

EMPLOYMENT BENEFITS, AUSTRALIA, FEBRUARY TO MAY 1979 (PRELIMINARY)

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NEW ISSUE

INQUIRIES

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MAIN FEATURES

NOTE : The survey estimates are subject to sampling variability, as explained in paragraph 21.

70 per cent of the estimated 4.3 million employees who usually worked 20 hours or more a week received some kind of employment benefit in addition to their regular wage or salary.

For males the percentage was 75 and for females 60.

One-third of employees received more than one type of benefit.

The most common benefits were superannuation fund membership (42 per cent of employees) and free or discounted goods and services (37 per cent).

survey were employed wage or salary earners (employees) and who usually worked at least 20 hours a week.

Definitions

5. An *employment benefit* was defined as a concession, allowance or other privilege, etc. received in addition to wages or salary and award, etc. minimum provisions under which a person was employed. All types of wage and salary payments, including bonuses, payments for leave of various kinds and overaward payments, as well as emoluments received in accordance with award, etc. provisions, e.g. safety clothing, were not considered to be benefits for the purposes of the survey. Definitions of benefits about which information was sought are given in the following paragraphs.

6. *Holiday costs:* Any free or discounted holiday or holiday travel expenses paid for or subsidised as a result of a person's employment at the time of the survey. An example is a concession air fare granted by an airline, to one of its employees, or to a travel agency employee.

7. *Low-interest finance:* Finance provided by a lender at a lower rate of interest than the lender's usual rate for the particular purpose for which the loan was made.

8. *Goods and services:* Goods and services other than above provided free or at a discounted price to an employee, e.g. a motor vehicle supplied at a discount price to an employee of a car manufacturer.

9. *Housing:* Assistance in the provision of or subsidisation of the costs of accommodation used as a residence by a person or his family. It includes the provision to an employee, as an employee entitlement, of a residence owned by the employer, payment or subsidisation of rent or board, provision of a housing allowance and payment or subsidisation of water, sewerage or general rates payable to local government authorities.

10. *Electricity, etc:* Payment or subsidisation by a person's employer of household fuel and/or power expenses, including electricity, gas, oil and firewood.

11. *Telephone:* Payment or subsidisation, by the employer, of private telephone charges.

12. *Transport:* Assistance with *day-to-day* travelling for *private purposes* by the provision of a vehicle or by other means, e.g. travelling allowance.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Introduction

This publication contains preliminary results of a survey conducted throughout Australia during the period February to May 1979 in order to obtain information about a range of employment benefits provided by employers to employees. More detailed estimates, which will be published as soon as possible, are available on request.

2. The survey was based on a multi-stage area sample of private dwellings (about 13,500 houses, flats, etc.) and non-private dwellings (hotels, motels, etc.), and covered about one-third of one per cent of the population of Australia. The information was obtained from the occupants of selected dwellings by carefully chosen and specially trained interviewers.

Scope

3. The survey included all persons aged fifteen years and over except:

- (a) members of the permanent defence forces
- (b) certain diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, customarily excluded from census and estimated populations
- (c) overseas visitors holidaying in Australia, and
- (d) members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependants) stationed in Australia.

4. Questions concerning employment benefits were asked only in respect of persons who at the time of the

excluding payment or subsidisation of the cost of travel to and from work. This type of emolument when used for less frequent purposes, e.g. holidays, was classified as another type of benefit, e.g. holiday costs.

13. *Medical:* Payment or subsidisation by the employer, of an employee's medical and/or hospital expenses, etc. and/or benefits fund contributions. Deduction from the employee's wages or salary, where the employee paid the full contribution, was not considered to be a benefit.

14. *Union dues:* Payment or subsidisation by the employer of the employee's union membership dues or professional association membership fees. Deduction from the employee's wages or salary, where the employee paid the full amount, was not considered to be a benefit.

15. *Club membership:* Payment or subsidisation of the employee's membership fee for a club or society (not being a union or professional association) of which he/she was a member. Deduction from the employee's wages or salary, where the employee paid the full amount, was not considered to be a benefit.

