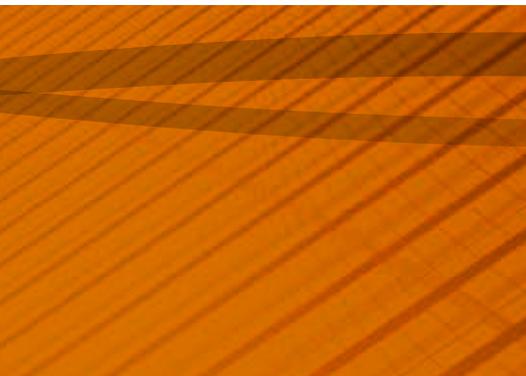


Forward Work Program

2012–13 to 2015–16





Forward Work Program

2012–13 to 2015–16



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Preface



The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia's national statistical agency. By providing trusted statistics and statistical leadership, the ABS supports public debate and helps Australians to make informed decisions in an increasingly complex world. In the context of increasing demand for statistics and continuing budget pressures, the ABS has set an ambitious forward work program for the next four years.

Over the next four years, the ABS will focus on two critical streams of work: the continued delivery of the world-class statistics and statistical leadership that our stakeholders expect from us, and the transformation of our business and our systems to ensure our long-term sustainability.

The ABS will continue to provide high quality statistical information to meet Australia's most important statistical needs. We will do this by delivering objective statistical solutions that are increasingly flexible, accessible, timely and relevant. We will continue to coordinate and invest in the National Statistical Service, and we will continue to unlock Australia's most valuable datasets while reinforcing the importance of confidentiality.

The ABS faces increasing demand for reliable, relevant statistical information to reflect the rapidly changing real-world environment. This environment also affects the resources and opportunities that enable us to deliver now and into the future. It is more and more difficult to reach people at home, recruit interviewers, and maintain ageing infrastructure. As a result, the costs of our current methods are increasing. However, these threats are complemented with significant opportunities. We have access to large, valuable datasets, better technology, and a compelling impetus for change. How we respond to our situation is critical.

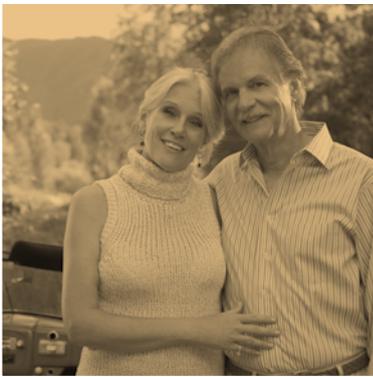
Over the next four years, we will transform the way we collect, collate, manage, use, reuse and disseminate statistical information – establishing the ABS of the future. We will design an enterprise architecture model that defines the future ABS business model and maps out a pathway to get there, we will re-engineer our business processes and applications to support standardisation, integration, better information management and reuse. We will engage our audiences online, reduce our field costs, and create flexible collection forms that ask the most relevant questions.

The next four years are critical to the future of the ABS, and the future of official statistics in Australia. I am confident that our efforts will continue to address the challenges we face and produce the results we set out to achieve – while remaining true to our values and belief in the importance of high quality and trusted official statistics to informed decision making in Australia.

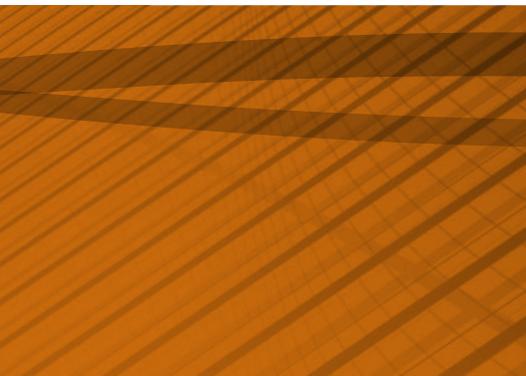
Brian Pink

Australian Statistician

June 2012



General Information



Notes to this publication

Further detail on the ABS work program

Resources

Resource costs presented in this publication reflect estimates for the four years 2012–13 to 2015–16. These costs present a broad indication of the resources currently allocated to each program but should not be taken as an accurate basis for estimating future allocations. Therefore, comparisons across programs and with previous ABS Forward Work Program publications are not possible.

The 2012–13 figures are full-year projections based on the agreed budget for the year. Projections for 2013–14, 2014–15 and 2015–16 are subject to change, as priorities are reviewed, and new budgets are agreed. These costs reflect all expenditure directly attributable to programs, including salaries, internally charged computing costs and administrative costs.

In addition to the forward estimates, summary information for 2011–12 is also provided. This is provided on the direct cost basis as described above, and also in full-cost terms for the statistical programs. The full-cost model reflects the total cost for the delivery of the statistical programs once the costs of the infrastructure and services programs, that are essential to enable delivery of the statistical programs, are allocated to the statistical programs based on estimated utilisation of these services and other overhead costs.

Percentage figures show program costs as proportions of the total annual costs.

Staff usage

Staff usage figures comprise full-time staff, and full-time equivalent figures for part-time staff. Inoperative staff are excluded. Staff usage figures are estimates for 2011–12.

Topics @ a Glance pages

The ABS website contains Topics @ a Glance pages that bring together all published ABS statistical information relating to a specific topic or region. These pages provide links to related ABS products and non-ABS statistical information. They may also provide information about ABS collections underpinning the statistical information, and notifications of ongoing statistical matters of interest to users.

Topics @ a Glance pages can be accessed from the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>. On the home page, select from the list of Topics available in the vertical navigation bar.

Methods and standards

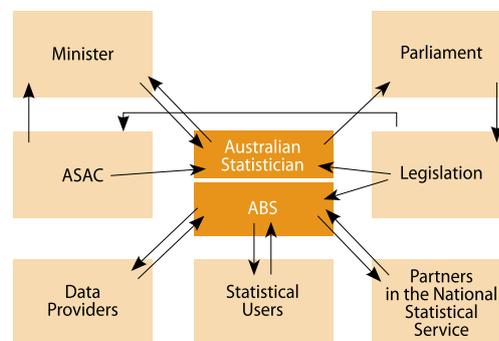
The ABS produces a range of products that describe the concepts, sources and methods used to compile Australia's major economic, environmental and social statistics. These products provide background information that will assist users in analysing and interpreting the statistics, and include standard classifications used in the ABS, for example, industry, occupation, commodity, country, languages, labour force and social classifications.

Methods, classifications and standards are available from the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>. On the home page, select Methods & Classifications on the horizontal navigation bar.

Overview of the ABS

Introduction

The ABS is Australia's official national statistical agency. It was established 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.



The Role of the ABS

The ABS provides statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters for government, business and the community. It also has a legislated role to coordinate the statistical operations of official bodies and liaise with international organisations.

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.

Census and Statistics Act 1905

- ▶ Provides the legislative authority to undertake the Census of Population and Housing and other statistical collections
- ▶ Provides the Australian Statistician with the power to direct a person to supply information
- ▶ Requires the ABS to publish the results of its collections
- ▶ Imposes strict secrecy provisions on officers of the ABS.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975

- ▶ Establishes and ensures the independence of both the ABS and the Australian Statistician
- ▶ Describes the functions of the ABS
- ▶ Requires ABS to advise Parliament of proposals for new collections
- ▶ Establishes the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)
- ▶ Requires ABS and ASAC to report to Parliament each year.

ABS Functions

- ▶ To constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian Government and by arrangements with the Governments of the States and Territories provide statistical services for those Governments
- ▶ To collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information on a wide range of economic and social matters
- ▶ To formulate, and ensure compliance with, statistical standards
- ▶ To ensure coordination of the statistical operations of official bodies
- ▶ To provide advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics
- ▶ To liaise with statistical agencies of other countries and international organisations.

Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)

Advises the Minister and the Australian Statistician on:

- ▶ the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia
- ▶ annual and longer-term priorities and programs of work that should be undertaken by the ABS
- ▶ any other matters relating to those statistical services.

Corporate Governance – Key Fora

- ▶ ABS Management Meetings
- ▶ Executive Leadership Group Meetings
- ▶ Senior Management Group Meetings
- ▶ Protective Security Management Committee
- ▶ Audit Committee
- ▶ Strategic Finance and Investment Committee.

ABS strategic management

Corporate Plan

The ABS Corporate Plan is a key part of the strategic planning process. The plan describes the ABS's working environment and outlines its mission, values and goals. It describes the strategies the ABS will pursue to fulfil its goals over the next four years. It sets out the directions we want the ABS to take to meet our future challenges.

The statement of mission, vision, values and goals in the corporate plan provides the higher level framework within which the rolling ABS forward work program has been developed, and future work programs will be developed. It provides the broad context for ensuring we use our resources effectively and efficiently.

The key components of the ABS Corporate Plan are outlined below. The objectives of each of the ABS programs set out on the following pages reflect how these components are operationalised throughout the ABS.

Vision

A trusted and progressive world-class statistical leader.

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.

Values

The ABS and its staff uphold the APS Values and Code of Conduct. ABS values, which are congruent with the APS values, are material to our role as an independent provider of statistical information for Australia. Our values are:

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

The ABS values encompass what we believe, and shape how we behave. The ABS values its staff and has obligations to them; staff in turn have obligations to the ABS.

Goals

To deliver on the ABS mission and realise our vision, the ABS has the following key goals:

- ▶ informed and better use of Australia's statistical assets
- ▶ continued trust and support of providers
- ▶ long-term organisational sustainability
- ▶ respected leader in the national and international statistical communities.

How the ABS work program is determined

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

How the ABS balances its work program

The ABS does not have the resources to undertake all of the activities that fall within its mandate and which users would ideally require.

In balancing the ABS's program of collection and other activities, the Australian Statistician seeks to ensure that the ABS's resources are used to the maximum benefit of governments and the broader community. In assessing this, the ABS takes account of the value of the information being sought, the extent to which the ABS undertaking the activity is consistent with its legislated mandate and with community expectations, and the costs that the activity would impose upon the ABS and the broader community.

In assessing the value of the information, the ABS takes account of:

- ▶ the importance of the issue from a public policy and/or community interest perspective
- ▶ the views of Australian, State and Territory government agencies
- ▶ the depth and breadth of user interest in the wider community
- ▶ the opinions of recognised experts in the field
- ▶ the extent to which the information would impact on decision making (as judged from history or from understanding the decision-making processes), and any international reporting obligations.

In assessing whether any proposed activity undertaken by the ABS would be consistent with its legislative mandate and community expectations, the ABS takes account of:

- ▶ any specific legislative obligations on the ABS to undertake the activity
- ▶ the statistical measurability of the issue, including the ability to provide information that is 'fit for purpose'
- ▶ the extent to which other available sources of information, both other ABS and non-ABS, could be used to inform decision making
- ▶ the extent to which the ABS's independent authority and the ABS power to collect information is required
- ▶ in determining the timing and frequency of the activity, the decision making time-frames and the expected rate of change in the information sought
- ▶ the level of community support to provide the required information.

In assessing the cost of the activity, the ABS takes account of:

- ▶ the full cost to the ABS of undertaking the collection activity
- ▶ the capacity and capability of the ABS to undertake the collection activity
- ▶ the workload and other costs imposed on providers
- ▶ the sensitivity of the information and the ABS's requirement to maintain the trust of providers.

How the ABS understands client needs

The ABS determines future priorities by consulting and planning with users of statistics. These consultations are a key input to decisions on the scope, content and frequency of statistical collections.

Consultation takes place through the ABS organised statistics user groups; direct discussion with Australian, State, Territory and local government agencies, academics, industry bodies, non-government and community organisations, social media blogs; and the release of information or discussion papers inviting comment.

Consultations cover both the need for data on new or emerging topics, and the need for changes to existing data collections including discontinuing some series. Contact with consulted groups continues throughout the statistical cycle to keep them informed on progress and as a check that developments towards statistical outputs remain on track to meet survey objectives.

The overall shape of the proposed work program and estimates of resources required to deliver it are considered by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC).

A list of user groups is provided in the appendix.

User-funded activities

The ABS work program can be extended by way of user-funded activities. The ABS undertakes user-funded work where:

- ▶ the work is consistent with the ABS's mission, legislative mandate and values
- ▶ the work itself, or the related funding arrangements, does not 'crowd out', compromise public support for, or otherwise put at risk the core work program
- ▶ there is demonstrable value in the activity, the ABS undertaking the activity would make a difference, and the burden imposed on providers is acceptable
- ▶ the ABS has the capability and capacity to undertake the work
- ▶ the work is fully cost-recovered
- ▶ the ABS has full control over all aspects of the work, including ownership of statistics created from it.

How the ABS operates

Introduction

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 service areas, 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 has a central office in Canberra and regional offices located in the eight State and Territory capitals. Regional offices are responsible for the delivery of statistical services to their State or Territory. Additionally all regional offices, apart from the ACT office, have some responsibilities for national operations for particular statistical activities.

The statistical collection process

The ABS conducts a large number of business and household collections. These collections are characterised by common statistical principles and many similar procedures. The statistical process involves a range of statistical operations, from developing specifications for statistics based on user information needs through to the delivery of data and support to clients.

The diagram below presents a typical survey cycle. It distinguishes between a core set of tasks and activities which form the three broad stages of the statistical collection process, and two overarching functions which ensure that ABS products, processes and services are of high quality and contribute to achieving corporate objectives and delivering on the ABS mission.

Functional areas undertaking statistical operations

Once statistical priorities have been set, through consultation and planning with statistics users, the ABS sets up arrangements for data collection, processing and analysis. Data collection activities include form creation for deployment to field interviewers or mail dispatch to businesses, data receipt and follow-up of non-response. Data may be collected directly from providers through surveys or censuses, or indirectly by accessing data collected by other organisations, particularly Australian, State and Territory administrative agencies. The processing stages of the cycle cover data editing and validation; checking individual records for completeness, consistency and accuracy; producing aggregate survey results; checking consistency and validity of aggregated data and preparing data for public release. Confidentiality rules are applied at all stages.

The final stage of the statistical cycle covers data communication and support for decision making. A key objective for the ABS is to maximise the informed use of ABS and non-ABS statistics by increasing the visibility of, and access to, statistics, optimising the mix of dissemination channels, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of information service delivery. To achieve this, a range of products and delivery options have been developed, with a focus on meeting the needs of ABS clients. Several areas support these activities, including market research, website publishing and development, a telephone enquiry service, delivery of customised products and working with various sectors to improve statistical literacy.

The statistical operations of each stage of the cycle are undertaken by a range of specialist areas. Other specialist areas have responsibility for achieving the broader objectives of managing quality and processes, and delivering statistical leadership. The key organisational areas and functions that are involved in the statistical collection and dissemination processes are described below.

National Statistics Centres (NSCs) provide statistical leadership, internally and externally, for each field of statistics. NSC responsibilities include: establishing and maintaining close links with key external clients and ensuring the ABS understands and satisfies their needs for data; providing leadership in the development of statistics within and outside the ABS; maintaining knowledge of current and emerging policy issues and debates, and assessing potential statistical impacts; understanding and awareness of important national and international statistics relating to these issues; and complex analytical work, which often draws on multiple information sources. NSCs also participate in the development of survey proposals and survey outputs, including dissemination strategies.



Business Statistics Centres (BSCs) are responsible for ABS business collections. The BSCs are responsible for the specification of output requirements to meet user needs and for determining appropriate collection methodologies for their specific subject matter. BSCs undertake more complex editing functions, analysis and preparation of survey-specific commentary and articles. They are the main contact point for data users, to help users interpret survey results for regular releases of ABS statistics in their field. Other responsibilities of BSCs include: data quality assurance, including the specification of data quality requirements to the Data Acquisition and Collection Branch (see below); and the consistent application of existing or new statistical frameworks, classifications, standards and concepts.

Household Survey Centres (HSCs) are responsible for ABS household surveys. HSCs manage consultation with relevant statistics users, develop survey objectives, prepare survey proposals and develop survey content. To support the data collection phase, HSCs develop and maintain survey-specific classifications and coding systems. In association with Methodology and Data Management Division, they ensure appropriate sample design and collection methodologies are developed. HSCs are responsible for quality assurance of survey development and processing. They develop dissemination strategies, manage the delivery of the initial publications and other outputs from each collection, and coordinate evaluation of the survey process.

The **Data Acquisition and Collection Branch** (DACB) supports the ABS corporate objectives by providing high quality, timely and cost effective collection and data acquisition services while maintaining the trust and cooperation of providers. To achieve this, the Branch provides leadership in development and delivery of data collection strategies and services across business, household and administrative data collections. DACB plays a pivotal role in the end to end process of survey development and data capture, including questionnaire development and testing; collection design, questionnaire deployment and despatch; quality checks; face-to-face and telephone interviewing; non-response follow-up; provider management and query/complaints resolution; and data receipt and uploading to a range of internal processing systems. For household surveys, DACB is also responsible for sample generation and maintenance, and interviewer management including recruitment, training and development. In addition, DACB has an ongoing research and development program aimed at identifying and progressing initiatives for providing multi-modal, flexible data acquisition solutions.

The **Customer Services Branch** (CSB) supports the 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. The branch provides a range of information solutions for customers, including self-serve statistics and other information on the ABS website, the free National Information and Referral telephone service, user-pays information consultancies and support for the complex needs of researchers through streamlined access to, and use of, microdata. Underpinning Customer Services support for the ABS Mission is our development of an ABS national approach to improving statistical literacy and capability across the Australian population.

Supporting statistical operations

Several programs within the ABS provide the infrastructure necessary for undertaking data collection and producing official statistics. This infrastructure comprises the concepts, classifications, standards, survey methodology and information technology systems, which support the statistical process.

Methodology and Data Management Division (MDMD) has specific responsibilities for supporting the statistical collection process. MDMD provides advice on metadata management, survey design, data collection methodology, analysis of outputs and data quality management through all stages of the survey cycle. The Division ensures ABS surveys are based on sound statistical principles and practices and that the statistics produced best meet survey design objectives, while maintaining data confidentiality. MDMD undertakes research on statistical methods to improve the efficiency and accuracy of ABS work, and provides leadership and support in the development, review and application of statistical classifications. The division is responsible for promoting the comparability, integration and quality of ABS statistics, through the use of standard concepts, definitions, classifications and procedures. It is also responsible for overseeing the Statistical Clearing House which reviews the business of surveys conducted by Australian Government agencies.

Corporate Services is responsible for recruitment, development and retention of the workforce needed to deliver the ABS work program; for the provision of leadership in driving cultural change; and for ensuring staff have a healthy, safe and functional working environment. The functions and responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer are also included in the Corporate Services operations.

Technology Services Division (TSD) provides ABS staff with effective, reliable, and secure information technology infrastructure, knowledge and library services. TSD works in partnership with areas of the ABS to deliver Statistical and Business Solutions that support efficient ABS statistical processes and timely release of ABS statistical outputs.

The **Office of the Statistician and External Engagement** (OOTSEE) is responsible for key corporate functions that support the Australian Statistician's administrative, statistical and strategic roles. OOTSEE manages: relationships with key external stakeholders including the Minister, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) and the media; corporate communications including graphic design; corporate governance activities including compliance with legislation under which the ABS operates; ABS's international activities; organisational performance monitoring and risk management; and strategic and work program planning and budget allocation.

Governance and legislation

Corporate governance

ABS corporate governance arrangements ensure transparency in decision making, operation and accountability by promoting strong leadership, sound management and effective planning and review processes.

The Office of the Statistician and External Engagement has a key role in leading and supporting ABS corporate governance. It ensures that the ABS operates within the scope of its authority and legislative basis, and manages strategic planning, audit, review and risk management activities.

Some of the key ABS corporate governance mechanisms are described below:

- ▶ 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 responsible for corporate/ABS policies and strategies, identifying priorities, driving change 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
- ▶ a risk management framework to assist in identifying and managing risks at organisational, operational and project level
- ▶ an audit and review program covering different facets of ABS operations, overseen by the Audit Committee
- ▶ instructions and manuals to ensure staff have access to ABS policies and practices.

