CORPORATE PLAN 2016–17

2016–17 to 2019–20

Australian Bureau of Statistics

CORPORATE PLAN 2016–17

2016–17 to 2019–20

Australian Bureau of Statistics

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) has a long history of providing trusted official statistics to inform decisions on issues of importance to Australia.

To remain relevant and to capitalise on the opportunities of a dynamic information environment, the ABS is fundamentally transforming across all aspects of the organisation to **unleash the power of statistics for a better Australia**. The Australian Government investment of $257 million to modernise our infrastructure over five years is the foundation for the ABS to transform for the 21st Century.

This Corporate Plan articulates the ABS organisational objectives and strategic priorities in this transformation context. It highlights the ambidextrous nature of the ABS, recognising that we need to continue delivering high quality and timely official statistics, while innovating to take advantage of new information opportunities, strengthening our partnerships, and driving high performance.

This plan also sets out our processes to ensure effective management of risk during this period of transformation, as well as outlining the measures we will use to monitor our performance.

As the accountable authority of the ABS, I am pleased to present the Australian Bureau of Statistics 2016–17 Corporate Plan[a].

David W. Kalisch
Australian Statistician

[a] This Corporate Plan covers the period 2016–17 to 2019–20, required under paragraph 35(1)(b) of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013*.

UNLEASHING THE POWER OF STATISTICS FOR A BETTER AUSTRALIA

TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE

WHILE CONTINUING TO
DELIVER HIGH QUALITY OFFICIAL STATISTICS
STRENGTHEN OUR PARTNERSHIPS
DRIVE HIGH PERFORMANCE

STRATEGY
Our strategies enable rigorous statistics, strong partnerships, and effective use of resources

GOVERNANCE
Our governance supports responsive decision making, prioritisation and management of enterprise risk

ENVIRONMENT
We collaborate with stakeholders to understand and respond better to the current and future external environment

TRANSFORMATION GOALS

PEOPLE
We have a diverse, expert, motivated and agile workforce

INFRASTRUCTURE
Our infrastructure is effective, efficient and adaptable

CULTURE
We are high performing, aligned, engaged, innovative and accountable

SUCCESS

INFORMED DECISIONS
Decisions on important matters are informed by quality official statistics and value-added statistical solutions.

TRUST AND SUPPORT
Government, business and the community continue to trust us and have confidence in our statistics.

A DYNAMIC STATISTICAL SYSTEM
We are a collaborative partner in building a responsive national statistical system that meets current and future requirements.

PURPOSE AND ROLE OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

VISION
Unleashing the power of statistics for a better Australia

For over 100 years, the ABS has contributed to the wellbeing of Australians and to Australia's democracy by providing high quality statistical information to governments, researchers and the community.

However, the ABS operates in a dynamic environment. New opportunities for accessing and interrogating a vast amount of administrative, transactional and other data are becoming available, increasing the potential to provide new insights into matters of importance to Australians. The statistical landscape is becoming more complex, expectations of decision makers are growing, and we are being challenged to deliver the best possible statistical program in more efficient and innovative ways.

In response to these opportunities and challenges, and informed by the _Government's Statement of Expectations_; recommendations from the _2013 Australian Public Service Commission (APSC) Capability Review of the ABS_; and engagement with our key stakeholders, the ABS will continue to undergo major transformation over the next four years. This transformation encompasses how we operate as an organisation, both internally and as part of the wider information community; our statistical infrastructure; our people and culture; and the statistical solutions we deliver. The Government's announcement in the 2015–16 Budget of a major investment in the ABS to modernise our systems and processes is a critical enabler for the wide reaching transformation agenda being pursued by the ABS.

The ABS is engaging and collaborating to build statistical solutions and capability, leveraging data sources held by partners to expand the scope of official statistics and reduce the burden on respondents, while protecting the confidentiality of information provided to the ABS. The value of ABS data will be enhanced through integration and by improving the accessibility of ABS data and microdata.

