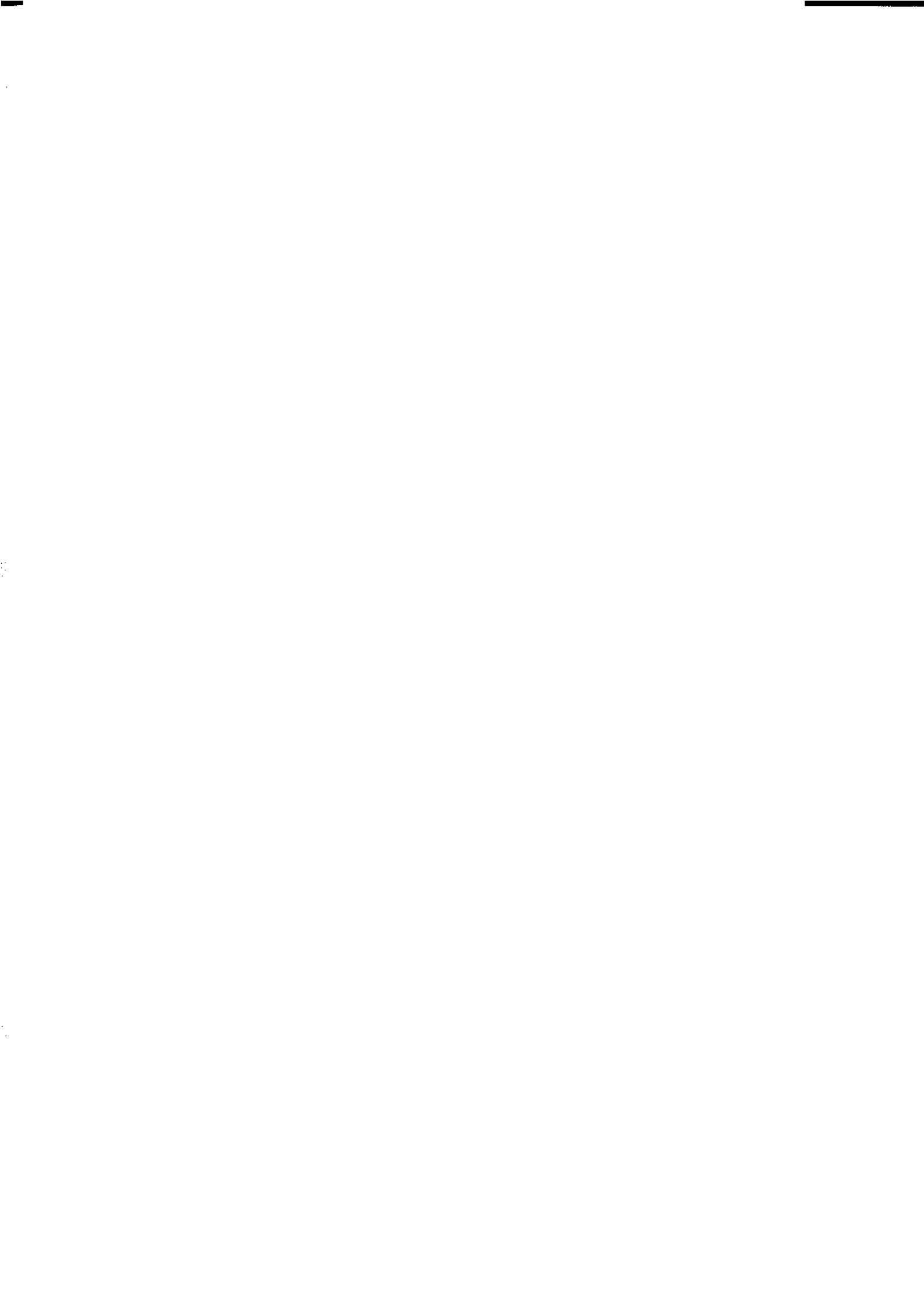




Annual Report  
1995 - 96






# Australian Bureau of Statistics

Annual Report  
1995-96

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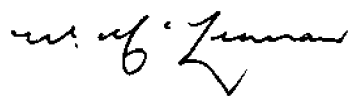
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The Honourable Peter Costello, MP  
Treasurer of the Commonwealth of Australia

In accordance with the provisions of section 24(1) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, I hereby submit to you, for presentation to the Parliament, this report on the operations of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 1996.

This report complies with 'Requirements for Departmental Annual Reports' approved by the Joint Committee of Public Accounts under subsection 25(7) of the *Public Service Act 1922*.

The report is dated on the day I approved the text for printing.



W. McLennan  
Australian Statistician

27 September 1996

## **Australian Bureau of Statistics**

### **Mission**

*We assist and encourage informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by providing a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.*

**Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Corporate Plan 1994**

**Objectives**

***Purpose***

*Informed and Satisfied Clients through an objective, relevant and responsive statistical service.*

***Product***

*Reliable, timely and coherent statistics.*

***Providers***

*Good relations with providers, respecting their rights.*

***People***

*A team of people with the skills and motivation to achieve the ABS mission.*

***Productivity***

*Continuing productivity improvements.*

***Profile***

*A high regard held for the ABS by decision makers and the community.*





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## Note

After the first reference in this report, the Australian Bureau of Statistics is generally referred to as the Bureau or the ABS, and the Australian Statistics Advisory Council as the Advisory Council or ASAC.

## Where to get information

*For any inquiries about the contents of this report, or to obtain 'Information on Request' documents (listed in Appendix 14), please contact:* Director, ABS Secretariat, PO Box 10, Belconnen, ACT 2616. Telephone (06) 252 5760. Facsimile (06) 253 1021.

This report, guides to ABS services, other selected documents, and a range of ABS statistics, are available electronically on the ABS's homepage service on the Internet (<http://www.abs.gov.au>).

# 1 ABS — INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

The Australian Bureau of Statistics is Australia's official statistical agency. For program budgeting purposes, the ABS is a single program with two sub-programs, Statistical Operations and Corporate Services. Details of the program structure are provided in Appendix 1.

The ABS has a Central Office in Canberra and eight State and Territory Offices. The senior management structure is provided at Appendix 2.

The ABS provides statistics on a very wide range of economic and social activity, covering government, business and society generally. This requires collection, methodological, information technology and coordination activity, as well as extensive consultation with users and providers of data. Chapters 4 and 5, which give an account of developments and achievements for some 53 components corresponding to the ABS's program management structure, show the range and diversity of activities involved in providing the national statistical service.

The appendices, including the Financial Statements at Appendix 15, provide additional information not contained in the body of the report.

The national accounts are of central importance in economic statistics. Chapter 2 of this report provides an outline of a major program of work to improve the quality of the statistics in the accounts, to implement revised international standards and to extend the accounts in significant ways.

Chapter 3 deals with the destruction of Census forms, an issue which again received some prominence in the lead-up to the 1996 Census of Population and Housing.

## AUTHORITY AND LEGISLATION

The principal legislation determining the functions and responsibilities of the ABS are the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, and the *Statistics (Arrangements with States) Act 1956*.

The functions of the ABS are defined in section 6 of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* 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 co-ordination 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.<sup>7</sup>

The *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* also established the Australian Statistics Advisory Council. Subsection 18(1) of the Act specifies that the functions of the Advisory Council are to advise the Minister and the 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.<sup>8</sup>

#### ROLE AND OPERATION

The mission of the ABS is to assist and encourage informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by providing a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.

To ensure that the ABS continues to fulfil that mission, the Australian Statistician determines which statistics are to be collected, after full discussion with users and clients including the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, and makes the results widely available. The independent status of the Australian Statistician is specified in law, and as a result the ABS has always received strong Parliamentary and community support.

In releasing statistics, the ABS follows the long-established principles that data should be made available as soon as is practicable and should be equally available to all users. In addition to traditional publications, a large range of products is available electronically.

In recognition of the importance of free and ready access to statistics for the community generally a large core set of statistics is made available through over 560 public, technical and tertiary libraries distributed across Australia. Complimentary copies of ABS publications are provided to members of parliament and to major news media organisations. The principal results from these publications are highlighted daily in the print and electronic media.

In order to produce official statistics, the ABS undertakes a large number of separate collections, ranging from periodic censuses to regular surveys of industry to provide current economic indicators, and from the five-yearly population census to regular household surveys on specific social or economic issues. The ABS devotes considerable efforts, in close cooperation with Commonwealth, State and Territory administrative agencies, to producing statistics as a by-product of administrative systems. The ABS also continually assesses user requirements and the capacity of providers to furnish data in collections.

Each field of statistics is the responsibility of a subject matter unit. These units maintain ongoing contact with providers and users of data through means such as standing committees, user groups, outposted statistical officer and consultancy services, conferences and seminars of representative organisations, and through day-to-day contact in the course of collecting and disseminating data.

The Australian Statistics Advisory Council plays an active role in advising upon the direction and priorities of the ABS work program. The activities of the Council are described in its annual report to Parliament.

Under the *Statistics (Arrangements with States) Act 1956*, Commonwealth and State statistical services have been integrated in all States since 1958 (in Tasmania since 1924). Although not covered by the Act, similar arrangements apply in both Territories. In Western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania, the Deputy Commonwealth Statistician administering the ABS Office is also the State Government Statistician. A government statistical coordination and consultative mechanism operates in most States and Territories. There is regular consultation with State Governments on statistical priorities.

#### TOP STRUCTURE REORGANISATION

During the first half of 1995-96 the top structure of the ABS was reorganised. This action was taken to ensure that best use is made of senior positions. The main aims of the reorganisation were to:

- enable more senior level attention to be given to strategic issues of concern to the governments of Australia and the community generally, and allow more contact with lifeline clients

- put more senior level resources into the statistical coordination functions specified in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*
- broaden the spans of control at all senior levels, and in so doing move away from traditional hierarchical structures
- strengthen the corporate area, and refocus attention on policy development
- adjust workloads
- place more importance on methodology
- put client services in the structure in such a way that it can run more along business lines.

The new top structure is shown in Appendix 2. The principal changes were:

- grouping of statistical subject areas into an Economic Statistics Group and a Population Statistics Group, each headed by a Deputy Australian Statistician
- creation of a Corporate Services Division, and a Policy Secretariat function within that Division
- creation of a Methodology Division to strengthen the technical underpinning of ABS work
- concentration of client service functions in a new Information Services Division.

#### PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

During 1995–96 the ABS continued to provide a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service. Performance highlights for 1995–96 follow and details are to be found in Chapters 4 and 5.

#### Information Products

Timeliness in the release of statistics continued to be a major objective and in 1995–96 predetermined release dates for key indicator series were consistently met.

