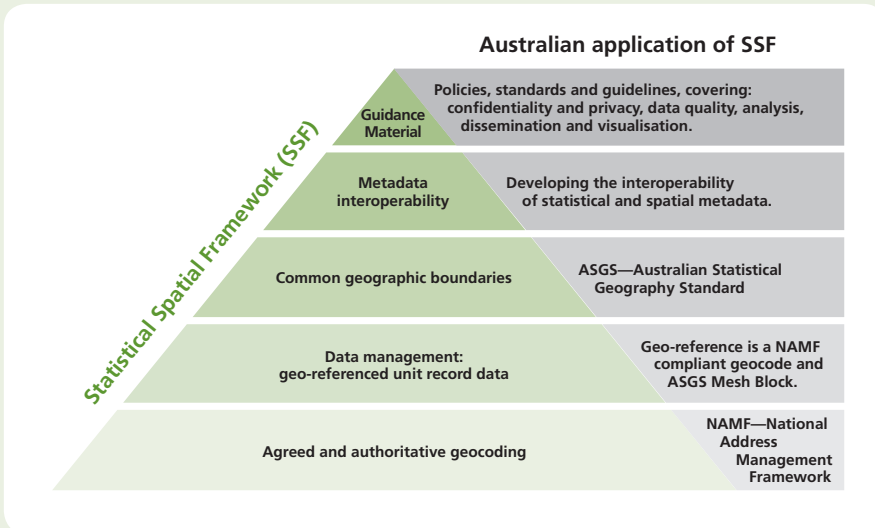
ABS also worked directly with the Australian Business Register (ABR) to include a location component on the Business Register. Recently this culminated in the ABR signing an agreement with PSMA to include a Geocoded National Address File (G-NAF) business location geocode and ASGS Mesh Block code on the Business Register. The Business Register is therefore expected to become the single consistent source of business locations for statistical purposes. The ABS is currently pursuing the use of this data source and several other datasets to support improved regional economic analyses in the future.

This represents a key piece of information infrastructure that will underpin the Statistical Spatial Framework principles and their adoption in Australia.

The Statistical Spatial Framework for Australia

The general Statistical Spatial Framework consists of five elements considered essential to integrating geospatial and socio-economic information. This general model of the Framework has broad relevance and will be applicable in a wide range of settings internationally. Interest in the general Framework is expected to result in the development of an international framework.

Diagram: Statistical Spatial Framework & Statistical Spatial Framework for Australia



The Statistical Spatial Framework for Australia details the Australian application of the general Framework and incorporates information relevant to Australian statistical and spatial infrastructures. The five elements and their application in Australia are detailed below.

1. Geocoding

The foundation of the Statistical Spatial Framework for Australia is the National Address Management Framework (NAMF). NAMF provides a common and consistent approach to establish a location (or geocode) from the address of each person, household or business in a dataset. This location should be obtained from a physical address and not a mailing address.

NAMF has been endorsed by all Australian government jurisdictions and utilises the G-NAF® as the source of address locations for service delivery.

2. Data management

Each person, household or business record in a dataset should have associated with it georeference information that is based on the geocoded address. To gain the maximum benefit from the geocoded address, the georeference information should ideally consist of the address geocode (i.e. a latitude and longitude) and the associated Mesh Block identifier, as defined in the ASGS.

3. Common geographic boundaries

The ASGS is the common boundary set for analysis, display and reporting of socioeconomic information within the Statistical Spatial Framework for Australia. Use of the ASGS geographic classifications in all information released will ensure that socioeconomic information is available for a consistent, hierarchical set of geographies.

In addition, the core ASGS boundary hierarchies have been designed to include approximately equal population numbers within each area, enabling meaningful comparisons of the population and associated human (socioeconomic) activity between areas. The ASGS boundaries were also designed by the ABS to support flexible reporting. The boundaries range in size from small geographic areas, such as suburbs and groups of a few urban blocks, through to larger areas, such as Natural Resource Management Areas and regions or cities.

4. Metadata interoperability

The spatial and statistical communities operate different metadata capabilities. Approaches to ensure that these two metadata environments can work together effectively are being investigated. Existing metadata standards being investigated include: Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX), Data Documentation Initiative (DDI), and ANZLIC ISO19115 Metadata Profile. It is important that any dataset that incorporates georeferencing contains the relevant statistical and spatial metadata to be accessible, understood and useful across the statistical and spatial data-user communities.

5. Guidance material

Organisations need to be aware of a range of legislative and operational issues when dealing with information about people and businesses, with the most significant issue being the privacy and confidentiality requirements for managing personal and commercial information. This is especially relevant when this information has a geospatial component. Other operational issues of relevance include: data quality, dissemination, analysis, and visualisation.

The ABS has in place a number of policies, guidelines and procedures that it is currently reviewing to make them available as reference material for organisations that are seeking to use the Framework to add a location element to their data. The ABS also welcomes input from other organisations that have experience in undertaking similar location-focused tasks. This material will provide best practice approaches to address many of the issues associated with location enabling socioeconomic data.

Benefits of the Statistical Spatial Framework for Australia

By standardising the process of integrating a range of socioeconomic information within a location context, the Framework will empower people and organisations to:

- improve planning for regional economies and communities
- better target service delivery at the local-area level
- engage in more informed, community-level decision making
- incorporate population, social and economic data into current geospatial analysis.

The Framework will also benefit the considerable efforts currently being made to bring a range of data together to better understand local-area level causes, impacts and responses to national and global concerns, such as natural disasters, climate change and sustainable development. The Framework will enhance Australia's environmental, social and economic intelligence in the twenty-first century.

Chapter 8

International engagement



Introduction

The ABS's international role is mandated by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, section 6(f) to 'provide liaison between Australia, on the one hand, and other countries and international organisations, on the other hand, in relation to statistical matters'.

The importance of ABS international engagement is a key part of our role for a number of reasons. The ABS shapes, influences and leads the development of international statistical standards in order to enhance Australia's international comparability, and improve the utility of international statistics for Australian decision makers across economic, environmental, population and social statistics. ABS international engagement helps make the global statistical picture more reliable and useful for Australia and its region. These enhanced international statistics inform the full spectrum of Australian policy making.

With newly emerging statistical areas and the rapidly changing international environment, demands on the ABS have increased significantly in recent years, and are expected to accelerate over the next five years. In light of this, and the *Australia in the Asian Century* white paper, the ABS has endorsed a new International Relations Strategy (2013), which aims to deepen relations with regional countries, recognise emerging statistical areas, and increase the focus on partnering to build statistical standards, capability and infrastructure.

The goals of the ABS International Relations Strategy are:

- to shape, influence and lead the development of international statistical standards obtaining international agreement on frameworks, strategies and policies to set the direction for the future
- to collaborate with international organisations to develop a shared set of infrastructure such as tools, methods and systems and collaborate on best practice to ensure the ABS remains a world-class statistical organisation
- to build capability in developing NSOs, particularly in Asia and the Pacific region, to improve statistical systems and standards to support information for decision-making; as well as building the capacity of Asia and the Pacific region to take a stronger leadership role in influencing standards in the international community.

During 2012–13 the ABS continued its focus on building capability in Asia and the Pacific region and leading work in statistical standards and methodology within the global statistical community. ABS executive and senior personnel chaired and actively participated in key international committees and working groups, providing leadership, influencing global standards and assisting regional outcomes.

In addition, the ABS continued its partnership with AusAID to deliver statistical programs for Indonesia and the Pacific region through leadership and technical capability building programs both in country, and by hosting development visits. Over this period, the ABS also hosted 12 international development and study visits from a range of countries including Japan, Thailand, Chile, Bangladesh and India.

Influencing the development of international statistical infrastructure, standards and setting the direction for the future

The growing importance of comparable regional data in the global economy is driving increasing demand to produce high quality, timely and consistent statistics. The Australian Statistician has taken a lead role in the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services (HLG), which was set up by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians in 2010 to oversee and coordinate international work relating to the development of enterprise architectures within statistical organisations.

In November 2012, the HLG group held a workshop, which agreed on two priority projects that should be undertaken during 2013, one on the implementation, management and support of existing standards, and the other on developing a common statistical production architecture. These have been progressed through 2012–13.

To complement this work, the ABS is co-ordinating an international collaboration initiative (the Statistical Network), with the vision of '... timelier, more trustworthy, and lower cost statistical information measuring new components of the society, economy, and environment, telling a richer story of our countries' progress'.

The Network's intention is to collaborate with other National Statistical Organisations (NSOs) to co-design and co-develop projects aligned with the vision. These projects aim to harmonise statistical methods, systems, and capabilities across international statistical institutions. Combining resources and effort to develop these projects will ensure that NSOs can benefit from the work done by the Network while incurring lower overall costs.

The ABS has continued to lead and support the Statistical Network—a network of NSOs from Australia, Canada, Sweden, Norway, United Kingdom, New Zealand and Italy. The Network seeks to improve statistical information management through a series of practical collaborations. During 2012–13, the Statistical Network progressed projects on business architecture, collection and dissemination of data, and the processing of administrative data.

Development of the Generic Statistical Information Model

The Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM) is a cornerstone of the international collaborative effort to industrialise official statistics. The ABS was a significant contributor to the successful delivery of GSIM V1.0 as an international standard in December 2012. GSIM is a reference framework of internationally agreed definitions, attributes and relationships that describes the pieces of information (called 'information objects') that are used in the production of official statistics.

UN Statistical Division Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications

The ABS attended the UN Statistical Division (UNSD) Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications in May 2013 where a range of items were discussed, including:

- best practice guidelines and criteria for inclusion in the Family of International Classifications
- the role of international standards and frameworks for national statistical organisations
- proposed reviews, classifications under revision and recently revised classifications including the Standard International Classification of Energy Products, International Classification of Crime, International Standard Classification of Occupations, Classification by Broad Economic Categories, and 2012 Status of Employment

- the need for revision or an update of the Central Product Classification and the International Standard Industrial Classification
- options for the effective management of classifications through classifications management systems.

Endorsement of a core set of population and social statistics as a framework for capacity development in Asia and the Pacific region

In early 2013 the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) endorsed a core set of population and social statistics to be used as a framework for guiding capacity and capability development in Asia and the Pacific region. The core set was developed by a Technical Advisory Group for the UN ESCAP Committee on Statistics. The UN ESCAP Statistics Division referred to the endorsement of the core set as a global milestone because all countries in Asia and the Pacific have agreed to a set of statistics to guide capacity development. Statistics offer flexibility and the ability for countries in the region to prioritise efforts towards the most relevant statistics for their circumstances. Australia, through the ABS, has co-chaired the Technical Advisory Group and played a leadership role in the Committee on Statistics' efforts to build this capability and capacity.

Endorsement of a resolution to implement the outcome of a High-Level Meeting on the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific

In early 2013 the UN ESCAP endorsed a resolution to implement the outcome of a High-Level Meeting on the Improvement of Civil Registration and Vital statistics in Asia and the Pacific. The resolution called for a ministerial-level meeting on civil registration and vital statistics, increased collaboration with donors and development partners to establish an effective funding and advocacy campaign, and establishment of a regional steering group with membership from the health, civil registration and statistics sectors.

An effective civil registration and vital statistics system is an essential capability for high quality population and health statistics in any country. Without such a system, countries will lack credible and basic information such as population estimates, life expectancy and mortality rates. Australia, through the ABS, has played a major role in supporting the UN ESCAP Civil Registration and Vitals program, particularly throughout the Pacific.

Measuring sustainable development

In June 2013 a UN Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)/OECD Taskforce on Measuring Sustainable Development presented its final draft report to the Conference of European Statisticians (CSE) for endorsement. The report built on the previous work of the Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development which developed a conceptual model for the measurement of sustainable development. The Task Force report recommends both a conceptual and measurement approach to measuring sustainable development, and a proposed set of indicators countries may wish to use for their own purposes. Australia, through the ABS and in conjunction with the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, has contributed to this initiative, both through the Working Group and the Taskforce. ABS contributions have helped to influence the recommendations so that they are appropriate to Australia's needs, as well as reflecting the particular challenges faced by countries in Asia and the Pacific region.

Measuring subjective wellbeing

Over the last 12 months, Australia, through the ABS, has contributed to an OECD working group developing guidelines for the measurement of subjective wellbeing. Subjective wellbeing is an emerging area of interest from both a policy and statistical perspective, particularly following the release of the Stiglitz, Sen and Fitoussi Report of the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress. The Guidelines were developed by a small working group including Australia, and were endorsed by the OECD in 2013.

Human development

In response to continuing concerns from the international statistics community, the United Nations Human Development Report Office committed to improving the availability and quality of national data in the UN Human Development report. This report is released annually with the 'goal of putting people at the centre of development, going beyond income to assess people's long-term well-being'. The ABS has undertaken a review of the sources used in the 2012 report, and no new or major concerns were raised. Suggestions for improvement were made to the Human Development Report Office to improve transparency and interpretability of findings, and to influence future measurement possibilities.

Post-2015 development agenda

With the United Nations Millennium Development Goals due to expire in 2015, the global community is engaging in discussions about the post-2015 development agenda. This discussion is also being influenced by the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development, and interest in a universal set of sustainable development goals. The Rio+20 Conference on Sustainable Development recommended that the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) contribute to the discussions through measurements beyond GDP. The ABS has joined an Australian Government Interdepartmental Committee that is leading Australia's work on the post-2015 agenda, and a UNSC Friends of Chair group is taking forward the associated measurement agenda.

Societal progress

The ABS attended the 4th OECD World Forum on Statistics, Knowledge and Policy, held in New Delhi in October 2012, under the theme 'Measuring Well-Being for Development and Policy Making'. The Forum brings together over 1,000 policy makers, researchers, statisticians, and community members. The ABS was invited to lead discussions on the Measures of Australia's Progress project, with a special focus on the public consultation undertaken during 2012–13 on Australian's aspirations for our nation. The ABS also led discussions on the emerging theme of governance.

Geospatial information

During 2012–13, under the auspices of the UNSC, the ABS undertook a major program review of countries' capacity and capability to integrate spatial and statistical information. The UNSC discussed the findings of this review in February 2013, and agreement was reached to form an Expert Group and hold an international conference to share learnings. The ABS has agreed to lead this Expert Group; the first meeting is expected during 2013–14 in conjunction with an International conference. At the same time, the ABS was part of an Australian Delegation to the UN Global Geospatial Information Management Committee of Experts, which met in New York in July 2012. The Committee has identified nine priority areas, one of which is the linking or integration of spatial and statistical information.

International Technical Advisory Board—Myanmar

An International Technical Advisory Board (ITAB) was established in 2012 to provide internationally recognised technical expertise and assist the Myanmar Government to successfully implement its 2014 Census of Population and Housing in compliance with international standards. The ABS accepted an invitation to join this board from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). The ABS is exploring opportunities for collaboration with Myanmar to build capability, share knowledge and make practical progress towards adoption of international statistical best practice in Myanmar.

Indonesia Program

Badan Pusat Statistik (BPS), the Central Statistics Agency in Indonesia, is developing its statistical capability through a major program called Change and Reform for the Development of Statistics as part of a broader, whole-of-Indonesian government reform agenda. The three-year AusAID-funded ABS program builds on the long standing relationship between the ABS and BPS, which is designed to improve the quality and breadth of data, improve the production of statistics, and develop the leadership and capability of senior leaders and staff. The technical assistance is designed and developed in consultation with senior BPS management, and is a mix of building statistical capability and leadership skills relevant to a statistics environment. Key areas of support in 2012–13 included:

- project management, leadership training
- National Accounts work towards meeting the System of National Accounts (SNA) 2008
- Integrated Business Register and Producer Price Index.

Pacific Program

In 2011 the ABS commenced a three year program of AusAID-funded assistance to the Pacific region under the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS) Action Plan. The ABS focuses on the following key areas of support:

- leadership and institutional strengthening—mentoring and supporting the Government Statisticians of Pacific NSOs and building regional capability, for example, through the Pacific Leadership Forum in Brisbane in March 2013 attended by the heads of 13 regional NSOs
- regional statistical capacity development in key statistical areas such as Civil Registration and Vitals, Consumer Price Index (CPI), and regional training programs offered for Government Finance Statistics (GFS) and the International Comparison Program (ICP)
- bilateral partnership support—supporting country programs in Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands to develop statistical capability and provide senior leadership mentoring and development
- regional statistical service support—assisting and collaborating with regional organisations, such as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre and the University of the South Pacific, with statistical training, courses and technical assistance programs in support of the TYPSS.

Timor-Leste Program

The ABS has agreed to provide a program of technical assistance in Timor-Leste to support statistical capacity building. The ABS is working with the Direccção Geral de Estatística (DGE), the central statistics agency in Timor-Leste, to design a four year program (2014–17).

Discussions on the program were supported by reciprocal visits by the Australian Statistician, Mr Brian Pink, to Timor-Leste in April 2013 and Mr Antonio Freitas, Director General of Statistics DGE, to Australia in June 2013.

In 2013, with funding from AusAID, ABS invested in five key statistical areas:

- statistical leadership development and management support
- support to produce a monthly, high quality CPI for Timor-Leste
- support to produce a high quality and timely Business Activity Survey (BAS)
- a review of the 2011 Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES) and support for the development of an implementation plan for the 2014 HIES
- a review of the National Accounts.

Seychelles National Bureau of Statistics

In 2012 the Vice President of Seychelles, Mr Danny Faure, requested the assistance of the Australia Government to provide long-term support to the Seychelles National Bureau of Statistics (NBS). A scoping study was undertaken through a collaborative arrangement between the ABS and AusAID to assess the feasibility of this support. As a result, the ABS has agreed to assist the NBS in 2013–14 through the deployment of an ABS officer as a resident technical advisor to NBS senior management.

International development study visits

The ABS receives many approaches for international study and technical visits from other countries, particularly countries in Asia. These visits are supported by staff from various statistical areas, and provide an opportunity for discussion on the challenges and lessons learned in developing statistical standards and methodology.

Table 8.1 International development visits 2012–13

Date	International development study visit	Topic	Location
26–28 June 2013	Central Bank of Chile	Annual and quarterly national accounts	Sydney Canberra
18–20 June 2013	Bank of Korea	National and sectoral non-financial balance sheets	Canberra
21–22 March 2013	Statistics New Zealand	ICT infrastructure management	Canberra
4–5 March 2013	Statistics Bureau of Japan	Census data processing, business register, business demography statistics and input-output analysis	Canberra
25 February to 1 March 2013	Department of Statistics, Malaysia	Statistical business process in data warehouse and data management technology	Canberra
25–27 February 2013	Bank of Thailand	Data quality, quality assurance and strategic discussions about major ABS survey programs	Canberra
19 November 2012	Statistics Netherlands (CBS)	Supermarket scanner data in Consumer Price Index	Canberra
12–16 November 2012	Bureau of Statistics, Bangladesh	Geographic information systems	Canberra
7 November 2012	Indigenous Leaders and Government Officials from Peru	Collection of statistical information on Indigenous peoples in Australia	Canberra
23–26 October 2012	Budget, Accounting and Statistics, Republic of China (Taiwan)	Business register; geography and geographic information systems	Melbourne Canberra
10–14 September 2012	Ministry of Tourism, Government of India	Tourism Satellite Account	Brisbane Sydney Canberra
6–10 August 2012	Bureau of Statistics, Bangladesh	Food security and nutrition; overview of ABS structure and governance	Canberra

International positions held by ABS officers

The ABS is an active participant in a wide range of multilateral meetings and committees. During 2012–13 the ABS continued to develop knowledge and share expertise, contributing to the development of statistical frameworks and methods. Our strong relationship with the UNSC, of which the Australian Statistician is the Vice-Chair, continues to benefit both the global statistical system and our ability to deliver the best possible information for Australia's own needs. ABS senior staff also chaired other committees, including in Asia and the Pacific region, such as the Governing Council of Statistical Institute of Asia, and the UN ESCAP Committee on Statistics Technical Advisory Group on Population and Social Statistics and the Pacific.

