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Hearing Impairment

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**DISABILITY, AGEING AND CARERS
AUSTRALIA, 1993**

HEARING IMPAIRMENT

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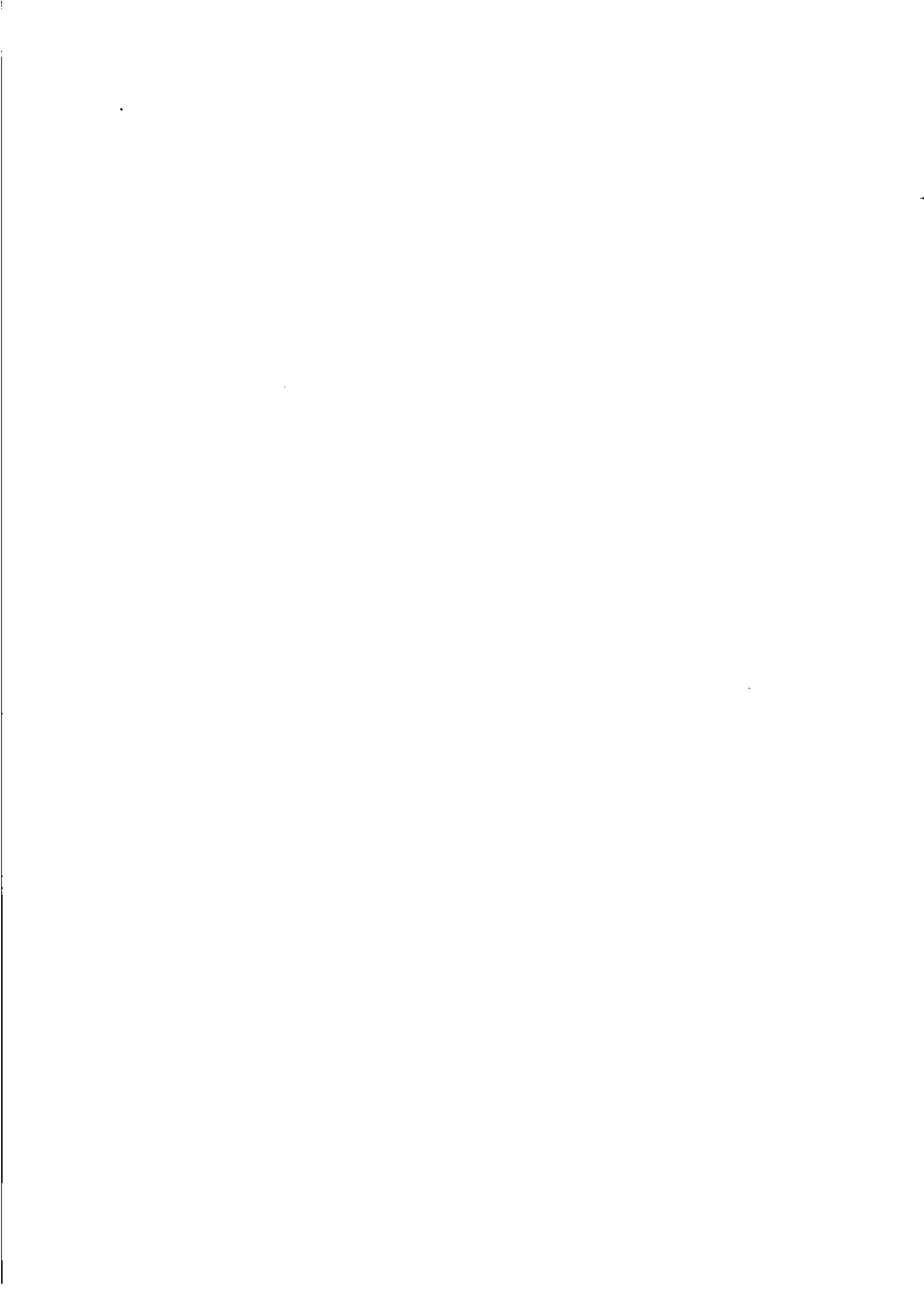
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INQUIRIES

- *for further information about the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, and the availability of unpublished statistics contact Tony Cheshire on Canberra (06) 252 5315.*
 - *for information about other ABS statistics and services please refer to the back page of this publication.*
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HEARING IMPAIRMENT

Introduction

The Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers conducted in 1993 was designed to identify a range of disabilities and impairments which were likely to limit a person's ability to function in society. Any hearing loss was identified as such an impairment. This publication presents data on all persons with hearing impairment.

In some cases, these people may also have other limitations, restrictions or impairments, so that some details presented in this publication may be due to disabilities other than those resulting from hearing impairment, or as a result of the interaction of several disabilities.