Four year planning and budgeting cycle

The four year planning and budgeting cycle clearly sets out the work program and total resources (including finances and staff) required to deliver the approved work program. This ensures a budget and planning process that is more rigorous and forward looking and aligns the work program with available budget. The ABS has an integrated framework for budgeting and planning which cascades from strategic priorities to divisional priorities and activities.

Strategic Finance and Investment Committee

The Strategic Finance and Investment Committee (SFIC) contributes to ABS planning and budgeting processes, by ensuring ABS funding is allocated to align with longer-term strategic directions. SFIC is responsible for working with the Chief Financial Officer in developing and executing an ABS capital plan that is aligned with strategic directions and approved by the ABS Management Meeting. SFIC also ensures the ABS has robust internal mechanisms for planning and managing capital assets and technology applications funding. The meetings are chaired by the ABS Chief Operating Officer and attended by the First Assistant Statisticians, two Regional Directors (on a rotating basis), Chief Financial Officer, and the Assistant Statistician of the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement with other attendees as required for particular items. SFIC meet three times a year, and more frequently if required, at appropriate times in the budget cycle.

Senior management committees

Senior management committees are an important feature of ABS corporate governance. These committees 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 are as follows:

- ▶ **ABS Management Meetings**
Management Meetings are the key forum for determining ABS strategic directions, priorities and resource allocations. These meetings are chaired by the Australian Statistician and attended by the Deputy Australian Statisticians, First Assistant Statisticians, Regional Directors, Chief Financial Officer, Assistant Statistician of the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement, and Assistant Statistician of the Human Resources Branch. Management Meetings are held twice a year to decide on the ABS's strategic priorities, budgeting and planning matters, and to discuss other issues of corporate importance.
- ▶ **Executive Leadership Group Meetings**
Executive Leadership Group (ELG) meetings are held fortnightly and provide strategic oversight of the ABS and determine ABS policy. It focuses on strategic issues that affect the future of the organisation, including giving high-level focus to the National Statistical Service and strategic client engagement. ELG Meetings are chaired by the Australian Statistician and attended by the Deputy Australian Statisticians and the Assistant Statistician of the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement.

► Senior Management Group Meetings

Senior Management Group (SMG) meetings are held weekly to provide tactical management oversight of the ABS's operations and to advise ELG on strategic and policy issues. It ensures the ABS is a well-run organisation with well formulated work programs that are reviewed appropriately and with proper consideration of cross-cutting issues. It will also address other issues, including information resource management, publishing and dissemination, human resources and accountability issues. SMG meetings are chaired by the ABS Chief Operating Officer and attended by First Assistant Statisticians, two Regional Directors (representing all Regional Directors), Chief Financial Officer, Assistant Statistician of the Office of the Statistician and External Engagement, and the Assistant Statistician of the Human Resources Branch with other attendees as required for particular items. ELG and SMG meet jointly to discuss strategic and policy issues and to review Key Performance Indicators that have been defined to measure the main areas of organisational performance.

► Protective Security Management Committee

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. The committee is a key means of ensuring that the ABS meets its legal requirement not to divulge identifiable information and to make sure that there is policy to meet the security and privacy related requirements of legislation including the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, *Privacy Act 1988* and *Crimes Act 1914*.

Audit, review and risk management

Risk Management Framework

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, better practice guides, and the outcomes of the annual Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking exercise.

There continues to be 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 identify key risks to their work programs. Significant risks identified at section level are elevated or integrated into business plans at the Branch and Division levels to provide a more comprehensive and consistent picture of the ABS risk profile.

On an annual basis, the ABS reviews and identifies strategic risks that have the potential to significantly impact on the organisation. These are known as enterprise risks. The key benefit of this annual review is the strengthening of risk identification and analysis through a coordinated examination of organisational threats. For each of the enterprise risks, treatment strategies have been determined, and the Risk Owners (members of the ABS Executive) have been allocated responsibility for monitoring their implementation. This approach provides clear ownership of risk mitigation responsibilities and the 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 upon program objectives.

The Internal Audit Program provides independent review, objective assurance and advisory services to the Australian Statistician and senior management. It allows for regular validation of components of the ABS control framework and it assists with the identification and mitigation of enterprise and operational risks facing the ABS.

The ABS's Internal Review Program complements the ABS Internal Audit Program. Internal reviews primarily focus on statistical programs to address issues including program effectiveness, efficiency and statistical quality.

Audit Committee

The Australian Statistician established the ABS Audit Committee in accordance with section 46 of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*.

The Audit Committee provides assurance to the Australian Statistician that the ABS has in place a comprehensive and effective framework for all its business systems. The Committee also examines the operation and management of ABS systems and the procedures for generating externally published information to ensure the ABS complies with all legislative and other obligations.

The Audit Committee determines and monitors to operations of the Internal Audit Program, independent of ABS line management.

The Audit Committee is chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician and comprises of four internal ABS staff and two external members. Appointment is based on personal attributes, experience and skills, and ability to demonstrate independence on matters before the Committee.

Authority and legislation

The principal legislation determining the functions and responsibilities of the ABS is contained in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* (ABS Act) and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (C&S Act).

The functions of the ABS are defined in section 6 of the ABS Act as follows:

- (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.

The ABS Act also established the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC). The functions of ASAC are to advise the Minister and the Australian 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, and
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.

All State and Territory Governments are represented on ASAC. The other Council members are chosen to represent a broad cross-section of perspectives, covering government, business, academic and community interests.

The C&S Act provides the Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections and, when necessary, to direct a person to provide statistical information. The Act imposes on the ABS obligations to publish and disseminate compilations and analyses of statistical information, and to maintain the confidentiality of information collected under the Act.

The ABS Act requires that the Statistician prepares, for presentation to Parliament, an annual report on the operations of the Bureau. The ABS Act also requires that ASAC prepares, and submits to the Minister for presentation to Parliament, an annual report relating to the matters connected with the operation of the Act.

Under the *Statistics (Arrangements with States) Act 1956*, Commonwealth and State statistical services have been integrated since 1958 (since 1924 for Tasmania). Although not covered by legislation, similar arrangements apply in both territories. There is regular consultation with State and Territory Governments on statistical priorities.

Products and services

Building on 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', the ABS objective is to increase the informed uses and users of ABS information. The ABS seeks to utilise leading edge communication and dissemination technology and aspires to showcase 'best practice' communication of official statistics.

Statistical releases

ABS releases comprise monthly, quarterly, annual, biennial and less frequent as well as irregular publications and products. In each year, there are over 800 statistical releases. The full range of publications and products are available through the ABS website and a small number of publications are available in paper format.

Electronic products and data services

The ABS's principal means of releasing statistical information is through the ABS website. The ABS's electronic services include:

- ▶ the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au), which provides free access to the full range of electronic publications and ABS statistics, as well as news, media releases, directories, technical material and information about the ABS
- ▶ Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs), which are compiled from ABS surveys and released on CD-ROM for analysis by researchers
- ▶ the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL), which provides access to more detailed data than can be made available on CD-ROM for analysis of ABS data by researchers, while ensuring the confidentiality of individual survey respondents
- ▶ international trade services, which provide detailed, customised trade data on both an ad hoc and regular subscription basis
- ▶ database products, which provide large volumes of detailed statistical data such as Census data packs, Census Table Builder and Survey Table Builder
- ▶ a free email notification service providing details of, and access to, ABS daily releases in subject areas nominated by clients
- ▶ a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) news feed allowing subscribers to access ABS statistical headlines from their desktop

User-funded surveys

The ABS conducts user-funded surveys that are consistent with its role as a national statistical agency. User-funding enables the ABS to extend the national statistical service, in line with the functions stipulated in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, to meet important needs of users and to improve the quality and comparability of statistical data used by other organisations. User funded statistical services are therefore an important element in providing a responsive statistical service. Survey results are publicly disseminated, not just made available to the client providing the funding.

National Information and Referral Service

The National Information and Referral Service (NIRS) is the main professional entry point to the ABS for basic telephone, email, and facsimile enquiries from clients. NIRS also provide a referral service to clients, referring inquiries that cannot be met by NIRS or self-help facilities to other parts of the ABS for servicing. Contact details for NIRS are listed on page 17.

Information Consultancy Services

More detailed statistics than those initially released on the website or in our database products are available on request. Requests for additional statistical data or analysis/enhanced data presentation are met through the Information Consultancy Service which is provided on a cost recovery basis.

The Statistical Consultancy Service provides assistance to government departments and statutory authorities in areas such as survey design, questionnaire design, sampling techniques and data analysis.

Statistical Literacy Program

The ABS Statistical Literacy Program provides leadership and coordination for the development and delivery of activities and strategies for improving the statistical literacy outcomes of Australians. The program develops initiatives and uses innovative approaches to build awareness about the range of

statistics available; promote recognition of the importance and relevance of statistics for informed decision making; and develop the statistical skills and knowledge of key target groups within the community.

The program focuses on building statistical literacy amongst five key target groups, including: school students; tertiary students (including university students, and teachers/lecturers); opinion leaders (including journalists); decision makers (including Members of Parliaments and staff from agencies in all levels of government); and the general community (including small business owners and community groups). Specific strategies are also developed for advancing the statistical literacy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the five target groups.

The Statistical Literacy Program develops and implements activities and strategies to assist these groups to access, understand, analyse and communicate statistical information based on the content and context of their statistical literacy needs. The development of these skills is vital for understanding the complex social, economic and environmental dimensions of an issue and transforming statistics into usable information for informed decisions.

Training services

The ABS provides training services on a cost recovery basis on a broad range of topics, including the ABS website, key statistical concepts and processes with programs targeted at developing the statistical skills of people using statistics, or working, managing or conducting surveys. The ABS can also provide customised statistical training programs on request.

Outposted officers

ABS employees are outposted to other government agencies to support strategic engagement between the ABS and those agencies. Outpostings also occur on a project basis to provide advice on statistical issues.

Dissemination and printing policy

Policy and principles

The Australian Government Cost Recovery Guidelines stipulate that a basic set of information products and services, funded by the taxpayer, should be provided to the community free of charge as 'public goods' and other information, products and services beyond the basic information set should be cost recovered. Consistent with this policy, the ABS dissemination principles ensure that:

- ▶ all users, including the general community, have free and easy access to a basic set of official statistics predominantly through the ABS website
- ▶ where it is cost effective to do so, the costs of producing and providing information products and services that are additional to the basic set of official statistics are recovered from the users of these additional products.

Objectives

The objectives of the ABS charging policy are to:

- ▶ reduce the need for the general taxpayer to bear those elements of the cost of the statistical service which have a specific and identifiable value to particular users
- ▶ rationalise use of ABS products and services
- ▶ enable the demand for ABS products and services to be used as an indicator of how ABS resources should be used.

Community service obligation

The ABS fulfils the community service obligation for statistics by:

- ▶ including all published ABS information in the basic set, which is available for access on the ABS website, free of charge
- ▶ providing a self-service for generating statistical tables from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing
- ▶ providing a range of self-service statistical literacy resources via the ABS website, free of charge
- ▶ offering a National Information and Referral Service.

Approaches to cost recovery

Products in the basic set may be provided in alternative formats on request by the user. Pricing is based on the marginal costs incurred in producing them in these formats, for example, the costs to the ABS to print and despatch a hard copy of materials to users, or access to Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs).

For products beyond the basic set, such as customised extraction of data, pricing is based on incremental (or avoidable) costs. The ABS may also price a limited range of products on a commercial basis. This occurs where such products and services compete, or may compete, with similar products provided by others.

Most of the ABS's free, subscription and customised data outputs (except CURFs) are covered by Creative Commons licensing. This licence empowers users to use or re-purpose ABS data without seeking ABS permission, provided that ABS is attributed as the source for that information.

Contacts

For information about the Forward Work Program

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Belconnen ACT 2616

For information about the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)

Lewis Conn
Secretariat, ASAC
Telephone 02 6252 5488
Email: lewis.conn@abs.gov.au
For access to the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>
Mail: Locked Bag 10
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For statistical information

National Information and Referral Service
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Top structure

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Deputy Australian Statisticians



Peter Harper
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Ian Ewing
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& Technology



Trevor Sutton
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Data Integration Division



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Lane Masterton
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& Social Analysis
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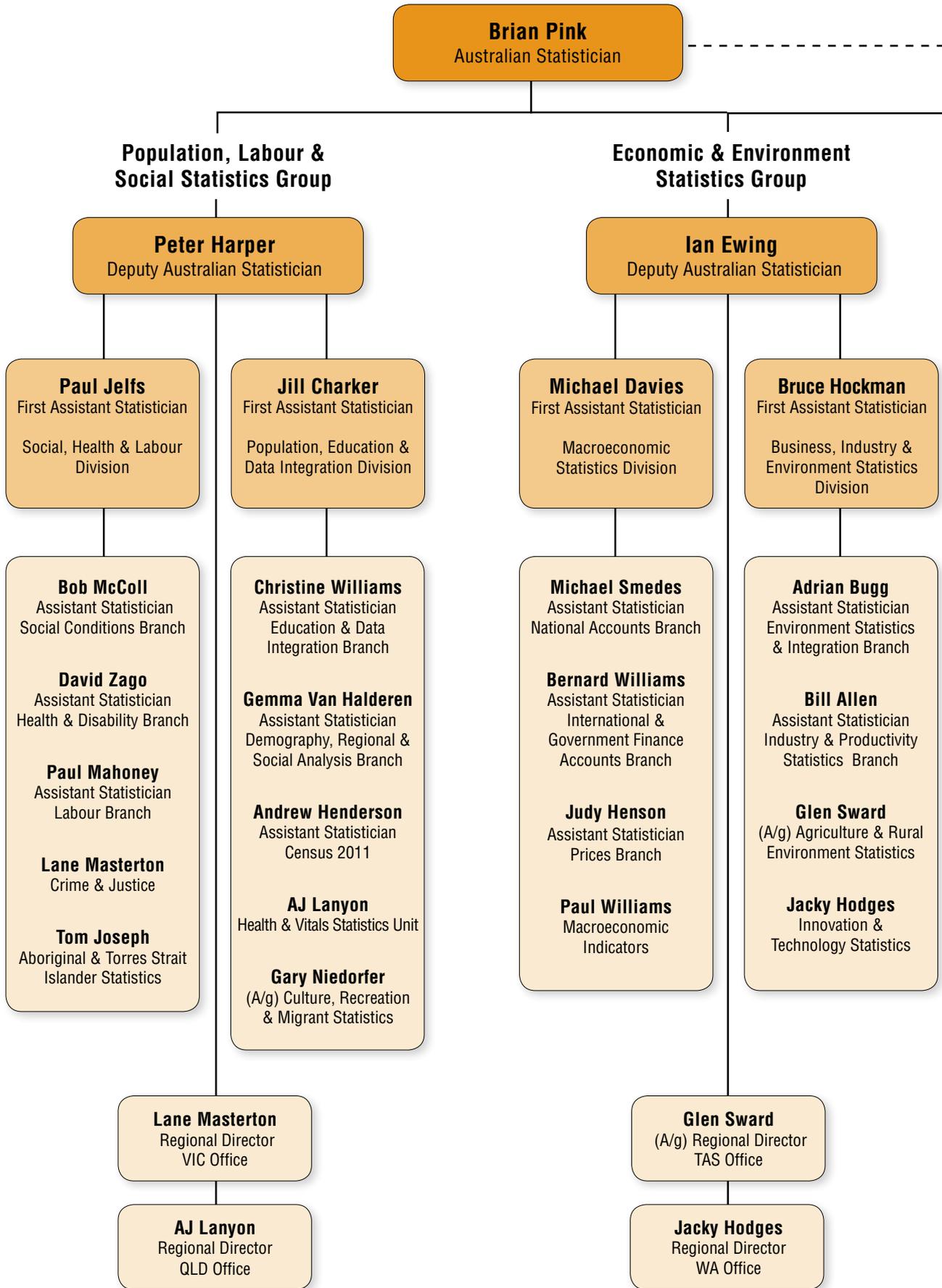


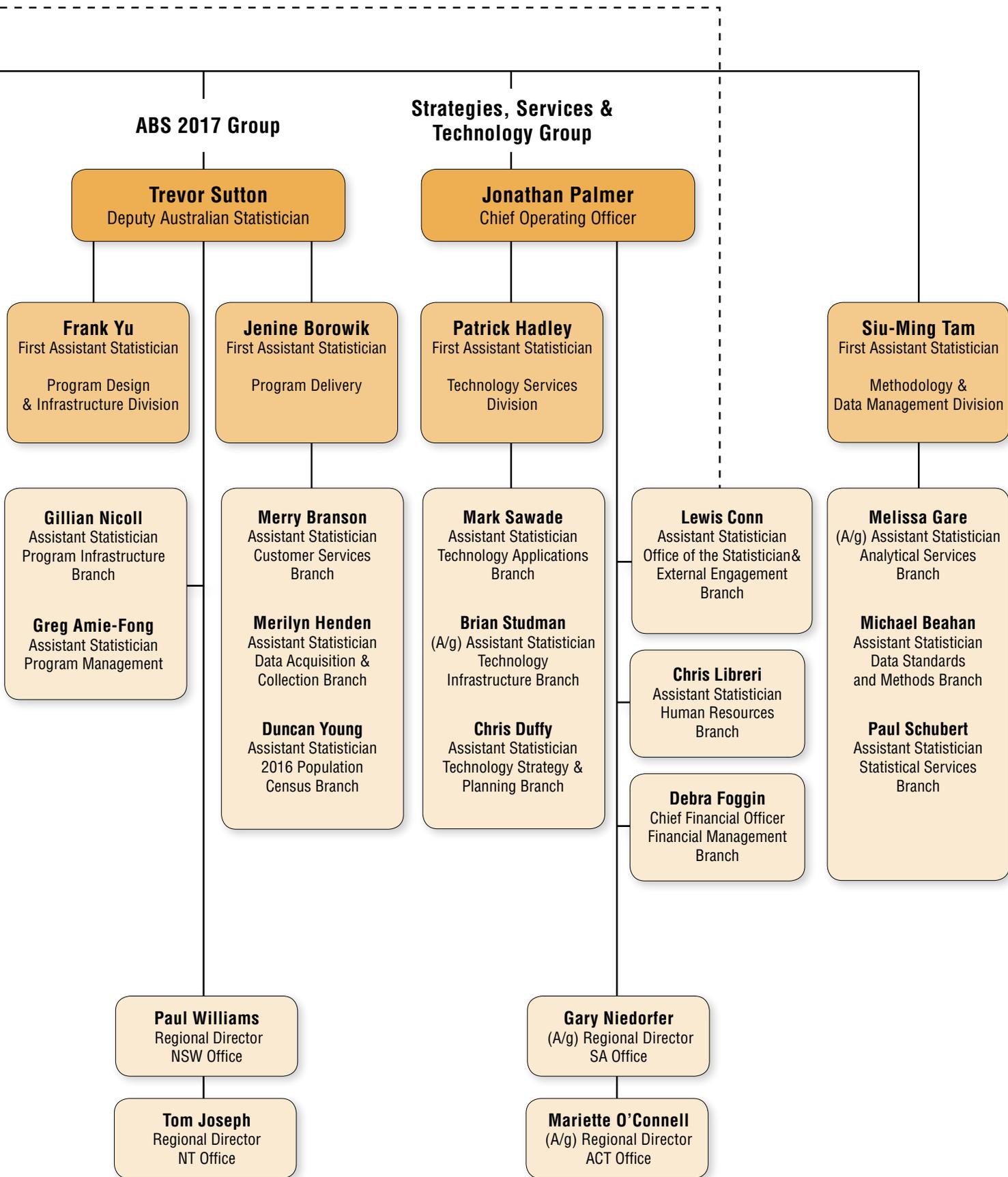
Paul Schubert
Statistical Services Branch

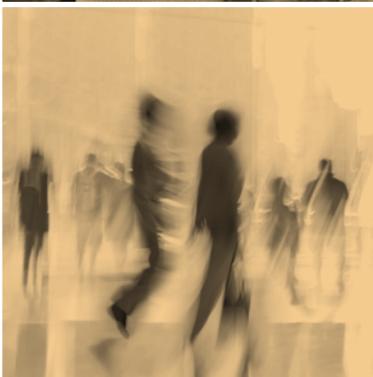


Paul Lowe
Senior Advisor ABS 2017

Organisational Chart

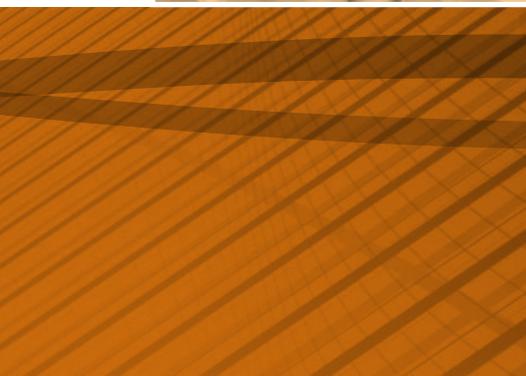






Forward Work Program

2012–13 to 2015–16



ABS Goals, Strategies and Key Projects

The ABS work program is established in response to current and emerging statistical priorities, and in the context of the ABS mission and corporate plan. Statistical drivers and demands are increasing both in volume and complexity. The ABS has a responsibility to respond to these demands within the limitations of the resources allocated to it. To assist to prioritise and shape its forward work program, the ABS has identified four overarching goals. Strategies to summarise how the ABS will achieve each goal underpin the forward work program and the organisation's annual priority setting process.