The range of ABS products in printed and electronic form increased significantly during 1995–96. More than 80 titles providing additional statistics or substantially new analyses were added to the catalogue. New analytical publications included:

- *Australians and the Environment*, a compendium designed to show the interactions between the environment, people, and the economy

- Results from the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey, in a series of publications for ATSI regions, as well as thematic publications on employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians and on Australia's Indigenous youth
- *Australian Mining Industry*, a compendium which draws together financial, commodity, employment, trade and other information

Other notable releases during the year were:

- *Social Trends* (third edition) with a special feature on private and public transport use
- *Australian Women's Year Book* (second edition)
- *Small Business in Australia*
- *Characteristics of Small Business*
- *Innovation in Australian Manufacturing and Innovation in selected Australian Industries*
- *Results of the 1993-94 Household Expenditure Survey*, and an associated study of the effects of government benefits and taxes on the distribution of income among private households in Australia
- *Experimental Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population*, containing projections to the year 2001
- *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia*
- *Voluntary Work, Australia*

There were also some important releases of electronic products. These included:

- a third, expanded edition of the ABS's Integrated Regional Data Base
- second release of *Year Book, Australia* on CD-ROM
- further development of the ABS's World Wide Web home page on the Internet
- first edition of the Statistical Concepts Reference Library on CD-ROM, containing concepts, sources and methods documentation for the national accounts, population statistics, balance of payments, government finance statistics and price indexes
- release, in cooperation with the Department of the Treasury, of their new macro-economic model of the Australian economy (TRYM) and the associated ABS database.

## Statistical Developments

In addition to statistical products the ABS makes available information and discussion papers about development intentions and issues related to particular fields of statistics. Examples during 1995-96 include strategy papers for economic and social statistics and discussion papers concerning the 1996 Census of Population and Housing. The monthly *Australian Economic Indicators* publication regularly features articles on developments in and analysis of statistical series.

In the course of several public addresses during the year, the Australian Statistician, Mr Bill McLennan, reviewed the challenges facing the Australian statistical service and the shifts that are occurring in statistical priorities and information services. These engagements included an address to the National Press Club in July 1995.

Preparations were well advanced for the national Census of Population and Housing conducted on 6 August 1996. The preparations included conduct of a large-scale dress rehearsal; recruitment and training of more than 31,000 Census Collectors; printing of 11 million Census forms and information booklets, together with Collectors' maps and other documentation. Plans for a Census Hotline with interpreter service were also completed. A public relations campaign was developed to promote awareness of the Census, to provide assurance on privacy and confidentiality, and to seek the public's cooperation in completing Census forms. Extensive consultation was undertaken with users concerning the statistical content of the Census products and services that are to be released from June 1997.

A major work program was put in train to improve the quality of the national accounts, to implement revised international standards for these statistics, and to extend the accounts in various ways. As a consequence, substantial changes have been made to a number of source collections. These changes and various important methodological developments are detailed in Chapter 2 of this report.

In addition to the extensive range of social and labour surveys which are conducted at regular intervals, a number of new household surveys were undertaken in 1995-96. These included surveys of nutrition, women's safety, adult literacy, and the first phase of a longitudinal survey of employment and unemployment patterns.

Coverage of the services sector in ABS collections was significantly extended with a number of industries being surveyed for the first time and results of earlier surveys published during the year (for details see the Service Industries component in Chapter 4). A plan has been developed which will see further extensions.

The ABS is cooperating in programs to assist small business and in 1995-96 conducted the first year's survey in a longitudinal study of small businesses.

Following special Budget funding for environmental and resource accounts, work in 1995-96 included: preparation of a public



discussion paper; extensive consultation to determine requirements; extension of existing environmental expenditure collections, and the formation of an Environment Statistics Advisory Group.

Other significant development work on statistical projects included:

- preparation of a discussion proposal for a framework for the measurement of inflation in the Australian economy
- first release of estimates of real gross income for States
- release of an exposure draft *Introduction of an Accruals Basis in Government Finance Statistics*
- initial development work on a new quarterly index of labour costs, to be implemented in stages during 1996-97 and 1997-98.

#### Infrastructure and Coordination

The ABS continued to invest in infrastructure such as: computing facilities, conceptual frameworks and classifications, the register of businesses (which provides the basis for the ABS's wide range of business based surveys), and a corresponding population survey framework which supports household surveys.

The ABS also continued its efforts to coordinate its activities with other agencies, and to take into account issues such the reporting burden being placed on data providers and confidentiality concerns.

Some developments during 1995-96 in these aspects of the ABS's operations were as follows:

- Release (including in electronic form) of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Commodity Classification covering all goods and services.
- Update of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC). Maps and boundary data sets based on the ASGC are now available in hard copy and electronic formats annually.
- Development of the ABS's Data Management program to the point where the bulk of output data is in the process of being lodged in a data 'warehouse' and linked to analytical, publishing and other output facilities. Further development will be directed to providing facilities to optimise reliability across statistical outputs, enhancing meta data management, and improving information services offered from the warehouse.
- Replacement of the ABS's mainframe computer and disk storage with resultant increases in performance and cost efficiencies.
- An external benchmarking review of the ABS computing environment and systems with reference to world best practice, which provided an extremely favourable assessment in relation to

both the computing environment and the application services provided.

- Continued efforts to rationalise statistical activity through coordinated arrangements with other agencies. During 1995–96 agreement was reached between the ABS and the Commonwealth Grants Commission on the integration of government finance statistics collections. Progress was also made towards more extensive ABS use of Australian Taxation Office business data for statistical purposes, in particular, the substitution of taxation data for direct ABS collection for small and medium sized businesses.
- A commitment by the ABS to reduce the load on small businesses by 20%.

The ABS continued the process of concentrating collection and specialised analytical activities in a series of national project centres and analytical units spread amongst ABS offices. This approach is designed to achieve improvements in quality as well as efficiencies. During 1995–96, a National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics was established in Victoria, the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics in Darwin was enhanced, Business Register operations were brought together in Victoria, building statistics collections were concentrated in South Australia, and Central Office became the centre for the retail survey.

#### International Involvement

The ABS is widely acknowledged to be an important and active member of the international statistical community. Highlights of this involvement in 1995–96 included:

- The Australian Statistician's Chairmanship of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
- Provision of technical assistance to some 22 countries of the Asia-Pacific region. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed with the Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics on cooperation in various fields of statistics.
- Provision of technical assistance to South Africa by arrangement with AusAID.
- Continued contributions to the development of conceptual frameworks, standards and methodology in a number of fields. The ABS chaired the UN Expert Group on Critical Problems in Economic Statistics. It took a prominent role in a UN expert group investigating the statistical implications of the 1994 Population and Development Conference, the 1995 Social Development Summit and the 1996 Women's Conference. The ABS was active in working groups concerned with, for example, national accounts, services industries, environmental accounting, balance of payments, science and technology, and tourism statistics.



*Australian Statistician, Bill McLennan, with Sbri S. Sathyam, Secretary, Department of Statistics, Indian Ministry of Planning, at a meeting in July 1995 in Canberra. This was one of a number of visits of high-level delegations from national statistical offices during the year.*



*In mid 1996, the ABS released a CD-ROM product containing 'concepts, sources and methods' documentation for several major statistical systems including national accounts, balance of payments, population statistics and price indexes. Pictured are Keith Blackburn (right) who developed the concept and Bob Baker who undertook the compilation, with the product and the 11 publications it covers.*

- A major contribution to the APEC Trade and Investment Data Review Project.

## Management

In relation to the corporate management of the organisation, notable developments included the following:

- establishment of an employer sponsored childcare centre close to the Central Office, in partnership with nearby government agencies
- continuing automation of personnel management practices and transaction processing such as leave applications, higher duties, overtime, and temporary and permanent transfers
- finalising the centralised processing of the accounts payable and accounts receivable functions in Canberra and Melbourne respectively
- contracting out of the functions of internal audit and development of Corporate Services information technology strategy
- successful upgrade of the ABS's financial management and information system, Oracle Financial, from version 9.4 to version 10.6
- adoption of the MAB/MIAC initiative '2+2=5 Innovative Ways of Organising People', as a model for introducing organisational and cultural change into relevant areas of the Bureau.

## FINANCIAL RESOURCES

1995-96 is the third year that the ABS has compiled its financial statements on an accrual basis. These financial statements can be found at Appendix 15.

The 1995-96 operating expenses of the ABS totalled \$257 million, compared with \$229 million in 1994-95, the increase being mainly due to expenses arising from the 1996 Census of Population and Housing and pay rises from the Public Service Enterprise Agreement.

Revenue in 1995-96 from the sale of statistical products and provision of services totalled \$25.5 million (including administered revenue of \$56,441), an increase of \$3.2 million on the figure achieved in 1994-95.

A summary of the appropriations to the ABS and the program outlays, as estimated at the presentation of the 1995-96 Commonwealth Budget (updated by the Additional Estimates), is shown in the table below.

**RECONCILIATION OF SUB-PROGRAMS AND BUDGET APPROPRIATION(a) ELEMENTS  
FOR 1995-96  
(\$'000)**

Sub-program	A Approp. Acts No.s 1 & 3	+B Approp. Acts No.s 2 & 4	+C Special Approps	+D Annotated Approps(b)	=E Budget Program Approps	- F Adjust -ments(c)	=G Budget Program Outlays
Statistical Operations	214 576	5 298	0	22 700	242 574	22 750	219 824
Corporate Services	23 247	—	0	300	23 547	300	23 247
<b>Total</b>	<b>237 823</b>	<b>5 298</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>23 000</b>	<b>266 121</b>	<b>23 050</b>	<b>243 071</b>

- (a) As at presentation of the 1995-96 Commonwealth Budget, updated by Additional Estimates.  
 (b) Annotated Appropriations are a form of special appropriations to allow an agency access to the money it earns.  
 (c) Adjustments include receipts which are offset against outlays. ABS receipts include miscellaneous receipts which are not eligible for consideration as Annotated Appropriations.

A summary of the financial and staffing resources for the program is contained in the following table.

**FINANCIAL AND STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY**

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
ACCRUAL BASIS (\$'000)			
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee expenses	154 166	142 455	153 552
Other administrative expenses	88 810	86 319	103 096
<i>Total expenses</i>	242 976	228 774	256 648
Revenue (including administered revenue)	22 668	22 283	25 537
Total assets	36 998	44 848	73 429
Total liabilities	55 627	61 558	68 549
STAFF YEARS			
<b>TOTAL STAFFING(a)</b>	<b>3 400</b>	<b>3 237</b>	<b>3 227</b>

- (a) Full time staff, and full-time equivalent of part-time staff. Includes paid inoperative staff. Further details on staffing are provided at Appendix 3, Table 3.1.

**HUMAN RESOURCES**

At 30th June 1996 the ABS had 3,489 staff, employed under the *Public Service Act 1922*, and for the year 1995-96 as a whole, 3,227 staff years were provided. In addition, 318 staff years of service were provided in 1995-96 by persons (mostly household survey interviewers) appointed under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

The ABS operates through a Central Office in Canberra and eight State and Territory Offices. A separate Data Processing Centre is established to undertake the processing operations of the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing. The Centre for the 1996 Census commenced operation in June 1995, in preparation for the processing of the Census Dress Rehearsal later in 1995.