**TABLE 1. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:
SEX BY TOTAL/ PARTIAL LOSS, AUSTRALIA 1993
(^{'000})**

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Total loss</i>	<i>Partial loss</i>	<i>Total</i>
Hearing impairment only			
Males	*4.7	227.5	282.2
Females	*6.2	168.0	174.2
<i>Persons</i>	<i>11.0</i>	<i>445.5</i>	<i>456.4</i>
Hearing impairment and other disabilities			
Males	10.0	304.0	314.1
Females	14.9	214.4	229.3
<i>Persons</i>	<i>24.9</i>	<i>518.4</i>	<i>543.3</i>
All persons with hearing impairment			
Males	14.8	581.5	596.3
Females	21.1	382.4	403.5
Persons	35.9	963.9	999.8

In 1993, 18.1 per cent (3,176,700) of the Australian population had one or more disabilities. Of these 999,800 persons (31.5%) reported a hearing impairment.

Hearing impairment was identified as their only impairment by 456,400 persons, of whom 11,000 reported total loss of hearing. A further 543,300 had other disabilities in addition to hearing impairment. Of these, 24,900 had a total hearing loss. Overall, males were more likely to have a hearing impairment, accounting for 60 per cent of all persons with a hearing impairment.

Age Structure

A relationship between age and hearing impairment is apparent. In 1993, there were 14,831,300 persons aged less than 60 years. Of these 1,770,900 persons had a disability, 417,900 persons having hearing impairment, or 3.2 per cent of the total Australian population aged less than 60 years.

There were 2,763,000 persons aged 60 years or more. Of those 1,405,800 persons had a disability, 581,900 persons having a hearing impairment, or 21.1 per cent of the total Australian population aged 60 years or more.

The incidence of hearing impairment increases with age. However, the proportion of people with a disability, who have a hearing impairment only, remains relatively consistent across age groups, showing that the rate of increase with age is similar to that for all disabilities.

TABLE 2. ALL PERSONS (a) : PROPORTION OF ALL PERSONS WITH A DISABILITY AND PROPORTION OF AUSTRALIAN POPULATION WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT BY AGE GROUP AUSTRALIA, 1993

<i>Age groups</i>	<i>Total with disability ('000)</i>	<i>% of those with a disability</i>		<i>% of Australian population</i>	
		<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>
0-4	56.4	6.0	12.2	0.3	0.5
5-14	211.2	6.9	14.9	0.6	1.2
15-24	204.7	9.8	16.3	0.7	1.2
25-34	279.7	15.6	22.7	1.5	2.2
35-44	366.2	16.5	23.9	2.3	3.3
45-54	420.8	15.5	29.9	3.2	6.2
55-59	231.8	15.2	29.8	4.6	9.2
60-64	260.9	13.5	33.1	4.9	12.0
65-69	292.0	17.8	38.5	7.6	16.4
70-74	309.8	17.2	40.1	9.7	22.6
75 and over	542.9	13.5	47.7	9.0	31.8
Total	3,176.7	14.4	31.5	2.6	5.7

(a) Excludes 32,800 persons at boarding schools.

Living Arrangements

Of those with a hearing impairment the majority (94.4%) lived in households. There were 56,300 persons with hearing impairment living in establishments (see Glossary). These comprised about a third of all people living in establishments. Of those identified as having a hearing impairment only, almost all lived in households, with less than one per cent living in establishments.

Of all persons with a hearing impairment 20.6 per cent (206,100) lived alone. A slightly lower proportion, 16.1 per cent (73,700), who have a hearing impairment only, lived alone.

Country of Birth

The majority of persons with a hearing impairment were born in Australia, 739,100 persons (73.9 %). Of persons with a hearing impairment only, 74.4 per cent were born in Australia. Comparison with the proportion of all persons born in Australia, 77.8 per cent, indicates a slightly lower rate of hearing impairment among the Australian-born. About 16.0 per cent (73,200) of persons with a hearing impairment only, and about 16.7 per cent (167,400) of all persons with a hearing impairment, were from a non-English speaking background, compared with 15.1 per cent of the total population.

TABLE 3. PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT: WHETHER ENGLISH MAIN LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME AND COUNTRY OF BIRTH, AUSTRALIA, 1993 ('000)

<i>English speaking background./ Country of birth</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>
English speaking background	383.2	449.2	832.4
Non-English speaking background	73.2	94.2	167.4
Main language, English	48.6	58.9	107.6
Main language, not English	24.6	35.3	59.8
Total	456.4	543.3	999.8
Australia	339.7	399.4	739.1
English speaking country	69.2	64.4	133.7
Non-English speaking country	47.5	79.5	126.9
Total	456.4	543.3	999.8

Disability and Disabling Conditions

Disorders of the ear and mastoid process were most frequently reported as the main disabling condition of those with a hearing impairment, 44.1 per cent (441,200).

Other main disabling conditions were musculoskeletal disorders, 20.2 per cent (201,900); circulatory diseases, 8.0 per cent (79,700); and respiratory diseases 4.7 per cent (47,400). These conditions are most likely associated with disabilities other than the hearing impairment, but which the respondent considered gave the most problems.

Of those with a hearing impairment, almost three-quarters (714,000) reported more than one disabling condition. Not all of these conditions would have led to hearing impairment. Of those with a hearing impairment only, 40.4 per cent (184,400) reported more than one disabling condition.