Statistics, well understood and wisely used, have the power to improve outcomes for Australia. Our transformation is the key to achieving our vision of **unleashing the power of statistics for a better Australia.**

OBJECTIVES

INFORMED DECISIONS

Decisions on important matters are informed by quality official statistics and value-added statistical solutions

TRUST AND SUPPORT

Government, business and the community trust us and have confidence in our statistics

A DYNAMIC STATISTICAL SYSTEM

We are a collaborative partner in building a responsive statistical system that meets current and future requirements

The ABS is Australia's national statistical agency, providing trusted official statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters of importance to Australia.

The ABS also has an important leadership role, coordinating statistical activities and collaborating with official bodies in the collection, compilation, analysis and distribution of statistics. This assists in maximising the value of government investment on these activities, and ensures outputs are fit-for-purpose.

Through delivery of high quality official statistics and value-added statistical solutions, we aim to **inform decisions** on important issues. We expect this will lead to a more informed community; more efficient markets, economic growth and productivity enhancements; better policy development and evaluation; and targeted and more efficient service delivery.

Maintaining the **trust and support** of government, business and the community is critical for the ABS to effectively carry out its functions. This is achieved through engaging with users within government, business and the community to ensure they have confidence in the statistical resources available to enable them to make informed decisions. To preserve the ongoing trust of our respondents and data providers we will continue to maintain the security of the information provided to us; and we will work with others to reduce burden by more effectively using the wealth of existing government and non-government data resources.

The ABS aims to ensure Australia is well served by a responsive, innovative and **dynamic statistical system** which continues to meet changing information requirements in a cost effective manner. This is achieved by partnering with others across the national statistical system, which embraces statistics and data held by Commonwealth and state and territory agencies, as well as collaborating with non-government organisations, to maximise the value of public and private sector data and enhance insights for informed decision making.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

DELIVER HIGH QUALITY STATISTICS

Continue to deliver quality, timely statistics on important matters

Maximise the value of public data through integration and improved access

STRENGTHEN OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Engage and partner to build statistical solutions and capability

Reduce the burden on respondents and protect the confidentiality of information provided

DRIVE HIGH PERFORMANCE

Innovate to facilitate more agile and efficient outcomes

Use technology wisely to transform our infrastructure and processes

Promote a high performance culture

The environment in which the ABS operates is changing, and the ABS recognises the need to transform significantly across all aspects of the organisation if we are to realise our vision of unleashing the power of statistics for a better Australia, and achieve our objectives.

During our transformation, the ABS is continuing to **deliver high quality official statistics** on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters of importance to Australia – this is central to the purpose and role of the ABS. Delivering a successful 2016 Census of Population and Housing, our largest and one of our most important statistical activities, is a high priority for the ABS. Better utilisation of data collected for administrative purposes and improving the availability and use of Australia's statistical assets is a key focus during transformation.

While the ABS is a large information provider, we are not alone in the critical task of collecting and reporting quality statistics for public use. We are **strengthening our partnerships** to ensure that we are able to effectively meet increasingly complex information needs, including working with others to provide innovative, value-added statistical solutions. Organisations and individuals who provide information are also important partners in the statistical system. At the same time as we increase the statistics available for informed decision making, we are pursuing ways to reduce the burden on respondents and minimise collection costs, while maintaining community trust and protecting the privacy of individuals.

The ABS is **driving high performance** across all aspects of the organisation. Crafting innovative solutions; capitalising on enabling technologies; and supporting, motivating and equipping staff to perform to their maximum potential, is empowering the ABS to transform successfully for the future.

ENABLING LEGISLATION

The *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* set out the primary functions, duties and powers of the ABS.

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975 establishes the ABS as an independent statutory authority, with *Section 6(1)* describing the six functions of the ABS as being to:

• constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian Government and provide services for the state and territory governments

• collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information

• ensure coordination of the operations of official bodies in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information

• develop standards for statistics and ensure compliance

• give advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics

• provide liaison between Australia, other countries and international organisations on statistical issues.