The number and distribution of average paid staff, by office, over the last three years are shown in the following table.

**DISTRIBUTION OF STAFF (average paid staff over the year(a))**

Office	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
<b>Operative staff</b>			
Central Office (Canberra)	1 686	1 597	1 533
New South Wales	414	366	352
Victoria	357	327	345
Queensland	262	252	247
Western Australia	231	232	232
South Australia	188	178	185
Tasmania	128	134	142
Northern Territory	43	50	59
Australian Capital Territory Office	4	7	11
Population Census			
Data Processing Centre (NSW)	0	0	37
<b>Total operative staff</b>	<b>3 313</b>	<b>3 143</b>	<b>3 143</b>
<b>Paid inoperative staff(b)</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>Total average paid staff</b>	<b>3 400</b>	<b>3 237</b>	<b>3 227</b>

(a) Comprises full-time staff and part-time staff at full-time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. More detailed information is available in Appendix 3, Table 3.1.

(b) For example, staff on approved leave for periods of twelve weeks or longer.

At 30 June 1996 there were 34 operative substantive Senior Executive Service (SES) officers in the ABS and two officers acting long-term in the SES. During 1995-96, two SES officers retired and three transferred outside the ABS (two on a temporary basis). Further details of the ABS senior staffing responsibilities are shown in Appendix 2.

The staffing overview (Appendix 3) provides a range of staffing information, summary statements on performance pay, expenditure and participation in staff development activities, and consultants engaged in 1995-96.

## PLANNING

The diverse activities involved in providing official statistical services require a considerable management effort to marshal resources in an optimal fashion. The ABS recognises that it is impossible to satisfy all demands, and seeks to react positively and responsibly to the needs of its users. At the same time, the ABS is conscious of the constraints on public spending and on the workload placed on providers of information for its collections. Continued effort is made to review, and where possible, reduce provider load.

The latest ABS Corporate Plan (released in 1994-95) reaffirms ABS commitment to providing high quality, objective and responsive statistical services to governments and the community.

The ABS maintains a three-year forward work program, which is 'rolled forward' by one year each year. The infrastructure for this program is the set of components described in Chapters 4 and 5. Work programs are developed, resources are allocated and performance indicators are established at these and lower levels.

Each year, relative priorities and competing resource requirements of all program components are formally and extensively considered by senior management. Particular attention is given to:

- the extent to which particular statistical activities continue to be justified vis-à-vis other work for which a demand has been expressed by users
- the cost imposed on respondents to collections, in terms of time, effort and loss of privacy
- prospective total resources available to the Bureau within the three-year period
- the market potential and revenue implications of the various initiatives proposed
- productivity gains which have been achieved or which might be possible in the future
- total demands on the service areas which the proposed forward work program would entail.

Proposals from managers of program components are considered by senior management, generally following consultation with major users. The proposed forward work program, and estimates which emerge are then considered by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council. The work program is finalised in the light of ASAC advice.

The culmination of the year's planning cycle is a comprehensive document describing the proposed work program for the ensuing triennium, associated performance indicators and proposed deployment of resources. This document is available for public scrutiny and comment.

Additional information on the ABS approach to strategic management and its activities to reduce provider load are available from the ABS on request (see Appendix 14 for details).

#### SOCIAL JUSTICE, ACCESS AND EQUITY

During 1995-96 the ABS continued its support for social justice, access and equity, and for government policies on the status of women. This support was primarily in the form of the provision of statistics that are available to government and community groups for developing and monitoring strategies in these fields, and by taking steps to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers in the collection of data. Internally, staff are kept aware of access and equity issues, particularly through personnel development activities.

The ABS forward work program attempts to meet the needs of government for statistics to support social justice policies by the identification of target groups in surveys. The ABS continued in 1995-96 to publish a wide range of statistics relevant to social justice and access and equity. These included the release of the third



*Australian Social Trends* (catalogue no. 4120.0), the *Australian Women's Yearbook* (catalogue no. 4124.0), statistics on families, health of children, people with disabilities, and further release of results from the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey.

To ensure that basic statistics are readily available to the community, publications are provided on a complimentary basis to major news media organisations and libraries. Through its Library Extension Program the ABS assists these libraries to display and use a wide array of information.

The ABS continued to consult and inform ethnic communities of its statistical services and collections, through direct contact and through English and foreign language media. A handbook on ethnicity data, prepared by the ABS and covering issues involved in collection, computation and usage, is published by the Office of Multicultural Affairs.

Major activities in support of the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) strategy were the continued implementation of the ABS EEO Program and the ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment and Career Development Strategy, as well as the construction, in Canberra, of an employer sponsored childcare centre in partnership with several other agencies.

Twenty-eight Public Administration Trainees were engaged under the Australian Public Service National Training Wage Program, which is aimed at providing opportunities for long-term unemployed people and young people assessed as being at risk of long-term unemployment.

A detailed statement on ABS contributions and outcomes in relation to social justice, access and equity, is available from the ABS on request (see Appendix 14 for details).

#### INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

The ABS rolling three year forward work program is subject to both internal and external scrutiny.

Internal scrutiny of the work program and general ABS operations takes the form of:

- Reviews directed at statistical collections, service functions, and cross-cutting issues. In reviews of statistical collections, external users are widely consulted, and on occasion external users assist the review team. There were 14 reviews undertaken in 1995-96. Examples include reviews of the Retail Census, Wholesale Industry Survey, Job Vacancies and Overtime Survey, health statistics and population statistics. Review recommendations are considered by periodic Management Meetings of executives from all offices.
- Annual reports from Branch Heads (in Central Office), Deputy Commonwealth Statisticians (for State Offices) and Territory Statisticians (for Northern Territory and ACT Offices) to the

Division Heads Meeting (comprising Australian Statistician, Deputy Australian Statisticians and Division Heads). The reports cover the activities of the Branch or Office for the previous year, directions proposed for the year ahead, and indicators of performance.

- An internal audit program covering different facets of ABS operations over a one to five year cycle. The internal audit recommendations are reported to an Audit Committee chaired by the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services Division. The Audit Committee establishes the audit work program.
- Ongoing joint ABS-Union committees which consider and consult on issues such as occupational health and safety, industrial democracy, and equal employment opportunity.
- In 1995-96 there were 34 internal audit reports issued. The majority of audits related to financial statements topics with the effectiveness of related processes included in the audit examination. A relatively large number of audit recommendations for enhanced operations are made each year and the vast majority of the recommendations are accepted and implemented. Because of the routine and modest nature of the administrative systems and activities in the ABS, there are typically no 'significant outcomes' from the internal audit process.

External scrutiny of the ABS takes the following forms:

- Reviews by ASAC of ABS priorities and proposals for the forward work program. ASAC advises the Statistician and the Treasurer, and produces its own Annual Report of issues considered and advice given.
- Portfolio evaluations and similar scrutinies. In 1995-96 there were reviews of the effectiveness of the Business Expectations Survey and the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey.
- Audits by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), either of ABS operations specifically or as part of cross-agency studies.
- Review of statistical activity by user consultative and advisory groups. The groups include:

Survey advisory committees established to advise ABS on the concepts, content and dissemination programs of major household surveys.

Advisory boards established for some user funded activities, to provide advice on statistical priorities and data standards, and to monitor and support the implementation of agreed collections. The forward work programs for jointly funded statistical units are usually agreed between the Statistician and the board. In a number of cases the boards are supported by an expert technical advisory group.

- Standing user advisory groups, comprising key government, business, academic and community group users, provide advice on statistical priorities and developments in particular fields.

Commonwealth/State working groups or committees, often attached to Ministerial Councils, which provide advice on emerging needs, priorities and areas for cooperation.

- Ad hoc groups brought together to provide advice on some aspect of statistical development or priorities.

Information on Freedom of Information, Inquiries by Parliamentary Committees, and Documents Tabled in Parliament is available in Appendixes 6, 7 and 8 respectively.

There were no adverse comments from the ANAO, Ombudsman, courts or tribunals during 1995-96.

## SECURITY

The ABS maintains a comprehensive security framework, overseen by a Protective Security Management Committee chaired by the First Assistant Statistician, Technology Services Division.

The legal requirements not to divulge identifiable information, and the strong confidentiality and security ethos which permeates the attitudes of ABS staff, are in themselves the most important elements of the ABS security screen. They are reinforced by a range of measures relating to the perimeter security of all ABS offices, the security measures protecting the ABS computing environment from any external access, and the security measures implemented for individual ABS data holdings.

The various elements of the security framework are summarised below.

### Undertakings of Fidelity and Secrecy under the Census and Statistics Act

The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* obliges ABS staff to maintain the confidentiality and security of all data reported to and held by the ABS. Staff sign an undertaking of fidelity and secrecy under the terms of the Act. The personal responsibility of all staff is a crucial element of ABS culture; it is the foundation upon which the security of ABS data holdings is built.

The ABS has an enviable reputation for the preservation of the confidentiality of reported data, and for the protection of its statistical data holdings from unauthorised release. There have been no known cases of any ABS officer breaching the undertaking of fidelity and secrecy.