Those who had other disabilities in addition to hearing loss reported physical disabilities most frequently (see Table 4).

**TABLE 4. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:
TOTAL AND PARTIAL LOSS OF HEARING BY DISABILITY TYPE
AUSTRALIA, 1993
(^{'000})**

<i>Type of disability(a)</i>	<i>Total loss</i>	<i>Partial loss</i>	<i>Total</i>
Sight disability	*3.2	86.1	89.3
Hearing disability	35.9	963.9	999.8
Speech disability	10.3	40.4	50.8
Physical disability	13.0	377.4	390.4
Intellectual disability	*5.0	63.2	68.2
Psychiatric disability	*3.1	72.4	75.5
Acquired brain damage	*3.5	57.3	60.8
Other disability(b)	13.8	341.5	355.3
Total	35.9	963.9	999.8

(a) Disability types are based on identified impairments, limitations and restrictions. (b) Any other long term condition resulting in a restriction..

Underlying Cause

For persons with a hearing impairment only, the most commonly reported cause of their main condition was *working conditions, work, overwork* (121,300). *Disease, illness or an hereditary condition* (90,900) was identified as the second most common cause although individual diseases accounted for small numbers. Diseases most frequently reported were measles (4,500), and mumps (2,500). A smaller number reported rubella (1,800) as the underlying cause of their condition.

For those people with hearing impairment and other disabilities the most commonly reported cause of their main condition was *disease, illness or hereditary conditions* (101,300). Other frequently reported causes were *accident* (72,600) and *just came on* (72,500). There were 71,500 who reported they did not know the cause of their condition.

There are differences between males and females in the underlying cause of the condition. Of those with a hearing impairment and other disabilities, 15.5 per cent of males (48,700) and 10.4 per cent of females (23,900) reported that an accident was the cause of their main condition. Work or working conditions was reported as the underlying cause of their condition by 13.9 per cent of males (43,800), but only 3.1 per cent (7,100) of females.

In contrast, 24.2 per cent of all females with a hearing impairment and other disabilities reported a disease, illness or hereditary condition as the underlying cause of their main disabling condition, compared with 14.9 per cent of males. For this group the main disabling condition may not necessarily relate to hearing impairment. Taken together, *congenital conditions, disease, illness or hereditary conditions* and *old age* were reported as the underlying causes by 39.3 per cent of females (90,100) compared with 22.5 per cent of males (70,600).

This suggests that males are more likely to develop hearing impairment through the kinds of activities they undertake. These findings are more sharply focused, however, for those with hearing impairment only, where the main disabling condition relates directly to hearing impairment. Of males with hearing impairment only, 40.4 per cent (114,000) reported working conditions as the main underlying cause of their condition, and working conditions, accidents and war combined accounted for the hearing impairment of 50.7 per cent (143,100). A similar proportion of females reported accidents, 4.8 per cent compared with 4.6 per cent of males, but the proportion reporting working conditions and war was much lower, 4.5 per cent.

**TABLE 5. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:
SEX BY GENERAL CAUSE OF MAIN CONDITION, AUSTRALIA, 1993
('000)**

<i>General cause of main condition</i>	<i>Males</i>		<i>Females</i>	
	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>
Accident	13.0	48.7	8.4	23.9
Work, working conditions	114.0	43.8	*7.3	7.1
Stress	*5.1	*7.9	*3.4	9.4
Disease, illness, hereditary	35.0	45.8	55.9	55.5
War	16.1	21.0	**0.5	**
Old age	27.3	24.8	21.8	34.6
Present at birth	12.9	11.7	12.5	13.6
Just came on	22.2	40.9	23.4	31.6
Don't know	21.5	43.1	27.1	28.4
Other	15.1	26.3	13.9	25.2
Total	282.2	314.1	174.2	229.3

A further 26.6 per cent of males with hearing impairment only, reported disease, illness, old age or present at birth as the underlying cause of their condition. A smaller proportion, 7.6 per cent, compared with 10.8 per cent of all males with hearing impairment, did not know the underlying cause.

Of females with hearing impairment only, 51.8 per cent (90,200) reported disease, illness, old age or present at birth as the cause of their impairment. Disease/illness was the underlying cause for 32.1 per cent (55,900) compared with 12.4 per cent of males with hearing impairment only (35,000).

Although the proportion of males in this group reporting old age as the underlying cause of their condition was lower than for females (9.7% compared with 12.5%) the actual numbers of males whose hearing was impaired by ageing was higher (27,300 males compared with 21,800 females).

Severity and Area of Handicap

Of all persons with a hearing impairment, 692,800 persons (69.3%) were classified as having a handicap. As 54.3 per cent of people with a hearing impairment also have other disabilities the area of handicap reported may not be due to the hearing impairment. The severity of handicap was classified as profound, severe, moderate or mild, with the largest number of persons with hearing impairment identified as having a mild handicap.