The Census and Statistics Act 1905:

• empowers the Australian Statistician to collect statistical information on a broad range of demographic, economic, environmental and social topics

• enables the Australian Statistician to direct a person to provide statistical information, in which case they are legally obliged to do so

• requires the ABS to publish the results of these statistical collections

• places a life-long obligation on all ABS officers to maintain the secrecy of information collected under the Act, and provides harsh penalties for those who fail to do so.

The ABS has been asked by the Australian Government to consider whether its existing legislative arrangements are suitable for a 21st Century national statistical office. The ABS is currently reviewing its existing legislative arrangements and international arrangements to guide this consideration.

The ABS is governed by the *Public Service Act 1999*, the principal Act governing the establishment and operation of, and employment in, the Australian Public Service; and is subject to requirements of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013,* the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the *Privacy Act 1988* and the *Public Interest Disclosure Act 2013.*

WORKING ACROSS GOVERNMENTS AND SUPPORTING PRIORITIES

The Statement of Expectations for the ABS outlines the Australian Government's expectations of us as we carry out our functions. The Statement recognises the independence of the ABS as a statutory authority, and also recognises the need for the ABS to take into account the Government's broad policy framework in performing our role and meeting our responsibilities.

As part of the Treasury portfolio, the ABS maintains a close relationship with the Treasury, while acting independently and objectively in the performance of its statistical functions and exercising its powers as set out in legislation. The ABS is accountable to the Parliament, and ultimately to the public, through the Treasury Ministers, the Parliamentary Committee process, and tabling of our Annual Report.

The *Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)* is the key advisory body to the Minister and the ABS in relation to our statistical functions. ASAC provides valuable input to the directions and priorities for the ABS work program, and reports annually to Parliament. ASAC meets at least twice a year, and Council members are chosen to represent a broad cross-section of perspectives, covering government, business, academic and community interests. All state and territory governments are typically represented.

Collaborative partnerships with Australian, state and territory government agencies contribute to a strong national statistical system. Active engagement and consultation with key stakeholders, including ASAC, to prioritise the annual ABS Forward Work Program ensures we continue to meet Australia's information requirements now and into the future.

ABS transformation goals take into account the Government's policy agenda. The ABS is contributing to the Government's deregulation agenda by looking for opportunities to reduce compliance costs for businesses and the community and contributing to the Government's $1 billion red and green tape reduction target.

The ABS is supporting the Government's digital transformation agenda through increasingly using internet based modes of data collection, with the 'digital first' 2016 Census of Population and Housing a major initiative; as well as establishing machine-to-machine data provision for businesses.

The ABS is continuing to contribute to whole-of-government discussions aimed at improving the Government's use of data to inform policy and tailor service delivery through making safe, effective use of data and improved statistical capability, capitalising on ABS expertise in these areas.

SHAPING THE ABS STATISTICAL FORWARD WORK PROGRAM

During 2014 and 2015, in consultation with stakeholders and informed through development of *Essential Statistical Assets for Australia (cat. no. 1395.0)*, components of the ABS statistical program were categorised into four tiers.

These tiers are used to assist with the prioritisation of the ABS work program.

TIER	COMPONENT	
CORE	Tier 0	Essential institutional statistical capability and infrastructure required to deliver a quality national statistical service and remain relevant and sustainable as Australia's national statistical organisation. This includes: systems and processes; methods; people capability; registers, frames and standards; classifications and conceptual frameworks; data integration; dissemination and technology capabilities.
	Tier 1	Statistics that are considered to be the foundation work of a national statistical organisation.
	Tier 2	Important areas of statistics where there is a significant government outlay or where there is a significant public policy interest.
OTHER	Tier 3	Other important statistical work that is currently undertaken to meet identified user requirements that could be deemed as falling beyond tiers 1 to 2.

To assist in determining the ABS statistical forward work program, the ABS will continue to engage with governments, users and other stakeholders, including the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, on prioritisation. A work program prioritisation document will be published, including the categorisation outlined above, as part of the *ABS Forward Work Program (cat. no. 1006.0)*.
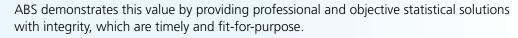
APS VALUES

The ABS demonstrates strong alignment with, and commitment to the APS Values which underpin and guide our decisions, behaviours and interactions with the Government, our partners, stakeholders, respondents and our staff.
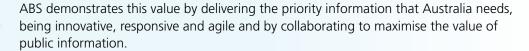
IMPARTIAL

The APS is apolitical and provides the Government with advice that is frank, honest, timely and based on the best available evidence.