Table 8.2 International positions held by ABS officers 2012–13

Brian Pink	Vice-Chair	United Nations Statistical Commission
	Member	OECD Committee on Statistics
	Member	Statistics Committee, UN ESCAP
	Member	UN ECE Conference of European Statisticians
	Member	High-Level Group on Strategic Development in Business Architecture for Statistics
	Member	UN ESCAP Expert Group on Opportunities and Advantages of Enhanced Collaboration on Statistical Information Management in Asia and the Pacific
Peter Harper	Chair	United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental – Economic Accounting
	Chair	Bureau Commonwealth Conference of Statisticians
Ian Ewing	Member	Executive Board of the International Comparisons Program
Trevor Sutton	Chair	Governing Council of Statistical Institute of Asia and the Pacific
	Member	Vital Statistics and Civil Registrations in Asia–Pacific Taskforce
	Member	Strategic Advisory Board for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services in Asia and the Pacific
Jonathan Palmer	Member	Governing Council of Statistical Institute of Asia and the Pacific
Gemma Van Halderen	Co-Chair	UN ESCAP Committee on Statistics Technical Advisory Group on Population and Social Statistics
	Member	UN ECE–OECD–Eurostat Taskforce on Measuring Sustainable Development
	Member	International Statistical Institute
	Member	UN Global Geospatial Information Management Committee of Experts
Michael Davies	Member	OECD Working Party on National Accounts
	Member	IMF Committee on Balance of Payments
	Member	IMF GFS Advisory Committee
	Member	Pacific Statistics Steering Committee
Bruce Hockman	Co-Chair	Ulaanbaatar City Group
Frank Yu	Chair	Statistical Network Steering Committee
	Member	Plug and Play for High-Level Group on Strategic Development in Business Architecture for Statistics
Jenine Borowik	Member	IT Advisory Board Meetings with Statistics New Zealand
	Member	Statistical Network Steering Committee
	Member	High-Level Group (HLG) Project Board
	Member	High-Level Group on Strategic Development in Business Architecture for Statistics
	Member	Conference of European Statisticians—Management of Statistical Information Systems

Chapter 9

Professional papers by ABS officers

Officers of the ABS prepared the following professional papers, which were presented or published between 1 July 2012 and 30 June 2013.

Branson, Merry. 'The challenges for statistical agencies with such a varied customer base', paper presented to IAOS Conference on Official Statistics: Getting Our Messages Across—Strategies and Best Practices to Ensure the Use of Statistics in Decision Making, Kyiv, Ukraine, 12–14 September 2012

Branson, Merry and Watson, Debbie. 'Statistical story telling: beyond data visualisation to data engagement', paper presented to IAOS Conference on Official Statistics: Getting Our Messages Across—Strategies and Best Practices to Ensure the Use of Statistics in Decision Making, Kyiv, Ukraine, 12–14 September 2012

Blink, Caroline and Kristen Pammer. 'Attentional differences in driving judgments for country and city scenes: semantic congruency in inattentive blindness', *Accident Analysis and Prevention*, vol. 50, 2013: 955–963

Brinkley, Eden, Preston, John, and Scott, Annette. 'Using administrative taxation data to improve sample design and estimation—an ABS perspective', *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference of Establishment Surveys*, Montréal, Canada, June 11–14, 2012

Brinkley, Eden and Scott, Annette. 'Implementing an integrated program of economic statistics—an ABS perspective', *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference of Establishment Surveys*, Montréal, Canada, June 11–14, 2012

Brinkley, Eden, Hamilton, Alistair, and Lalor, Therese. 'Operationalising metadata frameworks—an ABS perspective', *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference of Establishment Surveys*, Montréal, Canada, June 11–14, 2012

Cao, Kay, Wong, Jason and Anil Kumar. 'Modelling the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System (NGER) energy consumption under-coverage', paper presented at the 41st Australian Conference of Economists, 8–12 July 2012, Melbourne

Cao, Kay, Wong, Jason and Anil Kumar. 'Modelling the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System's energy consumption under-coverage', *The Australian Economic Review*, vol. 46, no. 2, June 2013

Hamilton, Alistair. 'Statistical and spatial frameworks', paper presented at the Standards and Data Infrastructure Conference: Work Session on Statistical Metadata, which was held from 6–8 May 2013, Geneva

Hossack, Darren. 'Defining Australia's urban population—a new methodology', paper presented at the Surveying and Spatial Sciences Conference, National Convention Centre, Canberra, Australia, 17–19 April 2013

Jayantha, Aravindan and Conn, Lewis. 'Using the two-stage approach to price index aggregation', Ottawa Group—International Working Group on Price Indices, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1–3 May 2013

Kindermann, Bindi and McColl, Bob. 'Household income, consumption and wealth—broader frameworks, more comprehensive and coincident measures, and analyses of joint distributions', paper prepared for the 32nd General Conference of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth. Boston, USA 5–10 August 2012

Hui Wei and Pengfei Zhao. 'The industry sources of Australia's productivity slowdown', paper presented at the Second World KLEMS Conference at Harvard University, August 9–10, 2012

Hui Wei, Loughton, Ben , Xiang, Jenny and Zhang, Rachel. 'Getting measures of capital services right: accounting for capital utilisation in the mining industry', paper presented at the 41st Annual Conference of Economists, 8–12 July 2012, Melbourne

Hansell, David and Thai Nguyen. 'Productivity, entry and exit in Australian manufacturing and professional services', paper presented at the Economic Measurement Group, 22 November 2012

McColl, Bob, Kindermann, Bindi, and Mira d'Ercole, Marco. 'Development of international guidelines and frameworks for micro statistics on household income, consumption and wealth', paper prepared for the 32nd General Conference of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth. Boston, USA, 5–10 August 2012

Merrington, Leigh. 'Using the two stage approach to price index aggregation', paper prepared for Ottawa Group 2013, Copenhagen, Denmark, 1–3 May 2013

Letherby, Robert and Branson, Merry. 'Statistical literacy: bringing concepts to life in our diverse and ever changing user communities', paper presented to IAOS Conference on Official Statistics: Getting Our Messages Across— Strategies and Best Practices to Ensure the Use of Statistics in Decision Making, Kyiv, Ukraine, 12–14 September 2012

Shahidullah, M. 'Response: ABS's comments on "Estimating Indigenous life expectancy: pitfalls with consequences"', *Journal of Population Research (JPR)*, vol. 29, no. 3, 2012

Soriano, Franklin. 'Propensity score matching: an application using the ABS Business Characteristics Survey', paper presented to 31st Centre for International Research on Economic Tendency Surveys (CIRET) Conference, Vienna, Austria, 5–8 September 2012

Tam, Siu-Ming. and Gross, Bill. 'Discussion', *Journal of Official Statistics*, vol. 29(1), 2013

Tam, Siu-Ming. 'Metadata—a bedrock for official statistics', paper presented at the Statistics Conference, Abu Dhabi, 12–13 May 2013

Whiting, Julian. 'Sample design for disabled', paper presented at International Conference on Methods for Surveying and Enumerating Hard-to-Reach Populations, October 31–November 3, 2012, New Orleans, Louisiana, USA

Wise, Phillip and Lin, Yan-Xia. 'Estimation of regression parameters from noise multiplied data', *Journal of Privacy and Confidentiality* (2012), vol. 4, no. 2, 61–94

Chapter 10

Statistical and topic advisory groups advising the ABS



National groups

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Demographic Statistics Expert Advisory Group
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group (advising on reconciliation)
Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics
Analytical Community Reference Group
Australasian Mortality Data Interest Group
Australia and New Zealand Population Workshop
Australian Government Energy Data Forum
Australian Government Statistical Forum
Australian Health Survey Reference Group and related advisory groups
Australian Statistics Advisory Council
Australian Transport Data Action Network
Census—Indigenous Enumeration Strategy Working Group
Committee of Australian Sport and Recreation Officials Research Group
Culture Statistics Working Group
Data and Performance Measurement Principal Committee
Demography Statistics Advisory Group
Disability Policy and Research Working Group
Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council ((CDSMAC) Sub-Committee)
Early Childhood Data Subgroup
Economic Statistics User Group
Gender Statistics Advisory Group
General Social Survey Reference Group
Health Statistics Advisory Group
Household Income and Expenditure Statistics User Advisory Group
Housing Statistics User Advisory Group
Information and Communication Technology Statistics Reference Group
Innovation (incl. R&D) Statistics Reference Group
Input-Output Statistics User Group
International Trade in Services User Group
Labour Statistics Advisory Group
Longitudinal Studies Advisory Group
Measures of Australia's Progress Economic Topic Advisory Panel
Measures of Australia's Progress Environment Topic Advisory Panel
Measures of Australia's Progress Expert Reference Group
Measures of Australia's Progress Governance Topic Advisory Panel

Measures of Australia's Progress Social Topic Advisory Panel
Mental Health Information Strategy Standing Committee
Methodology Advisory Committee
Migrant Statistics Management Board
Migrant Statistics Reference Group
Mortality Statistics Advisory Group
National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data
National Community Services Information Management Group
National Corrective Services Statistics Advisory Group
National Crime Statistics Advisory Group
National Criminal Courts Statistics Advisory Group
National Health Information Standards and Statistics Committee
National Housing and Homelessness Information Management Group
National Housing Supply Data Sub-group
Patient Experience Survey Reference Group
Personal Safety Survey Advisory Group
Population Estimates Technical Workshop
Private Hospital Statistics User Group
Productivity Measurement Reference Group
Programme for Assessment of Adult Competencies Reference Group
Rural Environment and Agriculture Statistics User Forum
Schools Data Subgroup
Standard Business Reporting Taxonomy Approval Committee
State Accounts User Group
Statistical Clearing House Advisory Forum
Steering Committee for the Review of Government Service Provision
Strategic Cross-sectoral Data Committee for Early Childhood, Education and Training
Structural Issues in the Workforce Sub-Committee, Workforce Profile Working Group
(Community Services Ministers' Advisory Council (CDSMAC) Sub-Committee
Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers Reference Group
Tourism Research Advisory Board

State and territory government groups

ACT Information Development Working Group
Government Agencies Statistical Committee (South Australia)
Northern Territory Statistical Liaison Committee
Queensland Statistical Table
Social Statistics Consultative Groups (Western Australia)
State Statistical Forum (all states and territories)
Statistical Coordination and User Forum (New South Wales)
Statistical Policy Committee (Tasmania)
Statistical Policy Committee (Western Australia)
Tasmanian Statistical Advisory Committee
Victorian Statistics Advisory Forum



Section 3

HOW THE ABS OPERATES



Chapter 11

Corporate Governance



Introduction

The ABS's corporate governance framework ensures transparency in decision making, operation, and accountability by promoting strong leadership, sound management and effective planning and review processes.

The key features of the ABS's corporate governance framework are:

- a planning cycle to ensure that the ABS work program reflects current and emerging statistical priorities of users, and is consistent with the ABS mission and overall strategic directions
- senior management committees involved in developing policies and strategies, identifying priorities and monitoring the ABS's performance
- advisory bodies and user groups, which enable the ABS to consult widely with the user community about the ABS work program
- an audit and review program covering the different facets of ABS operations, overseen by the ABS Audit Committee
- a risk management framework to assist in identifying and managing risks at organisational, operational and project level
- instructions and manuals to ensure staff have access to ABS policies and practices.

ABS values

Underlying the corporate governance framework are the Australian Public Service (APS) and ABS values, which are the basis for the ethical standards for ABS employees.

As an APS agency, ABS employees are required to abide by the APS Values and Code of Conduct. In addition, the ABS Corporate Plan sets out values specific to the ABS, which are essential to the ABS's role as a trusted and independent provider of statistical information for Australia.

These values are promoted through training courses and awareness raising. They are used as a reference for the actions and decisions of all ABS staff.

The ABS values are:

- integrity
- service
- professionalism
- relevance
- trust of providers
- access for all.

For more information on the ABS values, see Chapter 12—Management of human resources.

Senior management committees

An important feature of ABS corporate governance is the role played by senior management committees, which are active in developing policies and strategies, identifying ABS priorities, assessing and responding to risks and opportunities, and monitoring ABS performance.

The major senior management committees in place during 2012–13 are outlined in Table 11.1.

Table 11.1: Senior management committees for 2012–13

<p>Executive Leadership Group meetings</p>	<p>The Executive Leadership Group (ELG) determines the strategic direction of the organisation.</p> <p>ELG meetings are held fortnightly to ensure that ongoing attention is given to strategic issues that affect the future of the organisation, including giving high-level focus to information transformation, the National Statistical Service and strategic client engagement.</p> <p>ELG membership consists of the Australian Statistician (chair) and the four Deputy Australian Statisticians.</p>
<p>Senior Management Group meetings</p>	<p>The Senior Management Group (SMG) provides tactical management oversight of ABS operations and advises the ELG on strategic and policy issues.</p> <p>SMG Meetings are held weekly to operationalise the strategic directions of the ABS and provide management oversight to ensure delivery of the ABS work program, within the framework of the ABS mission. SMG meetings also address other issues, including resource management, publishing and dissemination, human resources and accountability. The Chief Operating Officer chairs SMG meetings and the First Assistant Statisticians, two Regional Directors (on a rotating basis), the Chief Financial Officer and the Assistant Statisticians of the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement and Human Resources branches attend. Other senior officers attend as required for particular items. The ELG and the SMG also meet jointly on at least a quarterly basis to discuss relevant strategic and policy issues.</p>
<p>ABS Management Meetings</p>	<p>ABS Management Meetings play a major role in determining ABS strategic directions, priorities and resource allocations.</p> <p>Management Meetings are held twice a year, and make formal decisions on ABS strategic directions, consider planning and budgeting issues, and discuss issues of corporate importance.</p> <p>The Australian Statistician chairs these meetings and the Deputy and First Assistant Statisticians, Regional Directors, Chief Financial Officer and the Assistant Statisticians of the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement and Human Resources branches attend.</p>
<p>Strategic Finance and Investment Committee</p>	<p>The Strategic Finance and Investment Committee (SFIC) contributes to ABS planning and budgeting processes by ensuring ABS capital expenditure and major investments are aligned with strategic directions of the ABS. The SFIC is responsible for working with the Chief Financial Officer in developing the ABS Strategic Investment and Capital Plan that is aligned with strategic directions and approved by the ABS Management Meeting.</p> <p>The SFIC ensures the ABS has robust internal mechanisms for planning and managing capital assets and technology applications funding over the medium to long term.</p> <p>The Chief Operating Officer chairs the SFIC meetings. Meetings are held quarterly, with additional meetings scheduled as required for the planning and budgeting cycle.</p>

<p>Audit Committee</p>	<p>The Audit Committee provides assurance to the Australian Statistician that the ABS has in place a comprehensive control framework for all its business systems, including those used to support statistical activities, and that this framework continues to work effectively.</p> <p>The committee also assures the Australian Statistician that the ABS complies with all its legislative and other obligations.</p> <p>A Deputy Australian Statistician chairs the committee, which meets four times a year. It consists of seven members, two of whom are external. Their appointments are based on their personal qualities, experience and skills, including their ability to demonstrate independence on matters before the committee.</p>
<p>Protective Security Management Committee</p>	<p>The ABS maintains a comprehensive security framework, overseen by a Protective Security Management Committee chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician. This security framework ensures that both physical and computer security are maintained.</p> <p>The committee is a key means of ensuring that the ABS meets its legal requirement not to divulge identifiable information and to ensure that there is policy to meet the security and privacy related requirements of legislation including the <i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i>, <i>Census and Statistics Act 1905</i>, <i>Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975</i>, <i>Privacy Act 1988</i> and <i>Crimes Act 1914</i>.</p>

Planning

The ABS mission statement and the corporate plan provide the context for decision making on the ABS forward work program.

While much of the ABS work program remains constant from year to year, each year the ABS examines the external environment to assess the likely statistical needs for the next four years.

The annual planning cycle comprises a series of high-level meetings and forums, where senior managers consider the relative priorities and competing resource requirements of program components. In doing this, particular attention is given to:

- input from user consultations
- strategic directions the ABS has set for the next four years
- the cost imposed on respondents to collections, in terms of time and effort
- consideration of enterprise opportunities and risks
- prospective total resources available to the ABS within the next four years
- productivity gains that have been achieved, or which may be possible to achieve in the future with a particular focus on information transformation
- the contribution statistical activities make to meeting National Statistical Service objectives
- the extent to which particular statistical activities continue to be justified in relation to other work, with respect to user demand.

Aspects of the proposed forward work program, and resource estimates that emerge are considered by ASAC. The statistical work program is then finalised, taking into consideration the advice provided by ASAC.

The Forward Work Program is published every year in hard copy, and is also available on the ABS website at <http://www.abs.gov.au>.

Audit and risk management

The ABS has a robust Risk Management Framework, which provides the basis for identifying, assessing and mitigating risks at all levels within the organisation. The framework is set out in the ABS's Risk Management Strategy. The strategy and framework undergo continuous review, based on feedback from many sources including internal audits, external risk reviews, best practice guides, and the outcomes of the annual Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking exercise.

The ABS has a strong focus on the integration of risk identification and prioritisation within the ABS business planning cycle. In developing business plans, managers at all levels are expected to identify key risks to their work programs. Significant risks identified at section level are elevated or integrated into business plans at the Branch and/or Division level to provide a more comprehensive and consistent picture of the ABS risk profile.

Each year the ABS reviews and identifies strategic risks that have the potential to significantly impact the organisation. These are known as enterprise risks. This annual review strengthens risk identification and analysis through a coordinated examination of organisational threats. For each of the enterprise risks, members of the ABS Executive are designated as Risk Owners and treatment strategies are determined. Each Risk Owner has responsibility for monitoring the implementation of the identified mitigation strategies. This approach provides clear ownership of risk mitigation responsibilities and an opportunity for the Executive to review the success of risk mitigation.

The ABS conducts operational risk workshops to assist program managers to identify and manage risks that have the potential to impact program objectives.

Each year, a program of internal audits is developed to address performance and compliance risks. These internal audits are undertaken by an external audit provider and are developed from assessing all identified auditable areas, to take a risk-based assessment of topics.

In conjunction with, and to complement the audit program, the ABS runs an annual Internal Review Program. Internal reviews primarily focus on statistical programs to address issues including program effectiveness, efficiency and statistical quality.

Fraud control

Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines require the Australian Statistician to certify that the ABS has prepared appropriate fraud risk assessments and fraud control plans. The ABS is required to have in place appropriate fraud prevention, detection, investigation, reporting and data collection procedures and processes that meet the specific needs of the ABS and comply with the guidelines.

The Australian Statistician released the 2012–14 ABS Fraud Control Plan in November 2012. The plan shows the ABS has a relatively low exposure to fraud, but also recommends some mitigating actions to provide increased protection in some areas. The ABS monitors progress against these recommendations and reports regularly to the Audit Committee.

The ABS Fraud Control Plan will be reviewed and updated for release in 2014.

Security of premises

The ABS relies on the trust and confidence of data providers to enable it to operate effectively and fulfil the ABS mission statement.

The security of ABS premises, and of the information technology environment, is a key aspect of maintaining that trust and confidence, and essential to minimising risks in a number of areas, including fraud.

All ABS premises are physically secured against unauthorised access. Entry is through electronically controlled access systems, activated by individually coded access cards and monitored by closed circuit television. Areas of the ABS producing particularly sensitive data, such as main economic indicators, are subject to further physical security measures.

The ABS computer network has a secure gateway, which allows connection to some Internet services only. The secure gateway has been established in accordance with Australian Government guidelines and is subject to an annual compliance review by an accredited independent assessor. Internal access to ABS computing systems is based on personal identifiers that are password protected. However, this will change shortly to a smartcard based system. Databases are accessible only by approved users. The computer systems are regularly monitored and usage audited. There were no unauthorised access incidents into the ABS computing systems during 2012–13.