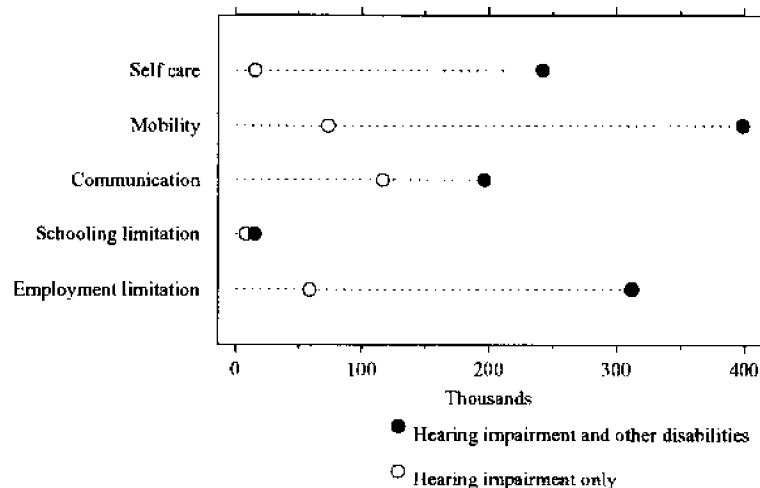
**TABLE 6. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:
SEVERITY OF HANDICAP, AUSTRALIA, 1993
(^{'000})**

<i>Severity of handicap</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>
Handicap			
Profound	*4.3	177.8	122.1
Severe	*5.5	58.0	63.4
Moderate	14.2	99.5	113.7
Mild	143.7	175.2	318.9
Not determined(a)	30.5	44.1	74.6
<i>Total with handicap</i>	<i>198.2</i>	<i>494.6</i>	<i>692.8</i>
Disability without handicap	258.2	48.8	306.9
Total	456.4	543.3	999.8

(a) Comprises all children aged less than 5 years with a disability, and persons with schooling limitation and employment limitations.

For those with a hearing impairment only, the most frequently reported area of handicap was communication, where 116,300 persons (25.5%) reported a limitation, followed by mobility handicap, 73,200 persons (16.0%), and employment limitation reported by 58,600 persons (12.8%).

**GRAPH 1: ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:
AREA OF HANDICAP BY HEARING IMPAIRMENT ONLY AND
HEARING IMPAIRMENT AND OTHER DISABILITIES, AUSTRALIA 1993**



For persons with disabilities in addition to hearing impairment, the ordering of handicap was different. The most frequently reported handicap was in mobility, 397,900 persons (73.2%), followed by 311,300 persons (57.3%) with an employment limitation and 241,800 persons (44.5%) with a self care handicap.

The area and severity of handicap for persons with a hearing impairment is not necessarily due to the hearing impairment but can be due to other causes or the interaction of several disabilities.

Communication

Communication handicap can be classified at the four levels of handicap (see Table 7). Although 116,300 persons with hearing impairment only, identified a communication handicap, for the vast majority the handicap was mild. Of those with a mild handicap (108,400) less than four per cent reported a total hearing loss, the majority reporting a partial loss.

Similarly, of persons with a hearing impairment and other disabilities, the majority with a communication handicap had a mild handicap (139,200) and of those 13.6 per cent reported a total loss of hearing. A higher proportion, 22.3 per cent, were classified as having a severe or profound handicap.

**TABLE 7. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:
COMMUNICATION HANDICAP BY SEVERITY OF HANDICAP,
AUSTRALIA, 1993
(^{'000})**

<i>Severity of handicap</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>
Handicap			
Profound	**0.6	36.2	36.8
Severe	**2.1	*7.5	9.6
Moderate	*5.1	13.3	18.5
Mild	108.4	139.2	247.6
Total	116.3	196.1	312.4

In almost every instance, those persons with a hearing impairment only, had no difficulty in understanding nor in making themselves understood either by people they did or did not know.

For all persons with hearing impairment, less than five per cent had any difficulty in being understood by someone they did or did not know. The proportion was slightly higher when trying to understand others. Even so, 97.1 per cent (971,100) reported that they had no difficulty understanding

someone they knew, and 94.1 per cent (940,400) had no difficulty in understanding someone they did not know.

Sign Language

The proportion of persons with a hearing impairment using sign language was very small. Of those with a hearing impairment only, less than one per cent (4,200) reported the use of sign language. Of persons with a hearing impairment and other disabilities, the proportion was 2.1 per cent (11,800).

Persons using sign language predominantly reported the age of onset of their condition as at birth or in early childhood (81.3%). Their condition was also most often due to *disease, illness, or hereditary* or *present at birth* (84.0%), although they represented only 5.5 per cent of all persons who reported *disease, illness or hereditary* or *present at birth* as the cause of their condition. Females were more likely to use sign language than males (2.4% compared with 1.1%). As might be expected, persons with a total hearing loss were much more likely to use sign language than those with a partial hearing loss (27.8% compared with 0.6%).

