

## Time poor? Email release alerts to the rescue

Too much to remember? Too little time to check all the latest information releases? If the answer is 'yes', then you will be happy to hear about the new ABS email notification service – and it's free.

The new ABS service will help librarians and researchers deal with information overload and keep up-to-date with topics in their area of interest. It will send an automatic email reminder whenever there is a new ABS release on your registered topics of interest.

You will be able to subscribe to the service from the ABS home page, just by ticking as many boxes as you like. From the 'Related Links' on these pages eLEP, subscribers can download full text publications. AusStats subscribers will have download access to the full range of AusStats data available for every release.

The LEP will send libraries an email alert as soon as the service is available, including a hot link straight to the registration page.

See NetNews on page 2 for more information.



ISSUE 45/AUGUST 2003  
ISSN 1039-5512

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## From the Editor



This issue of the **LEP Newsletter** has developed a web site theme! This was not intentional but there is no doubt that the web site is increasingly a major source of ABS statistics for our clients – libraries included. More than 300 LEP libraries now access most of their ABS information on the web – through the eLEP or AusStats services.

This greater use of the web site is not just occurring in libraries. Gary Dunnet in his article on this page tells us that there were more than **38 million** hits, or page views, on the ABS web site in 2002/03. This was up from 27 million the year before. Large numbers in anyone's view!

To help users of such a vast web site, the ABS is shortly to release a new Search Engine to the site – called Lotus Discovery Server. This was outlined in the last issue of the **LEP Newsletter**. Another aid for users are the new web Help pages – see the story on page 4. We have reproduced one of these Help pages as this issue's 'Shortcut' feature on page 8.

Kim Farley-Larmour  
*LEP National Manager*

## NetNews

In previous **LEP Newsletters** I have mentioned the forthcoming email notification system and with the announcement on page 1 of this Newsletter, I thought that I would take the opportunity to provide you with some more detail about how it is going to operate.

The email notification service enables the user to subscribe to an email list that notifies the user when a particular release has been issued by the ABS. To subscribe, the user follows the link from the home page, where they are asked to fill in their email address and choose the two digit catalogue entries they wish to be notified of when released. Upon submitting, an email will be issued back to the user to confirm their subscription – once the ABS receives this return receipt the subscription will be finalised. The user can 'unsubscribe' and also query what they have subscribed to.

On the day of release, the user will receive an email with URL links backs



*Gary Dunnet*

to the relevant products on the ABS web site. The email will contain links to the products released that day related to the catalogue entries subscribed to. The email will be issued shortly after the 11.30am release of the product to the web site.

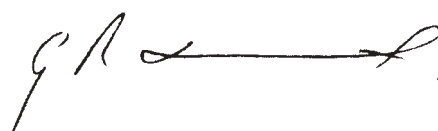
In order to be able to provide this as a free service, the development of the system has taken the very simplest approach. The email notification is a text based service – we did consider offering an HTML version, but realised

that HTML is often blocked by many firewalls. If there is suitable demand, we may offer an HTML version in the future.

We have considered "anti-spam" principles in this development, thus the subscription confirmation email and an "opt in" approach.

This should see the ABS web site continue its recent popularity. The annual web logs for the web site have been processed and for the year ended July 2003 there were 38,712,367 hits (page views) on the site. This was up on the previous years of 27,659,711 (2001/2002) and 20,946,456 (2000/2001). In the next newsletter, I hope to give to a finer breakdown of these figures.

As usual if you have any questions or comments, please feel free to email me @ [gary.dunnet@abs.gov.au](mailto:gary.dunnet@abs.gov.au).



# LEP reaches regional and remote areas in NT

Training in regional and remote areas is all part of the service provided by the LEP Coordinators – especially in the Northern Territory.

LEP Coordinator Lee Magnusson recently visited Batchelor, 90km south of Darwin with a regional population of 1364. LEP training for librarians at the **Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education Library** covered many aspects of CLIB and the ABS web site.

The Batchelor Institute librarians commented that the training was “very timely, and we got a lot out of learning the ins and outs of searching for census data online.”