### Physical Security

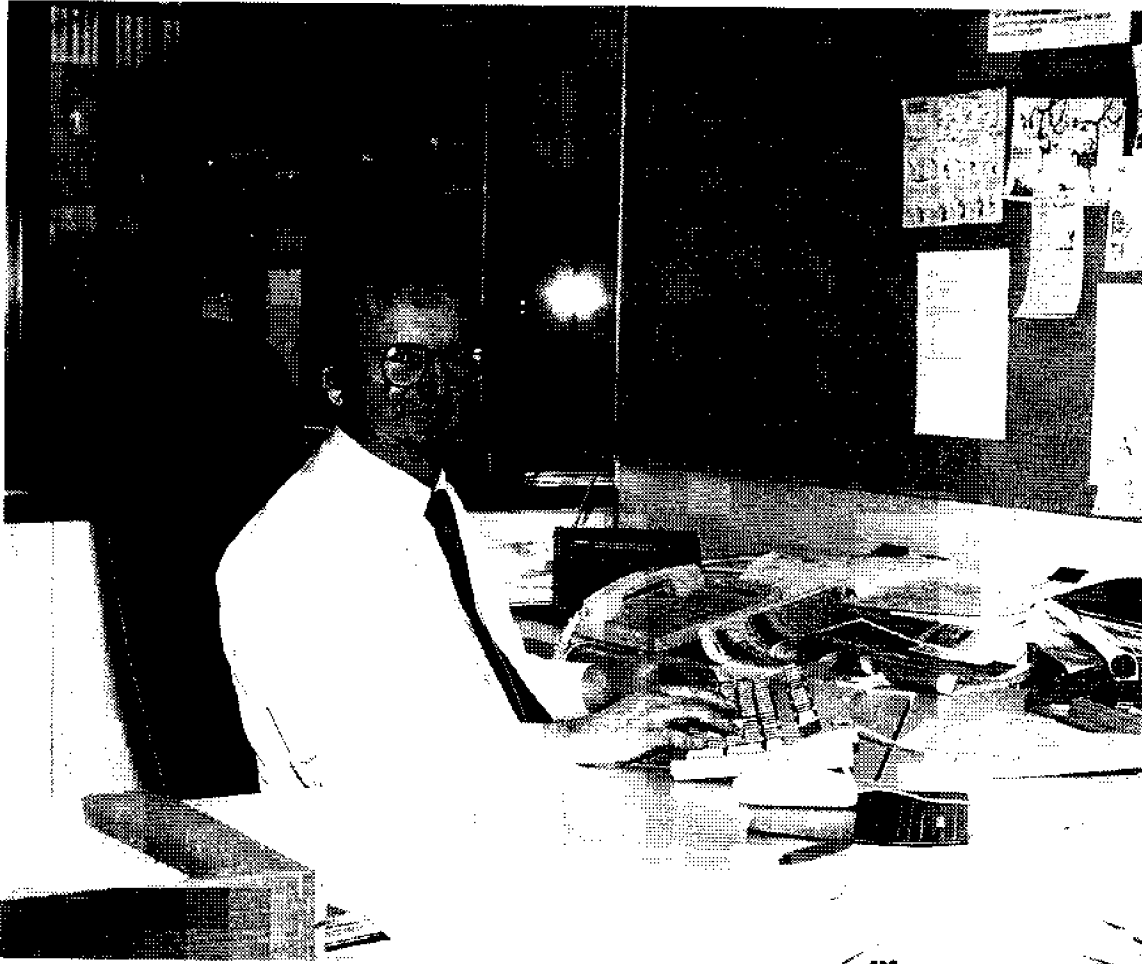
All ABS premises are physically secure against unauthorised access. Entry is through electronically controlled access systems activated by individual coded keys. In addition, particularly sensitive output data,

and the staff handling them, are located in physically isolated areas, protected by further electronic access systems.

#### Computer Security

Access to ABS computing is based on personal identifiers which are password protected. The computer systems are regularly monitored and usage audited.

Further access control systems are used to protect any data designated 'sensitive'. Access to sensitive data is only granted under the authority of area line management (the 'owners' of the data) on the basis that access is required by the staff member to carry out his or her work duties.



*It was announced in the June 1996 Queen's Birthday Honours that John Pollard (pictured above) of the ABS Tasmanian Office, was awarded the Public Service Medal for outstanding contributions in the field of agricultural statistics.*



*In the 1996 Australia Day Honours, Ross Harvey of the ABS was awarded the Public Service Medal for 'outstanding public service, particularly in maintaining and improving the very high quality of Australia's national accounts statistics'. Ross (left) is shown being congratulated by the Governor-General, Sir William Deane, at Government House in Canberra.*

## 2 DEVELOPMENTS IN THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

### INTRODUCTION

For a number of reasons it is appropriate to feature in this year's report, steps being taken both to improve the quality of the Australian National Accounts and to develop and extend them in various important respects:

- The national accounts have a central role in assessing the state of the economy and in this connection are being subjected to increasingly exacting public scrutiny. Present development work is aimed at improving the quality of the quarterly and annual accounts.
- The changing nature of the Australian economy (such as the growing importance of services industries) requires continuous reassessment of the relevance of statistical outputs to ensure that important user requirements are being met.
- New international standards have been promulgated and Australia, in common with other countries, has commenced the considerable program of work required to implement them.
- The national accounts draw on a very wide range of statistical sources and series. As indicated in Chapter 4 many of these are being reviewed and adjusted to meet the changing requirements.

The national accounting framework provides a comprehensive, consistent and integrated basis for presenting and analysing economic data. The national accounts themselves not only summarise overall economic activity, but also provide detailed data on various parts of the economy. The major summary statistic derived within the accounts is gross domestic product (GDP), a measure of the total output of the economy in the reference period. The national accounts also provide the starting point for compiling other statistics such as productivity measures. There is growing interest in assessing the environmental consequences of economic activity and this has led to the development of environmental accounting which also takes its starting point from the national accounting framework.

This article describes developments in the Australian national accounts in terms of the following:

- (a) improving the quality of the national accounts;
- (b) a review of the means by which measured economic growth rates are calculated;
- (c) improving the measurement of productivity; and
- (d) developments in environmental accounting.

## IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF THE NATIONAL ACCOUNTS

In 1994, the ABS commenced a work program aimed at enhancing the relevance, coherence and accuracy of the Australian national accounts. Two major factors influenced this new work:

- a new international standard for national accounting was released, namely, *System of National Accounts, 1993*<sup>1</sup> (SNA93)
- two recent major reviews by the ABS of the methods used to compile the annual and quarterly accounts identified ways in which the quality of the accounts could be improved by using new compilation methods.

### New international standards

Since the previous national accounting standards were promulgated by the United Nations in 1968, there have been major changes in the structure of economic activity in most countries, and the demands of those using national accounts statistics have also changed. Financial markets have been deregulated, exchange rates have been floated, new ways of doing business have been developed, and there has been a marked shift in the mix of economic activities (e.g., in Australia, as in most industrialised countries, the services industries have significantly increased their share of economic activity, largely at the expense of manufacturing and agriculture). Producing the national accounts on the basis of SNA93 will provide a set of data which will more accurately reflect underlying economic conditions and, therefore, economic growth. In addition, it will enable a more accurate picture to be presented of the structure of the economy and the interaction between the various institutional sectors than is currently the case.

The most visible change in the Australian national accounts arising from the application of SNA93 will be tables that are more comprehensive (e.g. balance sheets will be included as an integral part of the annual accounts along with the present 'flow' accounts such as those of income and expenditure, and the flow accounts will be presented in greater detail than previously).

The framework set out in SNA93 defines a consistent and comprehensive set of macroeconomic accounts as well as providing a framework for collecting and compiling economic statistics in general. In parallel with the development of SNA93, the International Monetary Fund has redeveloped its standards for balance of payments statistics (incorporating standards for international investment position statistics) in the fifth edition of the Balance of Payments Manual<sup>2</sup> (BPM5). The result is that the two sets of standards are almost in complete harmony. Accordingly, the ABS is proceeding with implementing SNA93 and BPM5 in a way which will ensure that the conceptual harmonisation of these related sets of statistics is achieved in practice.

The ABS released a publication in December 1994 titled *Discussion Paper: Introduction of Revised International Statistical Standards in ABS Macro-economic Statistics* (Catalogue No. 5245.0) which sets out in detail the changes likely to arise from the introduction of SNA93.



The 'input-output approach'

The introduction of the new international standards offers a valuable opportunity for the ABS to review the entirety of its national accounts program. In particular, two detailed reviews (one in 1993 and the other in 1994) investigated how compilation techniques could be improved. As a result of these reviews, the ABS is currently working on a major development which will ultimately see the national income, expenditure and product (NIEP) accounts integrated with the input-output tables. The three alternative GDP estimates (i.e., based on income, expenditure and production respectively) and their average, all of which are currently shown in the accounts, will be reconciled annually using an input-output framework. The result will be that a single estimate of GDP (and therefore a single growth rate) will be published for each year with the possible exception of the most recent complete year. While this will be a major step forward, it will not eliminate all problems of reconciliation. Because of the variety of data sources and methodologies used within the Australian national accounts there will remain other statistical discrepancies between estimates of items that are conceptually equivalent. For example, sectoral net lending in the NIEP accounts typically does not agree with the equivalent net change in financial position in the financial accounts. A major goal of the ABS is to reduce these discrepancies as well as those between the alternative approaches to GDP.

At present, despite being conceptually identical, estimates of GDP derived from the NIEP accounts and the input-output tables generally differ because of a combination of the following two factors:

- (1) In compiling the input-output tables, the objective has been to produce as accurately as possible a comprehensive picture of the interrelationships in the Australian economy, within a single year, between the supply and use of goods and services, and the incomes generated from production. The need to satisfy the two identities: 'supply = use' for each commodity and 'production = income' for each industry has led the input-output compilers to choose the data sources most helpful in achieving this objective. The data confrontation and consequent balancing process leads to adjustments to some of the data.
- (2) The NIEP accounts, on the other hand, are not currently subject to any practical balancing constraint other than at the macro level between the three alternative estimates of GDP, and even that is avoided by explicitly showing a statistical discrepancy and by averaging the results of the three alternative methods of calculating constant price GDP to provide the overall measure of economic growth in Australia (GDP(A)). In the absence of comprehensive balancing constraints, the NIEP compilers have chosen data sources that are aimed at giving the best result over time at the total economy level and allowing a consistent application across the various sectors in the economy.

Until the present initiative was implemented, input-output tables were produced only triennially and up to three and a half years after the end of the reference period. This infrequency, and lack of timeliness,

were the principal reasons for the tables not being used as benchmarks for the NIEP accounts.

The aim is to achieve full integration of the input-output and annual national accounts statistics in 1998 in parallel with implementing SNA93.

Integrating the input-output tables and the NIEP accounts has three main advantages:

- the accounts will be more consistent, both for any particular year and over time;
- the data confrontation and balancing process at detailed levels can lead to better estimates by identifying data deficiencies, thus prompting remedial action before the annual accounts are released; and
- input-output tables can provide a focus for data collection activities and also a 'quality filter' on the economic statistics collected.

In addition, annual current and constant price input-output tables will provide a rich data source for sophisticated analyses such as the detailed and coherent measurement of multifactor productivity.

#### Improvements in source data

A major requirement of the so-called 'input-output approach' is more detailed source data, particularly those collected in the annual economy-wide Economic Activity Survey and the annual manufacturing collection. In addition, the quarterly survey of employment and earnings and the quarterly survey of new capital expenditure are especially important. A thorough review of the survey of employment and earnings has recently been completed. It aimed to improve the data quality which had been deteriorating in recent times; a revamped survey will commence in September quarter 1996 as a result of this review. In the case of the survey of new capital expenditure, a dissection of total new capital expenditure on equipment into six broad commodity groups (e.g., computers, road vehicles, etc.) is being collected. As well as assisting in implementing the input-output approach, the additional data will enable a more accurate assessment to be made of the factors impacting on growth in private investment, which is a critical element in assessing economic conditions.

Data from the Australian Tax Office (ATO), supplied in respect of companies, individuals, and partnerships and trusts, have formed a major source for the national accounts for many years, albeit with a time delay. In developing the economic activity survey, the ABS strategy is to ultimately combine the data directly collected in the survey in respect of medium and large-sized businesses with ATO data for business units not covered by the ABS survey, in order to produce the annual benchmarks used in the national accounts. (All the work on identifying the businesses for which ATO data will be used is being undertaken within the ABS. Under ATO legislation, the ABS has access to unit record data in respect of identified businesses for statistical

purposes. On the other hand, the ATO cannot be provided by the ABS with details relating to identifiable individual businesses.)