ABS Goals 2012-13 to 2015-16

1 Informed and better use of Australia's statistical assets

To achieve this goal, the ABS will:

- ▶ Deliver high quality, objective and flexible official statistical solutions.
- ▶ Improve accessibility, timeliness and relevance of Australia's statistical information.
- ▶ Improve the management and informed use of official statistical information.

2 Continued trust and support of providers

To achieve this goal, the ABS will:

- ▶ Engage effectively with providers.
- ▶ Develop solutions that maintain confidentiality but unlock the value of information.

3 Long-term organisational sustainability

To achieve this goal, the ABS will:

- ▶ Better prepare our people for the future.
- ▶ Transform our business systems and processes.
- ▶ Foster our ability to innovate.

4 Respected leader in the national and international statistical communities

To achieve this goal, the ABS will:

- ▶ Enhance the coordination of, and investment in, the National Statistical Service.
- ▶ Build strong statistical capacity and capability domestically and within the Asia-Pacific region.
- ▶ Shape and influence national and international discussions regarding statistical frameworks and policies.

Key projects underpinning these strategies

Statistical Business Process and Information Management Transformation in Australia

The ABS commenced planning its business and information management transformation program in 2010. This program, which will be undertaken in a number of phases, represents the most strategic initiative to update statistical business processes and information management infrastructure within the ABS since the 1970s. In early 2012, the ABS 2017 Group formed to lead the transformation of the way that the ABS collects, collates, manages, uses, reuses and disseminates statistical information.

This transformation will provide our stakeholders with access to statistical information that is easily and rapidly found and used, reliable and comparable. The ABS will achieve this by upgrading infrastructure, refining the ways data is acquired, and modernising the ways it communicates and disseminates statistical information to clients.

To improve the management of the statistical information which the ABS itself currently delivers, the ABS will develop a coherent and integrated environment for the life-cycle management of statistical data, which will be significantly more responsive and adaptable than current approaches and systems allow. This includes the harmonisation of statistical processes, methods, information management approaches and supporting ICT applications, followed by training in the new approaches, and the migration of processes and data from the existing to the new environment.

Australia is not alone in facing demands for better managed statistical information. Many other countries face the same challenges. The harmonisation of statistical production and information management approaches needed within the ABS is also needed by many other national statistical organisations (NSOs). The ABS is collaborating with other NSOs to develop the next generation of statistical infrastructure. Five collaborative projects are currently underway (OCMIMF – Operationalise a common metadata information management framework; data editing; web data capture; disclosure control; and innovation in dissemination).

Ensuring a successful Census in 2016

The Australian Census is now at a critical point. Major changes are necessary to ensure the long-term sustainability of the Census program and to establish a foundation for future development and innovation. The ABS will improve the sustainability of the Census program by re-engineering the 2016 Census, and building new infrastructure for use in the 2016 and future Censuses. The scale of change proposed is much greater than that considered for previous Censuses. Such change is needed to overcome the challenges in recruiting field staff, while maximising advantage from new technologies and ensuring greater efficiency and effectiveness of Census processes.

Census 2016 will move to a multi-modal, eCensus focussed, wave-based enumeration model, similar to that used by Statistics Canada in 2011. This change requires the establishment of a high-quality address register to use as the source of addresses to mail eCensus codes to dwellings, replacing the traditional model of using Census collectors to deliver and collect eCensus codes and Census forms. It will need to be supported by new, more flexible and smarter workload management processes and systems to optimise response rates efficiently. These changes to the Census are needed to improve the sustainability of the program and reduce the future costs of the Census. Changes such as 40 per cent less field staff and significantly reduced level of paper form printing will change the risk profile and mitigation options compared with previous censuses.

Strategic developments planned include: a revised field model; a smarter eCensus; optimised topics; intelligent processing systems; and metadata and standards to support increasingly flexible data for users. These key directions are in line with strategic directions of the ABS and complement work being done in the ABS 2017 program. Where possible, new infrastructure will be developed in a way that will also satisfy other ABS statistical needs. For example, the address register developed for use in the Census will also be used in future household surveys selection, thus maximising the utility of the infrastructure.

Demands for statistical data integration

Data integration is a major priority for the ABS and wider National Statistical System as the demand for, and activities associated with, linking social, economic and environmental datasets increase across Australian Governments.

There is a strong need for consistent governance, methods, policies and protocols around data integration to:

- ▶ maximise benefits from the use of data, in a controlled and secure manner, from portfolios such as health, education, migration and family support;
- ▶ minimise risks associated with poorly managed data linkage activities on datasets of national significance such as the Census of Population and Housing; and
- ▶ maintain the trust of the broader community in the collection and use of an individual's data.

A Cross Portfolio Statistical Data Integration Oversight Board was established in late 2010 to oversee the application of high level principles for the integration of Commonwealth data. The Australian Statistician chairs the Board and membership includes the ABS and Secretaries of the Department of Health and Ageing, the Department of Human Services, and the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs. Commonwealth Portfolio Secretaries also agreed to fund a small Secretariat, to be housed in the ABS, to support the Oversight Board and implement other elements of an agreed set of governance and institutional arrangements including best practice guidelines and a public register and complaints mechanism for data integration projects involving Commonwealth data.

Essential Statistical Assets for Australia

In November 2010, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) endorsed the ABS to "identify in highly consultative way a preliminary list of *Essential Statistical Assets (ESA) for Australia* regardless of the organisations that produce them". The ABS recognises that it is not the only producer of highly important official statistical information for policy formulation and evaluation, and the effective delivery of community services. ESA has been developed over the last two years as part of the ABS's strategy to support the National Statistical Service (NSS).

The purpose of the list is to separate the core set of essential statistical assets from the number of other official statistics generated by governments and use it to prioritise investment in statistical assets. This broader set of statistics is still important and will continue to be produced, managed and invested in when needed. Distinguishing those statistical assets that are "essential" aims to identify where ongoing investment will yield the greatest benefit.

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

- i. The efficient use of government resources by identifying areas of duplication and underutilisation
- ii. Ensuring that the critically important information (statistics/data) are of sufficient quality and
- iii. Identification of critical information gaps, so that these can be addressed.

These objectives align closely with section 6(c) of the Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975. The potential outcomes from undertaking such an initiative have been discussed as part of the Australian Statistician's regular engagement process with a range of heads of government agencies at the Commonwealth, state and territory level, and has been met with a strong degree of support.

The ABS has now developed a preliminary list to provide a springboard for consultation with the community and stakeholders who produce and/or use official statistics to identify those statistics considered essential for the nation. To support this a public consultation paper, along with the preliminary list, was released on the NSS website (www.nss.gov.au) on 29 May 2012, inviting public feedback to complement other consultation mechanisms that will be pursued by the ABS.

Measures of Australia's Progress

Setting out a suite of indicators that aim to measure a country's progress continues to be an important and challenging task for national statistical agencies. *Measures of Australia's Progress* is a flagship statistical project that aims to provide Australians with accessible, quality measures of societal progress. To do this, the ABS has engaged in an extensive consultation process to identify what societal progress means to Australians. The outcomes of this consultation will be reported in 2012–13 to the fourth OECD World Forum on the Progress of Societies to be held in New Delhi, India in October 2012.

Consultation outcomes will contribute to further development of the conceptual foundation for progress, and provide the basis of the next version of the *Measures of Australia's Progress* publication.



National Statistical Service



National Statistical Service Leadership

Program Manager

Lewis Conn
Assistant Statistician
Office of the Statistician
& External Engagement
Branch

Resources

2011-2012	\$m
Direct Costs	2.3
Full Costs	4.9
% of total costs	0.8%
Staff Usage	
13 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012-2013	2.0
2013-2014	1.9
2014-2015	2.0
2015-2016	2.0

Objectives

The National Statistical Service Leadership program provides a focus within the ABS for strategies aimed at strengthening and extending the National Statistical Service (NSS), the community of government agencies, working together to build a rich statistical picture for a better informed Australia. Consistent with the ABS's legislated responsibilities as Australia's central statistical authority, the program identifies opportunities for the ABS to partner with other organisations to improve the quality and value of their statistical resources. Targeted outcomes of this program 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; and increased statistical capability of producers and users of statistics.

The program has a key role in developing policy and strategies to support the NSS, and serves as a catalyst and evaluator of NSS activities, particularly those which cut across ABS program areas or involve cross-jurisdictional developments. Externally, the program is a focus for statistical coordination and provides leadership to policy and research professionals by disseminating resources and policies to support their statistical activities.

Outputs

Outputs of the program are:

- ▶ policy and strategies for ongoing development and advancement of the NSS
- ▶ support to the NSS Board and the following external statistical governance forums to advance NSS priorities and the use of statistical information;
 - the Australian Statistical Advisory Council
 - the State Statistical Forum and
 - the Australian Government Statistical Forum
- ▶ resources for collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of survey and administrative data
- ▶ strategic engagement with stakeholders to advance information sharing across government agencies
- ▶ participation in initiatives to improve statistical sharing and use, e.g. Gov 2.0, data.australia.gov.au, and the Australian National Data Service and
- ▶ support the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Reform Council's reporting process through promotion of Data Quality Online.

Developments

Stakeholder engagement for 2012 will focus on the following key strategic priorities for advancing the NSS:

- (i) the transformation of Information Management infrastructure to establish an environment in which Australian governments and the community can easily find, access, and combine statistical information
- (ii) identifying, in a highly consultative way, the essential statistical assets for Australia to protect and prioritise government investment in official statistics
- (iii) unlocking the potential of key administrative data holdings held by Governments for statistical data integration and research, and enhance the official statistics evidence base for decision-making purposes
- (iv) supporting improvements to measures used in the COAG performance reporting
- (v) enabling statistical information to be integrated with location information and
- (vi) enhancing the level of statistical capability across Government agencies to support improved use of statistical information in policy formulation and evaluation.

The main medium-term developments of the program are to:

- ▶ develop a list of the *Essential Statistical Assets for Australia* considered critical for the Nation – December 2012
- ▶ host the 2013 NatStats Conference; to raise the profile and commitment to developing national statistics; provide opportunity for engagement on key policy issues; and strengthen relationships between information providers, policy makers and opinion leaders – due March 2013
- ▶ strategically position external statistical governance fora to focus on National Statistical Service priority areas – ongoing
- ▶ consult with key external stakeholders on issues related to a national statistical policy – December 2013
- ▶ enhance strategic engagement with key stakeholders to improve statistical capability and the quality and value of information as a strategic resource – ongoing.

Statistical Data Integration

Program Manager

Christine Williams
Assistant Statistician
Education & Data
Integration Branch

References

More information can be found in:
'Data integration involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes: governance and institutional arrangements'
<http://www.nss.gov.au/nss/home.nsf/NSS/00FB7E20E1D56B96CA2577F20016C3DB?opendocument>

Objectives

The Statistical Data Integration Program provides a focal point for strong and consistent governance, methods, policies and protocols around statistical data integration.

Statistical data integration involves integrating data from different sources to provide new datasets for statistical and research purposes. The potential value from bringing together data in a controlled, secure and transparent manner is immense. However, poorly managed data linkage activities could significantly impact on community trust and the National Statistical System (for example, by reducing the response rate to the Census of Population and Housing, other ABS collection activities, and administrative data collection activities undertaken by governments). The focus of the Statistical Data Integration program is therefore on balancing the gains and the risks in a cooperative, productive and transparent manner consistent with all relevant legislation.

In recognition of the strong, but not exclusive, focus to date on combining data from portfolios such as health, education, migration and family support, the program is managed within the ABS Population, Labour and Social Statistics Group.

The principal clients of the Statistical Data Integration Program are data custodians and data users both within the ABS and in other Australian, state, territory and local government organisations, researchers and the community. The key outcome of this program is a safe and effective environment for statistical data integration activities within Australia.

Outputs

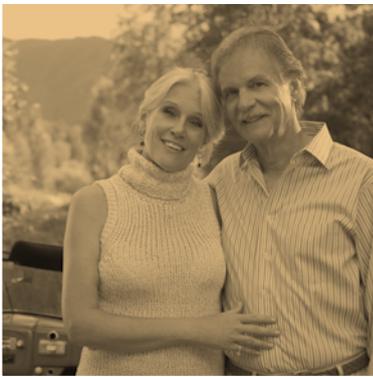
The program has the following outputs:

- ▶ policies and strategies for data integration activities involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes
- ▶ best practice materials and tools for data integration activities involving Commonwealth data for statistical and research purposes
- ▶ communication, which includes seminars and presentations, participation in relevant conferences (particularly those that relate to information sharing across governments, the research sector and the community), and participation in meetings (particularly those across portfolios within governments) and
- ▶ secretariat services to a Data Integration Oversight Board chaired by the Australian Statistician, and with membership comprising Portfolio Secretaries from Health and Ageing, Human Services, and Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs.

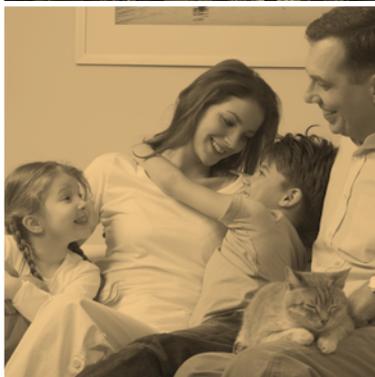
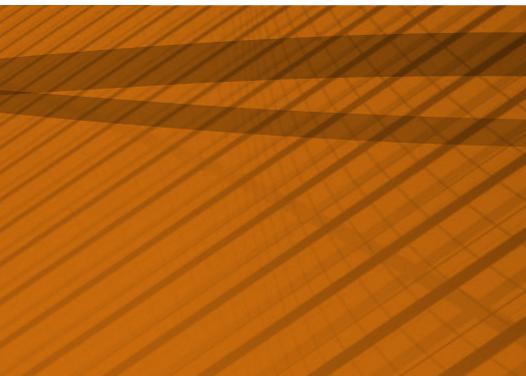
Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ work with agencies to implement a safe and effective environment for data integration involving Commonwealth data, including developing best practice guidelines – timing dependent on consultation with stakeholders
- ▶ create a register of all statistical data integration projects involving Commonwealth data, to ensure transparency – due February 2013
- ▶ engage with the states and territories to encourage a safe and effective environment for data integration for statistical purposes across all jurisdictions – ongoing
- ▶ stay abreast of international best practice for statistical integration activities in order to influence Australian deliberations – ongoing
- ▶ engage with the custodians of key datasets, to identify opportunities for their use in statistical data integration projects – ongoing
- ▶ support confidentialising data and providing safe access to microdata to support research and statistical outputs – ongoing, and
- ▶ improve the understanding of issues around different levels of data linking accuracy – ongoing.



Statistical Programs



National Accounts

Program Manager

Michael Smedes
Assistant Statistician
National Accounts Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	12.4
Full Costs	22.7

% of total costs 3.6%

Staff Usage
119 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	11.4
2013–2014	10.5
2014–2015	10.6
2015–2016	10.6

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy, then
National Accounts

Under National Statistics
select National Accounts

Other references

Australian National Accounts: Concepts, Sources and Methods (ABS cat. no. 5216.0)

Objectives

The National Accounts Program provides quarterly and annual data about the level of economic activity, the pattern of economic growth and the structure of the Australian and State economies within a coherent system of concepts and classifications.

The main clients of the program are Australian government agencies (in particular the Treasury), the Reserve Bank of Australia, State and Territory government agencies (in particular State and Territory Treasuries), international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, economic analysts in the private sector, the media and academics.

National accounts information is used to: formulate and assess government macro-economic policies, both fiscal and monetary; assist in allocating Australian government funds to State Governments; formulate industry development policies; undertake financial and business planning; and facilitate international economic comparisons.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are the quarterly publications *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (ABS cat. no. 5206.0) and *Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5232.0); and the annual publication *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0). Together these publications provide comprehensive measures of Australia's macro-economic performance and economic structure.

The key series relate to current price and volume measures of Australia's Gross Domestic Product broken down into its components. In the quarterly publication, most data are published in seasonally adjusted and trend terms. The publications also show estimates for the national income and capital accounts, and sector accounts such as for households and general government. Data on financial transactions, flow of funds and financial balance sheet positions are provided quarterly and complete balance sheets for sectors and the nation are compiled annually. The annual publication also includes a range of economic data by industry as well as capital stock and productivity estimates.

Annual estimates of economic growth for each State and Territory are published separately in *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5220.0). The annual release of Input-Output tables in *Australian National Accounts: Input-Output Tables – Electronic Publication* (ABS cat. no. 5209.0) tables provides a detailed articulation of the structure of economic production by detailing the flows of products into and between industries and their use for consumption, investment or export.

The program provides seminars, training courses and other information to assist economic analysts in understanding and using National Accounts statistics.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ improve National Accounts compilation processes and methods, with a particular focus on improving the coherence of the accounts with other economic indicators and minimising revisions to growth rates and levels – due December 2012
- ▶ improve the coverage of services industries by increasing the scope of input collections and investigating additional data sources – due December 2013
- ▶ produce income and capital accounts for all sectors on a quarterly basis as well as quarterly household balance sheets – due June 2014
- ▶ contribute to international research of topics identified as needing further work during the update of the System of National Accounts, with an emphasis on the concept of income and the treatment of emissions trading instruments – ongoing.

International Accounts

Program Manager

Bernard Williams
Assistant Statistician
International &
Government Finance
Accounts Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	6.8
Full Costs	14.1
% of total costs	2.2%

Staff Usage
66 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	6.4
2013–2014	6.5
2014–2015	6.3
2015–2016	6.3

Objectives

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 Australian Customs and Border Protection Service.

The main users of the International Accounts data are economic and industry analysts and policy advisers in Australian government agencies (in particular, the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Productivity Commission, Austrade and the Departments of: Foreign Affairs and Trade; Prime Minister and Cabinet; and Resources, Energy and Tourism), private sector economic analysts and dealers, academics, the media and international organisations.

The statistics are used to analyse Australia's external performance, formulate and evaluate macro-economic 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 to undertake international comparisons. The international accounts are inputs to the Australian National Accounts, providing the external transactions accounts and the external assets and liabilities components of the national balance sheet.

Outputs

The program produces a range of statistical publications, classifications and methodological information. The key statistical publication is the quarterly *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5302.0) which presents a comprehensive set of international accounts statistics including chain volume measures for trade in goods and services and seasonally adjusted data for the current account.