> ABS demonstrates this value by providing professional and objective statistical solutions with integrity, which are timely and fit-for-purpose.
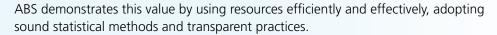
COMMITTED TO SERVICE

The APS is professional, objective, innovative and efficient, and works collaboratively to achieve the best results for the Australian community and the Government.

> ABS demonstrates this value by delivering the priority information that Australia needs, being innovative, responsive and agile and by collaborating to maximise the value of public information.

ACCOUNTABLE

The APS is open and accountable to the Australian community under the law and within the framework of Ministerial responsibility.

> ABS demonstrates this value by using resources efficiently and effectively, adopting sound statistical methods and transparent practices.
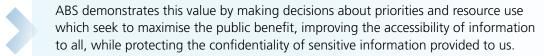
RESPECTFUL

The APS respects all people, including their rights and their heritage.

> ABS demonstrates this value by engaging with stakeholders and providers in a respectful and professional manner, seeking to minimise respondent burden and valuing diverse perspectives across our workforce and stakeholders.

ETHICAL

The APS demonstrates leadership, is trustworthy, and acts with integrity, in all that it does.

> ABS demonstrates this value by making decisions about priorities and resource use which seek to maximise the public benefit, improving the accessibility of information to all, while protecting the confidentiality of sensitive information provided to us.

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN THE CURRENT ENVIRONMENT

The ABS operates in a rapidly evolving information environment. We are striving to understand and respond to current and emerging challenges and opportunities – shaping our transformation agenda to meet the complex information needs of Australia's dynamic economy and changing society; responding to new opportunities to enhance statistical solutions; and achieving organisational efficiencies.

A DYNAMIC INFORMATION ENVIRONMENT

To remain relevant, our statistics must keep pace with Australia's changing economic and social environment. The economy is increasingly influenced by the growing services sector, and economies are more internationally connected through trade in goods and services as well as financial flows. Australian society is becoming more complex, with an increasingly mobile population, and changing family and household structures. This dynamic environment provides measurement challenges, and requires the ABS to review and adapt measurement approaches. Updating underlying conceptual frameworks and standards, ensuring consistency with international measurement standards, while maintaining time-series and data coherence, are key challenges.

Information collected by governments and businesses in the course of their operations is increasingly seen as a strategic resource in both public and private sectors. Sophisticated technologies and advances in analytical capacity are driving information opportunities, both in terms of administrative, transactional and other big data sources; as well as expanded ways to use data to provide new insights. The ABS is working collaboratively with other data custodians to unlock the potential of these expanding data sources effectively, while maintaining the appropriate protection for personal information. Maximising the value of public and corporate data through improving access and integration in a safe environment will be critical to unleashing the power of statistics.

GROWING EXPECTATIONS OF CUSTOMERS AND PARTNERS

The information needed to support key decision making and research that is critical to the nation is becoming increasingly complex. Expectations are growing and demands are being placed on us for more timely statistics, at greater levels of detail; enhanced geospatial capability; improved access to microdata; and more sophisticated analysis and interpretation. The ABS will work to anticipate future information needs, and be ready to respond with value-added statistical solutions, without increasing the burden we currently place on households and businesses.

Our interconnected information environment, with many important contributors, demands stronger collaboration and partnerships if we are to better realise the potential value of expanding information opportunities into the future.

NEED FOR IMPROVED EFFICIENCY

The ABS will look for ways of reducing inefficiencies in the collection, production and dissemination of our statistics, as well as our corporate infrastructure. The cost of traditional survey collection methods has been increasing over time and the ABS will seek ways to deliver statistical solutions which are less intrusive and less costly on households and businesses. Tapping into the potential of administrative and transactional data collected by governments and businesses in the course of their operations, as well as drawing on sophisticated statistical modelling and estimation capabilities, will provide opportunities to meet increasing demands to deliver more and better statistical services in a challenging fiscal environment.