Additional access control systems are used to protect any data designated 'sensitive'. Access to sensitive data is only granted under the authority of area line management (the 'owners' of the data) on the basis that access is required by the staff member to carry out his or her duties.

Included in the ABS audit plan is an ongoing program of security audits, and reviews of computer systems and the physical environment.

External scrutiny

There were no significant developments in external scrutiny in 2012–13, with no reports issued by the Attorney-General, Parliament or the Ombudsman. There were also no individual or administrative review decisions of relevance to the ABS.

A range of Australian Government bodies examine the operations of the ABS. The ABS assisted in providing information to the Commonwealth Auditor-General and the Commonwealth Ombudsman during 2012–13.

There were no adverse comments relating to the ABS from the Commonwealth Auditor-General, the Commonwealth Ombudsman, Parliamentary Committees, or courts or tribunals during 2012–13.

Privacy

As an Australian Government agency, the ABS must comply with the *Privacy Act 1988* and the associated Information Privacy Principles. These obligations govern the way personal information about staff, clients and respondents should be collected, stored, used and disclosed. Information provided by respondents also has the additional protection of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

The ABS has a privacy officer who, providing the perspective of a privacy advocate, advises on privacy issues internally, and monitors the external environment to keep up-to-date on privacy issues that could impact upon ABS operations.

The ABS maintains a close relationship with the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner, advising the Commissioner regularly of the ABS's Forward Work Program, attending Information Contact Officer Network meetings and seeking advice on any new ABS initiatives about which privacy advocates may have concerns. Every year, the ABS contributes to the Privacy Commissioner's Personal Information Digest, which is published to inform the general public of the types of personal information that Australian Government departments hold.

Submissions to parliamentary committees

Table 11.2: Submissions to parliamentary committees and inquiries, 2012–13

Committee/Inquiry	Description of submission/information provided
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia Inquiry into the Use of Fly In/Fly Out (FIFO) Workforces in Regional Australia	In August 2012, the ABS provided a submission to the Inquiry into the use of Fly In/Fly Out (FIFO) Workforces in Regional Australia. The ABS submission informed the inquiry of issues around enumerated, working, service, and usual resident populations.
Parliamentary Joint Committee on Corporations and Financial Services Inquiry into Family Business in Australia	In October 2012, the ABS provided a submission to the Inquiry into Family Business in Australia. The ABS submission informed the inquiry of issues around collecting data on family businesses.
House of Representatives Standing Committee on Regional Australia Inquiry into the use of Fly In/Fly Out (FIFO) Workforces in Regional Australia	In November 2012, the ABS provided a second submission to the Inquiry into the use of Fly In/Fly Out (FIFO) Workforces in Regional Australia. The second submission addressed possible development work on population data.
Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration Inquiry into the Implementation of the National Health Reform Agreement	In February 2012, the ABS provided a submission to the Inquiry into the Implementation of the National Health Reform Agreement. The submission outlined the ABS's collection of population statistics.

Documents tabled in Parliament

In accordance with section 6 of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, the ABS tabled, in both Houses of Parliament, 41 proposals for the collection of information for statistical purposes. Details of the proposals are shown in the following table.

Table 11.3: Tabling—proposals for the collection of information for statistical purposes, 2012–13

Date tabled (a)	Statistical collection (b)
14 August 2012	Energy, Water and Environment Survey 2011–12
10 September 2012	Housing Motivations and Intentions Survey, Western Australia, 2012
9 October 2012	Survey of Sales to Households—Communication Survey
9 October 2012	Australian Health Survey
9 October 2012	Work, Life and Family Survey
9 October 2012	Retail Business Survey
26 November 2012	Survey of Research and Experimental Development, Businesses 2011–12
26 November 2012	Survey of Average Weekly Earnings
26 November 2012	Interstate Trade Queensland Imports/Exports
6 February 2013	Topic to be included as a supplement to the monthly population survey: Water use and Conservation Survey 2013
6 February 2013	Recorded Crime—Victims, Australia
6 February 2013	Survey of Cultural Funding by Government
12 March 2013	Topic to be included as a supplement to the Monthly Population Survey: Work Related Training and Adult Learning
12 March 2013	Agricultural Land and Water Ownership Survey 2012–13
12 March 2013	Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced Collection
12 March 2013	Rural Environment and Agricultural Commodities Survey
12 March 2013	Industrial Disputes Collection
12 March 2013	Survey of Income and Housing
12 March 2013	Survey of Foreign Currency Exposure
15 May 2013	Multipurpose Household Survey
15 May 2013	Consumer Price Index
15 May 2013	Survey of Job Vacancies
15 May 2013	Survey of Employment and Earnings
15 May 2013	Survey of Research and Experimental Development, Government and Private Non-Profit Organisations
15 May 2013	Wholesale and Retail Industries Survey
15 May 2013	National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection
15 May 2013	National Schools Statistics Collection
17 June 2013	Health Services Survey
17 June 2013	Water Supply and Sewerage Services Survey 2012–13
17 June 2013	Survey of Motor Vehicle Use
17 June 2013	Non-Profit Institutions Survey
17 June 2013	Economic Activity Survey 2012–13: Tourism Business Survey
17 June 2013	Environment Indicators Survey

Table 11.3: Tabling—proposals for the collection of information for statistical purposes, 2012–13 cont.

Date tabled (a)	Statistical collection (b)
17 June 2013	Private Health Establishments Collection
17 June 2013	Topic to be Included as a Supplement to the Monthly Population Survey: Characteristics of Recent Migrants
17 June 2013	Survey of Producer Prices
17 June 2013	Corrective Services, Australia—Quarterly Collections
17 June 2013	Criminal Courts, Australia
17 June 2013	Recorded Crime—Offenders, Australia
17 June 2013	Prisoners in Australia
17 June 2013	Survey to Support Estimates of Sub-State Resident Population

(a) If the proposal was tabled on different dates in the two Houses of Parliament, the earlier of the dates is shown.

(b) Unless otherwise indicated by the title, the statistical collection is a national project.

Disclosure of lists of names and addresses

In accordance with clause 6 of the Statistics Determination 1983 made under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the ABS tables, in both Houses of Parliament, details of the disclosure of lists of names, addresses and other information provided to a specified department or authority. The information released is shown in the following table.

Table 11.4: Tabling—disclosure of lists of names and addresses, 2012–13

Date tabled (a)	Information released
26 November 2012	List of Businesses for the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education (DIISRTE)
26 November 2012	Release of Lists of Businesses for Safe Work Australia
6 February 2013	Lists of Early Childhood Education Providers for the Commonwealth, State and Territory Education Departments
12 March 2013	Disclosure of lists of Agricultural Farm Businesses for the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences

(a) If the proposal was tabled on different dates in the two Houses of Parliament, the earlier of the dates is shown.

Freedom of Information requests

Introduction

Section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* requires the ABS to provide detail on the structure of the ABS, and how members of the public can gain access to information held by the ABS.

Detail on the structure of the ABS can be found in Section 1, Overview of the ABS.

The ABS is subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (FOI Act) and is required to publish information to the public as part of the Information Publication Scheme (IPS). This requirement is in Part II of the FOI Act and has replaced the former requirement to publish a section 8 statement in an annual report. The ABS has developed a plan showing what information is published in accordance with the IPS requirements, and this is available free of charge on our website.

Information held by the ABS

Table 11.5: Categories of documents in the possession of the ABS

Documents open to public access upon payment of a fee	The ABS does not hold any of these types of documents.
Documents available for purchase or customarily available free of charge	The ABS has a wide range of statistical publications available free of charge on its website: www.abs.gov.au , and through major public libraries. Charged publications can be purchased via the ABS National Information Referral Service (Phone 1300 135 070).
Government and Parliament	The ABS holds policy-related documents, ministerial briefings, ministerial correspondence, replies to parliamentary questions, and tabling documents.
Meetings and conferences	The ABS holds agenda papers, submissions, and records of proceedings of internal and external conferences, management meetings and workshops.
Statistical and statistical services projects	The ABS holds research, development and evaluation papers; records of consultations with suppliers and users of data; statistical classifications; lists of businesses; maps; data collection, processing and publication manuals and instructions; and mailing lists.
Administration and management	The ABS holds work program and planning documents; finance, staff and establishment papers and manuals; personnel files; recruitment files; files on selection and promotion of staff; staff development and training papers; officer services documents; and tenders.
Privacy	The ABS holds a record of the extent and nature of ABS holdings of personal information, as contained in the Personal Information Digest published by the Privacy Commissioner.
General	The ABS holds correspondence, manuals on general subjects, internal reports and administrative circulars.

ABS Freedom of Information activities

Matters relating to the operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* within the ABS are the responsibility of the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement, which is located in Central Office. Authority for decision making under this Act has been delegated to the Deputy Australian Statisticians, the First Assistant Statistician of Methodology and Data Management Division, and the Assistant Statistician in the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement.

A significant part of ABS information holdings is information collected under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. This information is exempt from the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Where to get information

Freedom of Information inquiries

All inquiries concerning access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* may be directed to the Freedom of Information Contact Officer, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Locked Bag 10, Belconnen, ACT, 2616; Phone 02 6252 7203; Email: freedomofinformation@abs.gov.au.

General information

The ABS offers an initial contact point for all information requests:

Telephone: 1300 135 070

Email: client.services@abs.gov.au

Facsimile: 1300 135 211

Mail: Client Services, ABS, GPO Box 796, Sydney, NSW, 2001.

Chapter 12

Management of human resources



Introduction

It is our people who will ensure we are a successful and sustainable organisation. Preparing our people for the future will enable us to deliver on our mission and work towards achieving our vision. Human resources (HR) management is a critical function within the agency. The ABS needs employees:

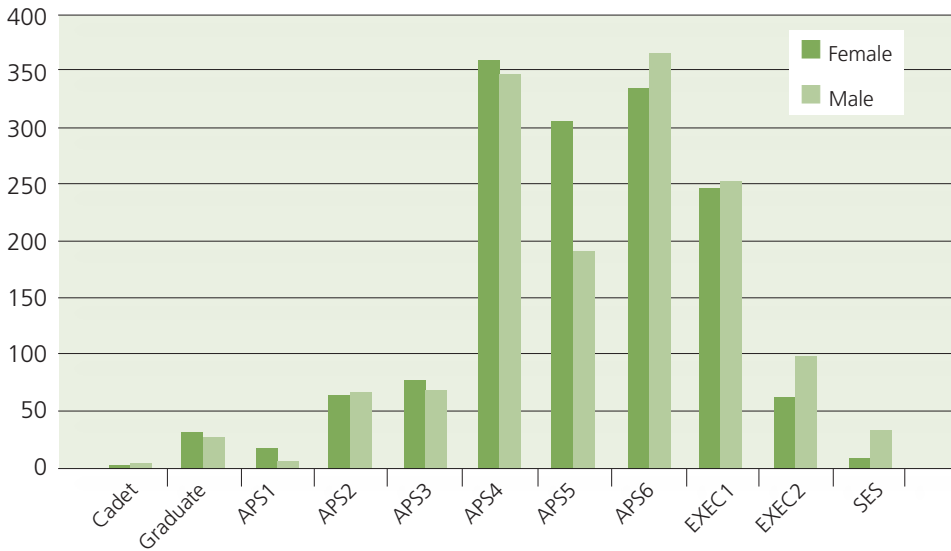
- who understand Australia's evolving information needs, and can assist the ABS to meet these needs
- who recognise the changes to the ABS operating environment, and can help the ABS to adapt to these changes
- possess professional competencies and a commitment to both Australian Public Service (APS) and ABS Values.

Proficient management of human resources is the key to ensuring the engagement and retention of a workforce that is skilled to deliver the ABS work program now and into the future.

As at 30 June 2013, there were 3,055 staff employed at the ABS under the *Public Service Act 1999*—1,476 males and 1,579 females. This includes operative, paid inoperative and unpaid inoperative employees. The ABS had 2,981 operative and paid inoperative staff, as at 30 June 2013.

There were also 567 staff employed to assist with data collection under Regulation 3 of the Statistics Regulations, and appointed as authorised officers under Section 16 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. These employees were mostly household survey interviewers.

Figure 12.1 and Tables 12.1 and 12.2 present the profile of ABS staff by employment classification and sex, and by location and type of employment for operative and paid inoperative staff. Staff employed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* (interviewers and census field staff), and 74 unpaid inoperative staff are excluded from the tables.

Figure 12.1: Employment classification by sex, 30 June 2013 ^{(a),(b)}

(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative staff.

(b) Excludes the Australian Statistician (Statutory appointment).

Table 12.1: Number of ABS staff by location and status, at 30 June 2013 ^{(a), (b), (c)}

Location	Ongoing		Non-ongoing		Total
	Full-time	Part-time	Full-time	Part-time	
Central Office (ACT)	1312	229	16	13	1570
NSW	235	42	1	57	335
VIC	244	49	2	4	299
QLD	134	27	1	33	195
SA	144	56	4	2	206
WA	117	27	28	42	214
TAS	79	14	14	7	114
NT	37	5	1	0	43
ACT	5	0	0	0	5
Total	2307	449	67	158	2981

(a) Includes operative and paid inoperative staff.

(b) Excludes the Australian Statistician (Statutory appointment).

(c) Totals were incorrectly reported in the 2011-12 Annual Report (Table 10.1).

At 30 June 2013, there were 10 women in the ABS Senior Executive Service (SES), representing 25% of the total number of SES officers in the ABS.

Table 12.2: Number of ABS Senior Executive Staff by level, sex and year ^(a)

Year (at 30 June)	SES Level			Sex		
	1	2	3	Male	Female	Total
2008	33	6	3	27	15	42
2009	26	7	3	26	10	36
2010	27	6	4	29	8	37
2011	26	7	4	26	11	37
2012	23	7	4	24	10	34
2013	28	8	4	30	10	40

(a) Includes only operative, substantive SES officers as at 30 June, but excludes the Australian Statistician, who is a statutory office holder appointed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. Excludes SES outposted to another department, i.e. one SES Officer for 2008–10 and 2011–12.

Australian Public Service values in the ABS

Australian Public Service (APS) Values are widely promoted and strongly observed throughout the ABS. The ABS has a complementary set of Values which underpin the work that we do to deliver on our mission as Australia's national statistical agency. These Values are drawn from the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and are consistent with the Values of many national statistical agencies around the world.

The ABS has long-established and strongly upheld agency Values that are fundamental to the ABS performing its role as an independent provider of statistical information.

Integrity—data, analysis and interpretation are always apolitical with the highest standards of integrity upheld

Relevance—all information provided by the ABS is relevant in terms of timeliness and content

Service—the ABS understands its service role and seeks to understand and meet its clients' statistical needs

Access for all—the ABS ensures its statistics can be easily accessed and used by the community, business and governments

Professionalism—the professionalism of employees is actively supported to ensure the ABS has the technical and leadership skills required for the future, and

Trust of providers—the ABS maintains provider trust by adhering to the highest level of data protection and privacy standards.

The importance of APS Values is acknowledged and integrated into the management and operations of the ABS. The obligations of all employees to uphold the APS and ABS Values and abide by the APS Code of Conduct are:

- promoted in learning and development activities across all levels from the induction of new starters through to senior management development programs
- actively applied through human resource processes
- supported by a suite of guidelines, policies and procedures, which themselves acknowledge the APS Values
- reflected as appropriate throughout ABS corporate documents, which are readily accessible to all employees through the ABS Intranet
- advertised through promotional material including posters and the distribution of bookmarks to all employees and new starters.

Following the amendments to the *Public Service Act 1999*, including the revision of the APS Values, and the introduction of a set of Employment Principles to be implemented across the APS, the ABS will be reviewing its HR policies, guidelines and procedures to ensure ABS behaviours reflect the intent embodied in the changes.

ABS People Plan

The People Plan supports ongoing organisational performance and sustainability via an integrated, consistent and focused implementation of people-related initiatives across the ABS. The essence of the Plan is highlighted in the motto 'Our People, Our Business, Our Future', reflecting the value placed on our people and recognising that a highly skilled ABS workforce is critical to achieving the ABS mission. The Plan is revised annually.

The key objective of the Plan is to ensure that we can continue to meet our mission, through our people. The five high-level national strategies progressed through the People Plan 2012–2013 were:

1. Build core capability to prepare our people for the future.
2. Strengthen leadership to help ensure organisational sustainability.
3. Foster a high performance culture where staff are engaged, supported and active participants in change.
4. Improve our ability to attract, recruit and deploy people with the right skills for the future ABS.
5. Understand and monitor our workforce and external environment.

These strategies reflect the people-related priorities articulated in ABS Strategic Framework documents (Corporate Plan and Strategic Direction Statements). They are also very closely aligned with the 'Key Focus Areas for Commonwealth Agencies' that were identified in the 2008–09 Australian Public Service Commission report, *State of the Service*.

Workplace diversity in the ABS

The ABS supports all forms of diversity, such as differences in gender, age, language, ethnicity, cultural background, disability, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, differences between individuals in educational level, life experience, work experience, socio-economic background and personality.

The *Workplace Diversity Action Plan 2013–2017* and the *Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–2016* form the core of the ABS Workplace Diversity Program and have been integrated with the ABS People Plan.

The ABS has identified four overarching strategies in the Workplace Diversity Action Plan to achieve positive outcomes from increased workplace diversity:

1. Strengthen a respectful and inclusive work environment and culture.
2. Improve our ability to attract, recruit and retain people of diverse backgrounds and targeted under-represented diversity groups.
3. Improve our understanding of workplace diversity issues and increase the analysis and utilisation of workplace diversity metrics.
4. As a statistical services provider, ensure accessible services, products and data collection practices are provided for people with disability and people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.

Access for people with disabilities

The *Workplace Diversity Action Plan 2013–2017* includes actions that aim to ensure accessible and equitable ABS business and workplace policies and practices for clients and employees with disabilities.

The ABS has reported, as required, on its activities for disability through the Australian Public Service Commission's *State of the Service* agency survey for 2012–13.

During 2012–13, initiatives to enable access to ABS products and services for clients with disabilities included:

- **Quality assurance and quality improvement mechanisms:** the ABS continues work to comply with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines version 2.0 developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C).
- **ABS Service Delivery Charter:** the ABS Service Delivery Charter describes the relationship between the ABS and its customers. The Charter specifies what to expect when accessing the ABS website and other services. Feedback and complaint mechanisms for ABS customers are set out in the Charter.
- **Collection mechanisms:** the ABS has three collection mechanisms relating to disability. These are:
 - the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (SDAC)
 - the ABS Short Disability Module
 - the Census of Population and Housing (Census).

Reconciliation Action Plan

The ABS is committed to reconciliation. In line with the ABS mission, the ABS assists and encourages informed decision making, research and discussion among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their communities and organisations, and within governments and the wider community. It does this by leading and coordinating statistical activity involving and relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The ABS Reconciliation Action Plan sets out actions the ABS will take to:

- increase the recruitment, retention and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ABS
- build the capability of ABS employees to respond effectively to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities through respect and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture
- ensure that ABS policies, programs and services effectively respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities
- develop the statistical literacy skills of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities to enable them to make informed decisions about themselves, their families and their communities.