Monthly information on exports and imports of goods and services, on a balance of payments basis, is released in *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0). The publication includes a selection of tables showing merchandise exports and imports data on a recorded trade basis. The program produces the *Australian Harmonised Export Commodity Classification* (ABS cat. no. 1233.0). Updates to the classification, if required, are scheduled for release six monthly.

International Merchandise Imports, Australia (ABS cat. no. 5439.0) provides summary information on Australia's merchandise imports for the latest reference month, on a recorded trade basis. Very detailed merchandise trade export and import statistics classified by commodity, country of trading partner, state, industry of origin and broad economic category can be obtained from ABS Client Services.

International trade in services data by partner country and state are released annually, on a calendar year basis in *International Trade in Services by Country, by State and by Detailed Services Category, Calendar Year* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0.55.004) and financial year basis in *International Trade in Services by Country, by State and by Detailed Services Category, Financial Year* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0.55.003). Calendar year international investment position, financial account and primary income data by partner country, and international investment position and financial account data by industry for direct investment are released annually in *International Investment Position Australia: Supplementary Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 5352.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ investigate the feasibility of improving the timeliness of trade in services information measured through the Survey of International Trade in Services – due December 2012
- ▶ review commodity classifications used in the balance of payments to ensure that they remain relevant and are linked appropriately to international and other ABS classifications – due December 2012
- ▶ determine the implications and cost of implementing the updated international manual on the compilation of Merchandise Trade statistics – due June 2013
- ▶ subject to user funding, conduct and release the results from a Survey of Foreign Currency Exposure (Hedging) in respect of March 2013 – due December 2013
- ▶ subject to the cost assessment, implement the updated international manual on the compilation of Merchandise Trade statistics and revise concepts, sources and methods documentation – due June 2014
- ▶ implement the final Extended Balance of Payments Services Classification contained in the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services – due December 2014.

Financial Statistics

Program Manager

Bernard Williams
Assistant Statistician
International & Government
Finance Accounts Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	2.8
Full Costs	5.6
% of total costs	0.9%
Staff Usage	
27 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	3.5
2013–2014	3.2
2014–2015	3.3
2015–2016	3.3

Objectives

The Financial Statistics Program compiles statistics on the financial assets, liabilities, borrowing and lending of financial institutions; and on the stocks and flows of finance for the 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 main users of the program include the main financial policy agencies (including the Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia), and financial institutions. Industry associations, analysts and State and Territory Treasuries are also extensive users of the lending statistics.

The statistics are used for analysis of monetary policy outcomes, for monitoring the flows in the financial system, and for assessing the financial performance of the economic sectors or institutional classes. Housing finance commitment statistics are used as one of the indicators of consumer sentiment and, together with personal, commercial and lease finance commitment statistics, are used as forward indicators of demand in the economy.

Financial statistics are important inputs to the Australian National Accounts, predominantly the financial accounts, and accordingly, the ABS National Accounts Program is a key client of the Financial Statistics Program.

Outputs

The program produces the quarterly publication *Managed Funds, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5655.0), which includes statistics for cash management trusts, superannuation funds, life insurance corporations, public unit trusts, common funds, and friendly societies. Information on securitisation trusts is released quarterly in the publication *Assets and Liabilities of Australian Securitizers* (ABS cat. no. 5232.0.55.001).

The monthly publication *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0) includes information on finance commitments for owner occupation and investment housing, as well as balances outstanding on housing finance loans. Finance commitments by banks and other financial institutions are covered, including whether the loans are at fixed or variable rates. The monthly publication *Lending Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5671.0) provides statistics on commercial, personal and lease finance commitments.

The program also compiles the source data for the quarterly publication *Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5232.0), which is a component of the Australian National Accounts.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ review the frequency and timing of the *Lending Finance, Australia* publication – due June 2013
- ▶ develop concepts, sources and methods documentation for Managed Funds – due December 2012
- ▶ participate in the review by APRA of their suite of statistical reporting forms for authorised deposit-taking institutions – due December 2013.
- ▶ Further medium-term developments will be determined as recommendations arising from the review of financial statistics are costed and prioritised.

Program Manager

Judy Henson
Assistant Statistician
Prices Branch

Resources

2010–2011	\$m
Direct Costs	14.7
Full Costs	28.5
% of total costs	6.6%
Staff Usage	
153 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2011–2012	14.2
2012–2013	13.7
2013–2014	13.3
2014–2015	12.3

References

Topics @ a Glance page
www.abs.gov.au
Select Economy, then Prices

Prices

Objectives

The Prices Program compiles a number of key main economic indicators: the Consumer Price Index (CPI); the House Price Index (HPI); the Wage Price Index (WPI); and a range of Producer and International Trade Price Indexes (PPIs and ITPIs). The program also produces a Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Costs Index (PBLCI), and Analytical Living Cost Indexes (ALCIs) for Selected Australian Household Types. The program promotes, through provision of information papers, seminars and other means, a greater understanding in the community of concepts, methods and uses of price indexes.

The main clients for the program's outputs are the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Treasury, the Australian Government Departments of: Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; and Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, Australian, State and Territory government agencies whose payments are indexed, economic analysts, and the general business community.

The main uses of the key prices indicators are:

- ▶ CPI is a general measure of price inflation for the household sector; for production of volume estimates of components of the Australian National Accounts; as a basis for indexing pensions, superannuation payments and government taxes and charges; as an input into salary and wage negotiations; and for indexation of government bonds and business contracts
- ▶ HPI is a measure of price changes for established houses and for project homes; for analysis of trends in the housing market; and of changes in the value of the housing stock
- ▶ WPI informs measurements of wage inflation; wage setting negotiations; production of volume estimates of components of the Australian National Accounts; and the indexation of business contracts
- ▶ PPIs and ITPIs are used for the production of volume estimates for components of the Australian National Accounts; as a guide to future inflationary trends; and for indexation of business contracts
- ▶ PBLCI is a measure of the impact of changes in prices on the out-of-pocket living costs experienced by pensioners and other government benefit recipient households; and as a basis for indexing pensions and other payments to government benefit recipients
- ▶ ALCIs are supplementary analytical series to the CPI and are used as a measure of the impact of changes in prices on the out-of-pocket living costs experienced by employee households, age pensioner households, other government benefit recipient households and self-funded retiree households.

Outputs

The main program outputs are the following quarterly publications:

Consumer Price Index, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6401.0)

House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities (ABS cat. no. 6416.0)

Wage Price Index, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6345.0)

Producer Price Indexes, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6427.0) and *International Trade Price Indexes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6457.0)

Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6467.0)

Analytical Living Costs Indexes for Selected Australian Household types, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6463.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ implement a program of improvements to the coverage of the services industries for Producer Price Indexes – from September 2012
- ▶ re-reference the CPI, PPIs, ITPIs, ALCIs and PBLCI – from October 2012
- ▶ introduce a program of improvements to the PBLCI and ALCIs, including amalgamating the PBLCI and ALCI into a single product; *Selected Living Cost Indexes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6467.0) – from October 2012
- ▶ implement the outcome of the review of the PPIs and ITPIs including: reweighting the indexes, and compiling the Stage of Production (SOP) Indexes on an Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), 2006 basis – November 2012
- ▶ introduce a retail trade margins index – early 2013
- ▶ review the HPI, including undertaking a re-weight based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing data – December 2013

Public Sector Accounts

Program Manager

Bernard Williams
Assistant Statistician
International & Government
Finance Accounts Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	3.8
Full Costs	7.3
% of total costs	1.2%
Staff Usage	
39 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	4.1
2013–2014	3.9
2014–2015	4.0
2015–2016	4.0

Objectives

The Public Sector Accounts Program provides Government Finance Statistics (GFS) in respect of the Australian, State and Territory Governments, their public financial and non-financial corporations, universities and local governments. The statistics are compiled predominantly from government accounting systems.

The main users of the program include various Australian Government agencies (in particular the Treasury, the Commonwealth Grants Commission, Productivity Commission, and the Departments of: Finance and Deregulation; Education; Employment and Workplace Relations; Health and Ageing), State and Territory government agencies (in particular State Treasuries), financial market analysts and international agencies.

GFS are used to monitor the financial performance of governments and to inform on the economic impact of government activities. They are also used to assist in the distribution of Australian government grants to State Governments.

GFS are an important input to the Australian National Accounts, providing income and expenditure estimates for the public sector. Accordingly, the ABS National Accounts Program is a key client of the Public Sector Accounts Program.

Outputs

The program produces a number of GFS publications each year, compiled in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001.

The annual publication *Government Finance Statistics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5512.0), provides an operating statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement for the most recent year for each of the Australian, State, Territory and local governments for the general government, and public non-financial and financial corporations. Key GFS accruals measures such as the net operating balance, net lending/borrowing, and net worth are provided. A cash-based surplus/deficit is also produced.

Quarterly publication, *Government Finance Statistics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5519.0.55.001), provides operating statements for general government and public non-financial corporations sector aggregates.

Other publications include:

- ▶ *Government Financial Estimates, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5501.0.55.001), which provides initial budget forecasts compiled by each jurisdiction on a GFS basis
- ▶ *Taxation Revenue, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5506.0), which provides revenue from taxation of the Australian Government, the State and Territory Governments and local government authorities in Australia
- ▶ *Government Finance Statistics, Education, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5518.0.55.001), which provides statistics on government expenditure in the field of education.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ implement revised international GFS standards in ABS statistics – timing dependent on the release of the International Monetary Fund's GFS Manual and consultation with stakeholders
- ▶ complete the assessment of the availability, quality and feasibility of compiling quarterly balance sheet data for the general government sector – due December 2012
- ▶ develop an implementation strategy for introducing Australia's revised institutional sector classification (Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia 2008) – due December 2012
- ▶ provide GFS technical assistance to Pacific Islands countries – due December 2012
- ▶ assess options for publishing a more comprehensive reconciliation between GFS and national accounts measures – due June 2014
- ▶ assist the Treasury and/or the Department of Finance in each jurisdiction with implementation and interpretative issues associated with the adoption of the GFS-GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) harmonised financial reporting basis represented by the new accounting standard AASB 1049 (Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting by Governments) – ongoing
- ▶ work with the Treasury and/or Department of Finance in each jurisdiction on the continual improvement in the quality and uniformity of Australia's GFS – ongoing.

Business Indicators

Program Manager

Paul Williams
Assistant Statistician
Macroeconomic Indicators

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	3.7
Full Costs	12.7
% of total costs	2.0%

Staff Usage
36 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	3.7
2013–2014	3.0
2014–2015	3.0
2015–2016	3.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy

Objectives

The Business Indicators Program is responsible for the provision of a range of sub-annual main 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 program include the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, various State and Territory departments, banks, industry associations, and other financial analysts and commentators.

These clients use the statistics as partial indicators of the National Accounts and as important indicators of economic activity in their own right.

Outputs

The key statistical outputs of the program are the monthly publication *Retail Trade, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8501.0) and the quarterly publications *Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5625.0), *Mineral and Petroleum Exploration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8412.0) and *Business Indicators, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5676.0). Each publication contains both national and state level data and estimates in original, seasonally adjusted and trend terms. The latter publication provides information on sales, labour costs, company profits and inventories; publications with cat. nos: 8501.0; 5625.0; and 5676.0; also present current price data by industry and, where appropriate, estimates are presented as chain volume measures.

The program produces detailed datasets that are available in spreadsheet form via the ABS website.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ extend Retail Trade's coverage to include service industries, particularly those which have become more significant in household consumption expenditures, and investigate the appropriateness of an activity-based collection versus an industry-based approach – due Dec 2012
- ▶ investigate extending the collection of inventories data for a broader selection of industries – due March 2013
- ▶ review Finance sector in Quality Business Intelligence Services (QBIS) – due June 2013
- ▶ investigate expanding the scope of QBIS to include Public Corporations – due September 2013.

Innovation and Technology

Program Manager

Jacky Hodges
Assistant Statistician
Innovation and Technology

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	2.9
Full Costs	6.1
% of total costs	1.0%
Staff Usage	
27 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	2.6
2013–2014	2.6
2014–2015	2.6
2015–2016	2.6

Objectives

The Innovation and Technology Program provides data to assist the understanding of the impact of research and experimental development, innovation and new technologies on economic and social outcomes. It provides:

- ▶ measures of the penetration and use of selected new technologies, particularly information and communication technology (ICT), within Australia, for both businesses and households
- ▶ measures of research and experimental development 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 possible links to business performance and productivity.

Clients of the program include:

- ▶ Australian government agencies including the Departments of: Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy; Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education; Climate Change and Energy Efficiency; and Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry as well as the Reserve Bank of Australia, Productivity Commission and Australian Communications and Media Authority
- ▶ State and Territory government departments
- ▶ industry associations, research organisations, universities and businesses.

Statistics for expenditure on research and experimental development are important inputs to the Australian National Accounts, and accordingly, the ABS National Accounts Program is a key client of the Innovation and Technology Program.

Outputs

The program produces a range of statistical outputs, showing:

- ▶ use of ICT by Australian businesses and households
- ▶ internet activity conducted through the Australian Internet Service Provider industry
- ▶ innovation activities undertaken within the Australian economy
- ▶ research and experimental development undertaken by businesses, government, universities and private non-profit organisations
- ▶ selected business characteristics data

The program is responsible for the collection and publication of Venture Capital and Later Stage Private Equity statistics on an annual basis. This work is undertaken on a user-funded basis.

The program is also responsible for the production of the Business Longitudinal Database Confidentialised Unit Record File (BLD CURF); a new BLD CURF is released as each panel of businesses completes five years of reporting.

The program contributes to the work of national and international agencies, through input to the review and development of relevant statistical standards and frameworks. Related research papers and discussion papers are made available via the ABS website.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ contribute to the development of a Broadband Metrics Framework being developed by the OECD which will facilitate international comparisons of broadband uptake and usage – development due to be completed June 2013
- ▶ work with the Department of Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education and the Australian Public Service Commission to develop measures of public sector innovation (Australian Public Sector Innovation Indicators) and to feed this work into the development of an international framework for measuring innovation in the Public Sector – first stage due June 2013
- ▶ implement outcomes from a comprehensive review of existing data collection strategies in the increasingly important area of Research and Development – due to be fully implemented by December 2013
- ▶ develop strategies for meeting information needs arising from major government policy initiatives including: the National Broadband Network; *Australia's Digital Economy: Future Directions* (July 2009); *Powering Ideas, an Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century* (May 2009); and *Inspiring Australia, a National Strategy for Engagement with the Sciences* (Dec 2009) – ongoing.

Business Demographics

Program Manager

Adrian Bugg
Assistant Statistician
Environment Statistics &
Integration Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	2.1
Full Costs	4.0
% of total costs	0.6%
Staff Usage	
17 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	2.1
2013–2014	2.2
2014–2015	2.2
2015–2016	2.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page
www.abs.gov.au

Objectives

The Business Demography Program is responsible for the provision of a range 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. A particular, but not exclusive, focus of the program is on providing information about small businesses.

Key external clients of the program are Australian and State government agencies and industry associations.

Government policy analysts at all levels of government and researchers make extensive use of ABS business statistics. Business and business operator counts produced by the program are important for users in understanding the likely impact of particular policies or events. The data are used mainly to monitor the structure and performance of the business sector; and to assess the need for, and effectiveness of, policies relating to the business sector.

Outputs

The program releases an annual publication *Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits* (ABS cat. no. 8165.0) which provides data relevant to users interested in understanding businesses that actively trade in goods or services.

The publication *Counts of Australian Business Operators* (ABS cat. no. 8175.0), first released in 2008, sources data from the Census of Population and Housing (Census) and the Forms of Employment Survey. The next release is due in 2013, using data collected in the 2011 Census and Forms of Employment Survey.

These outputs, together with a range of relevant information, are available on the Business Demography Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website.

Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ investigate the feasibility of linking ABS business counts data with aggregate employment and annual turnover data – due December 2012
- ▶ examine the feasibility of enhancing outputs by including additional small business data – due mid- 2013
- ▶ improve the international comparability of ABS business demography statistics using the Eurostat-OECD Manual on Business Demography Statistics as a framework – ongoing.

Industry Statistics

Program Manager

Bill Allen
Assistant Statistician
Industry & Productivity
Statistics Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	12.1
Full Costs	22.2
% of total costs	3.5%
Staff Usage	
116 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	11.0
2013–2014	10.2
2014–2015	9.9
2015–2016	10.0

Objectives

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

The program consists of:

- ▶ annual economy wide financial statistics, from a collection program composed of core and flexible elements that cover the entire economy over a ten year period (in response to specifically identified needs), modelling and analytical work
- ▶ construction statistics on activity levels in residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction.

The main clients include: the Treasury; the Reserve Bank of Australia; the Productivity Commission; the Australian Government Departments of: Resources, Energy and Tourism; Industry, Innovation, Science, Research and Tertiary Education; Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities; as well as Geoscience Australia; the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences; Bureau of Meteorology; State and Territory agencies; industry organisations and associations; and financial and academic institutions.

As the program outputs are a key input to the Australian National Accounts and Environmental Economic Accounts, they are widely used for economic monitoring and forecasting.

Construction statistics are used for construction industry, finance and investment sector analysis; and in understanding population change, an essential input to regional planning.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ the monthly publication *Building Approvals, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8731.0) providing building approvals statistics which are a leading indicator of future building activity
- ▶ the annual publication *Australian Industry* (ABS cat. no. 8155.0) providing national estimates of income, expenses, wages and salaries, operating profit before tax, industry value added, operating businesses, employment, and selected business performance measures at industry division and subdivision levels.

Other outputs include statistical data releases for Australian Industry such as:

- ▶ information about Australia's mineral production based on data from State and Territory authorities
- ▶ additional detail on the industries covered in 2011–12 survey program – manufacturing and construction.

Quarterly releases are:

- ▶ *Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary* (ABS cat. no. 8755.0)
- ▶ *Building Activity, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8752.0)
- ▶ *Engineering Construction Activity, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8762.0).

Specific user requirements (e.g. more detail for industry and/or data items) are available by request.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ release Australian Industry outputs for 2011–12 – due May 2013
- ▶ extend the depth and quality of industry statistics through business taxation and other administrative data, synthetic estimation and/or modelling techniques – ongoing.

Agriculture

Program Manager

Glen Sward
(A/g) Assistant Statistician
Agriculture and Rural
Environment

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	7.0
Full Costs	13.5
% of total costs	2.2%
Staff Usage	
67 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	7.6
2013–2014	4.5
2014–2015	5.8
2015–2016	5.5

Objectives

The Agriculture Program provides agricultural policy makers and other key users of agricultural statistics with reliable, relevant and timely information on the social, economic and environmental characteristics of agriculture, including: commodity production; economic performance; farm management; land use and land management practices; natural resource management practices including water management; and foreign ownership of agricultural land, businesses and water entitlements. 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.

The main clients of the program include a range of Australian, State and Territory government agencies, industry organisations, financial institutions, academic institutions, and private sector organisations providing services to the agricultural sector. Government agencies use the data to formulate and monitor policies on agriculture and land management practices, and industry organisations use agricultural data to assess the relative performance of the various industries and for the development of marketing and export strategies. The data also informs decision-making by farmers, land managers and the wider community relating to agricultural and land management practices.

Outputs

Preliminary estimates on the production and value of selected commodities for the preceding financial year are released annually in November in *Principal Agricultural Commodities, Australia, Preliminary* (ABS cat. no. 7111.0) and *Value of Principal Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia, Preliminary* (ABS cat. no. 7501.0). Estimates are at the national and state levels. Final estimates for major agricultural outputs and activity are published the following June in *Agricultural Commodities, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7121.0), including data for finer levels of geography (below state-level) which are released subsequently in data cubes. Final data related to the value of agricultural commodities is published in *Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7503.0). The values of irrigated agricultural commodities are published in *Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0.55.008).

Details of agricultural land management practices are available in *Land Management and Farming in Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4627.0). An expanded suite of land management practices data will be released biennially starting in 2013.