Services industries have become an increasingly important part of the overall economy and, since the late 1980s, the ABS has implemented a rolling program of collecting detailed data on such industries periodically. The need for more current, broad indicators of activity for these industries has led to the planned introduction of a quarterly survey of turnover of services industries and to the development of price indexes for a range of services industries.

The ABS is confident that the initiatives described above will lead to significant improvements in the relevance, coherence and quality of the annual national accounts. Since the annual accounts in turn provide the benchmarks for the quarterly national accounts it can be expected that there will be commensurate improvements in the quarterly accounts. The improvements to the quarterly economic surveys described above will directly contribute to improving the quarterly accounts.

#### MEASURING ECONOMIC GROWTH

Many ABS statistics, including the national accounts, are expressed at prices in a base period so that underlying changes in quantities, or 'real' growth rates can be assessed. Over many years, the established practice in the ABS and most other national statistical agencies has been to rebase (i.e., change the base year for weighting and reference purposes) every five years. The current base year used by the ABS is 1989-90 and the next base year for constant price estimates produced by the ABS is scheduled to be 1994-95. However, significant changes in measured growth rates have occurred in some components of the accounts following the last two rebases and it has become apparent that rebasing every five years may not be sufficiently frequent. A problem arises when both price and volume relativities between major commodities are changing rapidly and significantly.

SNA93 recommends more frequent rebasing than the traditional five-yearly cycle. It proposes a procedure referred to as 'chaining' or 'chain linking'; the output from the chaining is referred to as 'chain volume indexes'. In effect, these indexes are derived by chaining together constant price estimates which are rebased frequently (generally annually) with price weights that more closely reflect current relativities. Chain volume indexes provide better indicators of growth than the more conventional 'fixed base' constant price estimates in situations where price and volume relativities are changing significantly. As an example, this situation is presently occurring to varying degrees for aggregates where computer and other high technology equipment is a substantial component. Computer equipment prices, relative to capability, have been falling rapidly and usage has been growing at a faster rate than that for most other goods. In these circumstances constant price estimates rebased infrequently will overstate growth for the latest periods because the (price) weights assigned to the products whose volumes are growing faster than the average, are higher than they would be if a more recent base period were chosen.

There are several alternative formulas which can be used to calculate chain volume indexes. At the present time, the ABS is calculating some experimental quarterly chain volume indexes using weights which change annually. The results are expected to be released in a discussion paper later in 1996. The aim will be to inform users about the issues associated with chain volume indexes and to provide an indication of the likely impact of their introduction. The growth rate recorded by chain volume indexes is generally considered to be a more realistic indicator of actual growth. However, 'constant price' value series calculated using chain volume indexes lose additivity, i.e., the components of an aggregate such as GDP do not sum to the total. The discussion paper will set out the various issues in detail prior to a round of meetings which the ABS intends conducting with interested users.

#### MEASURING PRODUCTIVITY

There has been a heightened interest in recent years in productivity measurement generally and particularly for services industries, including in the context of measuring the efficiency of government service provision. Governments in Australia have been under increasing pressure to implement fiscal strategies to deal with adverse trends in revenue, outlays and debt. A quest for increased efficiency in government service provision, including the progressive adoption of 'best practice' techniques, has been an important feature of government initiatives and is also consistent with the national micro-economic reform agenda. However, existing data and techniques for monitoring the quantum of output and productivity of services industries, particularly for government services, are inadequate.

There are a number of streams to the work on productivity currently being undertaken in the ABS:

- (a) For the market sector of the economy:
  - (i) improving the range of price indexes available, especially for service industries, so that improved measures of real output — the numerator in the productivity equation — can be compiled; and
  - (ii) improving estimates of inputs to production (labour, capital stock estimates, intermediate consumption) — the denominators in the productivity equation.
- (b) For non-marketed outputs (e.g. government services) better real output measures (the numerator) are required in circumstances where conventional price deflation of current price outputs, imputed on the basis of input costs, is inappropriate. With regard to the denominator, the work in (a)(ii) above will be relevant.

The productivity work will benefit from the availability of annual input-output tables (in both current and constant price terms) and the work on chain-linking described above. This work is conceptually difficult and ABS is seeking collaborative arrangements with other national statistical agencies in undertaking the work.

## ENVIRONMENTAL ACCOUNTING

The term 'environmental accounting' covers a range of issues, all of which relate in one way or another to incorporating environmental considerations into economic analysis.

There are three main elements relating to environmental accounting which complement and overlap each other to some degree. First, natural resource accounting focuses initially on resource accounts (such as energy or forest accounts) in physical units, both within and beyond the economic boundary of the national accounts. Second, national and sectoral balance sheets provide in dollar terms the value of those resources classified as 'economic' assets<sup>3</sup>, which can be combined with data on the capital stock and financial assets and liabilities to provide a summary measure of Australia's 'net worth'. Third, environment satellite accounts provide a framework within which some of the effects of human activity on the environment (such as resource depletion and environmental degradation) can be examined in monetary terms alongside the relevant national accounting aggregates. An environment satellite account represents the first step to quantifying those issues outside the main accounts but within a comparable framework.

### Energy accounts

The ABS has compiled draft energy accounts, published in *Energy Accounts for Australia* (ABS Catalogue 4604.0). These focus on the physical measurement of energy, describing sources, uses and residual emissions (where data are available). The next step is to place the energy flow data into an input-output framework in order to estimate, in total and for industry groups, the energy use and associated wastes and emissions which occur in the process of meeting intermediate and final demand for goods and services.

### Balance sheets

In March 1995, the ABS published experimental estimates of non-produced natural assets within the economic boundaries of the national accounts in *National Balance Sheets for Australia: Issues and Experimental Estimates* (ABS Catalogue 5241.0). Monetary and some physical estimates were compiled for subsoil assets, forests, land and livestock, covering the years 1989 to 1992.

Although some non-produced assets (such as fish stocks and water) are not included, the inclusion in the balance sheets of the other natural resources represents a significant development in the Australian national accounts. Prior to the release of these data, the ABS published separate estimates for produced assets and financial assets and liabilities (by sector) but they were not presented in an integrated manner. The balance sheet accounts provide this framework. Work is continuing in this area to extend the time series back to the mid-1980s and to provide estimates up to 1995. It is intended to provide detailed accounts for all sectors' assets (natural resources, produced non-financial assets, and financial assets) and liabilities, and hence sectoral estimates of net worth.

## Environmental satellite accounts

It is unlikely that it will be possible to produce environmental satellite accounts (expressed in monetary terms) in Australia for many years, because of the major conceptual and data problems which have to be overcome. For example, while it is possible to identify the values of Australian oil reserves used up in the course of production, it is much more difficult to assign a value to the remaining reserves in the ground and more difficult again to value the effects of environmental degradation arising from the generation of wastes and emissions. While a draft international framework was produced in the early 1990s, some aspects of it have been found to require substantial further development and it is expected that an updated framework will be issued within the next couple of years.

An environmentally-adjusted GDP estimate, if produced, could be expected to be volatile, contentious and subject to misinterpretation. In Australia this is of particular concern given the imprecise knowledge of our natural resources across a huge and varied land mass (re-assessments are occurring constantly) and the major role that trade in resource commodities has in the economy. Adjustments to GDP growth would be sensitive to valuation errors and judgements and could lead to false debate about sustainability and the measure of 'true' income.

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

The ABS will undertake significant developmental work in the national accounts and related fields over the next few years. These developments are aiming to achieve significant quality improvements in these important statistics as well as extending the range of national accounts and related statistics so that analysts may better understand the complex inter-relationships in a changing economy.

- 1 *System of National Accounts, 1993*. Commission of the European Communities, International Monetary Fund, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, United Nations and World Bank; Brussels/Luxembourg, New York, Paris, Washington D.C.1993.
- 2 *Balance of Payments Manual: Fifth Edition*. International Monetary Fund; Washington D.C. 1993 (commonly referred to as BPM5). Extensive efforts were made to ensure that similar concepts covered by both SNA93 and BPM5 were treated consistently.
- 3 For an asset to be included in the national balance sheets, SNA3 states that it must fulfil certain criteria: it must be an - economic asset' over which ownership rights are enforced by institutional units, individually or collectively;  
- it must be an 'economic asset' from which economic benefit may be derived by its owner by holding it, or using it over a period of time.

### 3 DESTRUCTION OF CENSUS FORMS

#### BACKGROUND

As Census forms are Commonwealth records their disposal is governed by the *Archives Act 1983*, which is administered by the Director-General of Australian Archives. In February 1994 the Director-General advised the ABS that

'a disposal authority allowing the destruction of the name-identified Census records for 1996 and beyond will be issued. If circumstances alter for subsequent Census records then these disposal arrangements can be reviewed.'

The Director-General's decision followed an extensive evaluation of the need and value of retaining 1996 Census forms, which concluded that their value did not outweigh the Government's interest in an effective Census. This finding was consistent with that of earlier evaluations by Australian Archives on 1986 and 1991 Census forms.

In supporting the destruction of the 1996 Census forms, the Government was not persuaded that the benefits of retaining forms overrode the concerns about confidentiality and privacy and the possible adverse effects on the overall success and accuracy of the Census. In other words, the present policy of destroying Census forms was seen as striking the right balance of public interests. This view is supported by the Australian Statistician, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, the Privacy Commissioner and the Director-General of the Australian Archives.

In the lead-up to the 1996 Census of Population and Housing, the issue of the destruction of Census forms again received some prominence. Obviously, there is some support for the retention of name-identified Census records. Proponents argue that the forms contain residual value for medical and demographic research, particularly genealogical research.

However, there is some concern about confidentiality and privacy in the Census, and this was shown clearly again during the conduct of the 1996 Census. The assurances given by the Australian Bureau of Statistics that Census forms will be destroyed and that names and addresses will not be retained are important to the cooperation of many people in the Census. High levels of public cooperation are essential to the production of high quality data.

As it would seem that the debate on census form destruction will continue, reproduced on the following pages are the following documents:

- The text of an address to the Australian Archives Council by the Australian Statistician on 24 November 1995 which, amongst other things, spells out the issues which need to be addressed further when reviewing the current disposal arrangements.

- An editorial from the *Sydney Morning Herald* of 11 July 1996 which supports the retention of Census forms.
- The Australian Statistician's reply of 12 July 1996, which was published in the *Sydney Morning Herald* on 17 July.
- The Privacy Commissioner's response to the 11 July editorial, which supports the current practice of destroying the forms and which, surprisingly, was not published.

TEXT OF ADDRESS TO THE AUSTRALIAN ARCHIVES COUNCIL BY THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN, W. McLENNAN AM, ON 24 NOVEMBER 1995

Introduction

I would like to thank you Chairman for inviting me to share with Council my views on the destruction of Census forms. This is a topic which has been discussed at great length for many years, and is one I understand Council members have a keen interest in.