BUILDING OUR CAPABILITY

The ABS will continue to drive a range of initiatives aimed at building organisational capability across all areas of our business – investing in our infrastructure, our statistics, our partnerships and our people. Building our capability in these areas will better position the ABS and the national statistical system more broadly to effectively harness the power of statistics to underpin evidence-based decisions in critical public policy and service delivery areas, and enable us to achieve our objectives.

INVESTING IN OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

In the 2015–16 Budget, the Government announced a $257m investment in the ABS over five years, to modernise ageing systems and processes, and develop statistical capabilities required for a 21st Century national statistical office.

Through the Statistical Business Transformation Program, the ABS has already begun to design and develop the next generation of statistical business processes and supporting information infrastructure. The transformed infrastructure and business processes will improve our responsiveness, reduce regulatory burden, reduce the risk of statistical failure, and deliver substantial savings through a reduction in future operational costs. The ABS will work collaboratively with industry partners, other government providers of statistics, and other national statistical offices in the development of this contemporary statistical infrastructure.

The ABS Information and Communications Technology (ICT) Strategy 2014–15 to 2018–19 supports our infrastructure transformation, and aligns with government directions in relation to whole-of-government shared services and enhanced use of digital technologies to deliver services to the community.

INVESTING IN OUR STATISTICS

Our transformation program has a strong focus on delivering capabilities required to effectively provide value-added statistical solutions – both regular and one-off products and services – able to meet current and emerging information requirements.

Investment in infrastructure is the enabler for Transforming Statistics, which will significantly enhance our ability to deliver statistical solutions which effectively inform matters of importance to Australia. This initiative will transform the ABS statistical program, enabling us to exploit new opportunities and better meet the evolving needs of users. Enhancing our statistical capability involves major redesign of our statistical collections, methods, products and services in order to deliver a more sustainable statistical program that extracts greater value from all available data, to produce modern statistical solutions.

Increased data integration, bringing together existing data sources or collections efficiently and safely, creates new datasets for statistical, policy and research purposes. As Australia's national statistical agency, the ABS is positioned as the 'go to' organisation for public sector data integration activities and access. We will work in partnership with data custodians and users to build on the range of data integration projects currently undertaken. Through investment in infrastructure and expertise, the ABS is well placed to undertake high risk integration projects, including those involving the linkage of sensitive data.

Unleashing the power of statistics through enhanced microdata access, while maintaining the necessary security of information, is central to ABS transformation. We have prioritised improved microdata access services as an important early deliverable from our infrastructure investment.

During transformation, we are carefully managing impacts on statistical outputs and engage with a wide range of stakeholders on the changes. We are collaborating with experts on key methodological and technical elements.

INVESTING IN OUR PARTNERSHIPS

Recent reviews have highlighted the need for the ABS to partner and collaborate across government more effectively. Investing in building organisational engagement capability will ensure the ABS remains responsive to the changing needs of our partners, and supports ABS transformation into a more integral partner in government. Strategic priorities include:

- revitalising stakeholder engagement as a central pillar of the ABS organisational culture

- supporting open and engaged partnerships across governments and the statistical community to strengthen the national statistical system

- strategically positioning external statistical governance fora to focus on priority areas and provide opportunity for engagement on key policy issues

- improving coordination and reducing duplication through reform of the statistical system.

The ABS Engagement Strategy ensures we are a connected and responsive partner in government, open to meeting the needs and expectations of our stakeholders. The strategy is based on three principles which guide our engagement and facilitate a shared vision, shared benefit and shared solutions with our partners. The principles are to: understand, nurture and collaborate. A relationship management plan provides a clear focus for embedding relationship management as a core part of our business.

INVESTING IN OUR PEOPLE

The ABS recognises that our people are essential to successfully realising our transformation goals and achieving our vision and objectives. To deliver our ambitious transformation agenda, we need to change our culture, drive high performance and build capability.