Details from the first Agricultural Land and Water Ownership Survey (ALWOS) were released in *Agricultural Land and Water Ownership, December 2010*, (ABS cat. no. 7127.0). The ABS will continue to release information on the foreign ownership of agricultural businesses, land and water entitlements in coming years. Data will be collected via stand-alone sample surveys in 2013 and 2018, and through supplementary surveys to the 2016 and 2021 Agricultural Census.

Details of agricultural water use and management are available annually in *Water Use on Australian Farms* (ABS cat. no. 4618.0). Agricultural water use information is also included in the environmental-economic *Water Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0) which is produced every year.

Details of the number of livestock slaughtered for human consumption and meat produced are available on a monthly basis in *Livestock and Meat, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7218.0.55.001). Details of other livestock products including poultry, meat and wool are published quarterly in *Livestock Products, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7215.0).

Information about the Australian wheat industry is released monthly in two publications. National and State stocks of wheat held by grain handlers are released in *Stocks of Grain Held by Bulk Grain Handling Companies and Grain Traders, Australia* (cat. no. 7122.0.55.001). Additionally, wheat exports information including planned exports of wheat grain are published in *Wheat Stocks and Exports, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7307.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ release the 2010–11 Agricultural Census results, including small area data – due June–October 2012
- ▶ deliver high-quality data on agricultural land management practices and agricultural land and water ownership to support government and other user needs – ongoing over 2013–2021
- ▶ investigate ways to further improve outputs from ABS' agricultural statistics collections, including improvements to data capture, data delivery systems and data visualisation – ongoing over 2012–2016
- ▶ complete a review of the ABS' rural environment and agricultural statistics program to ensure it remains relevant and responsive to emerging data needs – forward work program to 2016 due June 2012; proposed work plan for 2016–2022 due April 2013.

Transport

Program Manager

Bill Allen
Assistant Statistician
Industry & Productivity
Statistics Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	1.2
Full Costs	3.7
% of total costs	0.6%
Staff Usage	
14 Staff Years	

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	1.1
2013–2014	1.2
2014–2015	1.2
2015–2016	1.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance select Industry, then Transport

Objectives

The Transport Program is responsible for producing statistics on transport and transport related activities and undertakes a coordination and liaison role between producers and users of transport data.

The main clients of the program include various Australian government agencies, in particular: the Department of Infrastructure and Transport; the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics; the Commonwealth Grants Commission; the Treasury; as well as State and Territory Government agencies; the National Road Transport Commission; as well as industry and academic organisations.

Statistics from the transport collections are used to assist in policy and planning deliberations by governments and transport organisations, particularly in the areas of long term planning, the regulation of road transport operators, and for accident exposure and fuel use analysis. Information about the vehicle fleet provides a measure of the stock of vehicles registered for road use at a point in time and supports the study of links between demographic change and vehicle ownership and use. Statistics on new motor vehicle sales provide an economic indicator of consumer confidence.

Outputs

The outputs of the program are the monthly publication of *Sales of New Motor Vehicles, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9314.0), a major economic indicator; biennial publication of the *Survey of Motor Vehicle Use, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9208.0); and annual publication of *Motor Vehicle Census, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9309.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ work with the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport, and Regional Economics on a project to collect nationally consistent freight data on an ongoing basis utilising administrative data. An initial feasibility assessment will be undertaken as the first phase of the project – due September 2012
- ▶ support the other activities of the Australian Transport Data Action Network as it progresses the Data Action Plan for the Standing Council on Transport and Infrastructure, including enhancing the comparability of nationally significant datasets through harmonisation of standards and classifications – due June 2013
- ▶ undertake research to further develop the Transport Satellite Account framework presented in *Information Paper: A Future Australian Transport Satellite Account: ABS Views, 2011* (ABS cat. no. 5269.0.55.001) – due June 2013
- ▶ support the Annual Integrated Collection case study investigations relating to transport activity and evaluate the results – due June 2013
- ▶ provide administrative support for the maintenance of the Transport Metadata Portal – ongoing.

Tourism

Program Manager

Bill Allen
Assistant Statistician
Industry & Productivity
Statistics Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	0.7
Full Costs	2.6
% of total costs	0.4%
Staff Usage	8 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	0.8
2013–2014	0.6
2014–2015	0.7
2015–2016	0.8

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Industry, then Tourism

Other references

*Framework for Australian
Tourism Statistics*
(ABS cat. no. 9502.0.55.001)

Objectives

The Tourism Program is responsible for producing regular, timely and coherent data on tourism activities. It also undertakes a coordination and liaison role between tourism statistics users and other areas of the ABS that produce tourism-related statistics. The program conducts the Survey of Tourist Accommodation (STA) and compiles the Australian Tourism Satellite Account (TSA). The Tourism Program is also responsible for the development and maintenance of tourism frameworks, standards and concepts. 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 main clients of the program are: the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism; State and Territory tourism departments; tourism industry associations; academic and research groups; and marketing and consultancy bodies.

Tourism data are used to assist in economic analysis and policy formation relating to tourism, to measure the size and structure of the tourism industry and related industries, to allocate State and Territory government funding to regional areas, and for local government planning and investment. The STA data are an input into the policy and planning activities of government and industry, particularly in relation to tourism activity in regional areas. The TSA shows the contribution of tourism to major economic aggregates such as gross domestic product.

Outputs

The key outputs of the program are quarterly data from the STA and annual data from the TSA. STA data is released as *Tourist Accommodation, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8635.0) and provides detailed demand and supply data relating to hotels, motels and guest houses with 15 or more rooms, and serviced apartments with 15 or more units. One of the most valuable aspects of the STA is the fine level of geographic detail for which estimates are available.

The TSA is produced by the Tourism Program working in conjunction with the National Accounts program and is funded by the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism. The output from the TSA is released in *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (ABS cat. no. 5249.0).

Other outputs of the program relate to research and development work in such areas as tourism statistics frameworks and classifications.

The program also actively assists in user education relating to *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (ABS cat. no. 5249.0), *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3401.0), tourism-related services exports and imports indicators in *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0) and *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5302.0), and the tourism-related outputs issued by the Industry Statistics program.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ undertake research to refine and improve methodology for the benchmark Tourism Satellite Account to be published April 2013 – due September 2012
- ▶ move the STA to the new ABS geography standard, the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), making small area data more geographically stable over time – due December 2012
- ▶ undertake research to further improve employment indicators in the Tourism Satellite Account, in association with Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism – due June 2013
- ▶ contribute to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation and other international bodies as they examine statistical standards and classifications – ongoing.

Environment Statistics

Program Manager

Adrian Bugg
Assistant Statistician
Environment Statistics &
Integration Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	1.5
Full Costs	2.9
% of total costs	0.5%
Staff Usage	14 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	1.8
2013–2014	1.3
2014–2015	0.9
2015–2016	0.9

Objectives

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 from the wide range of data available in this field.

Clients of the program include:

- ▶ Australian Government Departments of: Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities; Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; Resources, Energy and Tourism; Climate Change and Energy Efficiency; and the Treasury
- ▶ Australian Government agencies such as Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences; the Murray Darling Basin Authority; the Bureau of Meteorology; and Geoscience Australia.
- ▶ State and territory government departments with environment or energy responsibilities
- ▶ academic and research organisations, environmental groups, businesses and individuals.

Use of environment statistics is varied and includes the formulation of policies, economic analysis, research and forecasting as well as meeting international reporting obligations.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ continued collaboration for development of the United Nations' System of Environmental Economic Accounts (SEEA), a satellite system of the System of National Accounts, which brings environmental and economic information together within a common framework.
- ▶ production of annual environmental economic accounts according to the SEEA framework: *Energy Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4604.0); and *Water Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0)
- ▶ production of household behaviour and practice statistics relating to biodiversity, water, energy and waste: *Environmental issues: Energy Use and Conservation* (ABS cat. no. 4602.0.55.001)
- ▶ production of information to underpin the environmental economic accounts, for example *Waste Management Services, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8698.0)

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ publish the first release of the Waste Account, Australia 2009–10 based on the SEEA – due end 2012
- ▶ release information collected through the 2011–12 Multi Purpose Household Survey: *Biodiversity Conservation Activities 2011–12* (ABS cat. no. 4602.4) – due end 2012
- ▶ improve the quality and depth of detail of existing water and energy accounts (including energy monetary accounts) – due end 2012
- ▶ further develop the on-going collection and release of data on energy, water and environment statistics with the triennial release of *Energy, Water and Environment Management* (ABS cat. no. 4660.0) – due mid-2013
- ▶ following the May 2012 conference in Melbourne and release of the related publication, *Completing the Picture – Environmental Accounting in Practice* (ABS cat. no. 4628.0.55.001), work with key stakeholders to demonstrate applications of SEEA and promote its use as framework for integration of socio-economic and environmental information to inform policy development and decision making – ongoing
- ▶ investigate further expansion of the environmental accounting program that could encompass land, environmental protection expenditure, and environment industry accounts – ongoing
- ▶ collaborate with other government agencies around environmental information initiatives such as the National Plan for Environmental Information (NPEI), the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting system (NGER) and the Bureau of Meteorology National Water Account – ongoing.

Demography

Program Managers

Gemma Van Halderen
Demography, Regional and
Social Analysis Branch

AJ Lanyon
Health and Vitals Statistics
Unit

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	3.2
Full Costs	6.4
% of total costs	1.0%

Staff Usage 29 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	2.8
2013–2014	3.0
2014–2015	2.8
2015–2016	3.2

Objectives

The key objective of the Demography Program is to produce estimates of the recent and projected population; and analysis of the components of population change (births, deaths, and migration) and related demographic trends. These data are provided at the national, state, territory, and regional level.

These statistics are produced to:

- ▶ meet a range of legislative requirements that make reference to population estimates
- ▶ assist in the formulation and monitoring of government policies, and in the planning and administration of government programs
- ▶ enable planning and market analyses by businesses and community organisations
- ▶ enable research and analyses by governments, businesses, academic institutions and others into the causes and consequences of population change.

Reflecting the use of population estimates for electoral and funding purposes, the main clients of the program are: Australian and state/territory-level electoral commissions, treasuries, and grants commissions. Within the ABS, demographic estimates and projections are the basis for population survey benchmarks. Other clients include agencies concerned with issues associated with migration and multicultural affairs, local area planning, health, education, the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population, family and community services, the environment and international tourism. The program also works to build capacity of government agencies to understand and use demographic data and statistics, and supports the development of civil registration systems in the Asia Pacific region.

Outputs

The program's key outputs are population estimates published in *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0). The program produces estimates of the total population by age, sex, country of birth and geographical distribution; estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population; and estimates of families and households.

Regular statistics are also produced on births, fertility rates, deaths, mortality rates, life expectancy, international migration as well as interstate and internal migration. Projections of population, families and households according to specified demographic assumptions are published on a regular basis. Population benchmarks are provided for use in the ABS and other population surveys. Regular statistics based on the movements of overseas arrivals and departures are also produced.

Major publications include:

- ▶ *Births, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0)
- ▶ *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0)
- ▶ *Regional Population Growth, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3218.0)
- ▶ *Population Projections, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3222.0)
- ▶ *Household and Family Projections, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3236.0)
- ▶ *Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS cat. no. 3238.0).
- ▶ In addition, an extensive range of historical data is available on the ABS website in *Australian Historical Population Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3105.0.65.001)

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ finalise the rebasing of all population estimates and projections series using the results of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing, including on the new Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS) for sub-state estimates – due progressively from June 2012 to June 2014
- ▶ evaluate and implement improved methods for projecting future births into ABS population projections – due September 2013
- ▶ review and recommend changes to the demographic content of the 2016 Census of Population and Housing – progressively to March 2014
- ▶ complete the implementation of methods and systems to enhance data quality of preliminary estimation of net overseas migration – progressive to June 2014
- ▶ in consultation with stakeholders, consolidate an enhanced method for estimating mortality and life expectancy of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples using the 2011 Census of Population and Housing results and death registrations, which in turn is used as a key input to a range of demographic statistics of Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples – progressive releases to June 2014
- ▶ begin development of 2016 Post Enumeration Survey (PES) – due June 2014
- ▶ strengthen engagement and collaboration with State and Territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages to identify and implement initiatives to improve the coverage and quality of birth and death registration information – ongoing.

Labour

Program Manager

Paul Mahoney
Assistant Statistician
Labour Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	8.1
Full Costs	61.5
% of total costs	9.8%
Staff Usage	71 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	7.0
2013–2014	6.7
2014–2015	7.0
2015–2016	7.3

Objectives

The key objectives for the Labour Statistics Program are to address labour statistics priorities and be responsive to user needs by producing 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.

Labour statistics are used extensively in the analysis, evaluation, and monitoring of the economy; the labour market; and a wide range of government policies and programs (such as those relating to employment, income support, workplace relations). Statistics on labour costs are also used in compiling the Australian National Accounts.

The main clients of the program are Australian government agencies (including the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, Fair Work Australia, the Productivity Commission, the Commonwealth Grants Commission and the Departments of: Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; and Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs), State and Territory government agencies, industry associations, trade unions and academic researchers.

Outputs

Statistics on labour force participation, employment, unemployment and hours worked are published monthly in *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0). More detailed labour force information is released either monthly (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) or quarterly (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003). Broad measures of labour underutilisation are available quarterly in the main Labour Force Survey release. Statistics on particular aspects of the Australian labour market, including earnings, working arrangements, forms of employment, trade union membership, labour mobility, underemployment, job search experience, independent contracting, labour hire, retirement, barriers and incentives to labour force participation, and marginal attachment to the labour force, are published periodically.

The program produces regular statistics on earnings and labour costs. Statistics on average weekly earnings of employees had been published quarterly in *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6302.0). However, the frequency of the average weekly earnings series will change from quarterly to biannual in 2012. The May 2012 publication will be the last quarterly issue (released in August 2012), with the November 2012 publication the first produced on a biannual basis (released in February 2013). Distributional data on employee earnings and hours, data on occupational earnings, and data on award and agreement coverage are available every two years in *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0). Data on details of major labour costs are also available. Information on the number of employees and total employee earnings for the public sector are available annually.

Statistics on job vacancies are published quarterly in *Job Vacancies, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6354.0). Data on industrial disputes are also published quarterly in *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

The publication *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0) is changing frequency in 2012 from quarterly to irregular. With this change the content will be reduced to just support the release of analytical data series, such as volume measures of labour underutilisation, and allow the release of feature articles on current labour market issues. Information about news and developments in ABS labour statistics, previously contained in this publication, will be available via the ABS website at the Labour Topics @ a glance page.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ develop a longitudinal Labour Force Survey dataset – release of microdata by June 2012
- ▶ develop, select and implement a new sample for the Monthly Population Survey, including incorporating the new Australian Statistical Geography Standard – progressively implemented November 2012 to June 2013
- ▶ implement new population benchmarks for the Labour Force Survey and make historical revisions to series, based on revised population estimates following the 2011 Census – by August 2013
- ▶ implement the recommendations from a review of the content of the labour household survey program – progressive implementation to February 2014
- ▶ conceptual framework development for a number of areas of labour market statistics including workplace relations, non-standard working arrangements and marginal attachment – by December 2014
- ▶ improve analytical content in labour program standard products, where appropriate – ongoing
- ▶ implement collection, quality assurance and output efficiencies into the labour statistics collections – ongoing.

Economic Analysis and Reporting

Program Manager

Bill Allen
Assistant Statistician
Industry & Productivity
Statistics Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	1.8
Full Costs	2.7
% of total costs	0.4%
Staff Usage	15 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	1.7
2013–2014	1.5
2014–2015	1.5
2015–2016	1.5

Objectives

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 statistics and conducts research into the measurement and interpretation of these statistics.

Outputs

Regular publications of the program include:

- ▶ annual productivity statistics presented in *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0)
- ▶ *Experimental Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity* (ABS cat. no. 5260.0.55.002), an annual release that presents a range of productivity estimates at the industry level

Additionally, the program produces research or information papers on the following areas:

- ▶ productivity measurement
- ▶ economic analysis using the Business Longitudinal Database and other microdata sets
- ▶ human capital measurement
- ▶ periodic reviews and standards upgrades for macroeconomic statistics.

Developments

The main medium term development in the program are to:

- ▶ Improve productivity estimates by:
 - ▶ implementing new measures of industry level quality adjusted labour input for the ABS industry multifactor productivity datacube – due end 2012
 - ▶ researching the incorporation of business survey based employment information in constructing labour input indexes – due mid 2013
 - ▶ undertaking research to develop measures of productivity for hard-to-measure industries – ongoing.
- ▶ Undertake periodic reviews and standards upgrades for macroeconomic statistics including:
 - ▶ exploring the suitability of administrative data in compiling official economic statistics including implementing price measurement with supermarket scanner data – due mid–2013
 - ▶ assisting Pacific island countries with their participation in the 2011 International (Price) Comparison Program – due mid 2013
 - ▶ undertaking research into aspects of the quality of macroeconomic and financial statistics arising from various reviews – ongoing
 - ▶ researching statistical treatments and gather data for inclusion of emissions trading and carbon credits schemes in economic accounts – due end 2012.
- ▶ Update measures of human capital using the 2011 Census by:
 - ▶ releasing a research paper on updated measures of human capital stock and flows due mid-2013
 - ▶ releasing a research paper on updated measures of rates of returns to education due mid-2013.

Regional Statistics

Program Manager

Gemma van Halderen
Demography, Regional &
Social Analysis Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	1.7
Full Costs	3.0

% of total costs 0.5%

Staff Usage 12 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	1.3
2013–2014	1.3
2014–2015	1.4
2015–2016	1.4

References

Under Topics @ a Glance,
select Regional

Under Regional Statistics
select Regional Profiles or
Regional Releases

Other references

*Information Paper: Regional
Research in Australia – the
Statistical Dimension: an
Information Development
Plan for Rural and Regional
Statistics* (ABS cat. no.
1362.0)

National Regional Profile
(ABS cat. no. 1379.0.55.001)

Objectives

The Regional Statistics Program aims to understand and support high priority emerging needs for regional statistics through providing relevant analyses, products and services. Regional data may include data relating to cities, urban, rural or remote areas. Activities undertaken under the program include improving access to, and dissemination of, ABS data and data from other sources and developing new indicators.

The activities of the Regional Statistics Program are led by the Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre, and is delivered through collaboration with many areas of the ABS which contribute regional data or analysis on a wide range of topics across economic, environment and social statistics. 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. All three tiers of government require regional data so ABS actively engages with the Australian Government, State and Local governments to understand and support regional data needs. The main focal point for engagement with the Australian Government is with the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport. The ABS also engages with a wide range of data users to provide professional advice to help data users to decide what regional data to use for analysis and to understand statistical issues that may arise in regional analyses (e.g. time series or data quality issues).

Over the next four years, a particular focus of this program will be on improving access to regional data and supporting users in the transition to the new ABS standard geography (Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS)). In the next two years, the regional analysis program will focus on making the best use of the 2011 ABS Census of Population and Housing to support regional policy analysis. An ongoing focus will be on utilising administrative data maintained by Australian, State and Territory government agencies, where data have a location identifier with the potential to be used to improve availability of regional data and in presenting the data spatially.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ the *National Regional Profile* (ABS cat. no. 1379.0.55.001), a web-based suite of statistics for regions containing data spanning five years and updated at least annually
- ▶ estimates and indicators from administrative data, such as the Australian Taxation Office personal income tax data, and data on customers of Centrelink and other agencies
- ▶ *Perspectives on Regional Australia* (ABS cat. nos: 1380.0.55.001, 1380.0.55.002, and subsequent), a series of publications analysing, at varying geographic levels, a range of topics with a particular focus on regions in Australia

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ actively engage with key data users to understand emerging priority data needs for regional statistics – ongoing
- ▶ build collaborative working arrangements with users and producers of regional statistics – ongoing
- ▶ improve ABS dissemination of information about regional data access and availability through the Regional Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website, Perspectives on Regions articles, and other appropriate avenues, such as through client networks, conferences, seminars and workshops – ongoing
- ▶ deliver an improved National Regional Profile product by progressively building in more flexibility for users to more easily access and use whatever data is available for the regions they are interested in – ongoing
- ▶ provide analysis and guidance to demonstrate how the new ASGS can be applied to a range of different regional analysis – such as analysis of local economies, social conditions or service access – ongoing.