I expect you would like to know a little about me. Well, I commenced duty as Australian Statistician in April this year, and for the three previous years I was Director of the UK Central Statistical Office and Head of the UK Government Statistical Service. Prior to that I worked in many areas of the ABS including on several Population Censuses. As Australian Statistician, I am in effect the managing director/chief executive officer of a large public company charged with showing a return (in terms of its statistical output) to its owners/shareholders, the Governments of Australia and the Australian public. In fulfilling my role, I must take account of the important environmental/social issues such as confidentiality, provider load and privacy.

Up front, let me say that I am not here just to tell you my views about the destruction of Census forms. I want to hear your views regarding the uses that the forms could be put to if they were retained, and what value these uses would be to the community.

In this talk today, I would like therefore to

- (i) describe what I think is the problem
- (ii) suggest a start-point from which we might progress the debate
- (iii) discuss in turn the uses to which identified census data might be put
- (iv) consider some recent public reaction to this topic, and
- (v) spell out the issues which might need to be addressed further.



The problem

As I understand it, the Director-General has said in a letter to the ABS on 18 February 1994, that

'a disposal authority allowing the destruction of the name-identified Census records for 1996 and beyond will be issued. If circumstances alter for subsequent Census records then these disposal arrangements can be reviewed.'

In September 1994 the Government endorsed the destruction of the 1996 forms.

There is, therefore, nothing to discuss about the retention of the 1996 Census records. The decision to destroy those records has been made and announced. However, I expect we need to consider how one might determine if these 'circumstances alter' prior to the next Census in 2001. The Director-General recognised these circumstances as being on the one hand 'the research value of these records' and on the other hand 'the Government's interest in running an effective Census', although I will suggest later on that the second category needs expanding a little. Specifically, the problem then is how do we measure or perceive a change in the relative importance of these circumstances over the next five years.

A start-point

I believe a good start-point is the extensive evaluation the Australian Archives did on name identified records in 1991. The report was commissioned in 1988, soon after the destruction of 1986 Census forms and was prepared by I. Pritchard, Director, Disposal Section.

The report recommended:

... the strong case for retention of name-identified Census records, especially their residual value for medical and demographic research, may not override at this time the advice of the ABS that retention of the records could compromise the conduct of an effective Census in 1991. If the Government is persuaded that the practice of destruction should be continued on this occasion, then the Director-General of the Australian Archives, pursuant to his powers under the *Archives Act 1983*, should authorise the destruction of the name-identified Census records.

The Director-General did so authorise in 1991, and has again in 1996.

With respect to the value for medical research, the report said:

The prospect which (record linkage techniques) holds out for improving the health circumstances of Australians provides the most compelling and practical reason for retaining the records. ...However, utilisation of record linkage techniques would require the use of records under special conditions of access. These conditions would include the use of recent, name-identified data in electronic format.

With respect to the value for demographic research, the report said:

Retention of the records would also enable the more traditional secondary uses of census material — i.e. for general historical and genealogical research — to be served.

The report also noted with respect to the possible reaction of the public to the retention of Census forms that

If the accuracy of the census is compromised by its retention, the value of the records for any kind of research would be greatly diminished. Privacy considerations and the possible adverse effects on the overall success and veracity of the census cannot be over-estimated.

It went on further to say:

On the other hand, the climate of public opinion in Australia in the past has strongly influenced the views of the ABS and successive Governments that personalised data from the census should not be retained. This climate is unlikely to change readily, as evidenced by public unease about proposals relating to other government collections of personal information, such as the Australia Card.

It did also note that public opinion may change over time.

Finally, it said that

the degree of public sensitivity attached to the census in other countries can give no indication of similar reactions in the Australian context, because of differing conditions, social attitudes and policies which make each country unique to itself.

I agree with this view, and therefore will not pursue international comparisons in this paper.

The uses of identified data

*Medical research*

The medical research use discussed in the report is based on the assumption that identified Census records can be matched at the individual record level with subsequent death or other medical

records, and most importantly this matching, and their subsequent use, generally takes place soon after the census. The report says the value of this research is well documented. I believe the reference is to UK experience, but as far as I know, after some first hand experience, no significant discoveries have been made which would back up this claim.

Further, I expect the Australian Government would not react positively to any suggestion that individual named records from the census be matched with other records soon after the census. This would indeed be a very significant move from past practice, and therefore would need strong justification. I would remind you that the Parliament and Privacy Commissioner have given great attention to data matching particularly across agencies.

In any event, I would have thought that the FOI Act, the Privacy Act, the ABS Act and the Census and Statistics Act would hold sway in considering such access.

#### *Demographic research*

The general historical and genealogical research identified in the report is well known. The ABS is, of course, aware of the potential use of Census forms for genealogical and family research, some 70 to 100 years after the forms had been completed. It is the relative importance of this use which is the topic which must be addressed.

Unlike many other countries, Australia benefits from a diverse range of alternative and comprehensive sources of records which will be available for use in genealogical and family history research in 100 years' time. These include the Register of Births, Deaths and Marriages, Electoral Rolls, and Arrivals and Departures cards, just to name a few. In Nick Vine Hall's book *Tracing Your Family History* (1986), he listed over 20 other additional sources. I should not forget to include rather complete and useful records available today, but not in the distant past, like telephone books.

The wealth and the quality of this information which will be available in 100 years' time should, in my opinion, satisfy most needs for genealogical and family history research. Unlike Census forms, these sources are readily accessible to the public. Records from some of them are already stored in electronic form, with the others expected to follow suit in the near future. The issue of retention of Census forms must be considered in the context that the census is only one of a number of possible sources of information for both genealogists and family historians in 100 years' time.

Although many genealogists and family historians criticise the destruction of Census forms, they have, however, failed to explain why it is necessary to retain Census forms for pursuing this research, whether any additional information on Census forms over existing sources is vital, as opposed to desirable, for conducting this research, and the value of this research to the community. The judgment then needs to be made does this value outweigh the costs of retention.

According to Mr Pritchard's report, the cost of storing the 1991 Census forms, or microfilming them and storing the microfilms, was estimated to be between \$2m and \$9.4m in 1988 prices. This cost in current prices, after 70 to 100 years, will of course be very substantial. Although his report did not provide an estimate of the cost for subsequent access to the material, overseas experience suggests the number of requests for access is small. Therefore, the cost of each access is likely to be very high, and unless subsidised will be out of the reach of ordinary researchers. It could thus be argued that, in effect, genealogists and family historians are seeking a substantial government subsidy, not just as a one-off exercise, but repeatedly once every 5 years, for the pursuit of their research.

#### Public reaction and sensitivity

##### *Public reaction*

As part of the 1996 Census user consultation, the ABS issued an information paper in early 1993, outlining the proposed content and procedures for the Census. In the same information paper, the ABS sought submissions from users on proposals for statistical uses of the forms that may require their retention longer than normal. Following the issue of the information paper, a senior ABS officer also spoke to a group of health researchers and epidemiologists to encourage the submission of research proposals. The ABS did not receive any proposals from them. It would seem that if there is residual value in Census records for medical research, Australian researchers either do not recognise it as a cost effective source or are not geared up to take advantage of it.

The ABS, however, did receive a large number of submissions from archivists, genealogists and family historians, as well as letters from Members of Parliament making representation on their behalf, after the Government's announcement of the decision to destroy 1996 Census forms. Many of these submissions claimed that Census forms need to be retained for social and genealogical research, but were short on specific details on the nature of such research, and how and why Census forms are needed.

The ABS is also aware that petitions have been tabled in the Senate to request the Government to review the form destruction policy and to support a proposal to retain Census forms for release for specific research purposes after 70 to 100 years.

On the other hand, the ABS has received submissions from government bodies with statutory responsibilities to protect privacy strongly opposing the retention of Census forms. It has also received submissions from a number of local government councils sharing the same view. Perhaps unexpectedly the ABS also received a submission from a health authority agreeing with the arrangement to destroy Census forms, which saw the quality of census data as paramount in fulfilling its information needs.

On the media front, the *Sydney Morning Herald* (SMH) has been campaigning for quite some time to retain Census forms and publishes editorials periodically claiming that the practice of form

destruction is 'cultural vandalism', is merely an administrative convenience, and is designed to protect the convict ancestry of politicians. Whilst expectedly the stance of SMH was heralded by archivists, genealogists and family historians, letters to the editor were also published in the same newspaper disagreeing with the views of the editor.

*Public sensitivity*

With regard to the possible adverse public reaction to the retention of name-identified Census records, I think I should spell out some of my concerns, and they do not just relate to the Census.

I am charged with producing Australia's official statistics, and of course one of our major collections is the Population Census. There is no doubt the quality, and the high level of cooperation, we receive is based in no small part on the trust the respondents have in the ABS. The cooperation in the Census, and indeed most statistical collections, is higher in Australia than in most other countries. This has contributed to the high international reputation of Australia's official statistics.

The trust respondents have in the ABS is based on the fact itself, i.e. on whether or not the ABS does what it says it will do, especially with respect to confidentiality and security of the data we collect, and also, in equal measure I believe, on the perception respondents have of the ABS in this regard. I would not call this perception fragile, but I doubt if it is very robust either! I have grave doubts though when anyone suggests we change our practices in any way which might impact unfavourably on this perception.

Also, let me make clear the purpose of the census is to gather statistical information. To the extent that the census gathers identifiable information about individuals, it does so incidentally. In this respect, census and other statistical data differ from administrative records which collect information about individuals in order to obtain information about individuals. Further, the ABS and its predecessor organisations have always attached a high priority to preventing the disclosure of personal information about identifiable individuals. We are proud of our record in protecting the confidentiality of identifiable information, which has been entrusted to us — and of making available to all, on an even-handed basis, the vital statistical information which is the product of our collections.

Let me give you a number of facts to support my concerns about public sensitivity.

- (i) If the 2001 Census forms were to be kept, under the Information Privacy Principles of the Privacy Act, householders would have to be told this 'up-front'. In other words the change would be obvious and explicit.
- (ii) Public relations studies commissioned by the ABS for the 1991 Census suggested that confidentiality and the provision of names on the Census form were key issues of concern to the community. Indeed, a study was undertaken to see if,

and how, a census could be conducted where names were not collected; this proved not to be feasible.

- (iii) A strong anti-Census reaction to privacy and confidentiality concerns adversely affected the quality of 1976 Census data. This resulted in a substantial increase in the number of refusals and significantly higher rates of under-enumeration and non-response to Census questions.
- (iv) Higher levels of cooperation in the 1981 Census were achieved following a public awareness campaign, which gave assurances on privacy and confidentiality, backed by a Government guarantee that previous Census forms had been destroyed. These improvements have continued in the 1986 and 1991 Censuses.
- (v) An increasing community concern with privacy is reflected in the growth in the number of people seeking 'privacy' envelopes in recent censuses. For the 1986 Census, 57,000 Australians requested 'privacy' envelopes to mail their forms to the ABS. The figure increased to 175,000 for the 1991 Census. In addition, some 35,000 Census forms were mailed directly to the ABS using ordinary envelopes.