Librarian Prue King said later: “Students and staff of Batchelor Institute, Batchelor School staff, and community members come to the library looking for statistics on health and other social topics. Because of our LEP training I now feel confident about being able to find that information quickly”.

“The day after the training I was asked how many Uniting Church members there were in our local area. I was able to go directly to that information on CLIB 2001,” Prue added.



Left to right: Prue King, Lynne Shirley, Iris Beale, Tita Allom, Fay Corbett and Veronica Skahill.



More libraries are discovering the benefits of eLEP, including **Box Hill College of TAFE library**, who have recently signed up for the electronic service. The eLEP service gives libraries free full text access to all ABS publications issued since 1998. And training is free. Talk to your LEP Coordinator today about signing up. Pictured above are library staff from the Box Hill Institute of TAFE Whitehorse campus (left to right – George, Nick, Rachel, and Helen).

## CLIB 2001 update

Libraries can now expect Release 3 for CLIB 2001 towards the end of 2003. It will provide more detailed geography, down to Postal Areas, as well as more profiles including Expanded Community Profiles. It will also contain the Working Population Profile, which shows labour force and related data on the characteristics of employed people. This will include, for the first time, information about Internet use by occupation, industry and sex.

# The eLEP Top Ten Downloads

What ABS titles are being downloaded in libraries subscribing to the eLEP web service? Here are the top ten titles for the 12 months ended February 2003. These titles were downloaded more frequently than any others:

1. **Australian Demographic Statistics** (ABS cat.no. 3101.0)
2. **Consumer Price Index, Australia** (ABS cat.no. 6401.0)
3. **Australian Standard Classification of Occupations**, Second Edition (ABS cat.no. 1220.0)
4. **Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia** (ABS cat.no. 3401.0)
5. **Average Retail Prices of Selected Items, Eight Capital Cities** (ABS cat.no. 6403.0)
6. **Australian Economic Indicators** (ABS cat.no. 1350.0)
7. **Average Weekly Earnings, States and Australia** (ABS cat.no. 6302.0)
8. **Migration, Australia** (ABS cat.no. 3412.0)
9. **Labour Force, Australia; Preliminary** (ABS cat.no. 6202.0)
10. **Labour Force, Australia** (ABS cat.no. 6203.0)

## New eLEP subscribers

Chisholm Institute of TAFE (Vic)  
Jabiru Public Library (NT)  
Lameroo Community Library (SA)  
Logan City Library, Hyperdome (Qld)  
Renmark and Paringa Public Library (SA)  
Southern Tablelands Regional Library Service, Goulburn (NSW)  
Swan Hill Regional Library (Vic)

# Help to negotiate the intricate Web

What is AusStats and how do I use it? What do ABS catalogue numbers mean? How do I search the ABS web site?

Would the answers to these and other questions about the ABS web site help you to help your library clients? The ABS web site is now the main way that the ABS provides information to the world. More "help" has just arrived.

Brand new Help pages have been released to the ABS web site. Written by ACT LEP Coordinator Kate Mason and Kate Doust from ABS Dissemination Support, these pages cover just about everything the new user (and the not-so-new user) would want to know about making the best use of the ABS web site. Things like how to find statistics and products using the catalogue numbers – and even **without** using the catalogue numbers. Librarians all over Australia as well as a myriad of other users of the ABS web site have contributed their feedback to the development of these comprehensive new pages.

You can find the new Help pages from the ABS home page by clicking on 'Help' from either the left hand navigation bar or from the bottom navigation bar.

Most are located under 'How do I?'



*Kate Mason and Kate Doust in front of a Help page they developed.*

The **National Library of Australia's** e-resource seminar series in June offered the public comprehensive training in making



the best use of CLIB 2001. Pictured here are Julie Ward of the National Library of Australia and the LEP's National Manager Kim Farley-Larmour, discussing some of the finer points of CLIB 2001.



# eLEP helps Goulburn Library position for retirement boom

Connecting to eLEP is part of the **Goulburn City Library's** strategy to prepare for the impending baby boomer retirement boom.