Census of Population and Housing

Program Managers

Andrew Henderson
Assistant Statistician
Census 2011

Duncan Young
Assistant Statistician
2016 Census

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	234.6
Full Costs	309.5
% of total costs	49.3%

Staff Usage 758 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	24.9
2013–2014	17.5
2014–2015	30.9
2015–2016	89.0

References

A wide range of reference and product information, and selected census data, are available from the ABS **website** at www.abs.gov.au/census

Objectives

The Census program conducts a five-yearly Census of Population and Housing. The program aims to accurately and efficiently measure the number and key characteristics of people in Australia on Census night. This provides a reliable basis to estimate the population of each State, Territory and local government area, primarily for electoral purposes (including determining the number of seats allocated to each State and Territory in the House of Representatives) and for distribution of government funds (Goods and Services Tax revenue) to each State and Territory.

The Census of Population and Housing is the only source of detailed statistics of the numbers and characteristics of the population and its housing within small geographic areas and for small population groups, covering the whole of Australia. This information supports the planning, administration, policy development and evaluation activities of government, business and others. The most recent Census was conducted in 2011 and first results were released on 21 June 2012.

Outputs

Online Products

- ▶ Census of Population and Housing data can be accessed via a range of online tools found on the ABS website. These include products such as QuickStats and Community Profiles in which Census data are displayed based upon selected location and topic of interest, and can be viewed in different formats including thematic maps or tables
- ▶ TableBuilder Basic: users can create their own tables on a range of topics such as age, education, housing, income, transport, religion, ethnicity, occupation and more. All Census geographies are available
- ▶ Table Builder PRO: users can construct their own tables via an interactive web interface, using a database containing the Census Output Record File. A range of person, family and dwelling classifications is available for users to analyse and output can be made available in tabular, graphical or map based format.

Other Products

- ▶ The Census sample files are comprehensive 1% (Basic) and 5% (Expanded) Confidentialised Unit Record Files. These files contain Census characteristics for a random sample of respondents on a person, family, household and dwelling basis.
- ▶ Census data packs containing Census of Population and Housing data, down to Statistical Area 1 (SA1) District level, and digital boundaries in generic format. These will be available for download from the ABS Website.
- ▶ Socio-economic Indexes for Areas, contains indexes to allow ranking of regions/areas, providing a method of determining the level of social and economic well-being of that region.
- ▶ A 5% Statistical Longitudinal Census Dataset which 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.

Customised Data Services

Where users' specialised information needs cannot be met by standard products, customised data services are available through ABS Information Consultancy.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ publish second release results from the 2011 Census (following first release in June 2012) – due October 2012
- ▶ commence re-engineering of Census enumeration model and building new infrastructure to support the change – due July 2012
- ▶ commence public consultation on content and procedures of 2016 Census – due October 2012
- ▶ develop a comprehensive register of addresses for use as part of the re-engineered Census enumeration model and to support sampling for ABS household surveys – due January 2014
- ▶ as part of the new ABS 2017 Program Delivery Division, develop selected components of new standardised, integrated systems for collection, processing and dissemination of ABS data – due August 2014
- ▶ conduct a major test of 2016 Census – due August 2014.

Health and Disability

Program Managers

David Zago
Assistant Statistician
Health and Disability Branch
AJ Lanyon
Health and Vitals Unit

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	12.2
Full Costs	16.8
% of total costs	2.7%
Staff Usage	76 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	10.5
2013–2014	6.5
2014–2015	4.5
2015–2016	4.7

Objectives

The Health and Disability Program provides information about aspects of the health of Australia's population, and about health related services. This includes statistics relating to health status (including causes of death), patient experiences, disability, health risk factors and impacts on sub-groups within the population.

Statistics on health and disability describe an important aspect of wellbeing, which can impact on people's capacity to participate in the labour force, and more broadly in the community. Changes in the levels of health measures, such as health conditions, risk factors, and disability, can inform both the development of interventions for prevention and care, and the need for related services over time. These statistics support the policy development, program delivery and evaluation of key government and non-government agencies involved in health, community and family services. They provide information on the impacts of programs and service provision, and can be used to assess areas of unmet need. They are heavily used in research related to health and community issues.

Clients of the program include Australian government agencies including the Departments of: Health and Ageing; and Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs; the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, State and Territory government agencies, academic and research institutions, social welfare organisations providing health and disability services and the general public.

Outputs

The program produces a range of outputs including: frameworks and standards; information development plans; statistics and associated Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs); information/technical papers; guides and analytical articles.

Specifically, the outputs of the program include:

- ▶ information on the health status of the population which focus on particular conditions, risk factors outcomes and population groups
- ▶ information on causes of death based on the International Classification of Diseases – Version 10 (ICD-10) published annually in *Causes of Death, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3303.0)
- ▶ information on the interaction of health services and their clients through the Patient Experience Surveys, *Health Services: Patient Experiences in Australia* (ABS. cat. no. 4839.0)
- ▶ information on the structure and operations of the Private Hospital Sector through the Private Hospitals Expenditure Collection
- ▶ information on the nature and extent of disability and associated needs for care and support, as well as the circumstances of carers
- ▶ provision of expertise, advice and data in supporting performance monitoring for a range of government activities – Council of Australian Governments (COAG) National Healthcare and Disability Agreements, Report on Government Services, National Health Performance Framework
- ▶ advice and contributions to key government advisory groups on health and disability information.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ analyse the results from the 2011–12 Patient Experience Survey – results due November 2012
- ▶ redevelop the 2013-14 Patient Experience survey – due March 2013
- ▶ conduct the 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers – from mid-2012
- ▶ redevelop the 2015 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers – due mid-2015
- ▶ analyse first results from the Australian Health Survey – from October 2012
- ▶ undertake the Australian Health Survey, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander wave – from April 2012
- ▶ undertake long-term planning for the next rounds of the Australian Health Survey – during 2012-13
- ▶ contribute to the development and implementation of the World Health Organisations' International Classification of Diseases – Version 11, for use in mortality and morbidity coding in Australia – ongoing
- ▶ support the development of performance indicators for the revised COAG National Healthcare Agreement, the National Health Reform Performance Framework, the National Health Performance Authority and the Australian National Health Prevention Agency – ongoing
- ▶ facilitate the publication and distribution of causes of death information in consultation with the Australian Co-ordinating Registrar and State and Territory Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages – ongoing .

Education and Training

Program Manager

Christine Williams
Assistant Statistician
Education and Data
Integration Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	6.8
Full Costs	10.8
% of total costs	1.7%
Staff Usage	59 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	5.5
2013–2014	5.1
2014–2015	4.5
2015–2016	4.1

Objectives

The Education and Training Program covers the activities of the National Centre for Education and Training Statistics (NCETS), which includes the development and compilation of statistics from national administrative collections and the conduct of a number of surveys relevant to learning in Australia.

Key elements of the program include the annual National Schools Statistics Collection, the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection, and regular household surveys related to child care, education, training and work. The ABS is leading national discussions and undertaking feasibility testing for an Australian Longitudinal Learning Database, envisaged as an enduring national research base of education and training information across the life course. In partnership with other relevant government agencies, NCETS promotes greater comparability of information across the education and training sectors and addresses issues such as data standards, collaboration, efficiency and resource use. In addition to these activities, the ABS analyses data and provides feedback and advice to stakeholders on relevant topics and emerging issues.

NCETS is closely involved in supporting the information needs of the Council Of Australian Governments (COAG) and other national reporting processes.

The main clients of the program are: the Standing Councils responsible for early childhood development, education, skills and employment; the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; the Department of Innovation, Industry, Research and Tertiary Education; state and territory government departments responsible for education, training and early childhood development; the National Centre for Vocational Education Research; and academic and research institutions. NCETS provides the Secretariat for the Strategic Cross-sectoral Data Committee which promotes data sharing and integration across early childhood education, schooling, vocational education and higher education.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ statistics from the National Schools Statistics Collection and the National Early Childhood Education and Care Collection
- ▶ summary publications, Confidentialised Unit Record Files and datacubes from regular household surveys such as the Survey of Education and Work, the Survey of Learning and Work and the Childhood Education and Care Survey
- ▶ analytical and comparative analysis of data for the indicators relevant to COAG National Agreements
- ▶ a statistical information and dissemination service for education and training statistics; and periodic snapshots on thematic issues
- ▶ statistical leadership, including engaging with clients through committee representation, state liaison officers, and occasional research papers.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ conduct and publish results from the 2011 Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies – due 2013
- ▶ undertake 2011 Census Data Quality Studies designed to test linkage between Census and data from the education sector – due 2013
- ▶ develop, conduct and publish results from a new survey of work-related training and adult learning – due 2015
- ▶ increase the amount of student level enrolment information collected through the National Schools Statistics Collection – ongoing
- ▶ expand and enhance education and training collections, through a collaborative program of work to link data and create a longitudinal learning database – ongoing.

Crime and Justice Statistics

Program Manager

Lane Masterton
Crime and Justice Statistics

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	2.2
Full Costs	5.2

% of total costs 0.8%

Staff Usage 21 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	2.2
2013–2014	2.2
2014–2015	2.3
2015–2016	2.3

Objectives

The Crime and Justice Statistics Program leads national statistical activity aimed at developing and improving information in this field. The program covers the activities of the National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics comprising 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 undertakes a survey program in the field of crime and justice statistics. This includes 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 are the Australian Government Attorney-General's Department, State and Territory agencies responsible for police services, courts administration and corrective services, and organisations undertaking criminal justice research.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ indicators of the level and nature of recorded crime victimisation in Australia presented annually in *Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4510.0)
- ▶ annual survey-based victimisation information for selected personal and household offences, and information on feelings of personal safety, presented in *Crime Victimisation, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4530.0)
- ▶ characteristics of alleged offenders who have been proceeded against by police, including offence information, available annually from 2007–08 in *Recorded Crime – Offenders, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4519.0)
- ▶ characteristics of defendants, including information on their offences and sentences, available annually in *Criminal Courts, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4513.0) and characteristics of federal defendants available annually in *Federal Defendants, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4515.0)
- ▶ information from the National Prisoner Census on persons held in adult prisons, including their characteristics, sentence lengths and offences for which they are imprisoned, published annually in *Prisoners in Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4517.0)
- ▶ quarterly *Corrective Services, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4512.0), which presents information on numbers and rates of persons in custody and those serving community-based corrections orders
- ▶ outputs to promote national standards for crime and justice statistics; recent examples include revised classifications such as the Australian and New Zealand Standard Offence Classification and the National Offence Index, the development of a national crime recording standard for police statistics, and the family and domestic violence conceptual framework
- ▶ outputs to explore different ways of looking at crime and justice statistics, through publication of short articles in the *Crime and Justice In Focus series* (cat. no. 4524.0)
- ▶ outputs to promote the effective use of crime and justice statistics, such as the *Directory of Family Violence Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 4533.0) and the *Information Paper: Measuring Victims of Crime: A Guide to Using Administrative and Survey data* (ABS cat. no. 4500.0.55.001).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ develop a conceptual framework for Cybercrime – due 2011–12
- ▶ conduct a feasibility study on sentence quantum as part of the criminal courts collection – due late 2012
- ▶ undertake topic development for the annual crime victimisation survey program – ongoing
- ▶ in collaboration with data providers, improve the range, quality and availability of data collected through administrative systems in police, courts and corrective services sectors with a focus on improving Indigenous identification – ongoing
- ▶ support evidence base development projects across crime and justice areas through assistance and advice to related agencies in key areas of statistical need such as family and domestic violence and the civil justice system – ongoing
- ▶ support efforts to improve information on substance use and ethnicity in relation to crime, justice and recidivism – ongoing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

Program Manager

Tom Joseph
Aboriginal & Torres Strait
Islander Statistics

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	3.7
Full Costs	8.7
% of total costs	1.4%
Staff Usage	33 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	4.1
2013–2014	4.2
2014–2015	3.0
2015–2016	3.0

Objectives

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics Program covers the activities of the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (NCATSIS), the development and conduct of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander surveys, and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics produced by the ABS. NCATSIS has responsibility for leadership and coordination of national statistical activity about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, both across the ABS and more broadly. This includes consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and working in collaboration with a range of government and non government agencies to ensure relevance of its statistical program.

NCATSIS undertakes and reports on analyses of data on topics of major social significance. NCATSIS plays a role in data development, and implements an Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy (ICES) to facilitate the return of information to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations and maintain dialogue on data collection and use.

The key elements in the program include: the development, conduct and dissemination of results from the six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and the six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS); enumeration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing; and production of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population estimates and associated life-expectancy estimates following each Census. The main clients of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics program are government agencies, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations, and research institutions.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ products from the Census of Population and Housing, such as *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS cat. no. 4713.0)
- ▶ products from surveys such as *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey* (ABS cat. no. 4715.0) and *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey* (ABS cat. no. 4714.0)
- ▶ reports on statistical research and analysis for a range of audiences (government, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their communities, researchers and the general public), including *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (ABS cat. no. 4704.0)
- ▶ statistical leadership to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics on population, mortality, health, housing, community services, education, employment, and law and justice;
- ▶ provision of subject matter expertise to other areas of the ABS conducting data collections, or analysing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander data
- ▶ coordination and promotion of improvements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics from administrative collections
- ▶ prioritisation and coordination of the Indigenous Community Engagement Program.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ deliver data quality improvements for the Census of Population and Housing and key administrative data sets as agreed in the Council of Australian Governments' National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Schedule F) – ongoing to 2013
- ▶ develop, conduct and disseminate results from the 2014 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey – due 2015
- ▶ continue to strengthen the ICES to build stronger relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities; to increase their statistical capacity and manage provider load on communities – ongoing
- ▶ support work on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics in the broader ABS work program including the updating of population estimates, projections and life expectancy following the 2011 Census, and initial work on defining and measuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business activity – ongoing
- ▶ work in collaboration with clients to ensure informed use of ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics, including those required for performance monitoring of Council of Australian Governments' reform initiatives, the Report on Government Services, Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework – ongoing.

Social Conditions

Program Manager

Bob McColl
Assistant Statistician
Social Conditions Statistics
Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	10.8
Full Costs	25.8
% of total costs	4.1%
Staff Usage	86 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	11.3
2013–2014	10.4
2014–2015	9.4
2015–2016	12.0

Objectives

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. It provides statistics covering a range of topics including income, expenditure, wealth, housing, superannuation, families, 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 social security, taxation, housing, homelessness, community and family services, and issues related to older people, children, youth, men and women.

Outputs

The program produces a range of outputs including: frameworks and standards; information development plans; statistics and associated Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs); information/technical papers; guides and analytical articles.

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ from the Survey of Income and Housing, and the Household Expenditure Survey: *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 652 3.0); *Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results* (ABS cat. no. 6530.0); *Household Wealth and Wealth Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6554.0); *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0); *Housing Mobility and Conditions, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.002); and *Government Benefits, Taxes and Household Income* (ABS cat. no. 6537.0)
- ▶ from the Work, Life and Family Survey: *Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6361.0); *How Australians Use Their Time* (ABS cat. no. 4153.0); and *Unpaid Work and the Australian Economy* (ABS cat. no. 5240.0)
- ▶ from the General Social Survey: a profile of the socio-economic characteristics of Australia's adult population with data on a range of social dimensions of the community, published in *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0); and *Voluntary Work, Australia, 2010* (cat. no. 44441.0)
- ▶ from the Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers: *Caring in the Community, Australia, 2009* (cat. no. 4436.0)
- ▶ the six monthly *Gender Indicators, Australia*, (cat. no. 4125.0)
- ▶ from monthly population survey components: *Family Characteristics and Transitions, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4442.0), and *Pregnancy and Employment Transitions, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4913.0)
- ▶ the Discussion Paper: *Methodological Review of Counting the Homeless, 2006* (ABS cat. no. 2050.0.55.001) and Position paper – *Methodological Review of Counting the Homeless, 2006* (cat. no. 2050.0.55.002)
- ▶ publication of Second Edition of the international statistical standard *Canberra Group Handbook on Household Income Statistics* in December 2011, lead by the Australian Bureau of Statistics; and
- ▶ annual information on registered marriages and divorces granted in *Marriages and Divorces, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3310.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ publish new income imputation results for the Census – due June 2012
- ▶ publish estimates from the 2011 Census on the number of people enumerated in the Census that were likely to have been homeless on Census night – due November 2012
- ▶ as chair of an OECD expert group, and significant work program contributor, lead and coordinate the development of international household wealth standards and guidelines and the development of an integrated framework for household income, consumption and wealth statistics – due December 2012
- ▶ as chair of an international task force, lead and coordinate practical guidance on measurement issues related to time use surveys – due end 2012
- ▶ as a member, contribute to the international task force on gender indicator development – due end 2012
- ▶ develop new standards for use in the 2016 Census for families and housing – due mid 2013
- ▶ develop, and publish results from: the 2012 Personal Safety Survey (due June 2013); 2012 Household Energy Consumption Survey (due September 2013); the 2011–12 and 2013–14 cycles of Survey of Income and Housing (due mid 2013 and April 2015 respectively); the 2012 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, *Caring in the Community* results (end 2013); the 2014 general Social Survey (due April 2015); the 2013 Work Life and Family Survey (due August 2014); and develop the 2015–16 Household Income and Expenditure Surveys
- ▶ publish an Australian framework for statistics on household income, expenditure and wealth – due May 2013.

Culture and Recreation

Program Manager

Christine Williams
Assistant Statistician
Education and Data
Integration Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	0.8
Full Costs	0.9
% of total costs	0.1%
Staff Usage	8 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	0.9
2013–2014	0.9
2014–2015	1.0
2015–2016	1.0

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then Culture
and Recreation

Objectives

The Culture and Recreation Program covers the activities of the ABS National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics (NCCRS). NCCRS has responsibility for the leadership and coordination of national statistical activity in the fields of culture, sport and leisure. It also provides expertise within the ABS regarding the collection of relevant data, as well as informing governments and the community about culture, sport and leisure statistics, relevant classifications and standards, and appropriate data analysis.

The main clients of the program are the Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts and Sport, other Australian government agencies (including the Australia Council, Screen Australia, and the Australian Sports Commission), the Committee of Australian Sport and Recreation Officials (CASRO) and the Culture Statistics Working Group. In addition, the client group extends to state and territory government departments responsible for culture and sport, as well as relevant industry bodies.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ statistical activities that develop and promote national standards, frameworks, classifications and definitions for culture and recreation statistics
- ▶ the development, coordination and specification of statistical data needs as articulated in the *Arts and Cultural Heritage Information Development Plan* (ABS cat. no. 4915.0.55.002), and ongoing liaison with data users regarding their needs
- ▶ a statistical information and dissemination service for culture, sport and leisure data, including: the provision of reports and compendium publications that use data from ABS collections; Topics @ a Glance pages for both Culture and Sport and Physical Recreation on the ABS website; and a regular newsletter
- ▶ a statistical service responsible for developing data collections, analysing data and releasing data on: government funding for cultural activities; children's participation in cultural and leisure activities; participation in sport and physical recreation; attendance at culture and sport venues; cultural participation
- ▶ the provision of advice to clients, including inter-agency statistical working groups involved in the culture and sport sectors.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ review data needs for sport and physical recreation data, focussing on the collection of high priority sport participation and exercise data with the discussion paper *Defining Sport and Exercise, a Conceptual Model* (ABS cat. no. 4149.0) informing development of future collections – ongoing
- ▶ analyse culture and sport data from various ABS household surveys, including: the General Social Survey; Children's Participation in Culture and Leisure Activities; Cultural Participation; Participation in Sports and Physical Recreation; and the National Health Survey – ongoing
- ▶ conduct a biennial Participation in Sport and Physical Recreation survey with support from the Australian Sports Commission and CASRO – ongoing
- ▶ increase the standardisation of culture and sport statistical sources by leading the development of relevant standards – ongoing.