TABLE 8. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT: NUMBER USING SIGN LANGUAGE: OR LIP-READING, AUSTRALIA, 1993 ('000)

	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>
Uses sign language	*4.2	11.8	16.0
Lip-reads	66.1	69.9	136.0
Total	456.4	543.3	999.8

Lip Reading

All persons in households who were aged over five years and had a hearing impairment (936,600), were asked about their use of lip-reading. Of those with a hearing impairment only, 14.7 per cent (66,100) could lip-read. A similar proportion, 12.9 per cent (69,900), of persons with a hearing impairment and other disabilities could lip-read. Although the numbers of people who were able to lip-read increased with age the proportions of persons in each age group actually declined.

Proportionally more females (18.0%) than males (12.3%) lip-read, although the actual number of males who lip-read (70,800 males) was greater than the number of females who lip-read (65,200) because more men suffer hearing impairment than women. For both males and females, the majority of persons who lip-read or used sign language had had a hearing impairment since birth or from a very young age.

Aids

When persons with a hearing impairment used aids, these were most likely to be aids for communication. An aid for communication was used by 288,400 persons with a hearing impairment, the majority of whom (88.3%) used a hearing aid. Of those with hearing impairment only, 112,200 persons used an aid for communication and almost all (96.8%) used a hearing aid.

Other aids used by persons with a hearing impairment included telephone attachments/adaptors (37,400) and large print and talking books/cassettes (30,500). Only small numbers reported using: teletext (3,300); writing aids (2,300); and computers (1,800).

TABLE 9. PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT WHO USE A HEARING AID(a): BY SOURCE OF AID AND WHETHER HEARING IMPROVEMENT, AUSTRALIA, 1993 ('000)

<i>Where hearing aid obtained/ whether hearing improved</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>
National Acoustic Laboratory	54.0	83.7	137.8
Other	44.5	37.2	81.7
Not known	*4.1	3.1	*7.2
Total	102.7	124.0	226.7
Hearing significantly improved	91.6	103.4	195.0
Hearing not significantly improved	11.1	20.6	31.6
Total	102.7	124.0	226.7

(a) Only persons in households were asked the additional questions about hearing aids.

Of those with a hearing impairment only, 52.6 per cent obtained the hearing aid from the National Acoustic Laboratory compared with 67.9 per cent of persons with a hearing impairment and other disabilities.

For persons with a hearing impairment only (89.3%), and for those with a hearing impairment and other disabilities (86.0%), use of a hearing aid significantly improved their hearing.

Questions about the aids which they needed but did not have, were only asked of people in households. There were 454,200 persons with hearing impairment only in households, of whom 7.4 per cent (33,700) identified needing an aid they did not have. Of those, 94.5 per cent (31,900) had a requirement for a communication aid, the majority (23,200) identifying a need for a hearing aid.

There was a total of 492,300 persons with hearing impairment and other disabilities in households. Of these, 12.4 per cent, (61,200) reported needing an aid they did not have. A communication aid was required by 58.7 per cent (35,900), the majority (28,100) identifying a need for a hearing aid.

Help Needed

The survey was also designed to collect information about the need for and receipt of help with a number of activities, and a range of personal and household tasks. This is similar to the concept of "felt need" identified by Jonathan Bradshaw¹.

TABLE 10. PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT WHO NEED HELP: ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH HELP WAS NEEDED BY SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1993 ('000)

<i>Activities</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>		<i>Hearing impairment and other disability</i>	
	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>
Self-care	**0.5	*2.1	35.7	37.2
Mobility	**1.7	*4.8	52.5	96.2
Verbal communication	*4.5	*3.4	22.0	34.8
Health care	*4.5	13.9	55.9	63.5
Home help	*5.2	*6.1	65.4	87.2
Home maintenance	10.9	28.8	89.3	121.3
Meal preparation	**1.6	**0.6	22.0	23.1
Personal affairs	*4.4	*4.0	47.0	68.8
Transport	*6.3	29.4	51.8	101.1
Total needing any help(a)	25.9	54.6	158.9	185.9

(a) Needs help with at least one activity.

Of all persons with a hearing impairment only, 17.6 per cent (80,500) identified a need for help with one or more activities. Of those with a hearing impairment and other disabilities 63.5 per cent (344,800) said they needed help with one or more activities.

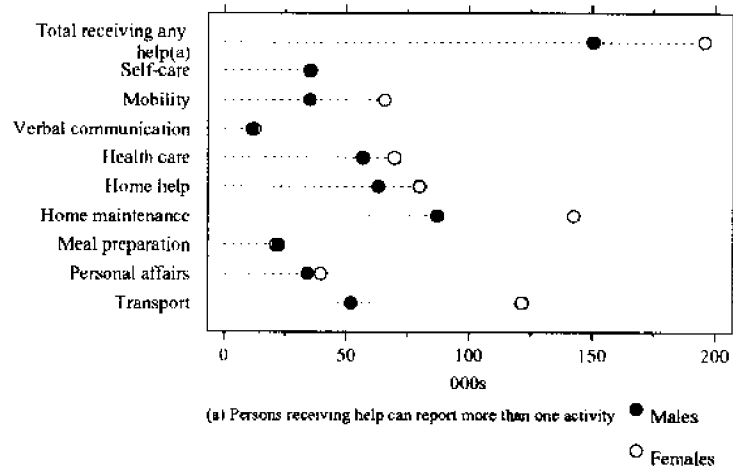
The most frequently reported activities for which help was required were home maintenance and transport for both those with a hearing impairment only and those with hearing impairment and other disabilities. The greater number of females identifying a need for help with these types of activities may be an indication of the adherence to traditional roles and the relationship disability, including hearing impairment, has with ageing.