16. *Entertainment allowance:* Regular provision of an amount for entertainment or hospitality expenses, or the reimbursement of expenses regularly incurred for entertainment or hospitality purposes.

17. *Shares, etc.:* Receipt or provision of shares, rights or options in the employer's business as an employee entitlement.

18. *Study leave:* Time off granted by the employer for attendance at classes during working hours, provided that the course being studied was not undertaken as a condition of employment. Thus apprentices, etc. attending college were not considered to be receiving a benefit; but other students were, even if they lost pay while on study leave or had to make up all of the time they were absent during working hours.

19. *Superannuation, etc.:* Membership of a superannuation or retirement benefits scheme, if the scheme was arranged or provided by the person's current employer, even if the employer did not contribute to the fund.

20. The mere availability of or entitlement to a benefit (as defined) was not sufficient reason for its inclusion in the tables in this publication; only those benefits which were used or taken up were counted.

Reliability of the estimates

21. Since the estimates are based on information obtained from occupants of a sample of dwellings they are subject to sampling variability; that is, they may differ by chance from the figures that would have been produced if all dwellings had been included in the survey. One measure of the likely difference is given by the *standard error*. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors. A table of estimated standard errors is shown below.

22. *The smaller the estimate the higher is the relative standard error.* Very small estimates are subject to such high relative standard errors as to detract seriously from their value for most reasonable uses. Estimates below 7,000 have not been included in the tables in this publication. Although figures for these small components can in some cases be derived by subtraction, they should not be regarded as reliable. More information about this topic will be found in *The Labour Force, Australia* (6203.0).

Related publications

23. Users may also wish to refer to the following publication which is available on request:

The Labour Force, Australia (6203.0)

24. All current publications produced by the ABS are listed in *Catalogue of Publications* (1101.0), which is available free of charge from any ABS office.

Symbols and other usages

* Subject to sampling variability too high for most practical uses. See paragraphs 21 and 22.

25. Figures have been rounded and discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

R. J. CAMERON
Australian Statistician

STANDARD ERRORS OF ESTIMATES

Size of estimate (persons)	Approximate standard error of estimate		Size of estimate (persons)	Approximate standard error of estimate	
	Persons	Per cent of estimate		Persons	Per cent of estimate
7,000	1,900	27.3	100,000	6,200	6.2
8,000	2,000	25.0	200,000	8,100	4.1
10,000	2,200	22.0	500,000	11,000	2.2
12,000	2,500	20.8	1,000,000	14,000	1.4
15,000	2,700	18.0	2,000,000	17,000	0.9
20,000	3,200	16.0	5,000,000	24,000	0.5
50,000	4,000	9.2			

TABLE 1. EMPLOYEES WHO USUALLY WORKED 20 HOURS OR MORE A WEEK : TYPE OF BENEFIT RECEIVED AND INDUSTRY (a), FEBRUARY TO MAY 1979 ('000)

	<i>Agriculture etc.</i>	<i>Mining</i>	<i>Manufacturing</i>	<i>Electricity, gas and water</i>	<i>Construction</i>	<i>Wholesale and retail trade</i>	
Total employees	78.9	80.8	1,065.3	115.1	248.6	739.5	
No benefits	20.5	12.0	322.7	23.0	107.6	187.3	
One or more benefits	58.4	68.8	742.6	92.1	141.0	552.1	
Holiday costs	*	18.1	42.1	*	13.8	25.5	
Low-interest finance	*	*	47.7	13.1	*	23.0	
Goods and services	37.6	25.5	479.9	40.1	64.6	454.8	
Housing	28.9	28.9	16.9	*	11.8	12.3	
Electricity, etc.	21.1	18.0	8.3	*	*	*	
Telephone	18.5	*	67.3	13.5	20.7	61.3	
Transport	12.0	*	81.2	*	26.4	98.7	
Medical	*	15.1	49.1	*	*	22.1	
Union dues	*	*	23.8	*	7.1	13.0	
Club fees	*	*	16.3	*	*	22.7	
Entertainment allowance	*	*	40.4	*	*	49.1	
Shares, etc.	*	*	16.5	*	*	13.2	
Study leave	*	*	13.5	*	*	9.8	
Superannuation	11.4	47.1	431.2	77.6	74.1	198.7	