Social and Progress Reporting

Program Manager

Gemma Van Halderen
Assistant Statistician
Social Data Integration and
Analysis Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	7.2
Full Costs	10.6
% of total costs	1.7%
Staff Usage	60 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	7.6
2013–2014	7.8
2014–2015	6.4
2015–2016	6.3

Objectives

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 include analysis of current circumstances, how circumstances have changed over time, how different groups of people have been affected, and how various factors may have accounted for observed trends. The reports provide information on the well-being 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.

The program is also responsible for providing leadership and coordination relating to the conceptual organisation of social statistics including the overall social statistics framework and related conceptual models. The framework's two primary dimensions, areas of social concern and population groups, are central to ABS social statistics collection and reporting activity.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are reports that take a cross-cutting approach and bring together information on the situation of Australians across a range of areas of concern and for a variety of population groups of interest. The reports describe key aspects of Australian life and how these are changing over time.

The key outputs are:

- ▶ *Australian Social Trends* (ABS cat. no. 4102.0), a quarterly flagship publication that contains articles on contemporary social issues and a range of social indicators covering major areas of social concern (such as health, education, work, and family and community)
- ▶ *Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP)* (ABS cat. no. 1370.0), an annual web-based product that presents a national summary of economic, social and environmental progress through indicators, descriptive text and, from 2010, a dashboard display of key indicators to help readers assess, at a glance, whether life in Australia is getting better.

Other outputs include:

- ▶ reports of analysis of social data sets that address technical and social issues and contribute to the work program of the ABS's Analytical Community.
- ▶ short audio podcasts of *Australian Social Trends* (AST) articles, extending the reach of AST through a multi-channel or modal approach

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ under the guidance of the Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP) Expert Reference Group, report on the major consultation undertaken during 2011 which aimed to identify what societal progress means to Australians. The report will describe the consultation process itself, and the outcomes of the consultation. It will be released in the second half of 2012, and will contribute to the fourth World Forum on the Progress of Societies to be held in New Delhi, India – due 2012
- ▶ under the guidance of the MAP Expert Reference Group, further develop the conceptual foundation for progress as the basis of the next version of the MAP product and in the context of Australia's high level involvement in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Global Project on Progress – due 2013
- ▶ under the guidance of the MAP Expert Reference Group, develop the next generation of MAP that incorporates the outcomes of the 2011 consultation process and includes the development of a new, user friendly web interface – due 2013
- ▶ continue the quarterly publication of *Australian Social Trends* (ABS cat. no. 4102.0), ensuring that the articles and social indicators reflect current and emerging social concerns and that the delivery of the publication through the web is kept up to date and is engaging for stakeholders – ongoing
- ▶ further strengthen the analytical value of the ABS's rich data holdings through research and development papers and working collaboratively with a range of internal and external stakeholders – ongoing.

Migrant Statistics

Program Manager

Christine Williams
Assistant Statistician
Education and Data
Integration Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	0.7
Full Costs	1.4
% of total costs	0.2%
Staff Usage	7 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	0.8
2013–2014	0.8
2014–2015	0.8
2015–2016	0.8

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then Migrant
& Ethnicity

Objectives

The Migrant Statistics Program covers the activities of the ABS National Migrant Statistics Unit, which has a focus on temporary and permanent migrant settlement within Australia. The unit develops and compiles a range of survey and administrative data outputs relevant to migrants. Activities include understanding current and emerging policy issues and debates, and determining appropriate statistics to inform decision making relevant to migrants and diverse ethnic groups. The program also provides expertise more broadly within the ABS regarding the collection of data, as well as informing governments and the community about migrant and ethnicity statistics, relevant classifications and standards, and appropriate data analysis.

The major stakeholders of the program are the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the various Australian, state and territory government agencies providing services to migrant and ethnic groups.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ the triennial *Characteristics of Recent Migrants, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6250.0)
- ▶ the *Guide to Migrant Statistical Sources* (ABS cat no. 3414.0), which contains information about ABS and non-ABS statistical data
- ▶ the *Migrant Data Matrices* (ABS cat. no. 3415.0), which compiles a range of ABS data relevant to migrants in one location.
- ▶ the *Perspectives on Migrants* (ABS cat. no. 3416.0) series, which provides an analysis of data from the ABS and other sources to provide a more comprehensive picture of migrants
- ▶ Migrant and Ethnicity Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website
- ▶ statistical activities aimed at promoting and developing national standards such as frameworks, classifications and definitions (e.g. *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity* (ABS cat. no. 1289.0))
- ▶ the coordination and specification of statistical data needs through consultation with data users and, where appropriate, undertaking development work to meet those needs
- ▶ the coordination of ABS activity to ensure that issues relevant to migrants are taken into account in statistical development activities.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ undertake the ABS 2011 Census Data Enhancement project to link Census data to migrant settlement records, including subsequent quality assessment, analysis and dissemination of data from the project – ongoing
- ▶ undertake a pilot project to link Australian Taxation Office data to migrant settlement records, including subsequent quality assessment and analysis of data from the project – ongoing
- ▶ explore, assess and utilise administrative data held within other government agencies for statistical purposes – ongoing
- ▶ explore, assess and utilise the administrative data holdings of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and undertake collaborative projects focussed on statistical development – ongoing.

Analytical Services

Program Manager

Melissa Gare
(A/g) Assistant Statistician
Analytical Services Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	7.3
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-
Staff Usage	55 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	4.4
2013–2014	3.6
2014–2015	3.9
2015–2016	3.6

Objectives

The Analytical Services Program develops new analytical products and provides analysis services to producers and users of social and economic data. Its major areas of focus are time series analysis (including seasonal adjustment); the construction and interpretation of socio-economic indexes; the development of data confidentiality methodology; and general modelling and analysis of data from statistical collections. The program also provides a statistical consultancy service to other government agencies.

By providing new and innovative analytical products, the program contributes to improving the ABS's statistical outputs and helps to inform evidence based decision making. Data confidentiality methods, especially when applied to microdata files, allow researchers outside the ABS to construct analytical outputs of their own choice.

Time series in seasonally adjusted and trend form are an important input to policy formation, decision making and research in government, academia and the private sector. Government users include Australian government economic policy agencies (especially the Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia), State Treasuries, the Australian Government, State and Territory Governments, and local government service delivery agencies.

Outputs

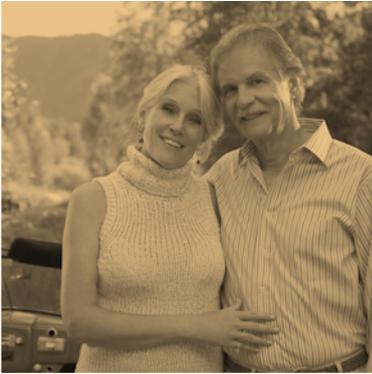
The main outputs of the Analytical Services Program include specialist analytical support for improving existing ABS methodology, and the development of new analytical products for potential dissemination to data users and others in the National Statistical Service. The program develops a range of analytical products including new time series, analytical frameworks, databases and models to measure socio-economic concepts. The program undertakes ongoing methodological development work to improve user access to information in microdata files and tabular outputs while protecting the confidentiality of individual providers.

The outputs of this work are disseminated via a series of *Research Papers* (ABS cat. no. 1351.0). These papers may contain analytical work in preliminary stages, in order to stimulate discussion and feedback. Time series products and analyses appear in many ABS publications on a regular basis.

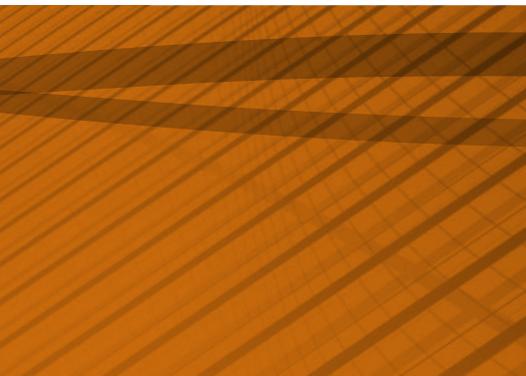
Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ research techniques for improving the seasonal adjustment processes by applying appropriate transformation and automated modelling of time series – due June 2013.
- ▶ construct and analyse socio-economic indexes from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing – due December 2012
- ▶ develop data confidentiality methods, and implement a web-based application, that will enable researchers to remotely access, process and analyse detailed microdata from household surveys, administrative and linked data sources – June 2013
- ▶ develop methodology for linkage of multiple datasets and analysis of linked data to support statistical data integration – due December 2013
- ▶ undertake analyses that demonstrate the power of datasets held by the ABS, including administrative data and transactional data – due June 2014



Infrastructure Programs



Geography

Program Manager

Gemma van Halderen
Assistant Statistician
Social Data Integration and
Analysis Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	2.8
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-
Staff Usage	19 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	3.1
2013–2014	2.6
2014–2015	1.0
2015–2016	1.0

Objectives

The key objectives of the Geography Program are to provide leadership in the development and use of standard geographies (such as definitions of urban, regional, remoteness, capital cities and statistical areas) as well as providing geospatial capability, standards and procedures used in the production of spatial statistics. Together these activities form a “statistical spatial framework” which will enable the integration of statistical data within a geographical context.

Specific objectives are to:

- ▶ lead the development and implementation of the Australian Statistical Geography Standard within the ABS and key government agencies, and to further develop and promote the Statistical Spatial Framework nationally as a mechanism for spatially integrating administrative data
- ▶ provide advice within the ABS and to other agencies on statistical geography and the Statistical Spatial Framework
- ▶ develop and apply geospatial capability, standards and processes to improve the collection, production, dissemination and integration of spatial statistics, and
- ▶ provide corporate geospatial data management, infrastructure, geographic analysis, mapping and geospatial support services.

Outputs

The program’s key output is the publication of a series of standards, including geographic boundaries known collectively as the *Australian Statistical Geography Standard*. Major publications include:

- ▶ The Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS)
 - Volume 1 – Main Structure and Greater Capital City Statistical Area* (ABS cat. no 1270.0.55.001)
 - Volume 2 – Indigenous Structure* (ABS cat. no 1270.0.55.002)
 - Volume 3 – Non ABS Structures* (ABS cat. no 1270.0.55.003)
 - Volume 4 – Significant Urban Areas, Urban Centres and Localities and Section of State* (ABS cat. no 1270.0.55.004)
 - Volume 5 – Remoteness Structure* (ABS cat. no 1270.0.55.005)
 - Volume 6 – Correspondences* (ABS cat. no 1270.0.55.006)

A web portal (www.abs.gov.au/geography) is also maintained that provides information on geographic classifications and supporting information.

Within the ABS, the program provides advice and support services, including:

- ▶ maintenance of the ABS Master Spatial Database, including incorporation of additional new sources of data
- ▶ providing enterprise geospatial capability including the corporate address coder and interactive spatial coder, and elements of the Basic Address Register
- ▶ geospatial support for the execution of the Census of Population and Housing and the Agricultural Census, and production of environmental accounts
- ▶ supporting the Statistical Spatial Framework Steering Committee.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ complete the development and lead the implementation of the ASGS – ongoing
- ▶ further develop and promote the Statistical Spatial Framework within the Australian government and nationally as a mechanism for spatially integrating administrative data – ongoing
- ▶ lead the engagement activities to improve Australia’s statistical geography infrastructure and support the development of international infrastructures – ongoing
- ▶ undertake a thorough evaluation of the Geocoded National Address File (G-NAF) to inform the development and application of the Basic Address Register – Dec 2013
- ▶ undertake an evaluation of new imagery sources to support Census 2016 and other initiatives – Dec 2014
- ▶ develop new procedures to support the 2016 Censuses of Population and Housing and Agriculture, the Carbon Farming Initiative, production of Land Accounts and other ABS initiatives – Dec 2015
- ▶ lead the development of a geospatial infrastructure enhancement plan – ongoing.

Data Standards and Methods

Program Manager

Michael Beahan
Assistant Statistician
Data Standards and
Methods Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	4.2
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-
Staff Usage	36 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	3.8
2013–2014	4.0
2014–2015	3.6
2015–2016	3.6

Objectives

The Data Standards and Methods Program provides critical 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 delivery capability, and provide statistical information management leadership to the external statistical community.

The program seeks to achieve this by:

- ▶ setting and reviewing ABS policies and principles for key statistical collection methods, standards and classifications, and for data and metadata management best practice
- ▶ planning and monitoring developments in the application of the corporate information architecture
- ▶ developing, maintaining and reviewing infrastructure used to hold key definitional metadata (e.g. classifications and standards) and to store statistical data from which ABS outputs are sourced
- ▶ providing leadership and expertise in the development and implementation of statistical and data management standards, practices and procedures within the ABS and National Statistical Service (NSS).

Outputs

Key outputs from the program cover the following areas:

- ▶ development and maintenance of key national standards on statistical units, concepts, definitions, methods, questions and classifications that underpin population, social, economic and environmental statistics
- ▶ development and maintenance of key infrastructure and processes across ABS collections, including the Information Warehouse and Corporate Metadata Repository
- ▶ data management policies and best practice expertise to internal stakeholders
- ▶ data management and metadata guidelines and expertise for the NSS
- ▶ policy and technical research on emerging information architecture and related infrastructure issues
- ▶ autocoding facilities and computer assisted coding indexes
- ▶ training and assistance to subject matter areas in the use and/or development of statistical collection methods, standards and associated tools for their implementation
- ▶ design, develop and implement data and metadata management models, practices and policies for the NSS.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ review the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) to ensure that it remains relevant by identifying emerging occupations – due June 2014
- ▶ develop the next generation of coding tools, processes and procedures – due June 2014
- ▶ improve the methodology for conduct and processing of Census of Population and Housing, for implementation in the 2016 Census – due June 2013
- ▶ implement updates to the 2006 Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC 06) to ensure that it remains relevant by identifying emerging industries – due December 2014
- ▶ provide advice on standards for exchange of data within the ABS and NSS as part of the ABS 2017 Program – due June 2013
- ▶ establish international statistical standards and classifications development and maintenance processes as part of the IMTP – due June 2014
- ▶ promulgate relevant standards for population, social, economic and environmental statistics on the ABS intranet and the ABS website – ongoing
- ▶ undertake and advise pathfinder projects to evaluate the application of the Data Documentation Initiative and Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange standards to the ABS information environment – ongoing
- ▶ contribute to the development of the ABS enterprise architecture by developing information management policies and guidelines – ongoing
- ▶ develop and implement best practices and standards for collecting survey data by web-forms and other electronic modes – ongoing
- ▶ re-develop, align and integrate key data and metadata management infrastructure with mainstream input processing, output production and data archiving systems as part of the implementation of ABS 2017 – ongoing.

ABS 2017 Program Management Office

Program Manager

Greg Amie-Fong
Assistant Statistician
Program Management Office

Objectives

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. These four functions will service the various ABS divisions and specifically the ABS 2017 change program with the critical skills and support required to achieve their outcomes by ensuring:

- ▶ 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.

Outputs

The main outputs will be:

- ▶ building project management capability, compliant with the Portfolio, Programme, Project Management Maturity Model (P3M3) standard
- ▶ to establish Business Process Management capability across the ABS to support investment decision making and performance reporting
- ▶ business analysis and process re-engineering services, delivering optimised business processes to the ABS
- ▶ standardised program reports and a project management service (including leadership in concepts, processes and templates) to support the program board and the ABS 2017 program dossier
- ▶ an ABS 2017 Program Plan, including agreed governance model, objectives, outcomes and outputs
- ▶ an integrated program schedule (eg outputs, deliverables, and timeframes) and visual roadmap
- ▶ a high level change management plan including communication and stakeholder engagement components that will be delivered in phases over the duration of the ABS 2017 program.

Developments

The main medium-term developments are to:

- ▶ operationalise the new ABS 2017 Program governance model and review its fitness for purpose in six months
- ▶ design and implement Program support strategies to:
 1. optimise the ABS 2017 ongoing monthly reporting to the ABS 2017 and strategic investment program board
 2. prepare an integrated schedule of the program dossier (eg outputs, deliverables, and timeframes)
 3. conduct robust costs and savings analysis, identifying dependancies to inform ABS 2017 Program Board decisions
 4. devise and operationalise communication and engagement plans, opening new channels for communicating ABS 2017 developments
 5. build capability in the key enabling areas of business process analysis and re-engineering, project management and change management, providing training where appropriate (eg through XPL, Diploma in Project Management)
 6. improve rigour, processes and tools, compliance to standards and embed 'best practice' particularly in relation to business process analysis and re-engineering and project management.

ABS 2017 Program Design and Infrastructure Division

Program Manager

Gillian Nicoll
Assistant Statistician
Program Infrastructure Branch

Objectives

The strategic objective of the ABS 2017 Program Design and Infrastructure Division is to support the ABS 2017 objectives on efficiency, effectiveness and first successful digital census by leading the design, development and implementation of new statistical business models, information management governance, infrastructure and standards, and metadata driven processes that encompasses the life-cycle management of data and metadata assets.

The Division is responsible for leading the design and information infrastructure strategy for transforming the ABS business to meet its strategic objectives. Working in collaboration with Technology Services Division, Methodology and Data Management Division and the two other areas of ABS 2017 Group, the Division will lead the development of:

- ▶ an enterprise architecture; and
- ▶ statistical information management governance, infrastructure and standards.

In addition, the Program is also coordinating an international collaboration initiative that shares expertise and resources to deliver co-designed and co-developed projects that aim to harmonise statistical methods and tools internationally. This includes developing the Generic Statistical Information Model, Web Collection Capability and Dissemination Platform. The Program also provides Secretariat support for a Statistical Network of National Statistical Offices of 6 countries established to develop strategies for international collaboration.

Outputs

The program has the following main outputs:

- ▶ An enterprise architecture model that defines the future ABS business model and how to get there
- ▶ Re-engineered business processes and applications to support standardisation, integration, better information management and reuse within the ABS
- ▶ Information Management frameworks, standards and governance
- ▶ Core Information Management infrastructure.

Developments

The main medium term developments are to:

- ▶ Develop a strategy for the ABS transformation program to support the ABS 2017 objectives – due 2012–2013.
- ▶ Develop, design and oversee the implication of enterprise applications that support plug and play, connectivity and re-use of applications – due 2012–13 to 2014–15.
- ▶ Develop and implement a Metadata Registry and Repository to provide end-to-end management, registration, storage and re-use of ABS metadata – due 2012–13 to 2013–14
- ▶ Develop and implement an Enterprise Data Warehouse to provide life-cycle management of statistical data – due 2012–13 to 2014–15
- ▶ Develop harmonised business requirements for administrative data, and ensure these requirements are incorporated into the development of the Generic Statistical Business Process Model processes – due 2012–13 to 2014–15
- ▶ Develop and implement a framework for managing and re-using metadata – due 2012–13 to 2014–15
- ▶ Lead the international development of the Generic Statistical Information Model – due 2012–13
- ▶ Provide secretariat services to the Statistical Network of eight countries established to progress international collaboration to “industrialise” the production of statistics – due June 2012–2013.

Data Acquisition and Collection

Program Manager

Merilyn Henden
Assistant Statistician
Data Acquisition and
Collection Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	66.9
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-
Staff Usage 333 Staff Years	
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	58.7
2013–2014	41.5
2014–2015	46.0
2015–2016	45.5

Objectives

Data Acquisition and Collection Branch (DACB) is part of the ABS 2017 Program Delivery Division which includes a range of business transformation projects as well as ongoing collection and dissemination services for the ABS. The Branch provides a professional data acquisition service for the ABS across business, household and administrative data collections. 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:

- ▶ developing and adopting world's best practice in data collection
- ▶ developing and maintaining a skilled and committed home and office-based interviewer workforce
- ▶ upholding the confidentiality of information provided to the ABS
- ▶ continually improving the processes and instruments to improve the interaction with providers.