Key diversity and reconciliation achievements in 2012–13

- release of the *Workplace Diversity Action Plan 2013–17* and the *Reconciliation Action Plan 2013–16*
- plans made available on the ABS website along with a statement of the ABS commitment to diversity
- the introduction of a Senior Reconciliation Champion position, which as at 30 June 2013 was occupied by Dr Paul Jelfs, First Assistant Statistician
- the establishment of the ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group in November 2012, which supports the implementation and review of the Reconciliation Action Plan
- increasing diversity and cultural awareness through online and face to face training, local and national celebrations and regular communications to staff on diversity and reconciliation achievements
- the continuing partnership with the Australian Football League (AFL) on the Footy Stats program, which was developed to use football to improve the statistical literacy of young Australians
- a National Rugby League (NRL) version of the Footy Stats program will be released in partnership with the NRL in 2013–14
- integrating the diversity and reconciliation plans with higher level business plans and mainstream organisational and business practices by:
 - including them in the ABS People Plan
 - reviewing progress on the deliverables of the Plans and reporting annually. The deliverables will be modified where necessary to ensure actions and targets remain relevant over the life of the Plans, and
 - incorporating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people employment strategies with the *Workplace Diversity Action Plan 2013–2017*.

Performance management in the ABS

ABS is committed to being a high performing public agency which promotes a people oriented culture through an increased focus on leadership, communication, innovation and engagement.

To this end, the ABS Development and Performance Framework (DPF) is designed to increase organisational performance by supporting all employees to maximise their performance through individual development, job satisfaction and positive, trusted working relationships.

In the last year, the ABS launched the 2012–13 People Plan with a key strategy of building core capability, strengthening leadership, retaining and engaging current employees, attracting and recruiting new employees and gaining a greater understanding of our workforce. The DPF supports this focus on core capability and engaging current employees. Cascading ABS goals from the most senior levels of management, through line-managers and teams to individuals, ensures that all employees are connected to the strategic direction of the ABS. Employees are encouraged to demonstrate insight and thinking beyond current practice. The innovation of our people is critical for the ABS to increase business performance and maintain organisational sustainability.

In support of delivery of the People Plan 2012–13 and the DPF, the following key initiatives have been conducted:

- skip-level feedback and interviews have been incorporated into guidelines and best practice guides to equip staff and managers to participate in multi-level communication in the areas of performance and capability development

- development of the ABS People Capability Framework (PCF) evaluation tool to be piloted as part of the 2013–14 Development and Performance Agreement (DPA) process
- regular promotional activities to develop awareness and education regarding the DPF.

All employees are expected to include key deliverables in their performance agreements, which also articulate the expectation that they will adhere to and promote the APS Values and Code of Conduct and consistently behave in an ethical and professional way.

Training and development

The ABS has a strong focus on building the capability of our people across all levels of the organisation, to ensure we have a highly skilled workforce capable of achieving our business outcomes. There is also a focus on strengthening our leadership capability to help shape the future ABS, and to support ongoing organisational performance and sustainability.

The PCF has been developed to facilitate workforce development. A PCF trial will coincide with the 2013–14 Start-of-Cycle DPA process, and allow staff to evaluate themselves against an agreed set of capabilities essential to the future operations of the ABS. The PCF will enable staff and managers to have more meaningful and targeted development discussions, contribute to enhanced capability and enable the ABS to understand its capability bench strength and associated development priorities.

The majority of development occurs on the job through experiential learning (70%). To supplement formal training ABS has increased the available range of informal learning opportunities using a variety of channels and is heading towards a goal of around 20% informal training. The HR area, in conjunction with various business areas, has offered a range of formal programs covering four major streams of learning: Leadership and Management; Understanding the Business of the ABS; Professional Expertise (Statistical); and Information Technology Business Tools. This accounts for 10% of learning.

Statistical training is a large component of the formal training curriculum. A range of foundation statistical skill programs has been offered at a corporate level, whilst business areas are offered further specialist training in more detailed or complex subject matter skills. This was enhanced by the development and introduction of the *ABS Statistical Skills for Official Statisticians* booklet that was provided to all ABS staff, as well as to a larger external audience via the ABS website.

Table 12.3: ABS employee training days^(a)

	Total ABS operative staff ^(b)	Attendance days	Average training days
2004–05	2,630	12,562	4.8
2005–06 ^(d)	2,865	16,163 ^(c)	5.6
2006–07	3,065	13,491 ^(c)	4.4
2007–08	2,733	9,907	3.6
2008–09	2,489	6,179	2.5
2009–10	2,593	7,397	2.9
2010–11 ^(d)	3,416	12,054	3.5
2011–12	3,213	15,541	4.8
2012–13	2,920	7547 ^(e)	2.6

(a) Excludes on the job and Census Data Processing (DPC) training.

(b) Comprises full time and part time staff operative headcount.

(c) Figures revised down since first published.

(d) Increase due to Census Management Unit operations.

(e) Decrease partly due to move to e-learning approaches.

The ABS is committed in fostering a high performance culture. The delivery of a range of management and leadership programs such as the Future Leaders program for EL1s, as well as a number of orientation sessions entitled Induction to Level for EL1 and EL2 staff were delivered.

Short communication snapshots were well received, with over 1,000 staff attending sessions throughout Central Office and all regional offices, including video conference delivery. Increased e-learning module development focused on core corporate requirements ranging from improving awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' culture to improving budgeting and procurement practices.

To increase staff access a two-day program, Personal Development in a Professional Environment, was designed to support APS 2–5 career development. This program includes identifying strengths, developing personal skills, behaviours and self-knowledge to improve communication within the professional environment.

The Graduate Development Program continued to build upon the successes of previous years by providing a diverse and challenging curriculum. This program incorporates both foundation technical and professional skills to quickly build organisational capability and successfully transition graduates into the ABS and wider APS environments.

The ABS has recently announced the inaugural Australian Statistician's Fellowship Program. This practical and experiential development program will commence in February 2014 and conclude in December 2016. It is designed to attract and rapidly develop high calibre candidates at an early stage of their career. This is part of a continuous strategy to build core capability and strengthen the future leadership base of the ABS.

For those people who choose to undertake formal external training qualifications, the ABS continues to offer a Study Support Program with paid study leave and financial assistance to approved students.

There was continued interest from other Asia–Pacific NSOs in HR management during 2012–13. The ABS continued to build strong relationships within the Central Statistics Agency of Indonesia and during this period assisted in the delivery of project management development, building core capability in leadership and management skills.

Recruitment

The ABS continues to review and improve recruitment processes to ensure they remain contemporary and reflect good practice. Improvements piloted during 2012–13 included:

- national selection rounds applying consistent methodologies and standards
- multi-modal assessment, including telephone screening and internet based testing
- accelerated assessment.

Work health and safety

The ABS is committed to fostering a proactive and collaborative approach to the management of health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace. Specialist teams focus on prevention and wellbeing at work and the management of rehabilitation and return to work programs. These teams are supported by a network of Health and Safety Advisors who are based in each ABS office.

The Executive of the ABS demonstrate commitment to work health and safety (WHS) in the ABS's WHS Policies, membership and participation in Health and Safety Committees, the endorsement of a new WHS Reporting Framework and through the implementation of the ABS Health and Wellbeing Plan (a sub plan of the ABS People Plan). An ABS officer due diligence framework and comprehensive officer WHS workshop program have been established.

Key achievements in 2012–13

- A bi-annual national hazard inspection program is in place and was successfully conducted in November and May.
- The annual influenza vaccination program was conducted across all ABS offices in March and April, with 39% of office-based staff receiving vaccinations, compared with 27% in 2011–12.
- A new safety incident investigation training course was developed and delivered to ABS managers.
- A review of workstation set-up procedures and guidance was completed, with new checklists being produced to enable office-based staff, outposted officers and home-based workers (teleworkers) to set up a safe workstation.
- A new Interviewer Health and Safety Committee was established, consistent with the requirements of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011*.
- The ABS joined six other Australian Government agencies in the APS Telework Trial, which involves staff with NBN or equivalent internet connections working from home at least one day per week for a period of six months, and providing feedback on their experiences. The trial aims to work towards the Australian Government's target of 12% teleworkers by 2020. The trial commenced on 28 June 2013 with 15 ABS participants and will be used to evaluate health, safety and well-being issues in a teleworking environment.

Work health and safety performance

The ABS participated in a pilot of the Federal Employers WHS Management System Reduced National (Cwlth) WHS Audit tool. The audit focused on legislative compliance and effectiveness of ABS health and safety policy, procedures, and health and safety management systems. The final report was provided in September 2012. The key findings were that there is a high level of Executive Management and key personnel support for health and safety, adequate resource allocation, an effective workplace inspection program and electronically accessible health and safety information for all staff. The recommendations from the audit included a revision of high level strategic planning and management plans, consolidation of the safety management system documentation, development of safe work procedures for tasks with inherent hazards, provision of training and competency assessments, more rigorous incident investigation methodology and the introduction of an internal audit program.

The ABS has made progress against the recommendations outlined in the audit report.

The ABS has one National, eight Regional and one Interviewer Health and Safety Committees. The latter was established in January 2013. Health and Safety Committees are required to meet on a quarterly basis. During 2012–13, the ABS Health and Safety Committees achieved 93% conformance to a quarterly meeting schedule.

No provisional improvement notices were issued by ABS Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) during 2012–13.

Within the ABS, there are a number of specific WHS roles filled by staff. A total of 192 staff with a specific WHS role received training during 2012–13. HSRs and wardens are entitled to refresher training annually, and wardens are required to attend a range of training sessions each year.

Table 12.4: ABS work health and safety positions 2012–13

Position	Filled	Vacant	Received training during 2012–13
First Aid Officer	58	0	44
Health and Safety Representative	75	9	44
Warden	213	25	104

In 2012–13, there were no Comcare investigations undertaken and no improvement notices issued to the ABS. There are also no ongoing actions.

During 2012–13, one Liaison Inspection was conducted by the regulator (Comcare); the outcomes of this case have yet to be finalised.

The ABS Comcare premium rate for 2012–13 was 1.7% of total salary (including GST).

Table 12.5: Comcare workers' compensation premium rate

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
ABS	1.50	1.51	1.27	1.70
All agencies combined average	1.25	1.20	1.41	1.77

Health and wellbeing

The average annual Employee Assistance Program usage rate for office-based staff for 2012–13 was 2.4% compared with 2.3% in 2011–12. The rate for ABS Interviewers was also 2.4% in 2012–13, compared with 0.5% in 2011–12.

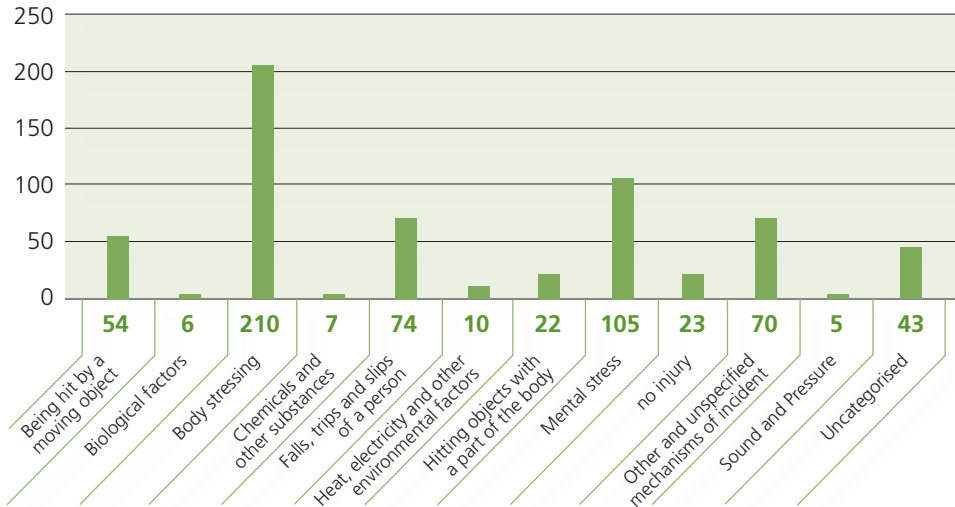
A regular program of health information seminars was held during 2012–13, with topics such as 'Sleep and Fatigue Management', 'Heart Health', and 'Productivity Plus'. A combined total of 1,012 employees attended these seminars or viewed the recorded version online.

Workplace injuries and illnesses

Under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* (WHS Act), the ABS is required to report 'notifiable incidents' which include the death of a person, serious injury or illness, or a dangerous incident which arises out of an undertaking of the ABS. There were 11 notifiable incidents during 2012–13, which is an incidence rate of 3.86 notifiable incidents per 1,000 full-time employees (FTE).

The top three mechanisms of incident reported in the ABS during 2012–13 were body stressing, mental stress and falls, trips and slips.

Figure 12.2: Number of incidents by mechanism of incident, 2012–13 ^(a)



(a) Complete data for 2012–13 was not available at the time of extraction. Data presented is for 1 July 2012 to 5 June 2013 inclusive.

The decrease in the number of claims since 2011–12 (from 110 to 27) is a result of the completion of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, and the cessation of the temporary employment of a large number of employees hired specifically for the Census.

Table 12.6: ABS premium group claims incidence

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
Number of accepted claims	28	47	110	27

The mechanism of incident for accepted claims is shown in Table 12.7.

Table 12.7: Comcare accepted claims by mechanism of incident ^(a), 2009–10 to 2012–13

	2009–10	2010–11	2011–12	2012–13
Falls, trips and slips	7	17	71	12
Hitting objects with body	0	0	3	0
Being hit by moving objects	0	0	11	0
Sound & pressure	0	0	0	0
Body Stressing	16	23	18	9
Heat, electrical & other environmental factors	0	0	0	0
Chemicals and other substances	0	0	0	0
Biological factors	0	0	0	0
Mental stress	3	4	4	4
Other & unspecified	2	3	3	2
Total claims	28	47	110	27

(a) A greater number of claims were accepted in 2011–12 due to the greater number of staff employed by the ABS for the 2011 Census of Population and Housing.

The ABS has a centralised, specialist rehabilitation case management team to deliver strategically focused, holistic case management services. The rehabilitation case management team reviewed all of the ABS compensation cases to ensure active intervention in longer-term cases and timely intervention in new cases to help deliver positive outcomes for injured staff and the ABS.

During the year, the ABS's priority focus was educating and supporting managers to understand, address and manage mental health issues in the workplace. A series of workshops and awareness sessions were delivered to managers and the executive.

The efforts placed on early intervention, rehabilitation and long tail cases resulted in the ABS being one of a small number of agencies that received a bonus in workers' compensation premium.

Consultation in the ABS

The ABS is committed to effective workplace relations arrangements that value communication, cooperation and effective consultation with employees and their chosen representatives, including union representatives, about matters that affect their workplace.

The ABS consultative framework is comprised of the following elements:

- line managers who have key responsibility for ensuring timely and effective communication and consultation in the workplace
- consultative forums which are convened in each resource centre, including each regional office
- the National Forum, which includes ABS management, employee and union representatives and meets at least bi-annually
- representatives of unions, meeting with management as necessary.

ABS consultative arrangements were reviewed in 2011. A number of new initiatives, including training packages, best practice guides, and revised change management arrangements to guide the effective management of major change, have been implemented nationally to improve the overall operation of ABS consultative arrangements.

A meeting of the ABS National Forum was held in September 2012 to discuss the results of the 2012 National Employee Survey, and the corporate and local strategies that were being developed in response to the results. The National Forum held in March 2013 had a strong focus on our people and discussed the ABS People and Workforce Plan, the 2013 State of the Service Employee Census, the ABS Capability Framework, non-ongoing staff in the ABS, ABS pay and leave and the ABS Innovation Framework.

Agreement making

The ABS has a number of industrial instruments in place to cover the employment arrangements for various ABS workforces. The instruments that apply to employees engaged under the *Public Service Act 1999* are:

- the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014* which covers office-based employees
- individual Determinations under s.24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999* which cover Senior Executive Service employees.

The instruments that apply to employees engaged under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* in accordance with the Statistics Regulations are:

- the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Interviewers Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014* which covers home-based ABS Interviewers

- a collective Determination under s.16(3) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* which covers Census field employees working on the 2016 Census of Population and Housing testing program.

Details of the number of employees covered by an Enterprise Agreement, or a Determination under section 24(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, as at 30 June 2013 are as follows:

- ABS employees covered by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014*: 3007
- ABS employees covered by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Interviewers Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014*: 559
- SES employees covered by a section 24(1) Determination: 48.

ABS salary system

Salary arrangements

The *ABS Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014* outlined the salary arrangements for non SES ABS employees for the period 1 July 2012 to 30 June 2013. In 2012–13, salary increases for APS1 to EL2 employees were paid from 5 July 2012 as a general salary increase of 2% for all employees, where the minimum and maximum amounts of the salary ranges were increased by more than 3%. Table 12.8 shows the salary ranges for ABS employees with the general salary increase factored in.

A three point salary range was introduced from 24 November 2011 for each classification. Employee salaries were transitioned to the new salary ranges by applying the provisions outlined in clauses 10.1, 10.2 and 12.1 of the *ABS Enterprise Agreement 2011–2014*, subject to the maximum of the salary range not being exceeded. Employee salaries were not forced to align with the new pay points.

Table 12.8: Salary ranges by classification as at 30 June 2013^(a)

Classification	Minimum (\$)	Maximum (\$)
Australian Public Service (APS) level		
APS1 (Adult)	39,994	44,994
APS2	45,734	51,451
APS3	52,101	58,613
APS4	58,680	66,014
APS5	66,017	74,270
APS6	74,277	83,562
Executive Officer level (EL)		
EL1	91,255	105,490
EL2	113,925	131,697
Senior Executive Service (SES) level		
SES Band 1	152,140	188,846
SES Band 2	188,846	219,303
SES Band 3	219,303	na ^(b)

(a) The salary ranges took effect from 5 July 2012.

(b) Not applicable (as there is not a maximum level for this classification).

Recognition and reward

The ABS operates a Recognition and Reward Scheme, which recognises exceptional one-off achievements by individual employees and work groups. The awards may include a certificate of commendation together with a voucher, such as a store gift voucher, or in-kind award such as a work group morning tea.

An annual Statistician's Award was introduced in 2011-12 to identify and recognise extraordinary contributions made to the ABS by individual employees. The quantum of this award is not prescribed, but may take the form of a significant non-cash reward or development opportunity.

Organisational guidelines have been developed to ensure consistent conduct of recognition and reward in the ABS.

Total ABS expenditure for the scheme in 2012-13 was \$98,531.

Scholarships

The ABS conducts a scholarships program in conjunction with four Australian Universities. A list of grant discretionary recipients can be found on the ABS website, www.abs.gov.au.

Chapter 13

Ecological sustainability



Introduction

During 2012–13, the ABS remained committed to the principles of Ecological Sustainable Development as outlined in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation (EPBC) Act 1999*.

In accordance with the EPBC Act, which requires agencies to report on aspects of their performance relating to ecologically sustainable development, the ABS has two key roles. The first of these is in relation to the ABS's responsibility for providing statistics on the environment and environmental issues to enable informed decision making. The second role relates to the impact of the ABS's operations on the environment and the action being taken by the ABS to minimise that impact.

The ABS's response to the five components of sub-section 516A (6), as required by the *EPBC Act*, is described below.

516A (6) (a) How do the activities of the organisation, and the administration of legislation by the organisation, accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development?

The ABS Environmental Management System (EMS) provides evidence of the ABS's commitment to ecological sustainable development. The ABS operates primarily in an office-based environment and is increasingly moving from paper to electronic products. This is being achieved by continuing to:

- make free publications available on the ABS website and increasing the number of publications available electronically, to reduce demand for hard copies of publications
- use duplex printing and copying
- have a knowledge framework, incorporating digital recordkeeping rather than paper records and automatic recordkeeping facilities for ABS workgroup databases
- utilise computer assisted interviewing to replace paper forms.

Other matters relating to ecologically sustainable development at the ABS include:

- incorporating environmental efficiency measures into the market testing process for new leases with the integration of Green lease schedule to each new tenancy
- inclusion of environmental and whole of life-cycle clauses as part of the tender and evaluation process in most procurement activities
- promoting sustainable environmental practises in the current enterprise agreement.