There is no doubt if we decided to keep Census forms this change would impact on every Australian, and certainly on their perception of ABS practices, i.e. their trust in statistics gathering and the purposes of statistics gathering. There would be an effect on the Census, but there might be effects elsewhere as well. For example, the ABS is under significant user demand to provide data for social policy formulation and planning, and so to collect more and more highly personal topics in our collections, e.g. National Health Survey, Women's Safety Survey. There may also be impacts on the monthly Labour Force Survey, and Income and Household Expenditure surveys, which are used by governments and private organisations for significant decision making.

#### Issues that need to be addressed

As I have spelt out, one issue to be addressed is how do we measure or perceive a change in the relative importance of 'the research value of these records', and 'the Government's interest in running an effective Census' and other statistical collections. On the research side, the task is for genealogists and family researchers to show in a compelling way the significant added value which would result from access after 70 or 100 years to named Census records. I think that it is a case of demonstrating what can be done and showing its worth, rather than simply asserting there are benefits as has been the case to date.

On the effectiveness of the collection of statistics side, the ABS will continue to monitor community attitudes towards privacy. You should be aware though that research by the Federal Privacy Commissioner's Office and our day-to-day dealing with respondents suggests that rather than a softening of these attitudes, the community seem to be

getting more concerned about the privacy issue. However, I do accept that public attitudes may change over time, even if only very slowly.

We now come to the vexed question of how is it decided that a change in the relative importance has taken place. The first point I would make is the change would have to be a significant one before the practice of form destruction, adopted and endorsed by successive governments, could be altered. The second point I would make is that it has been put to me by several people that Parliament should determine these circumstances through debates on a legislative amendment to the Census and Statistics Act which mandates the destruction of Census forms — a most open test of public attitudes. Under this scenario, assurances about the confidentiality of Census forms would then be given through an amendment to the Act mandating the destruction of Census forms. From then on any change would require Parliamentary action. I have found this argument to have some attraction, and I would need to give it close consideration if the circumstances warranted it.

#### Conclusion

Let me conclude my address by making two observations. First, a number of proponents of form retention claim that the ABS is destroying our heritage by pulping Census forms. Nothing is further from the truth! Let me assure you that the ABS has kept and will continue to keep an electronic record of the forms for each contemporary census, other than the names and addresses of respondents. The availability of this unique record will provide a statistical profile of contemporary Australia or any parts thereof at any time now and in the future. It will also be an invaluable current and future resource for research allowing cross tabulations in many ways and down to any small domains, including areas, as may be required.

Second, statisticians are not alone in their views on the destruction of Census forms. Mr K O'Connor, the Federal Privacy Commissioner, in a radio interview in late 1992, in response to a question on the policy of form destruction, summarised the issue well when he said

....(the issue on form destruction) is essentially a question to do with what I would call the cultural settings that have applied historically in Australia. It is true, as the caller says, that several countries do keep basic personal particulars associated with the census for genealogical and research purposes but certainly the view ... is that the need to get community wide cooperation with the census process in a relatively untraumatic way is assisted by the fact that there is no long term retention of the data that is given to the government by the community.

It is difficult to be scientific about this matter obviously but that is the balance that has been struck now for some time in Australian census activity. I think it (the form destruction policy) ought to be retained.....

Finally, let me say thank you once again for inviting me here today, and I am now interested in hearing your views on these issues.

EXTRACT FROM EDITORIAL COLUMN,  
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, JULY 11, 1996

## Census fire

**M**R STEPHEN Mutch, the Federal MP for Cook, is campaigning within the Federal Government to ensure that the forms from next month's census are preserved. His campaign deserves to succeed. The information on the returns is a cultural asset. It should not be destroyed, as the present legislation requires. This is an act of cultural vandalism that future generations will find hard to understand and harder to forgive.

The decision to destroy the census is made on the advice of the Director General of the Australian Archives, after considering advice from the Advisory Council on the Australian Archives (ACAA) and the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC). But, in its June 1995 annual report, the ACAA stated: "Members are concerned with current Government policy that all census returns be destroyed after relevant information has been extracted. Members consider that a major reference source is being lost to the nation." Why is this advice being rejected?

Mr Mutch argues it is not too late to preserve the forms in this year's census. The wording on the forms regarding confidentiality has changed from the 1986 commitment "that under no circumstances are any names or addresses kept" to the 1996 statement that "no information will be released in a way that would enable an individual or household to be identified". Mr Mutch makes the convincing point that "I believe this guarantee would be honoured if the raw census data were securely archived for a period of, say, 70 years."

The argument that is invariably raised by the bureaucrats – that unless the destruction of the forms is guaranteed many people will refuse to co-operate – is convenient fear-mongering. Statisticians in the United States, where the forms are preserved, do not find a lack of co-operation. Nor are there problems in Canada, Britain and New Zealand, other countries where the forms are kept – in the case of Britain for 100 years before being opened to the scrutiny of researchers.

Another convenient argument is that it would be an intrusion on privacy. But this was rejected in 1979 by the Law Reform Commission which stated – correctly – that the community's right to the long-term use of the census data balances out the right to privacy. The Howard Government wants to make its mark with sensible and important reforms. Preserving the census returns is a reform it should pursue.



EXTRACT FROM LETTERS COLUMN,  
SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, JULY 17, 1996

## Too late!

Whatever the merits of the case, it is now too late for 1996 census forms to be retained (*Herald* editorial, July 11).

The census is ready to go on Tuesday, August 6 – 10 million forms and census information booklets have been printed and distributed to all parts of Australia and 35,000 census collectors are in place ready to deliver them to every household.

The booklet assures householders that census data will be kept confidential and that the census forms will be destroyed. Further debate on the retention of census forms will have to await the 2001 census.

The valuable information provided on the census form, excluding names and address, will not be destroyed. It will certainly be kept for use by future generations.

However, statistics legislation guarantees that the confidentiality of the data will be protected. No information will be released in a way that would enable an individual or household to be identified.

I look forward to the help of all Australians in completing their census form so the Australian Bureau of Statistics can provide the statistical information needed to plan for a better Australia.

W. McLennan,  
Australian Statistician,  
Australian Bureau of Statistics,  
July 12 Belconnen (ACT).

**Human Rights Australia**



**Privacy Commissioner**

Our reference: 93/368  
12 July 1996

The Editor  
Sydney Morning Herald

Dear Editor

Your editorial "Census Fire" (11 July) calls for the forms used for the forthcoming national census to be retained, in secure storage for future research.

I have consistently supported, on privacy grounds, the longstanding government policy which is that the census forms are destroyed after the processing is complete.

The census asks for a wide range of detailed and in some cases sensitive personal information.

The Bureau of Statistics fully complies with the privacy principle that personal information should only be used for the purpose for which it is obtained, and this has contributed to a high level of community trust. If the forms were to be retained, that trust would most likely be significantly diminished, leading to a reduced level of accuracy, and undermining the important objectives of the census. It would also, in my view, be an undesirable intrusion into the privacy of all Australians. However strong the assurances initially given about confidentiality during a "closed access" period, the Bureau would inevitably come under severe pressure to make exceptions for other public interests. There would also be differing opinions about the length of time before the forms were made available.

Other governments have encountered major opposition to national censuses because of privacy concerns. You were clearly not aware that the New Zealand government changed to a destruction policy this year.

The aggregate census results are of course already a major and valuable research resource. Long term access to identifiable details would be an additional use at the margin. In my view, the present policy strikes the right balance of public interests. It is supported by both the Statistician and the Director-General of the Australian Archives, has been accepted by successive governments, and should be maintained.

Yours sincerely

on behalf of  
KEVIN O'CONNOR  
Privacy Commissioner

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Kevin O'Connor", with a horizontal line underneath.

## 4 STATISTICAL OPERATIONS SUB-PROGRAM

### OBJECTIVES

The statistical operations sub-program contributes to the following objectives of the ABS Corporate Plan:

- Informed and satisfied clients through an objective, relevant and responsive statistical service.
- Reliable, timely and coherent statistics.
- Good relations with providers, respecting their rights.
- Continuing productivity improvements.
- A high regard held for the ABS by decision makers and the community.

### DESCRIPTION

The statistical operations sub-program operates in response to the statistical needs of governments and the wider community, taking into account the public and private costs associated with collecting, processing and disseminating statistical information. During 1995-96 the sub-program operated with an average of 2,776 operative staff, representing 87% of average ABS operative staffing. The cost of the sub-program was \$222.4 million.

At the broad level, the activities undertaken within the sub-program include:

- Collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of statistics.
- Coordination of the statistical activities of other agencies (through participation in national and State statistical committees and through the ABS outposted and statistical consultancy services).
- Provision of professional statistical support (through outposted officers and consultancy work).
- Development, maintenance and promotion of statistical standards, classifications and frameworks.

The work program of the statistical operations sub-program is determined after extensive consultation with governments, businesses and community groups and with the advice of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council. In determining the work program, account is taken of the needs of users, the benefits of statistics, the load on providers and the costs associated with the activities.

The statistical operations sub-program depends on the corporate services sub-program for personnel and resource management.

Individual components within the sub-program have close links with a wide range of specific government programs which act as providers of data, users of statistical information and users of statistical coordination and consultancy services. Other agencies also cooperate with the statistical operations sub-program in providing a total statistical service.

Costs and average staffing levels of the sub-program are shown in the following table.

**COST OF STATISTICAL OPERATIONS SUB-PROGRAM AND AVERAGE STAFFING LEVEL**

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Total cost (\$'000)	206 034	196 673	222 440
Cost as a percentage of ABS expenditure (%)	85	86	87
Average operative staff years(a)	2 874	2 759	2 776

(a) More detailed information is available in Appendix 3, Table 3.1.

**OUTPUTS**

While the ABS exploits many avenues for the dissemination of its statistical information, printed publications remain, for the time being, the main first release medium. Modes other than publications used for the dissemination of information include microfiche, computer-readable media (magnetic tape, floppy disk, CD-ROM) and a number of facilities allowing electronic online access. This latter form of access includes an online service, called PC-Ausstats, for delivering time series data to customers; and the use of the Telecom Keylink electronic mail system to provide a service called TELESTATS which delivers previously requested foreign trade statistics to subscribers. The ABS also provides a 0055 telephone recorded message service, 'Dial-a-Statistic', covering the most frequently sought information.

The ABS also operates two Internet services. The first, which is generally accessible, provides 'public good' information free of charge. (The ABS 'home page' is at <http://www.abs.gov.au>). The second service provides access to ABS time series by staff and students of subscribing Australian university libraries.