¹Bradshaw J., 'The concept of social need', *New Society*, 30 March 1972, pp640-643.

Help Received

Of persons with a hearing impairment only, 71,600 persons (15.7%) reported receiving help with at least one activity, while 345,900 of all persons with a hearing impairment (34.6%) reported receiving help with at least one activity.

GRAPH 2. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT:
ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH HELP RECEIVED BY SEX
AUSTRALIA, 1993



The most frequently reported activity in which help was received by persons with a hearing impairment was for home maintenance, 229,600 persons (66.4%). Other activities included transport 50.2 per cent (173,500); home help 41.3 per cent (142,700); and health care 36.5 per cent (126,100).

TABLE 11. PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT WHO RECEIVED
HELP: ACTIVITIES FOR WHICH HELP WAS RECEIVED BY SEX,
AUSTRALIA, 1993
(^{'000})

Activities	Hearing impairment only		Hearing impairment and other disabilities	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Self-care	**0.5	*1.5	34.4	34.0
Mobility	**1.5	*4.7	33.5	59.8
Verbal communication	*2.5	*1.3	8.8	11.1
Health care	*4.1	10.7	52.6	58.8
Home help	*4.3	*4.8	58.7	74.9
Home maintenance	9.4	27.3	77.6	115.2
Meal preparation	**1.1	**0.6	21.0	20.5
Personal affairs	*4.3	*3.1	29.7	36.3
Transport	*5.3	28.3	46.7	93.2
Total receiving any help(a)	21.6	50.0	128.8	145.5

(a) Needs help with at least one activity.

Of those with a hearing impairment only receiving help, 5.3 per cent reported receiving help with verbal communication, and 7.3 per cent of persons with a hearing impairment and other disabilities received similar help. These proportions indicate that most persons with a hearing impairment manage verbal communication without assistance.

Employment

There were 303,200 persons aged 15 to 64 years with a hearing impairment living in households who were classified as part of the labour force, of whom 264,200 persons were employed. Of these 74.1 per cent were male and 25.9 per cent were female.

Almost 88.6 per cent (173,400) of employed males worked full-time, while 61.3 per cent (42,000) of employed females worked full-time. For both hearing impaired males and females in full-time employment, the majority had a partial loss of hearing, 169,100 and 40,700 respectively.

TABLE 12. ALL PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS IN HOUSEHOLDS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT: LABOUR FORCE STATUS(a) BY SEX BY AGE, AUSTRALIA, 1993 ('000)

<i>Labour force status</i>	<i>15-24</i>	<i>25-34</i>	<i>35-44</i>	<i>45-54</i>	<i>55-64</i>	<i>Total</i>
Males						
Employed	10.4	27.2	45.8	65.1	47.3	195.7
Unemployed	*4.7	*5.0	*4.7	*5.7	10.2	30.5
Not in labour force	*2.3	*3.7	*3.6	17.3	54.2	81.1
Total	17.4	35.9	54.1	88.2	111.7	307.2
Females						
Employed	*6.2	13.8	18.8	20.0	9.5	68.5
Unemployed	*2.5	*2.9	*3.1	**0.1	**	8.5
Not in the labour force	*3.8	10.4	11.5	17.4	33.3	76.4
Total	12.6	27.1	33.4	37.5	42.8	153.4
Persons						
Employed	16.6	41.0	64.6	85.1	56.8	264.2
Unemployed	*7.2	*7.9	*7.8	*5.8	10.2	39.0
Not in the labour force	6.1	14.1	15.1	34.7	87.5	157.5
Total	30.0	63.0	87.5	125.6	154.5	460.6

The unemployment rate for persons with a hearing impairment was 12.9 per cent, compared with a rate for all persons of 12.7 per cent. The rate for males was higher (13.5%) than for females (11.1%). Where hearing impairment was the only disability, the unemployment rate for males was closer to the national average, 12.9 per cent compared with 12.5 per cent for all males, while for females it was much lower.

The labour force participation rate for males was 73.6 per cent, while for females it was 50.2 per cent. The participation rate was lower for the population with hearing impairment than for the total population. Again, it does not appear to be hearing impairment as such that produces this effect, as the participation rate for persons with hearing impairment only was higher than average.