516A (6) (b) How do the outcomes specified in a relevant Appropriations Act contribute to ecologically sustainable development?

The ABS receives appropriation for the purpose of producing statistics that inform decision making on a wide range of social and economic matters.

The ABS is working closely with the community and governments to further build information on environmental statistics, to complement the more established information bases on population, society and the economy. The focus of this development work is the integration of environmental statistics with Australia's economic and social statistics.

For more information on ABS statistical publications and developments, please see the Program Reports in Chapter 6 for:

- Agriculture
- Rural and Regional Statistics
- Environment
- Energy
- Water.

516A (6) (c) What is the effect of the organisation's activities on the environment?

The ABS's activities have the potential to affect the environment through consumption of energy, waste production and the impact on local waterways, flora and fauna. A number of ongoing action plans, with relevant targets and objectives have been put in place to reduce the ABS's environmental impact. These include:

- reducing energy consumption and greenhouse gas pollution
- reducing paper consumption
- reducing carbon emissions in transportation
- decreasing water usage
- increasing waste recycling
- increasing the procurement of environmentally friendly products.

516A (6) (d) What measures are taken by the organisation to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment?

The ABS has sought to minimise its impact by:

- developing an ABS ICT Energy Management Plan in alignment with requirements and targets set by the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, which included:
 - server virtualisation
 - automatic shutdown of PCs overnight. Unused PCs stay powered off during the day
 - duplex printing enabled
 - transition from network printers to multi-function devices (MFDs)
 - rationalisation of MFD numbers

- reduced standby timeout period on MFD's from 90 to 60 minutes
- continual refresh program for desktops, servers and storage—utilising latest available technology
- introducing 80% recycled content copy paper
- maintaining Altiris EiPower, desktop energy measurement software
- high-level metering of data centre (located in Central Office) and communications equipment energy consumption
- installing an intelligent management system for data centre air-conditioners to increase efficiency
- installing variable speed drives in data centre condenser water pumps and cooling tower fans
- intelligent server management system to maximise energy efficiencies—for newer technology servers.
- maintaining motion sensors in all ABS House tenanted areas and energy efficient LED lights within certain areas of the ABS House tenanted areas to reduce energy consumption
- maintaining procurement of 10% green energy as part of the whole of government energy contract for ABS House and 10% green energy for the Victorian office
- maintaining digital recordkeeping processes and methods for collecting, managing and delivering knowledge databases
- provision and promotion of free electronic publications on the website, reducing the number of printed hard copies
- using computer assisted interviewing, in place of paper forms
- upgrading video conferencing equipment software and increasing the number of video conferencing facilities to support virtual teams thus reducing the amount of interstate travel
- using the Greenhouse Vehicle Guide when leasing ABS-owned vehicles
- using re-manufactured and recycled cartridges for photocopiers, faxes and printers, and recycling used printer cartridges wherever possible
 - recycling paper, bottles, aluminium cans, steel cans, plastic and cardboard products in all offices
 - recycling mobile phones, batteries, polystyrene and plastic shopping bags in Central Office
 - using A4 paper with a 100% recycled content
 - purchasing white goods with heavily weighting energy ratings
 - using organic inks and biodegradable coating in printed publications
 - promoting, participating and celebrating environmental and energy programs around national and international events such as World Environment Day, Earth Hour and Walk and Ride to Work days
 - providing tips via the intranet on ways to reduce work and home environmental footprint
 - maintaining an organic recycling program in Central Office to reduce the amount taken to landfill.

516A (6) (e) What are the mechanisms for reviewing and increasing the effectiveness of these measures?

The ABS has implemented an Environmental Management System at its primary site, ABS House in Canberra, and continues to monitor the activities of the organisation that have an environmental impact. Objectives and targets are set each year to manage and reduce the impact.

Chapter 14

Management of assets, purchasing, consultants, advertising and market research



The ABS's assets are integral to the effective conduct of its business, and are part of the combination of resources required for service delivery. This chapter outlines the asset management principles, including the approach to purchasing, used by ABS during 2012–13.

The ABS directly manages its non-financial assets in accordance with Chief Executive Instructions and Australian Accounting Standards. The total value of assets is \$125.6 million. Most of the assets are intangible (internally generated software), and were valued at \$74.8 million in 2012–13. Tangible assets (property, plant and equipment) formed the remainder, and were valued at \$41.6 million with other non-financial assets (prepayments and accrued revenue) valued at \$9.2 million. Tangible asset values are maintained with the assistance of an independent assessor.

Asset management in the ABS

Principles

ABS asset management principles are designed to ensure that asset management practices and decisions support the service delivery requirements and business demands of the organisation, and that capital expenditure decisions address the full life-cycle costs, benefits and risks of the assets.

The ABS's approach to asset management encompasses the following principles:

- asset management activities are undertaken within an integrated government asset management framework
- asset planning and management are integrated with corporate and business plans, as well as budgetary and reporting processes
- capital expenditure decisions are based on evaluations of alternatives that take into account full life-cycle costs, benefits and risks of assets
- ownership, control, accountability and reporting requirements for assets are established, clearly communicated and implemented.

Asset measurement

The ABS maintains an asset register to address management, statutory reporting and user requirements.

The ABS's assets are integral to the conduct of its business and are part of the combination of resources required to enable cost-effective service delivery.

The asset register underpins planning policies, analysis of financial programs, capitalisation, and reviews of performance against defined objectives.

For recognition as an asset, the ABS has an expenditure capitalisation threshold of \$2,000 for general assets and \$1,000 for information and technology assets, including software.

Asset expenditure greater than, or equal to, these amounts is capitalised and recorded on the asset register.

Purchasing

Purchasing and competitive tendering and contracting

The ABS undertakes a wide variety of procurement and contracting activities, with the majority of purchases being classed as low value and low complexity.

The ABS conducts its procurement and contracting activities in accordance with the Commonwealth procurement policy framework, the Commonwealth Procurement Rules, and Chief Executive Instructions. The ABS advertises an annual procurement plan on AusTender, and the plan is reviewed and updated as required throughout the year. The ABS has a centralised area of expertise, which provides procurement and contracting support to operational areas, and provides direct support for more complex procurement projects. Information on procurement policy and practices is disseminated to staff through an internal procurement portal.

Through the use of efficient processes and effective application of ABS and Australian Government policies and principles, the ABS is satisfied that its approach to market testing and contracting is highly effective, resulting in value-for-money outcomes. ABS continues to invest in developing procurement skills and reviewing processes to ensure that efficiency and value-for-money outcomes are achieved.

Exempt contracts

During the 2012–13 financial year, the ABS did not exempt any contracts from publication by AusTender, under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

Consultants

Annual reports contain information about actual expenditure on contracts for consultancies. Information on the value of contracts and consultancies is available on the AusTender website: www.tenders.gov.au.

During 2012–13, ten new consultancy contracts were entered into, involving total actual expenditure of \$0.5 million. In addition, six ongoing consultancy contracts were active during the 2012–13 year, involving total actual expenditure of \$0.2 million.

Advertising and market research

The ABS paid \$10,651 (GST exclusive) for advertising, and \$85,848 (GST exclusive) for public relations consultancies. The organisations that supplied these services included Universal McCann and Leo Burnett. The ABS also paid \$197,090 (GST exclusive) for market research in 2012–13.

Market research expenditure incurred in 2012–13 was in relation to testing for the 2016 Census of Population and Housing, the 2011 Census campaign evaluation, as well as a household respondent's behavioural survey and research on contact material. The organisations that supplied the market research services included DBM Consultants and Hall and Partners Open Mind Pty Ltd.



Section 4

FINANCIAL STATEMENTS





INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Assistant Treasurer

I have audited the accompanying financial statements of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 2013, which comprise: a Statement by the Australian Statistician and Chief Financial Officer; Statement of Comprehensive Income; Balance Sheet; Statement of Changes in Equity; Cash Flow Statement; Schedule of Commitments; Schedule of Contingencies; Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income; Administered Reconciliation Schedule; Administered Cash Flow Statement; and Notes comprising a Summary of Significant Accounting Policies and other explanatory information.

Australian Statistician's Responsibility for the Financial Statements

The Australian Statistician is responsible for the preparation of financial statements that give a true and fair view in accordance with the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, including the Australian Accounting Standards, and for such internal control as is necessary to enable the preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view and are free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

Auditor's Responsibility

My responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial statements based on my audit. I have conducted my audit in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards. These auditing standards require that I comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial statements are free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgement, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial statements, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the Australian Bureau of Statistics' preparation of the financial statements that give a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on

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the effectiveness of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of the accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the Australian Statistician, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial statements.

I believe that the audit evidence I have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for my audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting my audit, I have followed the independence requirements of the Australian National Audit Office, which incorporate the requirements of the Australian accounting profession.

Opinion

In my opinion, the financial statements of the Australian Bureau of Statistics:

- (a) have been prepared in accordance with the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, including the Australian Accounting Standards; and
- (b) give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders including the Australian Bureau of Statistics' financial position as at 30 June 2013 and of its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office



Michael J. Watson

Group Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

9 August 2013

Australian Bureau of Statistics
STATEMENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN AND CHIEF FINANCIAL OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2013 are based on properly maintained financial records and give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders made under the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997, as amended.

Signed.....

Brian Pink
Australian Statistician

9 August 2013

Signed.....

Debra Foggin
Chief Financial Officer

9 August 2013

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Statement of Comprehensive Income
for the period ended 30 June 2013

	Notes	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
EXPENSES			
Employee benefits	3A	301,064	433,179
Supplier	3B	88,644	160,030
Depreciation and amortisation	3C	35,162	34,481
Write-down and impairment of assets	3D	185	772
Losses from asset sales	3E	110	57
Other expenses		112	128
Total expenses		425,277	628,647
LESS:			
OWN-SOURCE INCOME			
Own-source revenue			
Sale of goods and rendering of services	4A	69,259	43,218
Other revenue		808	733
Total own-source revenue		70,067	43,951
Gains			
Other gains	4B	125	125
Total gains		125	125
Total own-source income		70,192	44,076
Net cost of services		355,085	584,571
Revenue from Government	4C	312,502	548,632
Deficit attributable to the Australian Government		(42,583)	(35,939)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Items not subject to subsequent reclassification to profit or loss			
Changes in asset revaluation surplus		-	5,530
Total other comprehensive income		-	5,530
Total comprehensive loss attributable to the Australian Government		(42,583)	(30,409)

The above statements should be read in conjunction with the following notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Balance Sheet
as at 30 June 2013

	Notes	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
ASSETS			
Financial Assets			
Cash and cash equivalents	5A	5,817	4,845
Trade and other receivables	5B	34,651	71,226
Total financial assets		40,468	76,071
Non-Financial Assets			
Leasehold improvements	6A, 6B	23,264	30,847
Property, plant and equipment	6A, 6B	18,349	22,112
Intangibles	6C, 6D	74,769	78,061
Other non-financial assets	6E	9,208	9,217
Total non-financial assets		125,590	140,237
Total assets		166,058	216,308
LIABILITIES			
Payables			
Suppliers	7A	19,590	30,047
Unearned income	7B	13,297	27,180
Other payables	7C	9,419	15,125
Total payables		42,306	72,352
Lease Incentives			
Lease incentives	8A	3,716	4,931
Total lease incentives		3,716	4,931
Provisions			
Employee provisions	9A	87,110	81,987
Other provisions	9B	6,413	6,418
Total provisions		93,523	88,405
Total liabilities		139,545	165,688
Net assets		26,513	50,620
EQUITY			
Contributed equity		101,476	83,000
Reserves		23,605	23,605
Accumulated deficit		(98,568)	(55,985)
Total equity		26,513	50,620

The above statements should be read in conjunction with the following notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Statement of Changes in Equity
for the period ended 30 June 2013

	Retained earnings		Asset revaluation surplus		Contributed equity/capital		Total equity	
	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Opening balance								
Balance carried forward from previous period	(55,985)	(20,046)	23,605	18,075	83,000	63,894	50,620	61,923
Adjusted opening balance	(55,985)	(20,046)	23,605	18,075	83,000	63,894	50,620	61,923
Comprehensive income								
Other comprehensive income	-	-	-	5,530	-	-	-	5,530
Deficit for the period	(42,583)	(35,939)	-	-	-	-	(42,583)	(35,939)
Total comprehensive income	(42,583)	(35,939)	-	5,530	-	-	(42,583)	(30,409)
of which:								
Attributable to the Australian Government	(42,583)	(35,939)	-	5,530	-	-	(42,583)	(30,409)
Transactions with owners								
Contributions by owners								
Equity injection - Appropriations	-	-	-	-	429	1,068	429	1,068
Departmental capital budget	-	-	-	-	18,047	18,038	18,047	18,038
Sub-total transactions with owners	-	-	-	-	18,476	19,106	18,476	19,106
Closing balance as at 30 June	(98,568)	(55,985)	23,605	23,605	101,476	83,000	26,513	50,620

The above statements should be read in conjunction with the following notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Cash Flow Statement
as at 30 June 2013

	Notes	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Appropriations		345,631	538,168
Sales of goods and rendering of services		58,952	55,673
Net GST received		6,116	9,379
Total cash received		410,699	603,220
Cash used			
Employees		301,647	423,722
Suppliers		109,227	176,405
Total cash used		410,874	600,127
Net cash used by operating activities	10	(175)	3,093
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		70	195
Total cash received		70	195
Cash used			
Purchase of leasehold improvements		92	2,410
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		4,779	8,913
Purchase of intangibles		15,980	17,860
Total cash used		20,851	29,183
Net cash used by investing activities		(20,781)	(28,988)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Contributed equity		21,928	26,703
Total cash received		21,928	26,703
Net cash from financing activities		21,928	26,703
Net increase in cash held		972	808
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		4,845	4,037
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period	5A	5,817	4,845

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Schedule of Commitments
as at 30 June 2013

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
BY TYPE		
Commitments receivable		
Net GST recoverable on commitments	<u>(10,148)</u>	<u>(12,918)</u>
Total commitments receivable	<u>(10,148)</u>	<u>(12,918)</u>
Commitments payable		
Capital commitments		
Property, plant and equipment	24	212
Intangibles	-	319
Total capital commitments	<u>24</u>	<u>531</u>
Other commitments		
Operating leases	107,892	137,790
Other	3,718	3,786
Total other commitments	<u>111,610</u>	<u>141,576</u>
Total commitments payable	<u>111,634</u>	<u>142,107</u>
Net commitments by type	<u>101,486</u>	<u>129,189</u>
BY MATURITY		
Commitments receivable		
Net GST recoverable on commitments		
One year or less	(2,843)	(3,112)
From one to five years	(6,722)	(8,992)
Over five years	(584)	(814)
Total net GST recoverable on commitments	<u>(10,149)</u>	<u>(12,918)</u>
Total commitments receivable	<u>(10,149)</u>	<u>(12,918)</u>
Commitments payable		
Capital commitments		
One year or less	24	531
Total capital commitments	<u>24</u>	<u>531</u>
Operating lease commitments		
One year or less	27,530	29,930
From one to five years	73,937	98,905
Over five years	6,424	8,955
Total operating lease commitments	<u>107,891</u>	<u>137,790</u>
Other Commitments		
One year or less	3,718	3,786
From one to five years	-	-
Total other commitments	<u>3,718</u>	<u>3,786</u>
Total commitments payable	<u>111,633</u>	<u>142,107</u>
Net commitments by maturity	<u>101,484</u>	<u>129,189</u>

Note: Commitments are GST inclusive where relevant.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Schedule of Commitments
as at 30 June 2013

The nature of capital commitments relates to committed purchases of property, plant and equipment. The majority relates to computer hardware and purchased software.

The nature of other commitments relates to operating leases and general purchases committed to as at 30 June 2013.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics in its capacity as a lessee has entered into a number of operating leases. The operating leases are effectively non-cancellable and comprise:

Nature of leases	General description of leasing arrangement
Leases for office accommodation	Lease payments are subject to annual increases which are either fixed as outlined in the rental agreement or in accordance with upwards movements in the Consumer Price Index. Office accommodation leases may be renewed for up to five years at the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) option, following a one-off adjustment of rentals to current market levels.
Agreements for the provision of motor vehicles to senior executive officers	No contingent rentals exist. There are no renewal or purchase options available to the ABS.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Schedule of Contingencies
as at 30 June 2013

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Contingent assets		
Indemnities	-	-
Claims for damages or costs	-	943
Total contingent assets	-	943
Net contingent assets	-	943

Details of each class of contingent liabilities and contingent assets listed above are disclosed in Note 11.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Administered Schedule of Comprehensive Income
for the period ended 30 June 2013

	Notes	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
OWN-SOURCE INCOME			
Own-source revenue			
Non-taxation revenue			
Fines ¹		2	1
Other ²		-	4
Total non-taxation revenue		2	5
Total own-source revenue administered on behalf of Government		2	5
Net contribution by services		(2)	(5)
Surplus		2	5
Total comprehensive income		2	5

¹The Census and Statistics Act 1905 provides the Australian Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections and, when necessary, to direct a person or an organisation to provide statistical information. Where information is not provided, the ABS can impose a fine on the person or organisation. Such fines are reported in the Financial Statements as Administered Revenue.

²Unidentified receipts returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Administered Reconciliation Schedule**

	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Opening administered assets less administered liabilities 1 July	-	-
Surplus items:		
Plus: Administered income	2	5
Administered transfers to/from Australian Government:		
Transfers to OPA	(2)	(5)
Closing administered assets less administered liabilities as at 30 June	-	-

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Administered Cash Flow Statement
for the period ended 30 June 2013

	Notes	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Fines ¹		2	1
Other ²		-	4
Total cash received		2	5
Net increase in Cash Held		2	5
Cash and cash equivalents at the beginning of the reporting period		-	-
Cash to the Official Public Account		2	5
Cash and cash equivalents at the end of the reporting period		-	-

¹The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* provides the Australian Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections and, when necessary, to direct a person or an organisation to provide statistical information. Where information is not provided, the ABS can impose a fine on the person or organisation. Such fines are reported in the Financial Statements as Administered Revenue.

²Unidentified receipts returned to the Consolidated Revenue Fund.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

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Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies

1.1 Objective of Australian Bureau Of Statistics

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is an Australian Government controlled entity. It is a not-for-profit entity. The mission and outcome of the ABS is to assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within Governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.

The ABS is structured to produce the aforementioned outcome through its economic and environment statistics group, and population, labour and social statistics group. Indirect costs for support services have been allocated to the economic and social statistical groups in Note 20 Reporting of Outcomes in the Financial Statements.

ABS activities contributing to this outcome are classified as either departmental or administered. Departmental activities involve the use of assets, liabilities, income and expenses controlled or incurred by the ABS in its own right. Administered activities involve the management or oversight by the ABS, on behalf of the Government, of items controlled or incurred by the Government.

Further information on ABS outcomes and outputs can be found in this Annual Report.

The continued existence of the ABS in its present form and with its present programs is dependent on Government policy and on continuing appropriations by Parliament for the ABS' programs and administration.

1.2 Basis of Preparation of the Financial Statements

The financial statements and notes are required by section 49 of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* and are general purpose financial statements.

The financial statements and notes have been prepared in accordance with:

- Finance Minister's Orders (or FMOs) for reporting periods ending on or after 1 July 2012; and
- Australian Accounting Standards and Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board (AASB) that apply for the reporting period.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with the historical cost convention, except for certain assets at fair value. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars and values, and are rounded to the nearest thousand dollars unless otherwise specified.

Unless an alternative treatment is specifically required by an accounting standard or the FMOs, assets and liabilities are recognised in the balance sheet when and only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow to the ABS or a future sacrifice of economic benefits will be required and the amounts of the assets or liabilities can be reliably measured. However, assets and liabilities arising under agreements are not recognised unless required by an accounting standard. Liabilities and assets that are unrecognised are reported in the schedule of commitments or the schedule of contingencies.