The General Manager of Goulburn City Council, Don Cooper, officially launched the eLEP service, as part of the library's celebrations for Local Government Week at their Library Expo on Monday 28 of July.

At the launch of the eLEP service in Goulburn last month, Southern Tablelands Regional Librarian Janet Smith said baby boomers in retirement will have high expectations of library services. In anticipation, the library is positioning itself to deliver a wider variety of services to meet the baby boomers' expectations.

Goulburn City Library is part of Southern Tablelands Regional Library, which also includes Yass, Crookwell, Gunning, Braidwood and Mulwaree shires.

"Statistical information is of prime importance to the region, especially since the recent NSW State Government announcement about possible regional council amalgamations," said Janet. "It is also vital for informing future planning in the region. The eLEP service will give the library a head start with statistics."



The eLEP launch at Southern Tablelands Regional Library at Goulburn (from left) Anne Freer, Don Cooper, Janet Smith, Gary Dunnet and Kim Farley-Larmour.

The Director of Library and Information Services at the State Library of New South Wales, Chris Williams, officially launched the Expo.

A number of ABS people attended the launch, including the Director of ABS Electronic Dissemination, Gary Dunnet, the NSW LEP Coordinator Anne Freer and ABS Library Extension Program National Manager Kim Farley-Larmour. Electronic Dissemination is the area of the ABS who do the actual connecting of libraries to the eLEP service.

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## Mining the ABS archives

This is the first of our 'Mining the ABS archives' feature items found while compiling a history of the ABS for its centenary year in 2005. Hope you find them interesting. If readers have interesting material to contribute, please email Beth Wright at [beth.wright@abs.gov.au](mailto:beth.wright@abs.gov.au)

Sir Roland Wilson (Australian Statistician 1936-1940, 1946-1948) told the story of the Librarian in the Bureau's library in the 1930s. The Librarian was a

Danish immigrant and presumably he couldn't read English because "...if you wanted a book out of the library, you had to tell him what size it was, how thick, what colour the binding was, then he'd bring you three or four to pick from."



Sir Roland Wilson (Australian Statistician 1936-1940, 1946-1948)

# Researchers welcome new CURF facility

The University sector welcomes a new facility offered by the ABS that enables researchers to undertake secondary analysis of its survey data, using new expanded Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs). This follows the very successful uptake of basic CD-ROM CURFs by researchers under the ABS/AVCC CURF Agreement.

Through the ABS's Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL), researchers can now access expanded CURF data via a secure web-based service. The RADL offers researchers a level of detail not previously available on CD-ROM.

CURFs contain the most detailed statistical information available from the ABS and are of most use to researchers and analysts who wish to run their own statistical queries on the data.

To ensure the confidentiality of respondents, CURFs have all name and address information removed and

have the amount of record detail controlled to protect the person or organisation from being identified.

For further information about CURFs or access to RADL see the ABS home page under 'Access to CURFs' or contact the ABS CURF Management Unit 02 6252 5853 or 02 6252 5731.



*Donna Goodman of the CURF Management Unit and RADL Administrator Alan Wong demonstrate the RADL.*

## “No job too big or small” says the NIRS

If you are ever stumped by a client's need for statistical information don't forget the ABS NIRS. The NIRS, the National Information Referral Service, is the gateway to the ABS for many clients, says Team Leader Silke Damson.

Whether it's a university student with an assignment, a new small business owner requesting demographic data and industry wide statistics, or a landlord requiring the latest *Consumer Price Index*, the NIRS can help – and its free, says Silke.

“Our team of highly trained professionals are friendly, enthusiastic and prepared to tackle any enquiry that comes their way. We mainly work with callers to assist them to meet their information needs using self help options. Our consultants will work with callers to help them locate information on the ABS web site or through other ABS channels.”

Silke points out that there are a large number of subject matter areas within the ABS. Enquiries can range from 'what's the population of Indooroopilly?' to 'can you tell me how many light globes were imported into Australia last year?'.“

“We always strive to assist clients, even when they have rather unusual questions. Someone once required the following vital statistic 'How tall is John Howard?', another wanted to know how many words does the average pen write and yet another desperately needed to know the average ATM withdrawal by postcode. These clients are then astonished when we politely explain we don't collect that data.”