To deliver on this, a Strategic Workforce Plan is implemented through annual People and Culture Action Plans. Workforce strategies focus on: reshaping our workforce capability; aligning our staff profile and structure to support a rationalised and responsive work program; building a high performance culture and improving diversity; and improving our leadership and collaboration.

The Strategic Workforce Plan links to a series of well-established people related plans and strategies. These include the Statistical Capability Plan, and a suite of diversity plans (*Workplace Diversity Action Plan*, *Reconciliation Action Plan*, and the *Gender Diversity Action Plan*) which aim to attract and retain a diverse workforce.

To equip and enable an agile workforce, we are implementing a flexible working environment. This offers ABS staff more flexible working conditions and provides cost savings through more efficient use of property. ABS staff can efficiently work from home, or remotely, through smarter use of technology, with all staff working from mobile computing devices on an enhanced computing network.

Our learning management system, CapabilityPlus, provides a contemporary blended learning environment – providing easy online access to capability development options for our field and office staff (as well as for external clients). To support efficient and effective work practices, staff can search a vast store of corporate knowledge online, covering corporate services, statistical services, policy and legislation and technological support through our knowledge management system, Services@ABS.

WHAT STAFF CAN EXPECT FROM THE ABS:

A healthy and safe work environment
To be treated with fairness and respect where diversity is valued
Access to opportunities to learn and develop
Recognition and reward for high performance
Flexible working arrangements to support work-life balance
Consultation and open communication

WHAT THE ABS EXPECTS FROM STAFF:

To at all times uphold the APS Values and Code of Conduct
Commitment to high performance and a strong work ethic
Ability to be adaptable and flexible when dealing with change
Collaboration and innovation
Commitment to self-development
Safe work practices

TRANSFORMING FOR THE FUTURE

In the context of a dynamic information environment; growing customer expectations; and an environment where we need to be more efficient and innovative – organisational transformation is the key to unleashing the power of statistics for a better Australia.

Over the next four years, the ABS will continue to implement a wide reaching transformation program, supported by a new structure and governance arrangements, and substantial Government investment in modernising our infrastructure. Transformation will enable the ABS to engage better with partners, develop more responsive solutions, make the best use of technologies, and be a high performing organisation.

STRATEGY

Our strategies enable rigorous statistics, strong partnerships, and effective use of resources

GOVERNANCE

Our governance supports responsive decision making, prioritisation and management of enterprise risk

ENVIRONMENT

We collaborate with stakeholders to understand and respond better to the current and future external environment

TRANSFORMATION GOALS

PEOPLE

We have a diverse, expert, motivated and agile workforce

INFRASTRUCTURE

Our infrastructure is effective, efficient and adaptable

CULTURE

We are high performing, aligned, engaged, innovative and accountable

THE 2016–17 TRANSFORMATION AGENDA

The ABS is continuing to deliver a number of initiatives within each transformation goal. Progress will be reviewed as part of ABS performance monitoring.

ENVIRONMENT

We collaborate with stakeholders to understand and respond better to the current and future external environment

- Be more open and responsive to meeting stakeholder needs and expectations.

- Work with governments and the community to increase support and appetite for maximising the value of public data through data sharing, re-use and integration.

STRATEGY

Our strategies enable rigorous statistics, strong partnerships, and effective use of resources

- Manage risk during our transformation so that we continue to deliver high quality official statistics.

- Deliver responsive solutions across people and economic statistics that meet stakeholder needs.

- Increase investment in partnerships, statistical leadership and high value-added statistical activities funded through savings in other ABS processes.

GOVERNANCE

Our governance supports responsive decision making, prioritisation and management of enterprise risk

- Simplify and streamline governance to enable transparent and responsive decision making, flexible resource allocation and efficient issues and risk management.

- Review policies and legislation to ensure that they are enabling and fit-for-purpose.

- Deliver maximum value in our use of public money through robust prioritisation, informed through consultation with key stakeholders.