	<i>Transport and storage</i>	<i>Communication</i>	<i>Finance, etc.</i>	<i>Public admin. and defence (b)</i>	<i>Community services</i>	<i>Entertainment, etc.</i>	<i>Total</i>
Total employees	264.3	131.1	368.2	253.5	776.1	198.9	4,320.3
No benefits	61.6	23.5	94.3	53.8	296.1	81.1	1,283.6
One or more benefits	202.7	107.7	273.8	199.7	480.0	117.8	3,036.7
Holiday costs	85.6	8.2	23.7	10.1	26.6	9.7	272.7
Low-interest finance	10.3	12.6	86.6	13.0	34.7	*	252.8
Goods and services	73.6	25.6	117.9	27.6	156.2	80.4	1,584.0
Housing	10.9	*	19.4	13.4	66.2	13.0	232.1
Electricity, etc.	*	*	*	*	30.9	8.5	116.8
Telephone	24.6	11.9	44.1	18.2	41.0	15.0	341.2
Transport	23.5	*	42.1	8.1	14.5	16.2	331.0
Medical	*	*	68.6	*	36.1	*	212.8
Union dues	8.2	*	16.8	*	10.8	*	88.6
Club fees	*	*	24.6	*	*	*	89.9
Entertainment allowance	10.7	*	44.7	*	12.6	12.6	182.1
Shares, etc.	*	*	15.8	*	*	*	55.7
Study leave	*	*	11.4	15.7	30.7	*	99.6
Superannuation	133.0	101.1	189.7	189.6	337.4	31.3	1,822.4

(a) At the time of the survey. Industry was classified according to the Australian Standard Industrial Classification (ASIC) 1969. (b) Excludes defence forces.

TABLE 2. EMPLOYEES WHO USUALLY WORKED 20 HOURS OR MORE A WEEK : NUMBER OF SEPARATE TYPES OF BENEFIT RECEIVED AND DURATION OF EMPLOYMENT WITH CURRENT EMPLOYER, FEBRUARY TO MAY 1979 ('000)

	<i>Number of separate types of benefit</i>						<i>Total</i>	<i>Total employees</i>
	<i>One or more</i>							
	<i>None</i>	<i>One</i>	<i>Two</i>	<i>Three</i>	<i>Four</i>	<i>Five or more</i>		
Under one year	440.5	293.3	79.3	37.1	15.2	11.3	436.4	876.9
Under six months	306.0	182.5	45.3	22.7	8.2	*	265.4	571.4
Six months and under one year	134.5	110.8	34.0	14.4	7.0	*	171.0	305.5
One year and over	843.0	1,307.1	704.5	326.3	132.9	129.4	2,600.4	3,443.3
One and under five years	495.3	638.1	261.0	96.5	46.9	33.5	1,076.0	1,571.2
Five and under ten years	204.2	326.9	196.9	88.8	35.1	34.2	682.0	886.2
Ten years and over	143.5	342.1	246.6	141.0	50.9	61.7	842.4	985.9
Total	1,283.6	1,600.5	783.9	363.5	148.1	140.7	3,036.7	4,320.3

**TABLE 3. EMPLOYEES WHO USUALLY WORKED 20 HOURS OR MORE A WEEK :
TYPE OF BENEFIT RECEIVED AND USUAL WEEKLY EARNINGS (a), FEBRUARY TO MAY 1979
(⁰⁰⁰)**