TABLE 13. ALL PERSONS AGED 15 TO 64 YEARS IN HOUSEHOLDS(a):
UNEMPLOYMENT AND PARTICIPATION RATE BY SEX,
AUSTRALIA, 1993.
(Per cent)

	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>	<i>All persons</i>
Unemployment rate				
Males	12.9	14.6	13.5	12.5
Females	7.9	19.8	11.1	12.8
Persons	11.5	15.6	12.9	12.7
Participation rate				
Males	89.2	55.2	73.6	88.7
Females	61.7	33.1	50.2	66.5
Persons	79.5	48.4	65.8	77.7

(a) Excludes all persons still attending school.

Of all persons with a hearing impairment there were 68,400 (6.8%), who reported that they had difficulty in obtaining or keeping a job and 54,100 (5.4%) who were restricted in the type of job they could do by their condition. Fewer persons with a hearing impairment only, 22,100 persons (4.8%), had a difficulty obtaining a job and 10,100 (2.2%) were restricted in the type of work they could do.

For those persons with hearing impairment only, the most common occupation was tradespersons (35,100), followed by professionals (29,900). For all persons with a hearing impairment, the most commonly reported occupation was also tradespersons (52,400), but the second most common category reported was labourers and related workers (47,600).

Income

For persons with a hearing impairment, the most common principal source of income was a government pension or benefit. For 45.8 per cent of those with a hearing impairment only, and 58.5 per cent of all those with a hearing impairment a pension or benefit was the principal source of income.

Almost half of males (49.1%) and almost three-quarters of females (74.1%) with a hearing impairment had a pension or benefit as their principal source of income. This was largely due to the age of the population, as 44.6 per cent of males with a hearing impairment were aged 65 years or over and 63.1 per cent of females with a hearing impairment were aged 60 years or over.

TABLE 14. ALL PERSONS WITH HEARING IMPAIRMENT IN HOUSEHOLDS(a): PRINCIPAL SOURCE OF INCOME BY SEX, AUSTRALIA, 1993 ('000)

<i>Principal source of income</i>	<i>Males</i>	<i>Females</i>	<i>Persons</i>
Hearing impairment only			
Wages/salary	86.0	24.4	110.4
Non-wage income	65.4	25.1	90.5
Government pension/benefit	92.2	98.2	190.4
Superannuation	19.4	**0.5	19.9
Other source	**1.7	*2.3	*4.0
<i>Total</i>	<i>264.7</i>	<i>150.5</i>	<i>415.2</i>
Hearing impairment and other disabilities			
Wages/salary	39.4	8.6	48.0
Non-wage income	32.5	16.4	48.9
Government pension/benefit	173.9	145.2	319.1
Superannuation	21.5	6.7	28.1
Other source	10.2	**1.1	11.4
<i>Total</i>	<i>277.6</i>	<i>178.0</i>	<i>455.6</i>
All persons with hearing impairment			
Wages/salary	125.5	33.0	158.5
Non-wage income	97.9	41.5	139.4
Government pension/benefit	266.1	243.4	509.5
Superannuation	40.9	*7.2	48.0
Other source	11.9	*3.4	15.4
Total	542.3	328.5	870.8

(a) Excludes persons with no income.

Education

There were 33,400 with a hearing impairment who were attending school. Of these 68.3 per cent (22,800) attended general classes, 84.7 per cent (19,300) of whom attended government school

Of those with a hearing impairment only, 16,000 attended school. The majority (76.8%) attended general classes with 82.0 per cent of these attending government schools.

For both those with a hearing impairment only and all persons with a hearing impairment the majority who were at school, but not attending special schools or classes, had a partial hearing loss.

A similar pattern emerged for those persons not at school but who had had a hearing impairment during their school years. Of those, 101,500 (81.0%) had attended general classes.

There were 10,600 persons with hearing impairment who attended special schools or classes, 81.7 per cent of whom attended government special classes. The majority (78.3%) had a partial hearing loss. All of the very small number with total hearing loss attending school attended either a government special school or a special class in a government school.

Of the 456,400 with a hearing impairment only, 223,200 (48.9%) had obtained a post-school qualification. The proportion is lower for persons with hearing impairment and other disabilities, 34.6 per cent (181,100), again a reflection of the older age profile of this group. This also influences the proportions with higher level qualifications. Compared with the 22.9 per cent of all persons with post-school qualifications, 15.3 per cent of persons with hearing impairment only and 10.2 per cent of persons with hearing impairment and other disabilities had a bachelor's degree or higher.

TABLE 15. ALL PERSONS AGED 15 YEARS AND OVER WITH A POST SCHOOL QUALIFICATION IN HOUSEHOLDS (a): HIGHEST POST-SCHOOL QUALIFICATION OBTAINED, AUSTRALIA, 1993 ('000)

<i>Highest post-school qualification</i>	<i>Hearing impairment only</i>	<i>Hearing impairment and other disabilities</i>	<i>All persons with hearing impairment</i>	<i>All persons</i>
Higher School Certificate	*3.7	*4.2	*7.9	83.7
Trade Certificate/Apprenticeship	92.8	90.4	183.2	1,763.7
Technician's Certificate/ Advanced Certificate	18.8	21.2	40.0	430.2
Other Certificate	51.9	40.7	92.5	1,599.0
Associate Diploma	13.7	*7.3	20.9	432.4
Undergraduate Diploma	*6.1	**1.8	*7.9	224.6
Bachelor Degree	24.4	13.5	37.9	1,007.6
Post-graduate Diploma	*4.6	**2.3	*6.9	202.2
Masters Degree/Doctorate	*5.1	*3.3	8.4	150.3
Other Qualification	*2.2	*3.5	*5.8	57.7
Total	223.2	188.1	411.3	5,951.4

(a) Excludes persons attending school, and persons who have never attended school.