PEOPLE	CULTURE	INFRASTRUCTURE
We have a diverse, expert, motivated and agile workforce	**We are high performing, aligned, engaged, innovative and accountable**	**Our infrastructure is effective, efficient and adaptable**
• Build and invest in a high performing workforce able to meet future capability needs.	• Provide leadership which sets clear expectations and accountabilities, empowers staff, values and capitalises on diversity, encourages collaboration and manages for high performance.	• Deliver on government expectations in developing contemporary, efficient and sustainable infrastructure.
• Embrace diversity of skills, thinking and experiences of staff.	• Communicate effectively with staff and stakeholders to build commitment and facilitate contribution across all aspects of the transformation agenda.	• Re-engineer end-to-end business processes and deliver agile, flexible infrastructure to support responsive statistical solutions.
• Motivate and challenge staff and provide a working environment that supports productive and flexible ways of working.		• Expand digital initiatives to meet changing user, provider and producer needs and expectations.

MANAGEMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

RISK OVERSIGHT AND MANAGEMENT

The ABS is undergoing significant transformation. This is a once-in-a-generation opportunity to improve our infrastructure, capacity and capability. A period of rapid change increases our exposure to risk. However, a 'no change' approach also involves risk exposure.

As part of this transformation, the ABS seeks to integrate effective risk management into the way it does business, so we can achieve our objectives, manage change effectively, realise opportunities and make sound decisions on the use of public resources.

The ABS has a strong focus on managing statistical risk (for example, lack of coherence between published statistics, or breaks in time series). Robust processes around statistical risk ensure that these risks are understood and managed in a cost effective way. Over the last year, the ABS has given increased priority to ensuring statistical risk is managed well. A new more rigorous and pragmatic framework has been applied to Labour Force, National Accounts, Consumer Price Index and Estimated Resident Population. Key statistics which contribute to these series are being progressively brought onto the new framework throughout 2016–17.

This new statistical risk framework is designed to ensure statistical risk management is streamlined, pragmatic and actually makes a difference, without unnecessarily stifling innovation. The new framework addresses issues which came to public attention in late 2014 when unexpected volatility was observed in seasonally adjusted labour force estimates for July to September 2014.

As the accountable authority for the ABS, the Australian Statistician has a duty to establish and maintain systems relating to risk and control under section 16 of the *Public Governance, Performance and Accountability Act 2013* (the PGPA Act). The Statistician has set out responsibilities related to managing risk and internal accountability through an Accountability Authority Instrument (AAI) issued under section 20A of the PGPA Act.

The ABS risk management framework aligns with the Commonwealth Risk Management Policy and is subject to continual improvement. The framework ensures there is a mechanism for monitoring and identifying shifts in risk exposure and the emergence of new risks. It also articulates tolerances for new risks and actions required when risks reach certain levels.

In addition to general risk management, the AAI and the framework identify mechanisms for specialist risk management which address persistent risks. These include: fraud (managed consistently with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Framework); work health and safety; information and communication technology security; and disclosure risk (relating to privacy and confidentiality which is part of ABS core business).

PERFORMANCE MONITORING AND REPORTING

Our purpose is to provide trusted official statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters of importance to Australia. When we succeed in our purpose we inform governments, businesses and the community to enable better discussions, research and decision making which enhances the wellbeing of all Australians.

The ABS cannot measure our influence on national wellbeing. The ABS Performance criteria focus on whether we are providing the right statistics, whether we are responsive in meeting the needs of stakeholders and whether the ABS is able to do this sustainably into the future. These measures will evolve over time reflecting ongoing changes in our operating environment. We report against these measures in the Annual Performance Statement in our *Australian Bureau of Statistics Annual Report (cat. no. 1001.0)*.

PERFORMANCE CRITERION 1

ABS statistical solutions will continue to inform decision makers, researchers and discussion by governments, business and the community. The ABS produces the statistics required by users and the statistics will be of sufficient quality to be fit-for-purpose for users. The ABS will engage with partners through appropriate consultation forums to understand user requirements that inform strategic directions and the ABS work program. The ABS will better manage risks to key statistics to maintain appropriate quality.