	Usual weekly earnings (b) (\$)								Total (c)
	Under 120	120 and under 140	140 and under 160	160 and under 180	180 and under 200	200 and under 250	250 and under 300	300 and over	
Total employees	562.5	314.3	544.2	658.4	465.5	871.4	400.5	408.1	4,320.3
No benefits	242.6	119.1	216.7	225.4	138.2	209.7	54.7	43.5	1,283.6
One or more benefits	320.0	195.2	327.5	432.9	327.3	661.7	345.9	364.6	3,036.7
Holiday costs	16.7	10.2	17.9	32.6	33.6	61.8	45.6	49.7	272.7
Low-interest finance	10.6	7.8	17.6	36.5	30.6	68.7	38.8	39.2	252.8
Goods and services	233.2	141.4	203.3	247.8	166.4	287.9	142.2	137.5	1,584.0
Housing	34.7	16.2	22.7	22.5	10.5	43.5	32.8	45.8	232.1
Electricity, etc.	21.0	12.6	12.7	8.9	*	19.7	11.0	21.7	116.8
Telephone	24.0	8.7	17.7	23.2	15.0	75.4	58.1	108.7	341.2
Transport	23.9	9.1	16.0	28.1	21.8	77.0	63.0	81.4	331.0
Medical	21.3	13.2	23.1	27.7	23.4	44.5	22.9	32.5	212.8
Union dues	*	*	*	*	7.1	16.7	13.1	24.4	88.6
Club fees	*	*	*	*	*	15.8	18.8	35.4	89.9
Entertainment allowance	*	*	*	8.6	8.9	38.7	39.8	71.2	182.1
Shares, etc.	*	*	*	*	*	13.0	10.6	15.8	55.7
Study leave	*	*	7.1	11.2	7.6	24.1	21.5	16.0	99.6
Superannuation, etc.	85.2	63.4	142.6	251.9	205.8	465.4	263.3	298.6	1,822.4

(a) Usual earnings at the time of the survey. (b) Earnings for employees not paid weekly have been converted to equivalent weekly amounts. (c) Includes employees who did not provide details of their earnings.

**TABLE 4. EMPLOYEES WHO USUALLY WORKED 20 HOURS OR MORE A WEEK :
NUMBER OF SEPARATE TYPES OF BENEFIT RECEIVED AND AGE, FEBRUARY TO MAY 1979
(⁰⁰⁰)**

Number of separate types of benefit	Age group (years)							Total
	15-19	20-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-59	60 and over	
MALES								
None	113.7	110.3	169.1	121.9	108.3	55.0	31.1	709.6
One or more	182.5	295.5	638.1	445.2	385.0	154.0	81.3	2,181.6
One	122.6	151.5	287.4	176.7	172.7	67.2	44.9	1,023.0
Two	36.1	87.6	166.6	121.0	112.9	49.4	19.7	593.4
Three	16.2	38.1	88.1	71.0	58.7	21.2	7.9	301.2
Four	*	13.1	52.8	30.7	16.1	7.5	*	129.9
Five or more	*	*	43.2	45.8	24.6	8.7	*	134.1
Total	296.2	405.9	807.2	567.1	493.3	209.0	112.4	2,891.2
FEMALES								
None	78.6	119.7	133.5	107.6	94.8	27.4	12.5	574.0
One or more	144.5	208.5	207.0	135.6	113.6	37.5	8.4	855.1
One	104.9	132.7	138.8	96.1	78.1	21.0	*	577.5
Two	24.5	52.4	45.8	29.3	27.8	9.6	*	190.4
Three	12.5	19.6	11.5	*	*	*	*	62.3
Four or more	*	*	10.2	*	*	*	*	24.8
Total	223.1	328.2	340.5	243.2	208.4	64.8	20.8	1,429.0
PERSONS								
None	192.3	230.0	302.7	229.5	203.1	82.4	43.5	1,283.6
One or more	327.0	504.1	845.0	580.8	498.6	191.5	89.7	3,036.7
One	227.6	284.1	426.2	272.8	250.8	88.2	50.9	1,600.5
Two	60.6	140.1	212.3	150.4	140.7	59.0	20.7	783.9
Three	28.8	57.7	99.6	77.9	64.1	27.2	8.1	363.5
Four	*	15.0	61.2	32.2	17.4	7.9	*	148.1
Five or more	*	*	45.7	47.6	25.6	9.0	*	140.7
Total	519.3	734.1	1,147.7	810.3	701.7	273.9	133.2	4,320.3