Silke says that clients often say: 'but you're the ABS – you know **everything!**'

**NIRS 1300 135 070**

# Just out! Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends



The 2003 issue of **Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends** (ABS cat.no. 4613.0) looks at the economic and other values that can be placed on Australia's environment and natural resources.

It differs from other ABS environmental publications in that it covers a selection of issues and is aimed at a general audience.

This issue includes sections on Landcare, genetically modified organisms, waste management, mining and forests. It provides data relevant to the emerging discipline of sustainable development. It is on the Core List and the Flagship List and is delivered in printed format to all LEP member libraries.

The June issue of the **Local Government and ABS newsletter** includes:

- How do I find data for areas smaller than States?
- Statistical terms and what they mean
- What's happening in Local Government Finance

Find the full text on the ABS web site at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

From the home page choose 'News', then 'Newsletters'. Click on the 'Local Government and ABS' twistie.

# New and forthcoming releases

These titles are a selection of what the ABS is releasing this quarter. It is not a complete list of ABS releases. Full lists of new releases are available from the 'Information on Releases' link on the ABS home page.

AusStats and eLEP subscribers may access these titles on the ABS web site as they are released.

**Occasional Paper: Vaccination coverage**, (ABS cat. no. 4816.0.55.001) Released 4 June 2003. Provides an insight into ABS estimates of compliance to national vaccination schedules, dating back to 1989-90. There is also analysis of the trend over time for vaccination coverage of Australian children. Free on the ABS web site.

**Employment in Sport and Recreation, Australia, 2001**, (ABS cat.no. 4148.0) Released 25 June 2003. Core list libraries may request a copy from ABS Subscription Services.

**Agricultural commodities 2001-02** (ABS cat. no. 7121.0) Released 15 July 2003. Australia's sheep numbers for the year ending 30 June 2002 were at their lowest levels since 1948. Core List libraries will receive this title in print format.

**Drug-induced deaths** (ABS cat. no. 3321.0.55.001) Released 15 July 2003. Provides updated information about drug-induced deaths for the period 1991-2001. Free on the ABS web site.

**Cultural Funding by Government, Australia 2001-02**, (ABS cat. no.4183.0) Released 28 July 2003. Core List libraries may request a copy from ABS Subscription Services.

**Measures of a Knowledge-based Economy and Society** (ABS cat. no. 1377.0) To be released 5 September 2003. This is a web-based compendium of statistics on the knowledge-based economy and society. Free on the ABS web site.



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# shortcuts

## What is a theme page?

Theme pages on the ABS web site are subject guides to ABS statistics

Use a Theme page to help you if:

- you know nothing about ABS subjects (the subject headings are listed in the Theme page), **OR**
- you know what statistic you want, but don't know the ABS subject name, title or catalogue number of the publication, **OR**
- you know the subject you need but don't know the title or catalogue number of the publication, **OR**
- you would like to browse ABS subjects in general

Theme pages generally provide:

- information about the subject matter area
- direct links to the major ABS publications
- related publications
- related web sites
- contact details

### Example of how to use a Theme page

You need to research the unemployment rate and long term unemployment in Australia, but you don't know where to start looking for information. Use the 'Labour' Theme page to get started

- From the ABS home page, follow the **Themes** link.
- There is no heading called 'Unemployment', but there is a link called 'Labour'.
- Follow the **Labour** link. You are now at the 'Labour' Theme Page
- Take time to read the page! The Labour subject specialists have created this Theme page to help people find the Labour statistics that they need.
- Explore the links at the top of the page. Click on **More Information**.
- Find and follow **A Guide to ABS Labour Statistics**. From there you can find what you need to know about unemployment figures in Australia.

*This information is taken from Kate Mason's new web Help pages. See story on page 4.*

The LEP Newsletter is published four times a year in February, May, August and November by the ABS Library Extension Program Locked Bag 10 Belconnen ACT 2616