2016–17[a] TARGETS	2017–18 AND THE FORWARD ESTIMATES TARGETS[b]
ABS continues to produce key economic and population statistics with appropriate coverage, frequency and timeliness as assessed by the International Monetary Fund against the Special Data Dissemination Standard; except where the ABS has made an explicit decision not to do so, following consultation with stakeholders, based on Australian needs and circumstances.[c]	Same as 2016–17
At least 96% of the media articles citing ABS statistics do so without concerns about quality.	
The following consultation forum meetings will be held: at least two of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council; at least four of the State Government Statistical Priority Forum; two of the Australian Government Statistical Forum; at least two Economic Statistics Advisory Group meetings; and two Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group meetings.	Same as 2016–17
Risk Management Plans are developed and approved for key economic and industry statistics.	

[a] Targets are for the end of the financial year unless specified otherwise.

[b] Targets are for the end of the financial year unless specified otherwise.

[c] The Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS) is produced and managed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF). The IMF monitors and reports on how well countries comply with SDDS requirements for the range of statistics produced and the coverage, frequency, and timeliness of the statistics that are produced. The statistics required by the SDDS include national accounts, labour force, unemployment, consumer price inflation and estimates of resident population. The information for Australia has not been updated since 2014; however no changes have been made which would negatively impact on compliance with the standard. The latest information on how well Australia complies with the SDDS is available on the IMF website: *http://dsbb.imf.org/Pages/SDDS/SOOCtyCtgList.aspx?ctycode=AUS*.

PERFORMANCE CRITERION 2

The ABS will partner and collaborate with stakeholders to develop new statistical solutions that inform decisions on important matters. ABS stakeholders will provide feedback on the effectiveness of these collaborations, their satisfaction with the ABS responsiveness in meeting their needs, and their confidence in ABS statistics.

2016-17 TARGETS	2017-18 AND THE FORWARD ESTIMATES TARGETS
Partners report increased levels of satisfaction with ABS responsiveness in meeting their needs in the biennial (April) 2016 Stakeholder Relationship Health Assessment compared to when the APSC Capability Review of the ABS was undertaken.	Partners' levels of satisfaction with ABS responsiveness in meeting their needs are maintained in the biennial (April) 2018 Stakeholder Relationship Health Assessment.
Case studies are produced demonstrating how the ABS collaborates with partners to develop statistical solutions that have or will significantly inform important decision making by government.	
A baseline is established on the use of ABS data integration products.	

PERFORMANCE CRITERION 3

The ABS will reduce the burden placed on providers. Provider take-up of electronic reporting will be enhanced through a Census electronic form usable on many mobile devices.

2016–17 TARGETS	2017–18 AND THE FORWARD ESTIMATES TARGETS
The ABS delivers annualised reductions in red tape of at least $200,000. Estimated total provider burden on businesses remains steady at approximately 400,000 hours.	
Business take-up of electronic forms exceeds 90%. More than 65% of the population complete their Census using an electronic form.	

PERFORMANCE CRITERION 4

The ABS will collaborate with partners to improve statistical infrastructure, capabilities, people and culture. The ABS Statistical Business Transformation Program is on track to develop innovative new infrastructure and capabilities. The ABS will progress the People and Culture Action Plan including an initiative to develop the future-ready professional, analytical and conceptual skills of selected staff.

2016–17 TARGETS	2017–18 AND THE FORWARD ESTIMATES TARGETS
The new enterprise data management environment will be implemented allowing the ABS to manage its data assets more cost-effectively.	ABS Statistical Business Transformation Program is on track and has met the agreed mid-term deliverables as assessed by a Gateway Review of the program to be undertaken by Australian Government by December 2017.
Case studies are produced demonstrating the benefits of new and enhanced infrastructure and capabilities.	
All actions from the ABS People and Culture Action Plan for 2016–17 are completed including identifying and starting to address future capability requirements through operational group workforce plans.	Completed all actions from the ABS People and Culture Action Plan for 2017–18.
A training course to build future ready professional, analytical and conceptual skills is developed and piloted.	