Unless alternative treatment is specifically required by an accounting standard, income and expenses are recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income when and only when, the flow, consumption or loss of economic benefits has occurred and can be reliably measured.

1.3 Significant Accounting Judgements and Estimates

In the process of applying the accounting policies listed in this note, ABS has made the following judgements that have the most significant impact on the amounts recorded in the financial statements:

Make good

The ABS currently holds eight leases for office space around Australia. All of the lease agreements include a make good clause.

It is considered that four make good arrangements would be more likely to be exercised as it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation and the amount can be reliably determined. The make good arrangements have been disclosed in Other Provisions. (Note 9B)

For the remaining four leases, it is not considered probable that the make good requirement would be exercised as it is the current intention for the ABS to leave the fittings with the premises intact for the landlord at lease end, therefore negating the requirement for a make good. These arrangements will be reviewed annually.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

1.4 New Australian Accounting Standards

Adoption of New Australian Accounting Standard Requirements

No accounting standard has been adopted earlier than the application date as stated in the standard.

Future Australian Accounting Standard Requirements

Other new standards/revised standards/interpretations/amending standards that were issued prior to the sign-off date and are applicable to the future reporting period are not expected to have a future financial impact on the entity

1.5 Revenue

Revenue from Government

Amounts appropriated for departmental appropriations for the year (adjusted for any formal additions and reductions) are recognised as Revenue from Government when ABS gains control of the appropriation, except for certain amounts that relate to activities that are reciprocal in nature, in which case revenue is recognised only when it has been earned. Revenue from Government received by the ABS is inclusive of the cyclical appropriation related to the five yearly Census of Population and Housing. The most recent Census was conducted on 9 August 2011.

Appropriations receivable are recognised at their nominal amounts.

Other Types of Revenue

Sales of goods and services includes revenue from the sale of publications, other products, and the provision of statistical services. Revenue from the sales of goods is recognised when:

- the risks and rewards of ownership have been transferred to the buyer;
- the agency retains no managerial involvement or effective control over the goods;
- the revenue and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- It is probable that the economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity.

Revenue from rendering of services is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date. The revenue is recognised when:

- the amount of revenue, stage of completion and transaction costs incurred can be reliably measured; and
- the probable economic benefits associated with the transaction will flow to the entity.

The stage of completion of contracts at the reporting date is determined by reference to the proportion of work completed.

Other revenue includes all miscellaneous revenue such as officer contributions, Comcover recoveries and recoveries of salary to seconded agencies.

Receivables for goods and services, which have 30 day terms, are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any impairment allowance account. Collectability of debts is reviewed at the end of the reporting period. Allowances are made when collectability of the debt is no longer probable.

1.6 Gains

Resources Received Free of Charge

Resources received free of charge are recognised as gains when, and only when, a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense.

Resources received free of charge are recorded as either revenue or gains, depending on their nature.

Contributions of assets at no cost of acquisition or for nominal consideration are recognised as gains at their fair value when the asset qualifies for recognition, unless received from another Government entity as a consequence of a restructuring of administrative arrangements.

Sale of Assets

Gains from disposal of non-current assets are recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

1.7 Unearned Revenue

Unearned revenue includes revenue from subscriptions to statistical publications, provision of statistical consultancies, and revenue from other agencies for statistical surveys. The unearned revenue is recognised on a stage of completion basis over the period of subscriptions or the provision of services as provided (Note 7B).

1.8 Transactions with the Government as Owner

Equity Injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any formal reductions) and Departmental Capital Budgets (DCBs) are recognised directly in contributed equity.

1.9 Employee Benefits

Liabilities for 'short-term employee benefits' (as defined in AASB 119 *Employee Benefits*) and termination benefits due within twelve months of the end of reporting period are measured at their nominal amounts.

The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability.

Other long-term employee benefits are measured as net total of the present value of the defined benefit obligation at the end of the reporting period minus the fair value at the end of the reporting period of plan assets (if any) out of which the obligations are to be settled directly.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave taken in future years by employees of the ABS is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration at the estimated salary rates that will be applied at the time the leave is taken, including the ABS' employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to the work of the Australian Government Actuary as at 30 June 2013. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

Separation and Redundancy

Provision is made for separation and redundancy benefit payments. The ABS recognises a provision for termination when it has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has informed those employees affected that it will carry out the terminations.

Superannuation

The majority of staff of the ABS are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme (CSS), the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme (PSS) or the PSS accumulation plan (PSSap).

The ABS also made employer contributions to commercial accumulation superannuation funds as directed by its employees.

The CSS and PSS are defined benefit schemes for the Australian Government. The PSSap is a defined contribution scheme.

The liability for defined benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. This liability is reported in the Department of Finance and Deregulation's administered schedules and notes.

ABS makes employer contributions to the employees' superannuation scheme at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the current cost to the Government. ABS accounts for the contributions as if they were contributions to defined contribution plans.

The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions that have yet to be paid.

1.10 Provision for Make good

Provision for make good obligations are recognised when: the ABS has a present legal or constructive obligation as a result of a past event; it is probable that an outflow of resources will be required to settle the obligation; and the amount has been reliably estimated. The ABS makes an assessment as to whether a make good provision is required at the commencement of each new lease and at reporting date, in accordance with the aforementioned recognition criteria contained within AASB137 Provisions, Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets.

Provisions are measured at the best estimate of the expenditure required to settle the present obligation at the reporting date. Provisions are reviewed at each reporting date and adjusted to reflect the current best estimate.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

1.11 Leases

A distinction is made between finance leases and operating leases. Finance leases effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all the risks and rewards incidental to ownership of leased assets. An operating lease is a lease that is not a finance lease. In operating leases, the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits.

The ABS has entered into a number of accommodation leases, which include lease incentives taking the form of 'free' leasehold improvements. Under interpretation 115 Operating Lease Incentives, all incentives in relation to operating leases are required to be classified as an integral part of the net consideration of the lease for the leased asset, irrespective of the incentives nature, form, or timing of payments.

Where an asset is acquired by means of an incentive under an operating lease, the asset is capitalised at the fair value of the lease incentive at the inception of the contract, and a liability is recognised at the same time, for the same amount.

Operating lease payments are expensed on a straight line basis over the term of the lease which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets. The straight line basis takes into account fixed escalation clauses (with the exception of escalation in accordance with the CPI).

1.12 Borrowing Costs

All borrowing costs are expensed as incurred.

1.13 Financial Assets

The ABS classifies its financial assets in the following categories:

- cash and cash equivalents; and
- trade and other receivables.

The classification depends on the nature and purpose of the financial assets and is determined at the time of initial recognition. Financial assets are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date.'

Cash

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand, cash held by outsiders, cash in special accounts and demand deposits in bank accounts with an original maturity of 3 months or less that are readily convertible to known amounts of cash and subject to insignificant risk of changes in value. Cash is recognised at its nominal amount.

Trade and Other Receivables

Trade receivables, loans and other receivables that have fixed or determinable payments that are not quoted in an active market are classified as 'trade and other receivables'. Trade and other receivables are measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method less impairment. Interest is recognised by applying the effective interest rate.

Impairment of Financial Assets

Financial assets are assessed for impairment at the end of each reporting period.

Financial assets held at amortised cost – if there is objective evidence that an impairment loss has been incurred for trade and other receivables, the amount of the loss is measured as the difference between the assets's carrying amount and the present value of estimated future cash flows discounted at the asset's original effective interest rate. The carrying amount is reduced by way of an allowance account. The loss is recognised in the Statement of Comprehensive Income.

1.14 Financial Liabilities

Financial liabilities are classified as either financial liabilities 'at fair value through profit or loss' or other financial liabilities. Financial liabilities are recognised and derecognised upon 'trade date'.

The ABS classifies its financial liabilities in the following categories:

- supplier and other payables; and
- other financial liabilities.

Supplier and Other Payables

Supplier and other payables are recognised at amortised cost. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Other Financial Liabilities

Other financial liabilities, including borrowings, are initially measured at fair value, net of transaction costs. These liabilities are subsequently measured at amortised cost using the effective interest method, with interest expense recognised on an effective yield basis.

The effective interest method is a method of calculating the amortised cost of a financial liability and of allocating interest expense over the relevant period. The effective interest rate is the rate that exactly discounts estimated future cash payments through the expected life of the financial liability, or, where appropriate, a shorter period.

1.15 Contingent Liabilities and Contingent Assets

Contingent liabilities and contingent assets are not recognised in the balance sheet but are reported in the relevant schedules and notes. They may arise from uncertainty as to the existence of a liability or asset, or represent an asset or liability in respect of which the amount cannot be reliably measured. Contingent assets are disclosed when settlement is probable but not virtually certain, and contingent liabilities are disclosed when settlement is greater than remote.

1.16 Acquisition of Assets

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken. Financial assets are initially measured at their fair value plus transaction costs where appropriate.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and income at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring of administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

1.17 Property, Plant and Equipment

Asset Recognition Threshold

Purchases of property, plant and equipment are recognised initially at cost in the balance sheet, except for purchases costing less than \$2,000 (\$1,000 for IT assets and purchased software, and all internally generated software assets), which are expensed in the year of acquisition (other than where they form part of a group of similar items which are significant in total).

Revaluations

Fair values for each class of asset are determined as shown below:

<i>Asset Class:</i>	<i>Fair Value Measured at:</i>
Leasehold Improvements	Depreciated replacement cost
Property, plant and equipment	Market selling price

Following initial recognition at cost, property, plant and equipment were carried at fair value less subsequent accumulated depreciation and accumulated impairment losses. Valuations were conducted with sufficient frequency to ensure that the carrying amounts of assets did not differ materially from the assets' fair values as at the reporting date. The regularity of independent valuations depended upon the volatility of movements in market values for the relevant assets.

Revaluation adjustments were made on a class basis. Any revaluation increment was credited to equity under the heading of asset revaluation reserve except to the extent that it reversed a previous revaluation decrement of the same asset class that was previously recognised in the surplus/deficit. Revaluation decrements for a class of assets were recognised directly in the surplus/deficit except to the extent that they reversed a previous revaluation increment for that class.

Any accumulated depreciation as at the revaluation date is eliminated against the gross carrying amount of the asset and the asset is restated to the revalued amount.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Depreciation

Depreciable property, plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the ABS using, in all cases, the straight line method of depreciation.

Leasehold improvements are depreciated on a straight line basis over the lesser of the estimated useful life of the improvements, or the unexpired period of the lease.

Depreciation rates (useful lives) are reviewed at each reporting date and necessary adjustments are recognised in the current, or current and future reporting periods, as appropriate.

Depreciation rates applying to each class of depreciable assets are based on the following useful lives:

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
Leasehold improvements	Lease term	Lease term
Property, plant and equipment	5-10 years*	5-10 years*

*Within this class, Artwork and Curios has a useful life between 10-100 years.

Impairment

All assets were assessed for impairment at 30 June 2013. Where indications of impairment exist, the asset's recoverable amount is estimated and an impairment adjustment is made if the asset's recoverable amount is less than its carrying amount.

The recoverable amount of an asset is the higher of its fair value less costs to sell and its value in use. Value in use for ABS assets is taken to be its depreciated replacement cost (where the ABS would replace the asset if it was deprived of it) as future economic benefit is not primarily dependent on the asset's ability to generate future cash flows.

Derecognition

An item of property, plant and equipment is derecognised upon disposal or when no further future economic benefits are expected from its use or disposal.

1.18 Intangibles

The ABS' intangibles comprise internally generated software and purchased software for internal use. These assets are carried at cost less accumulated amortisation and accumulated impairment losses.

Software is amortised on a straight-line basis over its anticipated useful life.

All software assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2013.

Internally Generated Software

In its role as Australia's national statistical agency, the ABS builds and maintains a significant set of internally generated software (IGSW) assets. These assets are added to over time, in line with the increasing range of statistical information sought by Government, business and the general community, and the increasing use of technology, particularly in relation to collection, analysis and dissemination activities.

All software developed in-house since 1 July 1994 has been capitalised (Note 6C). The costing methodology capitalises direct salary and on costs for programmers. General administration, and overhead costs relating to software development have not been capitalised. The data capture systems in place to collect data for programmers are in line with the requirements of the FMOs.

In accordance with the requirements of AASB 138 Intangible Assets, IGSW is stated at cost. All IGSW assets were assessed for indications of impairment as at 30 June 2013. Impairment on intangibles is recognised in Note 3D.

Purchased Software

Purchased software assets are stated at cost where the asset costs more than \$1,000. Purchased software below this threshold is expensed at the time of purchase. The cost of purchased software includes the purchase price and any directly attributable costs.

Amortisation

The ABS has long term commitments to survey and data collection programs. These are supported by software packages that are required to be maintained for the same time period as the data collection and analysis programs, to ensure consistency in approach and of data treatment.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

The estimated useful lives of the major asset classes are as follows:

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2012</u>
Computer software (proprietary)	Lease term	Lease term
Computer software (internally generated)	5-16 years*	5-16 years*

The above table outlines the range of life in years for computer software, however, the average life is currently 8 years (2012: 8 years).

The aggregate amount of amortisation allocated for each class of asset during the reporting period is disclosed in Note 3C.

1.19 Capital Work in Progress

Capital work in progress represents two main asset types: software assets under development, and office refurbishments. Work in progress is disclosed in the intangibles, and property, plant and equipment balances.

Software assets are not depreciated until the year in which the development phase is completed and the asset is operational. Where use of the asset commences after substantial completion of the development phase, but some improvements or enhancements to the system continue to be made, the date of substantial completion is treated as the date of completion and depreciation commences from that date.

1.20 Historical Statistical Data

Statistical data accumulated over many years is stored for reference purposes. This historical time series data plays an important part in the operations of the ABS as Australia's official statistical provider. The cost of storing and maintaining this data is treated as an operating expense.

1.21 Other Non-Financial Assets

The ABS classifies its non-financial assets in the following categories:

- prepayments; and
- accrued revenue.

Prepayments

Prepayments primarily relate to maintenance contracts, office rent and subscriptions.

Accrued Revenue

The ABS accrues revenue at the time when goods are provided and/or the services are performed.

1.22 Taxation

The ABS is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST).

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST except:

- where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office; and
- for receivables and payables.

1.23 Compliance with Statutory Conditions for Payments from the Consolidated Revenue Fund

Section 83 of the Constitution provides that no amount may be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue Fund except under an appropriation made by law. The Department of Finance and Deregulation provided information to all agencies in 2011 regarding the need for risk assessments in relation to compliance with the statutory conditions on payments from special appropriations, including special accounts.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

The ABS undertook a risk assessment as at 30 June 2013, including potential risks relating to long service leave, goods and services tax and payments under determinations of the Remuneration Tribunal, and confirmed there were no breaches of Section 83 during the 2012-13 financial year, and that the overall risk of a breach was considered low. During the 2011-12 financial year, there were also no breaches of Section 83, and the risk assessment was low.

Breaches of Section 83 will continue to be assessed as part of the Certificate of Compliance process each financial year.

1.24 Recent decision on Commonwealth Expenditure

The Australian Government continues to have regard to developments in case law, including the High Court's most recent decision on Commonwealth expenditure in *Williams v Commonwealth* (2012) 288 ALR 410, as they contribute to the larger body of law relevant to the development of Commonwealth programs. In accordance with its general practice, the Government will continue to monitor and assess risk and decide on any appropriate actions to respond to risks of expenditure not being consistent with constitutional or other legal requirements.

1.25 Reporting Of Administered Activities

Administered revenues, assets, and cash flows are disclosed in the administered schedules and related notes. There are no administered expenses, liabilities, contingencies or commitments in 2012-13, nor were there any in 2011-12.

Except where otherwise stated below, administered items are accounted for on the same basis and using the same policies as for departmental items, including the application of Australian Accounting Standards.

Administered Cash Transfers to Official Public Account

Revenue collected by the ABS for use by the Government rather than the ABS is administered revenue. Collections are transferred to the Official Public Account (OPA) maintained by the Department of Finance and Deregulation. These transfers to the OPA are adjustments to the administered cash held by the ABS on behalf of the Government and reported as such in the schedule of administered cash flows, and in the administered reconciliation table.

Revenue

All administered revenues are revenues relating to ordinary activities performed by the ABS on behalf of the Australian Government.

Revenue is generated from fines applied by the courts, which is recognised upon payment. Court costs awarded against the ABS, as opposed to fines, are recorded as a departmental expense.

Note 2: Events After the Reporting Period

There have been no events occurring subsequent to balance date that would affect the ABS Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2013.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 3: Expenses

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 3A: Employee Benefits		
Wages and salaries	235,027	260,652
Superannuation:		
Defined contribution plans	17,513	18,465
Defined benefit plans	21,916	20,003
Leave and other entitlements	11,697	8,675
Interviewer wages	19,538	18,032
Interviewer superannuation:		
Defined contribution plans	2,208	2,462
Defined benefit plans	848	820
Census field staff wages	-	92,887
Census field staff superannuation		
Defined contribution plans	-	7,994
Defined benefit plans	-	81
Separation and redundancies	2,909	8,713
Other employee expenses	1,759	3,176
	<u>313,415</u>	<u>441,960</u>
Less amounts capitalised for IGSW	<u>(12,351)</u>	<u>(8,781)</u>
Total employee benefits	301,064	433,179

*Total employee benefits have decreased in 2012-13 due to a reduction in the Census of Population and Housing work program.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Note 3B: Supplier		
Goods and services		
Consultants	772	1,429
Contractors	5,549	18,618
IT related	12,996	14,841
Printing and subscriptions	1,502	2,153
Property related	7,816	9,649
PSO interviewer related	8,104	8,039
Recruitment and employment related	2,358	17,396
Stationery and postage	1,910	8,465
Travel and training	13,720	24,140
Advertising and market research	146	14,488
Other	2,666	3,620
Total goods and services	57,539	122,838
Goods and services are made up of:		
Provision of goods – related entities	380	384
Provision of goods – external parties	13,195	33,925
Rendering of services – related entities	2,697	3,153
Rendering of services – external parties	41,267	85,376
Total goods and services	57,539	122,838
Other supplier expenses		
Operating lease rentals – external parties:		
Minimum lease payments	27,603	31,380
Workers compensation expenses	3,502	5,812
Total other supplier expenses	31,105	37,192
Total supplier expenses	88,644	160,030
Note 3C: Depreciation and Amortisation		
Depreciation:		
Property, plant and equipment	15,971	17,528
Total depreciation	15,971	17,528
Amortisation:		
Intangibles	19,191	16,953
Total amortisation	19,191	16,953
Total depreciation and amortisation	35,162	34,481

* Total supplier expenses have decreased in 2012-13 due to a reduction in the Census of Population and Housing work program.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 3D: Write-Down and Impairment of Assets</u>		
Asset write-downs and impairments from:		
Impairment on financial instruments	4	11
Asset write-offs	<u>181</u>	<u>761</u>
Total write-down and impairment of assets	<u>185</u>	<u>772</u>
<u>Note 3E: Losses from Asset Sales</u>		
Property, plant and equipment:		
Proceeds from sale	(70)	(195)
Carrying value of assets sold	<u>146</u>	<u>233</u>
Selling expense	<u>34</u>	<u>19</u>
Total losses from asset sales	<u>110</u>	<u>57</u>

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 4: Income

	2013	2012
OWN-SOURCE REVENUE	\$'000	\$'000

Note 4A: Sale of Goods and Rendering of Services

Provision of goods - related entities	1,117	861
Provision of goods - external parties	168	150
Rendering of services - related entities	59,076	35,948
Rendering of services - external parties	8,898	6,259
Total sale of goods and rendering of services	69,259	43,218

Note 4B: Other Gains

Resources received free of charge	125	125
Total other gains	125	125

REVENUE FROM GOVERNMENT

Note 4C: Revenue from Government

Appropriations:

Departmental appropriations	312,502	548,632
Total revenue from Government	312,502	548,632

* Total revenue from Government has decreased in 2012-13 due to a reduction in the Census of Population and Housing work program.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 5: Financial Assets

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 5A: Cash and Cash Equivalents		
Cash on hand or on deposit	5,817	4,845
Total cash and cash equivalents	5,817	4,845
Note 5B: Trade and Other Receivables		
Good and Services:		
Goods and services - related entities	1,375	2,901
Goods and services - external parties	2,720	1,218
Total receivables for goods and services	4,095	4,119
Appropriations receivable:		
For existing programs	29,757	66,338
Total appropriations receivable	29,757	66,338
Other receivables:		
GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	518	757
Sundry receivables	281	12
Total other receivables	799	769
Total trade and other receivables (net)	34,651	71,226
Receivables are expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months	34,651	71,226
Total trade and other receivables (net)	34,651	71,226
Receivables are aged as follows:		
Not overdue	34,357	70,580
Overdue by:		
0 to 30 days	190	203
31 to 60 days	31	367
61 to 90 days	59	11
More than 90 days	14	65
Total receivables (gross)	34,651	71,226

Credit terms for goods and services were within 30 days (2012: 30 days).