Among those with hearing impairment only, the most commonly obtained qualification was a Trade Certificate/Apprenticeship, 41.6 per cent (92,800). Similarly, for persons with hearing impairment and other disabilities, 48.1 per cent of those with a post-school qualification had a Trade Certificate.

Compared with the general population, where the rate is 29.6 per cent, there was a high concentration of persons with trade qualifications among those with hearing impairment.

The high rates of trade qualifications correspond with the finding that the most common occupation among males currently employed was tradesperson. Combined with the high rate of males with hearing impairment who reported work conditions as the underlying cause of their main condition, these results suggest a higher risk of hearing impairment in jobs in the trades area.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

The 1993 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers was conducted throughout Australia during the period 7 February to 3 April 1993, and covered both rural and urban areas in all States and Territories. The sample included approximately 17,800 private households, 1,600 special dwelling units, and 700 establishments. This resulted in 47,000 person records.

Disability

The International Classification of Impairments, Disabilities and Handicaps definition for disability is as follows:

In the context of health experience, a disability is any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner or within the range considered normal for a human being.

For the purposes of this survey:

disability was defined as the presence of one or more of a selected group of limitations, restrictions or impairments which had lasted, or were likely to last, for a period of 6 months or more.

Education

Education information was only collected from persons in households.

Employment

Employment data was collected from persons in households, aged 15 years or more, who were not attending school.

Establishments

Establishments are defined for this survey as hospitals, nursing homes, hostels, retirement villages and other 'homes'.

Handicap

A handicap is identified as a limitation due to a disability, to perform specific tasks associated with daily living. Refer *Disability, Ageing and Carers: User Guide* (Catalogue No. 4431.0).

Help needed/received

A person with a disability is determined to have a need for help with an activity if they require help or supervision to do one or more tasks or if they would find the tasks difficult to do alone. A person is considered to need help whether or not that help is actually received.

Help received with an activity relates only to persons with one or more disability or persons aged 60 years or more who have identified that they need help. The source of help may be individuals, organisations or other bodies, and may be formal or informal help.

Formal help is help provided by:

- organisations or individuals representing such organisations;
- family or friends living outside the house, or neighbours, who receive money on a regular basis for providing care; and
- other persons (excluding family, friends or neighbours as described in informal help) who provide care on a regular basis and who were not associated with any organisation.

Informal help is help provided by family, friends or neighbours and, generally, it is unpaid.

Help received does not include assistance from appliances and aids.

Income

Income data was only collected from persons in households.

Main disabling condition

That condition identified by a person with multiple conditions as the one causing the most problems. Where only one condition is recorded, this is coded as the main disabling condition.

Severity of handicap

Four levels of severity of handicap were determined which were based on the person's ability to perform relevant tasks and on the amount and type of help required. These were:

- profound handicap - personal help or supervision always required;
- severe handicap - personal help or supervision sometimes required ;
- moderate handicap - no personal help or supervision required, but the person has difficulty in performing one or more of the tasks;
- mild handicap - no personal help or supervision required and no difficulty in performing any of the tasks, but the person uses an aid, or has a mild mobility handicap or cannot easily pick up an object from the floor.

Scope and Coverage

The survey was designed to include all persons except non-Australian diplomatic personnel of overseas governments, overseas residents in Australia, members of non-Australian defence forces (and their dependents) stationed in Australia, and inmates of gaols and reformatories. Boarding school pupils. 32,800 persons, were included in the estimate of the total Australian population, however only age and sex details were obtained for each person. They are not, therefore, used in the calculation of proportions in this publication.

Coverage rules were applied which aimed to ensure that each person eligible for inclusion was associated with only one dwelling and thus had only one chance of selection.

Symbols and other usages

The following symbols, where shown, mean:

- * subject to relative standard error between 25-50%.
- ** subject to relative standard error greater than 50%, including blank and zero cells.

Further information about standard errors can be found in *Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings* (Catalogue No. 4430.0).

Where figures have been rounded, discrepancies may occur between the sum of the component items and the total. Published percentages are calculated prior to rounding and therefore, some discrepancy may exist between these percentages and those that could be calculated from the rounded figures.

Further information

More information about the survey, scope and coverage, content, methods and notes concerning the interpretation of results are contained in the publications *Disability, Ageing and Carers: User Guide* (Catalogue No. 4431.0) and *Disability, Ageing and Carers: Data Reference Package* (Catalogue No. 4432.0).

National estimates relating to disability can be found in *Disability, Ageing and Carers: Summary of Findings* (Catalogue No. 4430.0).



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