Outputs

The main outputs of DACB are:

- ▶ data collection and capture capability, systems, procedures and instruments for ABS surveys and administrative sources to deliver cleansed datasets, including administrative unit record data and ABS survey data
- ▶ advice to subject matter areas on data acquisition strategies for the collection of data from both administrative sources and ABS surveys
- ▶ sample management for ABS household surveys
- ▶ an active provider engagement strategy to ensure a continued high level of public trust and provider cooperation.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are focused around the first phase of the transformation of collection processes and facilities. Key aspects of this modernisation include:

- ▶ providing an internet reporting option for household surveys – due December 2012
- ▶ providing an internet reporting option for business surveys – due June 2012
- ▶ introducing mobile devices and applications to ABS field operations – due mid 2012
- ▶ progressing the development of a questionnaire authoring tool to facilitate end-to-end data and metadata management – ongoing
- ▶ developing and implementing a new household survey sampling system based on the new Australian Standard Geographical Classification – due 2012
- ▶ continuing to integrate data enhanced collection processes across household and business based collections – ongoing
- ▶ increasing the extent of administrative data acquisition undertaken by the ABS including greater use of corporate facilities – ongoing
- ▶ optimising the use of internet reporting for online collections – June 2014.

Customer Services

Program Manager

Merry Branson
Assistant Statistician
Customer Services Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	12.0
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-
Staff Usage	104 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	13.8
2013–2014	12.9
2014–2015	12.3
2015–2016	12.2

Objectives

Customer Services Branch is part of the ABS 2017 Program Delivery Division which includes a range of business transformation projects as well as ongoing collection and dissemination services for the ABS.

The Branch supports the ABS mission by assisting business partners to effectively communicate official statistics through a wide range of high quality information products and services and communication channels.

The program's key objectives are to maximise the informed use of ABS statistics, optimising the mix of dissemination channels, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of statistical communication.

The program seeks to utilise leading edge communication and dissemination technology and aspires to showcase 'best practice' communication of official statistics.

The program provides a range of information solutions for customers – from a telephone referral service, through user-pays consultancies, to supporting the complex needs of clients through improved access to, and use of, microdata. It is responsible for developing a national approach to improving statistical literacy and capability across segments of the Australian population.

The Customer Services Program works with ABS business partners to provide many of the services and processes by which statistical releases are prepared. The program helps business partners produce web and database content efficiently and effectively and provides the tools, training and processes to help achieve this. In addition, the program ensures that the presentation and usability of ABS products are enhanced by the use of relevant standards developed based on objective research.

Outputs

The main output of the program is the provision of a range of ABS product and delivery options to customers, which include:

- ▶ the ABS website www.abs.gov.au as the primary vehicle for ABS statistical communication
- ▶ database products, which provide large volumes of detailed statistical data such as Census data packs, Census Table Builder and Survey Table Builder
- ▶ information consultancies, providing data tailored to customers' needs
- ▶ Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) available in CD-ROM, via the Remote Access Data Laboratory or ABS Data Laboratory for analysis by researchers
- ▶ telephone/e-mail/fax information and referral services
- ▶ outreach and statistical training programs provided across Australia
- ▶ lesson plans for teachers and interactive activities for school students
- ▶ pre-release embargo lockup arrangements.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ continue to deliver 2011 Census of Population and Housing products and services – due 2012–13
- ▶ take a leading role in an international collaborative project to help develop a multi-dimensional publishing facility (.Stat) with the ability to view data as dynamic tables, graphs, maps and the functionality to provide machine-to-machine web services – due 2013–14
- ▶ work towards updating dissemination infrastructure and systems to meet the needs of users in a rapidly changing digital environment, including facilitating re-use of ABS data by external clients and third party portals while ensuring visibility of the ABS brand – due 2013–14
- ▶ continuously expand the ABS's internet presence and content to allow visitors to have greater insight into the information through visualisation tools and web services and engage with the information and dynamically create information tailored to their needs – due 2013–14
- ▶ take a leading role in an international collaborative project for shared microdata access infrastructure and increase use of ABS microdata by researchers – ongoing
- ▶ implement new innovative and flexible tools for safe and effective access to microdata – due progressively from 2012
- ▶ increase statistical literacy among the five target groups identified by the ABS (school students, tertiary students, opinion leaders, decision makers and general community) – ongoing
- ▶ capture, understand and report evidence about information consumption needs and behaviours of the Australian community – ongoing

Statistical Services

Program Manager

Paul Schubert
Assistant Statistician
Statistical Services Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	7.9
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-
Staff Usage	74 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	8.5
2013–2014	6.2
2014–2015	6.0
2015–2016	6.1

Objectives

The Statistical Services Program provides specialist services to meet new and ongoing demands in statistics. Much of the work has the goal of ensuring the methods underlying ABS outputs are based on sound, defensible statistical principles and are cost effective.

The program has specific responsibilities for supporting the statistical collection process. It provides advice on survey design and methods, and on data quality, through all stages of the survey cycle; and undertakes research on statistical methods to improve the efficiency and accuracy of ABS work. The program provides leadership in developing the future methodological infrastructure of the ABS.

The program also manages the Australian Government Statistical Clearing House, to minimise the load on businesses and to improve the quality of business survey outputs.

Outputs

The program's main internal products include specialist support for survey design, estimation and other survey-related issues, including the use of administrative data for improving efficiency or effectiveness of statistical products, as well as developing and adapting new methods to meet future needs. The program applies operation research techniques to improve the cost efficiency of ABS collections. It conducts quality reviews of methods and statistical products that contribute to improvements in data quality and to reductions in the load on providers. The program also supports the development of training courses on mathematical, statistical and other methodological issues for all ABS staff.

Externally, in conjunction with Analytical Services, the program produces and publishes a series of *Methodology Advisory Committee Papers* (ABS cat. nos. 1352.0.55.001-1352.0.55.120), which present the results of current research or analysis, often of an experimental nature, to facilitate expert discussion and comment. In addition, guidelines on current best practices of statistical methodology are also produced (ABS cat. no. 1500.0).

The Statistical Clearing House produces an annual report of all surveys directed to businesses conducted by Commonwealth agencies during each fiscal year, and promulgates and promotes survey best practices in agencies conducting business surveys.

Developments

The main medium-term developments are to:

- ▶ develop methodological architecture for supporting future ABS statistical collections and products – due June 2013
- ▶ improve survey data collection efficiency by using para-data for more dynamic and adaptive survey data operations – due June 2013
- ▶ develop methods (editing, autocorrection and imputation) for cleaning administrative data in preparation for statistical uses – due June 2013
- ▶ develop methods for dealing with missing data for more complex statistical products (derived from linked data, administrative data) – due June 2014
- ▶ develop methodologies for supporting multi-modal data collection for conduct and processing of the Census of Population and Housing and household surveys – due June 2014
- ▶ develop the sampling framework and procedures to support list-based sampling, harness administrative data and utilise address information in delivering more efficient designs and more efficient identification of subpopulations of interest for household surveys – due December 2014

Corporate Services

Program Managers

Chris Libreri
Assistant Statistician
Human Resources Branch

Debra Foggin
Chief Financial Officer
Financial Management
Branch

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	108.4
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-

Staff Usage 274 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	103.1
2013–2014	108.2
2014–2015	113.9
2015–2016	117.3

Objectives

Corporate Services provides leadership and strategic support to assist the ABS in achieving its strategic directions. It does this through partnering with business areas in the ABS by:

- ▶ providing timely, relevant, high quality and best practice corporate services with a customer and business focus to meet the changing needs of internal and external clients
- ▶ engaging and influencing stakeholders to ensure the ABS's interests are considered and accommodated, including in whole of government initiatives
- ▶ positioning the ABS to meet its current and future workforce needs
- ▶ provision of high quality corporate infrastructure, and timely and comprehensive management information
- ▶ leading the ABS in the areas of culture, leadership capability development, and financial and people management.

Outputs

Outputs for corporate services fall into the following categories: services that are delivered to ABS employees and policy advice, framework development and internal consultancy. These are provided through two organisational groups: Financial Management Branch and Human Resources Branch. Each branch operates on a national basis and provides services to all ABS offices. A number of national business lines are delivered from locations other than, or in conjunction with central office.

The main outputs of the corporate services program are:

- ▶ a full range of integrated and coordinated services to support the Human Resources (HR) life cycle, from recruitment through to retirement
- ▶ leadership, support and guidance (including building capability) to ensure the ABS is maximising individual employees' potential
- ▶ a full range of services to support the physical working environment, including implementing changes associated with the strategic use of property and space management
- ▶ leadership and consultancy on workforce planning, budgeting, business continuity, financial reporting, financial policies and support
- ▶ maintenance and development of corporate support systems and services.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ optimise, upgrade and integrate HR and Financial Systems and associated management information – ABS Pay and Leave will be launched 2012
- ▶ provide leadership and support to deliver ABS Future Organisational Sustainability (AFOS) successfully including the development of guiding principles which assist in determining the allocation of work and resources across the ABS – ongoing
- ▶ implement changed employment arrangements resulting from the new Enterprise Agreements for ABS employees – ongoing
- ▶ embed the new national corporate services delivery model and continue to enhance client service capability and culture – ongoing
- ▶ implement the key 'ABS people plan' strategies (including those related to workforce planning, people and performance management, learning and development, leadership and general capability enhancement and cultural renewal) – ongoing
- ▶ support the business outputs of the ABS by ensuring the ongoing development and maintenance of statistical capability, leadership and business skills in the workforce – ongoing.

Technology Services

Program Manager

Patrick Hadley
First Assistant Statistician
Technology Services Division

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	34.5
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-

Staff Usage 484 Staff Years

Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	33.6
2013–2014	38.8
2014–2015	31.0
2015–2016	30.9

Objectives

The key objectives for the Technology Services Program (TSD) are to:

- ▶ ensure the ABS leverages information technology strategically to support its mission, to support ABS transformation and the ABS 2017 program of work
- ▶ ensure the ABS has effective security policies, practices and procedures
- ▶ represent the ABS and build strategic relationships in the broader Information and Communication Technology (ICT), government and international statistical communities in relation to ICT and security matters
- ▶ ensure sustainability of ICT investments and services through building and maintaining a highly capable and motivated ICT workforce.

Behind the key objectives of the Technology Services Program are five business drivers:

- ▶ focus on information management that positions the ABS to flexibly respond to a range of future statistical needs in an enterprise wide and timely way
- ▶ increased use of the internet as a means to collaborate with others, and to collect and disseminate data and information
- ▶ ensuring our people are productive in the use of their ICT facilities, as the ABS locates more staff to state offices
- ▶ strong leadership in innovation through new approaches and application of ICT to ABS business
- ▶ optimising ICT services through the adoption of frameworks, standards and good practices to improve services, lower unit costs and benchmark well with other agencies.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- ▶ delivery of enterprise wide technology solutions to support statistical and business processes for the ABS
- ▶ delivery of consistent and measurable services for business and application analysis, design, programming, acquisition and commissioning services to assist in improving ABS business processes
- ▶ provision of reliable, cost effective and secure technology infrastructure, library and knowledge management services
- ▶ updates to the ABS ICT Strategy, applications architecture and infrastructure architecture to support ABS Enterprise Architecture
- ▶ implementation of the ABS ICT Workforce Plan to grow capability to meet new business and leverage new technologies.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ provide technology solutions to support ABS transformation and the ABS 2017 program of work – due 2012-13 onwards
- ▶ undertake a program of transition and improvement within TSD to address the outcomes of the Technology Services review and to align and integrate with ABS transformation and the ABS 2017 program of work – ongoing
- ▶ work collaboratively with ABS 2017 to update the ABS Enterprise Architecture, through the development of application and infrastructure architecture – due 2012–13
- ▶ provide a secure solution for the remote execution environment for microdata (REEM), enhance ABS.stat and begin integration into existing publishing and dissemination processes and the ABS website – due 2012–13
- ▶ implement and migrate business processes onto the Metadata Registry and Repository (MRR) and Business Process Management system (inSPIRE) – due 2012–13 to 2013–14
- ▶ source or design/build new tools to support a Statistical Enterprise Data Warehouse – ongoing
- ▶ provide ICT services and systems for the 2016 Population Census and continued development for dissemination products – ongoing
- ▶ develop enterprise wide approaches to ICT systems and services in the ABS – 2012–13 onwards
- ▶ source or design/build and integrate new tools to support electronic collection of data via the web and mobile devices – 2012–13 onwards
- ▶ undertake a program of security improvements to meet new business requirements and ICT services – due 2012–13 to 2013–14
- ▶ lead and support ABS innovation initiatives – ongoing
- ▶ improve productivity of ABS staff through enhanced desktop, video conferencing and mobile capabilities – ongoing
- ▶ produce an efficient and effective mechanism to prioritise and provide ICT support for business applications – ongoing
- ▶ strengthen internal processes and approaches through the adoption of industry standards – ongoing
- ▶ assist with setting up, and embedding the replacement human resource system – due 2012–13.

State and Territory Statistical Services

Program Managers

Regional Directors

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	9.9
Full Costs	17.6
% of total costs	2.8%
Staff Usage	107 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	8.8
2013–2014	9.1
2014–2015	9.2
2015–2016	8.6

Objectives

The ABS contributes to the development of well-informed policy and decisions in States and Territories through statistical promotion, leadership and representation. This role is set out in ABS legislation and is supported by formal agreements with State and Territory governments. The State and Territory Statistical Services Program (STSS) supports the ABS objective of an expanded and improved National Statistical Service (NSS) within each State and Territory.

The role of the STSS is:

- ▶ advocating for State and Territory statistical priorities
- ▶ garnering support from States and Territories in support of national statistical programs
- ▶ enhancing the State and Territory governments' statistical governance and capability
- ▶ realising the statistical potential of State and Territory governments' data through
 - developing a culture of valuing data
 - improving the quality of administrative data, and
 - ensuring the ongoing development of statistical infrastructure.

Outputs

The main outputs of the STSS project are:

- ▶ ongoing assessment of statistical priorities for each State and Territory as an input to the ABS forward work program development
- ▶ advice and intelligence to ABS national programs on relevant State and Territory statistical needs and issues
- ▶ provision of support for the advancement of NSS objectives in the statistical environments of each State and Territory
- ▶ collaboration with State and Territory Governments to improve statistical capability and the quality, coherence, comparability, and availability of administrative and other data held by State and Territory government agencies
- ▶ statistical projects designed to meet high priority needs of State and Territory Governments
- ▶ statistical consultancy services covering a wide range of services including survey design, statistical analysis, methodological advice and assistance, and a range of statistical training and development activities
- ▶ provision of support to State and Territory demography work programs as required.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- ▶ Progress the statistical priorities projects as endorsed by the State Statistics Forum. The current projects are: data integration, performance reporting, spatially enabling data, and local economic data – due 2013
- ▶ Identify and evaluate the demand for, and supply of, statistical data, in collaboration with ABS programs and State and Territory Governments – ongoing
- ▶ Develop strategies to fill high priority data gaps for performance indicators for Council of Australian Governments priorities and State and Territory Plans – ongoing
- ▶ Develop the statistical governance and capability of State and Territory governments – ongoing
- ▶ Support the widest possible use by governments and the community of 2011 Census data – due 2013

Office of the Statistician and External Engagement

Program Manager

Lewis Conn
Assistant Statistician
Office of the Statistician and
External Engagement

Resources

2011–2012	\$m
Direct Costs	6.2
Full Costs	-
% of total costs	-
Staff Usage	35 Staff Years
Direct Costs	\$m
2012–2013	5.4
2013–2014	4.6
2014–2015	4.7
2015–2016	4.7

Objectives

The Office of the Statistician and External Engagement (OOTSEE) provides sound independent strategic advice to the Australian Statistician and the ABS Executive, assists with the identification and management of key risks to the ABS, and ensures effective relationships and communication with internal and external strategic stakeholders.

Key objectives of the program are to:

- ▶ review and update legislation and policy, and ensure compliance across ABS operations
- ▶ promote and protect the ABS brand and reputation, in particular with the media and Parliament
- ▶ support the organisational monitoring framework and governance that provides the ABS Executive with the information required to ensure the right plans, initiatives and strategies are in place to meet strategic directions
- ▶ support a strategic approach to international engagement with national statistical organisations
- ▶ ensure the ABS is managing and mitigating against significant risk to the organisation
- ▶ monitor performance and compliance across the ABS by undertaking a comprehensive audit and review program

Outputs

OOTSEE provides a range of key corporate outputs that support the Australian Statistician's administrative, statistical and strategic roles. OOTSEE consists of four organisational sections: Planning and Governance; International Relations and Regional Statistical Development; Communications and Ministerial Liaison; Audit, Policy, and Parliamentary Liaison.

The main outputs of the OOTSEE program are:

- ▶ leadership and consultancy to the ABS on policy, legislation, legal compliance (such as Freedom of Information requests and reporting), business and financial planning, risk management, and international relations
- ▶ a high quality communication service for the ABS and the Australian Statistician
- ▶ independent strategic advice to Australian Statistician and the ABS Executive through a range of activities such as the development and reporting of the organisational performance monitoring and risk management frameworks
- ▶ coordination of the ABS's assistance to other countries and the International Engagement program for the ABS
- ▶ governance and secretariat services to senior management and external forums such as the Australian Statistical Advisory Council, ABS Management Meetings and the ABS Audit Committee
- ▶ a sustainable and strategic ABS forward work program, budget and annual report.

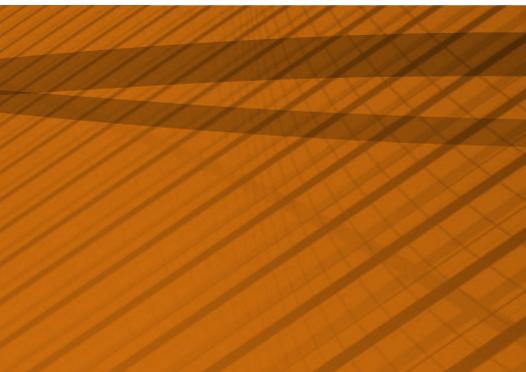
Developments

The main medium-term developments are to:

- ▶ implement the refreshed Corporate Plan including the review of organisational performance monitoring – due 2012-13
- ▶ continue reporting the organisations key performance indicators – ongoing
- ▶ update policy and legislation, and provide advice and education to ensure ABS understanding and compliance with legislation – ongoing
- ▶ measure and manage media attribution of ABS business – ongoing
- ▶ manage communication strategies with key stakeholders using new media platforms – ongoing
- ▶ the continued development of an audit universe based on risk identification procedures – ongoing
- ▶ review the ABS International Engagement Strategy – due 2013
- ▶ implement the AusAID funded Program – Government Partnership Fund II, to provide support to the Indonesian NSO – due 2011–13
- ▶ implement the AusAID funded Program – the Pacific Program, to provide support to Pacific Island Countries – due 2011–13



Appendix



Appendix

Statistical user groups

The user groups advising the ABS on its forward work program include:

National groups

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Demographic Statistics Expert Advisory Group
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 Bureau of Statistics – (Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources) High Level Liaison Committee
Australian Government Energy Data Forum
Australian Government Statistical Forum
Australian Health Survey Reference Group
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
Early Childhood Data Subgroup
Economic Statistics User Group
Work, Life and Family Survey Reference Group
Gender Statistics Advisory Group
General Social Survey Reference 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 Expert Reference Group
Measures of Australia's Progress Social Topic Advisory Panel
Measures of Australia's Progress Economic Topic Advisory Panel
Measures of Australia's Progress Environment Topic Advisory Panel
Measures of Australia's Progress Governance Topic Advisory Panel
Methodology Advisory Committee
Migrant Statistics Advisory Group
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 User Group
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 and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council (CDSMAC) Sub-Committee)
Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers Advisory 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