The ABS has no provision for doubtful debts and all receivables are expected to be recovered.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 6: Non-Financial Assets

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 6A: Property Plant and Equipment		
Leasehold improvements:		
Fair value	32,049	34,066
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(8,785)</u>	<u>(3,219)</u>
Total leasehold improvements	<u>23,264</u>	<u>30,847</u>
Other property, plant and equipment:		
Fair value	36,155	33,116
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(17,806)</u>	<u>(11,004)</u>
Total other property, plant and equipment	<u>18,349</u>	<u>22,112</u>
Total property, plant and equipment	<u>41,613</u>	<u>52,959</u>

No indicators of impairment were found for property, plant and equipment.

Revaluations of non-financial assets

There was no revaluation review completed on the carrying value of property, plant and equipment and computer hardware assets in 2012-13 as per the ABS revaluation cycle.

The Australian Valuation Office reviewed the fair value of property plant and equipment assets as at 30 June 2012. A revaluation increment of \$5,529,663 was credited to the asset revaluation reserves and included in the equity section of the balance sheet for property plant and equipment in 2011-12. The Australian Valuation Office has subsequently issued a certificate of fair value for this asset class as at 30 June 2013.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements**

Note 6B: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment 2013

	Leasehold improvements \$'000	Other property, plant and equipment \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2012			
Gross book value	34,066	33,116	67,182
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(3,219)	(11,004)	(14,223)
Net book value 1 July 2012	30,847	22,112	52,959
Additions:			
By purchase	92	4,779	4,871
Make good	-	-	-
Revaluations and impairments recognised in other comprehensive income	-	-	-
Reclassifications	(6)	6	-
Depreciation expense	(7,661)	(8,310)	(15,971)
Disposals:			
Other disposals	-	(146)	(146)
Write-offs	(8)	(92)	(100)
Net book value 30 June 2013	23,264	18,349	41,613
Net book value as of 30 June 2013 represented by:			
Gross book value	32,049	36,155	68,204
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(8,785)	(17,806)	(26,591)
Net book value 30 June 2013	23,264	18,349	41,613

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements**

Note 6B: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Property, Plant and Equipment 2012

	Leasehold improvements \$'000	Other property, plant & equipment \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2011			
Gross book value	40,982	27,086	68,068
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(10,023)	(4,701)	(14,724)
Net book value 1 July 2011	30,959	22,385	53,344
Additions:			
By purchase	2,410	8,913	11,323
Make good	616	-	616
Revaluations and impairments recognised in other comprehensive income	5,003	544	5,547
Reclassification	(12)	(5)	(17)
Depreciation expense	(8,124)	(9,404)	(17,528)
Disposals:			
Other disposals	-	(233)	(233)
Write-offs	(5)	(88)	(93)
Net book value 30 June 2012	30,847	22,112	52,959
Net book value as of 30 June 2012 represented by:			
Gross book value	34,066	33,116	67,182
Accumulated depreciation and impairment	(3,219)	(11,004)	(14,223)
Net book value 30 June 2012	30,847	22,112	52,959

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 6C: Intangibles</u>		
Computer software:		
Internally developed – in progress	12,876	8,365
Internally developed – in use	157,576	154,806
Purchased	30,905	28,399
Accumulated amortisation	(125,240)	(112,161)
Accumulated impairment losses	(1,348)	(1,348)
Total computer software	74,769	78,061
Total intangibles	74,769	78,061

No intangibles are expected to be sold or disposed of within the next 12 months.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements**

Note 6D: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Intangibles 2013

	Computer software internally developed \$'000	Computer software purchased \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2012			
Gross book value	163,171	28,399	191,570
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(101,649)	(11,860)	(113,509)
Net book value 1 July 2012	61,522	16,539	78,061
Additions:			
By purchase	-	3,629	3,629
Internally developed	12,351	-	12,351
Impairments recognised in the operating result	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	-	-
Amortisation	(13,553)	(5,638)	(19,191)
Disposals:			
Other disposals	-	-	-
Write-offs	(23)	(58)	(81)
Net book value 30 June 2013	60,297	14,472	74,769
Net book value as of 30 June 2013 represented by:			
Gross book value	170,452	30,905	201,357
Accumulated amortisation	(108,807)	(16,433)	(125,240)
Accumulated impairment	(1,348)	-	(1,348)
Net book value 30 June 2013	60,297	14,472	74,769

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 6D: Reconciliation of the Opening and Closing Balances of Intangibles 2012

	Computer software internally developed \$'000	Computer software purchased \$'000	Total \$'000
As at 1 July 2011			
Gross book value	157,735	20,452	178,187
Accumulated amortisation and impairment	(91,184)	(9,198)	(100,382)
Net book value 1 July 2011	66,551	11,254	77,805
Additions			
By purchase	-	9,079	9,079
Internally developed	8,781	-	8,781
Impairments recognised in the operating result	-	-	-
Reclassifications	-	17	17
Amortisation	(13,279)	(3,674)	(16,953)
Disposals:			
Other disposals	-	-	-
Write-offs	(531)	(137)	(668)
Net book value 30 June 2012	61,522	16,539	78,061
Net book value as of 30 June 2012 represented by:			
Gross book value	163,171	28,399	191,570
Accumulated amortisation	(100,301)	(11,860)	(112,161)
Accumulated impairment	(1,348)	-	(1,348)
Net book value 30 June 2012	61,522	16,539	78,061

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Note 6E: Other Non-Financial Assets		
Accrued revenue	1,134	805
Prepayments	<u>8,074</u>	<u>8,412</u>
Total other non-financial assets	<u>9,208</u>	<u>9,217</u>
Total other non-financial assets - are expected to be recovered in:		
No more than 12 months	7,578	7,829
More than 12 months	<u>1,630</u>	<u>1,388</u>
Total other non-financial assets	<u>9,208</u>	<u>9,217</u>

No indicators of impairment were found for other non-financial assets.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 7: Payables

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 7A: Suppliers		
Trade creditors and accruals	8,162	17,118
Operating lease rentals	<u>11,428</u>	<u>12,929</u>
Total suppliers payables	<u>19,590</u>	<u>30,047</u>

Suppliers payables expected to be settled within 12 months:

Related entities	122	114
External parties	<u>10,659</u>	<u>18,948</u>
Total	<u>10,781</u>	<u>19,062</u>

Suppliers payables expected to be settled in greater than 12 months:

Related entities	-	-
External parties	<u>8,809</u>	<u>10,985</u>
Total	<u>8,809</u>	<u>10,985</u>
Total suppliers payables	<u>19,590</u>	<u>30,047</u>

Settlement was usually made within 30 days.

Note 7B: Unearned Revenue

Unearned revenue	<u>13,297</u>	<u>27,180</u>
Total unearned revenue	<u>13,297</u>	<u>27,180</u>

Total unearned revenue - expected to be settled in:

No more than 12 months	11,473	26,463
More than 12 months	<u>1,824</u>	<u>717</u>
Total unearned revenue	<u>13,297</u>	<u>27,180</u>

Note 7C: Other Payables

Salaries and wages	7,281	8,830
Superannuation	1,104	1,279
Separations and redundancies	<u>1,034</u>	<u>5,016</u>
Total other payables	<u>9,419</u>	<u>15,125</u>

Total other payables are expected to be settled in:

No more than 12 months	<u>9,419</u>	<u>15,125</u>
Total other payables	<u>9,419</u>	<u>15,125</u>

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 8: Lease Incentives

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 8A: Lease Incentives</u>		
Lease incentives	<u>3,716</u>	<u>4,931</u>
Total lease incentives	<u>3,716</u>	<u>4,931</u>
Payable:		
Within one year	1,214	1,214
In one to five years	<u>2,502</u>	<u>3,717</u>
Total lease incentives	<u>3,716</u>	<u>4,931</u>

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 9: Provisions

	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Note 9A: Employee Provisions		
Leave	87,110	81,987
Total employee provisions	<u>87,110</u>	<u>81,987</u>
Employee provisions are expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months	23,085	20,529
More than 12 months	64,025	61,458
Total employee provisions	<u>87,110</u>	<u>81,987</u>
Note 9B: Other Provisions		
Make good provision	6,413	6,418
Total other provisions	<u>6,413</u>	<u>6,418</u>
Other provisions are expected to be settled in:		
No more than 12 months	-	68
More than 12 months	6,413	6,350
Total other provisions	<u>6,413</u>	<u>6,418</u>

	Make good provision \$'000	Total \$'000
Carrying amount 1 July 2012	6,418	6,418
Additional provisions made	-	-
Amounts reversed	-	-
Amounts used	(68)	(68)
Unwinding of discount or change in discount rate	63	63
Closing balance 30 June 2013	6,413	6,413

The ABS currently has four (2011-12: five) agreements for the leasing of premises which have provisions requiring the entity to restore the premises to their original condition at the conclusion of the lease. The entity has made a provision to reflect the present value of this obligation.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 10: Cash Flow Reconciliation

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Reconciliation of cash and cash equivalents as per Balance Sheet to Cash Flow Statement		
Cash and cash equivalents as per:		
Cash flow statement	5,817	4,845
Balance sheet	5,817	4,845
Difference	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Reconciliation of net cost of services to net cash from operating activities:		
Net cost of services	355,085	584,571
Add revenue from Government	312,502	548,632
Adjustments for non-cash items		
Net loss (gains) on disposal of assets	76	38
Depreciation / amortisation	35,162	34,481
Net write down of non-financial assets	181	761
Changes in assets / liabilities		
(Increase) / decrease in net receivables	33,123	(12,469)
(Increase) / decrease in other non-financial assets	9	(1,069)
Increase / (decrease) in lease incentives	(1,215)	(1,215)
Increase / (decrease) in employee provisions	5,123	4,144
Increase / (decrease) in other provisions	(5)	-
Increase / (decrease) in unearned revenue	(13,883)	8,746
Increase / (decrease) in suppliers payable	(10,457)	302
Increase / (decrease) in other payables	(5,706)	5,313
Net cash used by operating activities	<u>(175)</u>	<u>3,093</u>

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 11: Contingent Assets and Liabilities

	Claims for damages or costs		Total	
	2013	2012	2013	2012
Contingent assets				
Balance from previous period	943	968	943	968
New contingent assets recognised		-	-	-
Re-measurement	(695)	(10)	(695)	(10)
Assets recognised	(248)	(15)	(248)	(15)
Total contingent assets	-	943	-	943
Net contingent assets	-	943	-	943

Quantifiable Contingencies

During 2011-12 a contingent asset in respect to a claim for costs of \$942,831 was reported, which was settled during 2012-13. There were no further claims for costs in 2012-13.

There are no contingent liabilities reported (2012: Nil).

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 12: Senior Executive Remuneration

Note 12A: Senior Executive Remuneration Expenses for the Reporting Period

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
Short-term employee benefits:		
Salary	8,429,210	6,810,614
Annual leave accrued	35,604	136,325
Performance bonuses	7,500	7,500
Other ¹	<u>1,043,823</u>	<u>967,697</u>
Total short-term employee benefits	<u>9,516,137</u>	<u>7,922,136</u>
Post-employment benefits:		
Superannuation	<u>1,297,592</u>	898,259
Total post-employment benefits	<u>1,297,592</u>	<u>898,259</u>
Other long-term employee benefits:		
Long-service leave	<u>410,866</u>	370,809
Total other long-term benefits	<u>410,866</u>	<u>370,809</u>
Termination benefits	-	-
Total senior executive remuneration expenses	<u>11,224,595</u>	<u>9,191,204</u>

Notes:

1. 'Other' includes motor vehicle allowances and other allowances.
2. Note 12A is prepared on an accrual basis (therefore the performance bonus expenses disclosed above may differ from the cash 'Bonus paid' in Note 12B).
3. Note 12A excludes acting arrangements and part-year service where total remuneration expensed for a senior executive was less than \$180,000. The 2012 comparatives have been amended to reflect the increase in the reporting threshold from \$150,000 to \$180,000. Based on the original threshold the senior executive remuneration in 2012 was \$10.2M.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 12B: Average Annual Reportable Remuneration Paid to Substantive Senior Executives During the Reporting Period

Average annual reportable remuneration paid to substantive senior executives in 2013

Average annual reportable remuneration ¹	Senior Executives No.	Reportable salary ² \$	Contributed		Reportable allowances ⁴ \$	Bonus paid ⁵ \$	Total \$
			superannuation ³ \$	allowances ⁴ \$			
Total reportable remuneration (including part-time arrangements):							
less than \$180,000	10	77,801	15,583	8,329	-	-	101,713
\$180,000 to \$209,999	11	153,169	23,235	23,893	-	-	200,297
\$210,000 to \$239,999	14	170,765	27,652	24,293	-	-	222,710
\$240,000 to \$269,999	7	201,869	31,482	22,069	1,071	-	256,491
\$270,000 to \$299,999	3	217,963	35,361	25,638	-	-	278,962
\$300,000 to \$329,999	1	263,202	30,925	26,159	-	-	320,286
\$330,000 to \$359,999	3	278,613	43,984	18,988	-	-	341,585
\$600,000 to \$629,999	1	432,544	66,811	110,881	-	-	610,236
Total	50						

Notes:

- This table reports substantive senior executives who received remuneration during the reporting period. Each row is an averaged figure based on headcount for individuals in the band.
- 'Reportable salary' includes the following:
 - gross payments (less any bonuses paid, which are separated out and disclosed in the 'bonus paid' column);
 - reportable fringe benefits (at the net amount prior to 'grossing up' for tax purposes);
 - exempt foreign employment income; and
 - salary sacrificed benefits
- The 'contributed superannuation' amount is the average cost to the entity for the provision of superannuation benefits to substantive senior executives in that reportable remuneration band during the reporting period.
- 'Reportable allowances' are the average actual allowances paid as per the 'total allowances' line on individuals' payment summaries.
- 'Bonus paid' represents average actual bonuses paid during the reporting period in that reportable remuneration band. The 'bonus paid' within a particular band may vary between financial years due to various factors such as individuals commencing with or leaving the ABS during the financial year.
- The ABS continues to manage its senior executive cohort within the Australian Public Service Commission SES CAP.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Average annual reportable remuneration paid to senior executives in 2012

Average annual reportable remuneration ¹	Senior Executives No.	Reportable salary ²	Contributed superannuation ³	Reportable allowances ⁴	Bonus paid ⁵	Total
		\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Total reportable remuneration (including part-time arrangements):						
less than \$180,000	10	66,028	19,683	8,798	-	94,509
\$180,000 to \$209,999	11	146,116	29,148	23,495	-	198,759
\$210,000 to \$239,999	14	160,569	35,521	23,727	536	220,353
\$240,000 to \$269,999	3	189,401	41,445	19,186	-	250,032
\$270,000 to \$299,999	2	177,094	77,735	24,259	-	279,088
\$300,000 to \$329,999	3	256,305	54,455	12,898	-	323,658
\$330,000 to \$359,999	1	194,872	117,222	26,437	-	338,531
\$510,000 to \$539,999	1	345,107	91,253	83,286	-	519,646
Total	45					

Notes:

- This table reports substantive senior executives who received remuneration during the reporting period. Each row is an averaged figure based on headcount for individuals in the band.
- 'Reportable salary' includes the following:
 - gross payments (less any bonuses paid, which are separated out and disclosed in the 'bonus paid' column);
 - reportable fringe benefits (at the net amount prior to 'grossing up' for tax purposes);
 - exempt foreign employment income; and
 - salary sacrificed benefits
- The 'contributed superannuation' amount is the average cost to the entity for the provision of superannuation benefits to substantive senior executives in that reportable remuneration band during the reporting period.
- 'Reportable allowances' are the average actual allowances paid as per the 'total allowances' line on individuals' payment summaries.
- 'Bonus paid' represents average actual bonuses paid during the reporting period in that reportable remuneration band. The 'bonus paid' within a particular band may vary between financial years due to various factors such as individuals commencing with or leaving the ABS during the financial year.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 12C: Average Annual Reportable Remuneration Paid to Other Highly Paid Staff during the Reporting Period

Average annual reportable remuneration paid to other highly paid staff in 2013

Average annual reportable remuneration ¹	Staff No.	Reportable salary ²	Contributed		Total
			superannuation ³	Bonus paid ⁵	
		\$	\$	\$	\$
Total reportable remuneration (including part-time arrangements):	1	151,030	22,018	20,961	194,009
\$180,000 to \$209,999	1			-	
Total	1		22,018	20,961	194,009

Notes:

1. This table reports staff:

- who were employed by the entity during the reporting period;
- whose reportable remuneration was \$180,000 or more for the financial period; and
- were not required to be disclosed in Table B or director disclosures.

Each row is an averaged figure based on headcount for individuals in the band.

2. 'Reportable salary' includes the following:

- gross payments (less any bonuses paid, which are separated out and disclosed in the 'bonus paid' column);
- reportable fringe benefits (at the net amount prior to 'grossing up' for tax purposes);
- exempt foreign employment income; and
- salary sacrificed benefits.

3. The 'contributed superannuation' amount is the average cost to the entity for the provision of superannuation benefits to other highly paid staff in that reportable remuneration band during the reporting period

4. 'Reportable allowances' are the average actual allowances paid as per the 'total allowances' line on individuals' payment summaries.

5. 'Bonus paid' represents average actual bonuses paid during the reporting period in that reportable remuneration band. The 'bonus paid' within a particular band may vary between financial years due to various factors such as individuals commencing with or leaving the entity during the financial year.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Average annual reportable remuneration paid to other highly paid staff in 2012

Average annual reportable remuneration ¹	Staff No.	Reportable salary ² \$	Contributed superannuation ³ \$	Reportable allowances ⁴ \$	Bonus paid ⁵ \$	Total \$
\$180,000 to \$209,999	2	127,052	39,658	23,711	-	190,421
Total	2					

Total reportable remuneration (including part-time arrangements):

Notes:

1. This table reports staff:

- who were employed by the entity during the reporting period;
- whose reportable remuneration was \$180,000 or more for the financial period; and
- were not required to be disclosed in Table B or director disclosures.

Each row is an averaged figure based on headcount for individuals in the band.

2. 'Reportable salary' includes the following:

- gross payments (less any bonuses paid, which are separated out and disclosed in the 'bonus paid' column);
- reportable fringe benefits (at the net amount prior to 'grossing up' for tax purposes);
- exempt foreign employment income; and
- salary sacrificed benefits.

3. The 'contributed superannuation' amount is the average cost to the entity for the provision of superannuation benefits to other highly paid staff in that reportable remuneration band during the reporting period.

4. 'Reportable allowances' are the average actual allowances paid as per the 'total allowances' line on individuals' payment summaries.

5. 'Bonus paid' represents average actual bonuses paid during the reporting period in that reportable remuneration band. The 'bonus paid' within a particular band may vary between financial years due to various factors such as individuals commencing with or leaving the entity during the financial year.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 13: Remuneration of Auditors

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
<p>Financial statement audit services were provided free of charge to the ABS by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO).</p>		
The fair value of the services provided		
Financial statement audit services	<u>125,000</u>	<u>125,000</u>
Total	<u>125,000</u>	<u>125,000</u>

No other services were provided by the auditors of the financial statements.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 14: Financial Instruments

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 14A: Categories of Financial Instruments		
Financial Assets		
Loans and receivables:		
Cash and cash equivalents	5,817	4,845
Trade and other receivables*	4,376	4,131
Carrying amount of financial assets	10,193	8,976
Financial Liabilities		
At amortised cost:		
Trade and sundry creditors	8,162	17,118
Carrying amount of financial liabilities	8,162	17,118
Note 14B: Net Income and Expense from Financial Assets		
Financial assets		
Bad debts written off	4	11
Net gain/(loss) from financial assets	4	11

Note 14C: Fair Value of Financial Instruments

The carrying value of financial instruments of the ABS is a reasonable approximation of the fair value of those financial statements.

*For the purposes of Note 14 Financial Instruments, trade and other receivables excludes appropriation receivable and GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 14D: Credit Risk

The ABS is a 100% owned Australian Government entity, which is primarily funded for its activities through the budget process.

The majority of services provided by the ABS are delivered to other Government entities and therefore represent minimal credit exposure for the agency.

The maximum exposure to credit risk is the risk that arises from potential default of a debtor. This amount is equal to the total amount of trade and other receivables excluding appropriation receivable and GST receivable from the Australian Tax Office (2013: \$4,376,000 and 2012: \$4,131,000).

The ABS has policies and procedures in relation to debt recovery techniques that are applied as appropriate. The ABS holds no collateral to mitigate against credit risk.

The following table illustrates the ABS' gross exposure to credit risk.

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Financial assets		
Cash and cash equivalents	5,817	4,845
Trade and other receivables	4,376	4,131
Total	10,193	8,976

Credit quality of financial instruments not past due or individually determined as impaired

	Not past due nor impaired 2013 \$'000	Not past due nor impaired 2012 \$'000	Past due or impaired 2013 \$'000	Past due or impaired 2012 \$'000
Cash and cash equivalents	5,817	4,845	-	-
Trade and other receivables	4,082	3,485	294	646
Total	9,899	8,330	294	646

Ageing of financial assets that were past due but not impaired for 2013

	0 to 30 days \$'000	31 to 60 days \$'000	61 to 90 days \$'000	90+ days \$'000	Total \$'000
Trade and other receivables	190	31	59	14	294
Total	190	31	59	14	294

Ageing of financial assets that were past due but not impaired for 2012

	0 to 30 days \$'000	31 to 60 days \$'000	61 to 90 days \$'000	90+ days \$'000	Total \$'000
Trade and other receivables	203	367	11	65	646
Total	203	367	11	65	646

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 14E: Liquidity Risk

The ABS receives appropriation funding from the Australian Government. The ABS manages its cash to ensure it is able to make payments as they fall due. In addition, the ABS undertakes cash forecasting to ensure it can meet future liabilities as they fall due. The ABS has policies in place to ensure payments are made on time.

The financial liabilities of ABS are trade and sundry creditors.

The exposure to liquidity risk is based on the notion that the ABS will encounter difficulty in meeting its obligations associated with financial liabilities. This is highly unlikely due to appropriation funding and mechanisms available to the ABS (e.g. Advance to the Finance Minister) and internal policies and procedures put in place to ensure there are appropriate resources to meet its financial obligations.

The ABS has no derivative financial liabilities in both current and prior year.

Maturities for non-derivative financial liabilities 2013

	On demand	Within 1 year	1 to 2 years	2 to 5 years	> 5 years	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Trade and sundry creditors	-	8,162	-	-	-	8,162
Total	-	8,162	-	-	-	8,162

Maturities for non-derivative financial liabilities 2012

	On demand	Within 1 year	1 to 2 years	2 to 5 years	> 5 years	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Trade and sundry creditors	-	17,118	-	-	-	17,118
Total	-	17,118	-	-	-	17,118

Note 14F: Market Risk

The ABS holds basic financial instruments that do not expose the ABS to 'currency risk' or 'other price risk'.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 15: Financial Assets Reconciliation

		2013	2012
		\$'000	\$'000
<u>Financial assets</u>	Notes		
Total financial assets as per balance sheet		40,468	76,071
Less: non-financial instrument components			
Appropriation receivable	5B	29,757	66,338
GST receivable from the ATO	5B	<u>518</u>	<u>757</u>
Total non-financial instrument components		<u>30,275</u>	67,095
Total financial assets as per financial instruments note	14A	<u>10,193</u>	<u>8,976</u>

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 16: Appropriations

Table A: Annual Appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

	2013 Appropriations					Appropriation applied in 2013 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance ³ \$'000
	Appropriation Act		FMA Act				
	Annual Appropriation \$'000	Appropriations reduced ¹ \$'000	Section 30 ² \$'000	Section 31 ² \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000		
DEPARTMENTAL							
Ordinary annual services	313,983	-	2,191	53,488	369,662	395,317	(25,655)
Other services	18,476	-	-	-	18,476	22,104	(3,628)
Equity							
Total departmental	332,459	-	2,191	53,488	388,138	417,421	(29,283)

Notes:

1. Appropriation reduced under Appropriation Acts (Nos. 1, 3 & 5) 2012-13; sections 10, 11, 12 and under Appropriation Acts (Nos. 2, 4 & 6) 2012-13; sections 12, 13 and 14. Departmental appropriations do not lapse at financial year-end. However, the responsible Minister may decide that part or all of a departmental appropriation is not required and request the Finance Minister to reduce that appropriation. The reduction in the appropriation is effected by the Finance Minister's determination and is disallowable by Parliament. No determinations were made in 2012-13.
2. Section 30 represents reimbursements to the ABS for payments made from appropriation. Section 31 represents retained receipts for good and services provided to external and related entities as per note 1.5.
3. The variance between the total Departmental appropriation and the appropriation applied is due to prior year undrawn appropriation being used. The undrawn appropriation at 30 June 2013 is detailed in Table C.
4. At 30 June 2013 a determination has not been issued by the Finance Minister for a reduction in appropriation of \$1.481M. The appropriation will be reduced when the determination is issued.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

	2012 Appropriations						Appropriation applied in 2012 (current and prior years) \$'000	Variance ³ \$'000
	Appropriation Act		FMA Act					
	Annual Appropriation \$'000	Appropriations reduced ¹ \$'000	Section 30 ² \$'000	Section 31 ² \$'000	Section 31 ² \$'000	Total appropriation \$'000		
DEPARTMENTAL								
Ordinary annual services	548,632	-	1,507	49,319	-	599,458	584,149	15,309
Other services	19,106	-	-	-	-	19,106	26,703	(7,597)
Total departmental	567,738	-	1,507	49,319	-	618,564	610,852	7,712

Notes:

1. Appropriation reduced under Appropriation Acts (Nos.1,3 & 5) 2011-12; sections 10,11,12 and under Appropriation Acts (Nos.2,4 & 6) 2011-12; sections 12,13 and 14. Departmental appropriations do not lapse at financial year-end. However, the responsible Minister may decide that part or all of a departmental appropriation is not required and request the Finance Minister to reduce that appropriation. The reduction in the appropriation is effected by the Finance Minister's determination and is disallowable by Parliament. No determinations were made in 2011-12.
2. Section 30 represents reimbursements to the ABS for payments made from appropriation. Section 31 represents retained receipts for good and services provided to external and related entities as per note 1.5.
3. The variance between the total Departmental appropriation and the appropriation applied is due to prior year undrawn appropriation being used. The undrawn appropriation at 30 June 2013 is detailed in Table C.

**Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements**

Table B.: Departmental Capital Budgets (Recoverable GST exclusive)

	2013 Capital Budget Appropriations			Capital Budget Appropriations applied in 2013 (current and prior years)			
	Appropriation Act		FMA Act	Total Capital Budget Appropriations \$'000	Payments for non-financial assets ³ \$'000	Payments for other purposes \$'000	Total payments \$'000
	Annual Capital Budget \$'000	Appropriations reduced ² \$'000	Section 32 \$'000				
DEPARTMENTAL Ordinary annual services - Departmental Capital Budget ¹	18,047	-	-	18,047	21,499	-	21,499
							Variance ⁴ \$'000 (3,452)

Notes:

1. Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5). They form part of ordinary annual services, and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts. For more information on ordinary annual services appropriations, please see Table A.: Annual appropriations.
2. Appropriations reduced under Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5) 2012-13: sections 10,11,12 and 15 or via a determination by the Finance Minister.
3. Payments made on non-financial assets include purchases of assets, expenditure on assets which has been capitalised, costs incurred to make good an asset to its original condition, and the capital repayment component of finance leases.
4. The variance between the Capital Budget appropriation and the appropriation applied during the reporting period is due to prior year undrawn appropriation being applied. The undrawn appropriation at 30 June 2013 is detailed in Table C.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

	2012 Capital Budget Appropriations			Capital Budget Appropriations applied in 2012 (current and prior years)			
	Appropriation Act		FMA Act	Total Capital Budget Appropriations \$'000	Payments for non-financial assets ³ \$'000	Payments for other purposes \$'000	Total payments \$'000
	Annual Capital Budget \$'000	Appropriations reduced ² \$'000	Section 32 \$'000				
DEPARTMENTAL Ordinary annual services - Departmental Capital Budget ¹	18,038	-	-	18,038	26,273	-	26,273
							Variance ⁴ \$'000
							(8,235)

Notes:

1. Departmental Capital Budgets are appropriated through Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5). They form part of ordinary annual services, and are not separately identified in the Appropriation Acts. For more information on ordinary annual services appropriations, please see Table A: Annual appropriations.
2. Appropriations reduced under Appropriation Acts (No.1,3,5) 2011-12: sections 10,11,12 and 15 or via a determination by the Finance Minister.
3. Payments made on non-financial assets include purchases of assets, expenditure on assets which has been capitalised, costs incurred to make good an asset to its original condition, and the capital repayment component of finance leases.
4. The variance between the Capital Budget appropriation and the appropriation applied during the reporting period is due to prior year undrawn appropriation being applied. The undrawn appropriation at 30 June 2013 is detailed in Table C.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Table C: Unspent Annual Appropriations ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

Authority	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
DEPARTMENTAL		
Departmental Appropriation Act 1 2012-13	35,112	-
Departmental Appropriation Act 1 2011-12	-	67,093
Departmental Act 2 - Non Operating - Equity Injection 2011-12	462	638
Departmental Appropriation Act 1 - Capital Budget (DCB) - Non Operating 2011-12	-	3,452
Total	35,574	71,183

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 17: Special Accounts

Note 17A: Special Accounts ('Recoverable GST exclusive')

	Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys ¹	
	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Balance brought forward from previous period	-	-
Increases:	-	-
Receipts	-	-
Total increases	-	-
Available for payments	-	-
Decreases:		
Departmental		
Payments made	-	-
Total departmental decreases	-	-
Total decreases	-	-
Total balance carried to the next period		
Total balance at dissolution	-	-

¹Appropriation: *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, section 20.

Establishing Instrument: Determination 2010/04.

Purpose: Disburse amounts held on trust or otherwise for the benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth.

The ABS has Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys special account. This account was established under section 20 of the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 (FMA Act). This account was dissolved with an Act of Parliament on the 27 February 2013.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 18: Compensation and Debt Relief

	2013 \$	2012 \$
Compensation and Debt Relief - Departmental		
No 'Act of Grace payments' were expended during the reporting period. (2012: No expenses).	-	-
No waivers of amounts owing to the Australian Government were made pursuant to subsection 34(1) of the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997. (2012: No waivers).	-	-
No payments were provided under the Compensation for Detriment caused by Defective Administration (CDDA) Scheme during the reporting period. (2012: No payments).	-	-
No ex-gratia payments were provided for during the reporting period. (2012: No payments).	-	-
1 payment was provided in special circumstances relating to APS employment pursuant to section 73 of the Public Service Act 1999 (PS Act) during the reporting period. (2012: No payments).	<u>(44,290)</u>	-

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 19: Assets Held in Trust

Monetary Assets

Financial assets held in trust include the Special account: Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys.
 This asset held in trust is disclosed in Note 17A: Special Accounts.

	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000
Services for Other Entities and Trust Moneys - Monetary Asset		
Total amount held at the beginning of the reporting period	-	-
Receipts	-	-
Payments	-	-
Total amount held at the end of the reporting period	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Non-monetary Assets

ABS has no non-monetary assets held in trust in both the current and prior years.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 20: Reporting of Outcomes

Note 20A: Net Cost of Outcome Delivery

	Outcome 1		Total	
	2013	2012	2013	2012
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Departmental				
Expenses	(425,277)	(628,647)	(425,277)	(628,647)
Own-source income	70,192	44,076	70,192	44,076
Administered				
Expenses	-	-	-	-
Own-source income	2	5	2	5
Net cost of outcome delivery	(355,083)	(584,566)	(355,083)	(584,566)

Outcome 1 is described in note 1.1.

Net costs shown include intra-government costs that are eliminated in calculating the actual Budget Outcome.

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Notes to and forming part of the financial statements

Note 21: Net Cash Appropriation Arrangements

	2013 \$'000	2012 \$'000
Total comprehensive loss less depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriations¹	(7,421)	4,072
Plus: depreciation/amortisation expenses previously funded through revenue appropriation	<u>(35,162)</u>	<u>(34,481)</u>
Total comprehensive loss - as per the Statement of Comprehensive Income	<u>(42,583)</u>	<u>(30,409)</u>

1. From 2010-11, the Government introduced net cash appropriation arrangements, where revenue appropriations for depreciation/amortisation expenses ceased. Entities now receive a separate capital budget provided through equity appropriations. Capital budgets are to be appropriated in the period when cash payment for capital expenditure is required.



Section 5

GLOSSARY AND INDEX



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Glossary

ABR	Australian Business Register
ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABS cat. no.	ABS catalogue number
ACIN	Australian Community Indicators Network
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AFL	Australian Football League
AFOS	ABS Future Organisational Sustainability
AGSF	Australian Government Statistical Forum
AHS	Australian Health Survey
ALWOS	Australian Land and Water Ownership Survey
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANZLIC—the Spatial Information Council	ANZLIC—the Spatial Information Council is a joint initiative of the Australian and New Zealand Governments, and the state and territory Governments of Australia. ANZLIC was originally established in January 1986 as the Australian Land Information Council. In November 1991, New Zealand formally became a full member and the Council was renamed ANZLIC. In 1994 the Australian Local Government Association was invited to participate in ANZLIC as an observer.
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
ANZSIC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
APRA	Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
APS	Australian Public Service
ARMS	Agricultural Resource Management Survey
ASAC	Australian Statistics Advisory Council
ASEAN	Association of South East Asian Nations
ASGS	Australian Statistical Geography Standard
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BAS	Business Activity Survey
BPS	Badan Pusat Statistik (Statistics Indonesia)
Census	Census of Population and Housing

CES	Conference of European Statisticians
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPC	Central Product Classification
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CSB	Customer Services Branch
CSM	Concepts, Sources and Methods
CSTAT	Committee of Statistics (OECD)
CURF	Confidentialised Unit Record File
DDI	Data Documentation Initiative
DEEWR	Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations
DGE	Dirreção Gerral de Estatística, Timor-Leste
DHS	Department of Human Services
DIAC	Department of Immigration and Citizenship
DIISRTE	Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education
DoHA	Department of Health and Ageing
DRALGAS	Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport
DPA	Development and Performance Agreement
DPF	Development and Performance Framework
DQO	Data Quality Online
ECE	Economic Commission for Europe
ECS	Engineering Construction Survey
ELG	Executive Leadership Group
ESA	Essential Statistical Assets
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN)
EUM	Economic Units Model
FaHCSIA	Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs
FIFO	fly-in, fly-out
FISIM	Financial Intermediation Services Indirectly Measured
FOI	Freedom of Information
FTE	Full Time Employee
G20	The Group of Twenty (G20) is the premier forum for international cooperation on the most important issues of the global economic and financial agenda. It was formally established in September 1999. The G20 brings together finance ministers and central bank governors from 19 countries: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom, the United States of America plus the European Union, which is represented by the President of the European Council and by Head of the European Central Bank.

GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GFS	Government Financial Statistics
GFS	government finance statistics
GFSM	Government Finance Statistics Manual (International Monetary Fund)
G-NAF	Geocoded National Address File
GSBPM	Generic Statistical Business Process Model
GSIM	Generic Statistical Information Model
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HLG	High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services
HPI	House price index
HR	Human Resources
HSR	Health and Safety Representative
ICP	International Comparison Program
ICT	information and communication technology
IEO	Index of Education and Occupation
IER	Index of Economic Resources
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPS	Information Publication Scheme
IRSAD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Advantage and Disadvantage
IRSD	Index of Relative Socio-Economic Disadvantage
ITAB	International Technical Advisory Board
ITPIs	International Trade Price Indexes
KLEMS	KLEMS approach to productivity measurement: capital (K), labour (L), energy (E), materials (M) and services (S)
LaMPS	Land Management Practices Survey
MAC	Methodological Advisory Committee
MAP	Measure of Australia's Progress
MFP	multifactor productivity
MRR	metadata registry and repository
N/A	not applicable
NATSIHS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NBS	National Bureau of Statistics, Seychelles
NCATSIS	National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics
NCCJS	National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics
NCCRS	National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics

NCETS	National Centre for Education and Training Statistics
NHS	National Health Survey
NIRS	National Information and Referral Service
NMSU	National Migrant Statistics Unit
NoD	Notice of Direction
NPI	non-profit institutions
NRL	National Rugby League
NSO	National Statistical Organisation
NSS	National Statistical Service
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PBLCI	Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index
PCF	People Capability Framework
PCU	Provider Contact Unit
PM&C	Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet
PMO	Program Management Office
PPIs	Producer Price Indexes
PSMA	PSMA (Public Sector Mapping Agencies) Australia Limited is an unlisted public company owned by the state, territory and Australian Governments of Australia.
PSO	Population Survey Operations
QLD	Queensland
R&D	research and development
REACS	Rural Environment and Agricultural Commodity Survey
REEM	Remote Execution Environment for Microdata
RSE	relative standard error
RTMI	Retail Trade Margins Index
SA	South Australia
SCDC	Strategic Cross-sectoral Data Committee
SCH	Statistical Clearing House
SCoSS	Strategic Committee on Social Statistics
SDAC	Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
SDMX	Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange
SDSS	IMF Special Data Dissemination Standard
SEEA	System of Environmental-Economic Accounting
SEIFA	Socio Economic Indexes for Areas

SES	Senior Executive Service
SESCA	Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia
SFIC	Strategic Finance and Investment Committee
SLCD	Statistical Longitudinal Census Dataset
SLCIs	Selected Living Cost Indexes
SMG	Senior Management Group
SNA	System of National Accounts
SSF	State Statistical Forum
SSF	Statistical Spatial Framework
STA	Survey of Tourist Accommodation
TAS	Tasmania
TETIA	Transforming Education and Training Information in Australia
TSA	Tourism Satellite Account
TSD	Technology Services Division
TYPSS	Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCEEA	United Nations Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCAP	UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNSC	United Nations Statistical Commission
UNSD	United Nations Statistical Division
USA	United States of America
VIC	Victoria
WA	Western Australia
WoLFS	Work, Life and Family Survey
WHS	work health and safety
WPI	Wage Price Index

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