ABS operates, in each of its offices, a free, quick reference, central information service for routine statistical information. ABS also offers an information consultancy service, on a fee-for-service basis, for clients requiring more complex information.

In most fields, more detailed statistics than those initially released in publications and other forms can be obtained by approaching the ABS through its central information service.

Even with the array of measures described above, the ABS cannot in practice meet the needs of all users of statistics directly. Various information intermediaries therefore play an important role in disseminating statistics. These include all branches of the media, libraries (general and specialised), commercial information networks, and business, academic and other research services.



*The ABS stand at the National Assembly of Local Government in Canberra in November 1995, with ABS staff Carolyn Verey, John Butler, Dean Souter and Ken Mitchell. The ABS takes many such opportunities to display its information products and services such as the Integrated Regional Database (IRDB) and associated services, featured on this occasion.*



*At an official function in February 1996, Australian Statistician, Bill McLennan, presents ATSIC Chairperson, Lois O'Donoghue, with a series of 36 publications summarising results of the nation's first comprehensive survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.*

Consistent with the Government's user pays policy, the ABS charges for its products and services regardless of whether they are being provided to governments or the community generally. The aims of this approach are to encourage users to address their real needs for statistics, to enable the demand for ABS products to be used as an indicator of how ABS resources should be used, and to offset the cost of production of the statistics.

The ABS has 'public interest' obligations to ensure that at least basic statistics are both readily available and affordable. To meet these obligations, publications are made available on a complimentary basis to parliamentarians, major news media organisations and parliamentary, public and tertiary institution libraries. In addition, the ABS conducts a Library Extension Program, with about 560 libraries participating across Australia. These libraries are provided with free ABS publications and some electronic services, to match the needs of their local communities.

The following tables show information relating to ABS outputs.

**PUBLICATION TITLES, 1994-95 and 1995-96**  
(number)

	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
1994-95	120	68	56	89	333
1995-96					
National	47	29	25	55	156
New South Wales	8	3	4	8	23
Victoria	6	3	3	5	17
Queensland	8	3	4	10	25
Western Australia	6	3	3	12	24
South Australia	7	2	3	5	17
Tasmania	7	2	3	2	14
Northern Territory	8	2	2	7	19
Australian Capital Territory	6	2	1	—	9
<i>Total</i>	<i>103</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>48</i>	<i>104</i>	<i>304</i>

**ABS RELEASES(a) CLASSIFIED BY SUBJECT MATTER AND FREQUENCY, 1994-95 AND 1995-96**  
(number)

	Annual	Quarterly	Monthly	Other	Total
<b>Economic finance releases</b>					
(National Accounts, Balance of Payments, International Investment and Trade, Public and Private Finance)					
1994-95	12	57	37	8	114
1995-96	13	55	35	2	105
<b>Industry releases</b>					
(Agriculture, Mining, Manufacturing, Construction, Distribution, Transport, Service Industries, Science and Technology)					
1994-95	35	116	270	46	467
1995-96	33	92	213	19	357
<b>Population and Migration releases</b>					
(Population Estimates, Projections, Census, Vital and Migration)					
1994-95	73	9	14	25	121
1995-96	38	4	11	6	59
<b>Labour releases</b>					
(Labour Force, Employment Conditions, Prices, Household Income and Expenditure)					
1994-95	15	46	156	38	255
1995-96	5	42	161	27	235
<b>Social analysis releases</b>					
(Education, Health, Welfare, Law, Order, Public Safety)					
1994-95	14	..	..	18	32
1995-96	10	4	..	63	77
<b>Other general releases</b>					
1994-95	24	8	162	216	410
1995-96	38	8	146	109	301
<b>Total</b>					
<b>1994-95</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>236</b>	<b>639</b>	<b>351</b>	<b>1 399</b>
<b>1995-96</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>566</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>1 134</b>

(a) Includes catalogue numbered publications and releases on microfiche, magnetic tape and floppy disk; as a result of a publications review, from January 1995, some low demand publications were discontinued and other publications combined.



**ACCESS TO DISSEMINATION SERVICES**

Service(a)	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Publications (subscribers)	n.a.	11 176	10 956
PC-Ausstats (subscribers)	164	191	215
Internet Home Page (accesses)(b)	..	..	562 930
CAUL Internet (subscribers)(c)	..	20	38
Telestats (subscribers)	118	110	129
Trade special returns (subscribers)	n.a.	n.a.	874
DISCOVERY (ABS frames accessed)(d)	47 134	10 248	8 033
Telephone Inquiry Service (calls completed)	185 868	194 440	210 867
Dial-a-Statistic -- 0055 (calls)	35 010	32 208	38 387
Library Extension Program (libraries)	550	554	560
Secondary providers (number)(e)	23	26	28

n.a. indicates information not available.

(a) Where the number of subscribers is shown this refers to 30 June.

(b) Service operated from 1 July 1995.

(c) Service for University Libraries operated from May 1995.

(d) Service discontinued 30 April 1996.

(e) Various organisations which are licensed to resell ABS data.

**REVENUE RAISED FROM STATISTICAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES  
(\$'000)**

Products and services(a)	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Publications			
Subscription	2 423	2 599	2 401
Other (including bookshops)	1 469	1 508	1 473
Electronic Products	4 219	2 372	1 938
Information Consultancy	3 489	3 919	3 399
Statistical Consultancy	1 487	1 520	1 415
User Funded Surveys	5 679	6 169	9 261
Other Products and Services(b)	3 383	3 703	5 247
<b>Total</b>	<b>(c) 22 149</b>	<b>21 790</b>	<b>25 134</b>

(a) The classification of products and services was restructured from 1994-95. Data for 1993-94 have been reclassified to the new structure as far as possible.

(b) Includes special trade returns, user funding for statistical units, microfiche, outposted officer charges, seminar fees and paper-based products other than publications.

(c) Includes administered revenue, which in 1993-94 was for statistical products and services.

**TIME BETWEEN END OF REFERENCE PERIOD AND RELEASE OF DATA(a)  
(average number of elapsed days)**

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Main economic indicator statistics			
Monthly	37	35	34
Quarterly	58	63	60
Other statistics			
Monthly	44	48	50
Quarterly	91	97	94
Annual	423	379	352

(a) Excludes releases of data from the Population Census, which have an atypical pattern, and publications that predominantly contain data that have been previously released.

## REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the statistical operations sub-program during 1995-96 (except the support and 'business office' components which provide executive, secretarial and other support to their respective Divisions). The entries are in the order shown in Appendix 1 (ABS Program Structure).

### Client Services

ABS Client Services provides a central information service for the supply of statistical information that is quickly and routinely available; provides an information consultancy service on a fee-for-service basis for clients with more complex information needs; distributes ABS publications and products in printed or electronic form through ABS Bookshops and through a subscription mailing service; and provides staff outposted to other government agencies for specialist statistical assignments.

Information consultancies usually involve an interpretation of client needs, identification of relevant data to service those needs, and the extraction, analysis and formatting of information for delivery to the client. The customised information provided to clients typically consists of statistical tables, graphs, maps, commentary, or a combination of these. The service primarily deals in ABS data, but occasionally draws on information from other sources, where relevant.

Client managers have been established to improve service provision to the Commonwealth and State government sectors, selected business sectors, the education sector, the library sector and the media.

The ABS subscription service continues to be an important means for the distribution of ABS publications. In 1995-96, sales from publication subscriptions provided revenue of \$2.4 million. To assist clients in selecting products available through the subscription service, ABS produces catalogues and guides for the publications and other products available.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- The telephone inquiry service handled over 210,000 calls, up about 8% on the previous year. The majority of inquiries are answered immediately and are free-of-charge.
- The recorded 'Dial-a-Statistic' telephone service, available 24 hours a day on a 0055 number, was used some 38,380 times in 1995-96, up 20% on the number of accesses in 1994-95. The recorded message provides information about the Consumer Price Index, Balance of Payments, National Accounts, Labour Force, Average Weekly Earnings and Population Estimates.
- Information consultancies were undertaken in all ABS offices for a diverse range of clients and on a wide range of statistical topics. Consultancies to the value of \$3.4 million were provided in 1995-96. This was a decline of about \$0.5m over the previous

year, mainly the result of reaching a low point in the Population and Housing Census dissemination cycle.

- During 1995-96, there were outposts of ABS staff to departments such as the Department of Employment Education Training and Youth Affairs, the Department of Social Security, the Department of Transport and Regional Development, the Industries Commission, the NSW Department of Mineral Resources, and the Queensland Department of Minerals and Energy. Short-term outposts were also undertaken in a number of Commonwealth and State government agencies.
- Secondary Distribution arrangements, enabling third parties to distribute ABS data to end users, continued to increase during the year (from 26 to 28), thereby expanding the use of ABS statistics. Considerable interest has been expressed by companies seeking to resell data from the 1996 Census.

#### Library Services

The national ABS Library Network (ABSLN), comprises the Central Office Library in Canberra and libraries in ABS offices in each State and the Northern Territory. It focuses on developing collections of statistical publications and on providing reference and consultancy services to meet the information and research needs of ABS staff and the public. The ABSLN delivers both priced and free-of-charge services to individual users and to other libraries across Australia, and plays an integral role in the ABS's information dissemination and information management strategies.

The ABSLN also manages the ABS Library Extension Program (LEP) which aims to improve community awareness of and access to the main findings of ABS collections and analyses. Through the LEP, the ABS makes its publications and some electronic services available on a complimentary basis to the National Library, State libraries, Parliamentary libraries, and to public and tertiary libraries across Australia.

The Library also maintains a database of professional papers presented or published by ABS officers. A detailed list for 1995-96 is provided at Appendix 12.

Activities and achievements during the year included the following:

- A review of the ABSLN was completed and the recommendations to achieve a more effective and cost-efficient library service for internal and external clients are progressively being implemented.
- The ABSLN statistical publications collection was further strengthened through the continuation of exchange arrangements with major statistical agencies throughout the world and with Australian agencies. Increasingly, electronic products are being exchanged.

- ABSLN staff broadened their professional participation in various library industry committees, associations, conferences and seminars, thus strengthening consultation with the library community and helping to ensure the relevance of ABS products and services.
- The number of participating LEP libraries reached 560 and over 500 librarians across the country were trained in the use and provision of ABS data.
- LEP library locations and various other information useful for libraries and their clients is maintained on the ABS StatSite, the ABS Home Page on the World Wide Web.

#### Dissemination

The dissemination component provides a printing and publishing service covering printed publications, statistical collection forms and a variety of other ABS printing needs. It is responsible for the ABS's main catalogue of publications and other products, and for various other directories and listings. It also produces products and services in a number of electronic forms, including online access to newly released statistics.

ABS publications range in size from a few pages containing monthly or quarterly key economic, social and other indicator series, to major volumes such as the Australian and State year books. ABS regularly reviews its suite of publications to ensure publishing is done cost effectively. At the same time it has been increasing the number of larger 'thematic' publications which bring together data from different sources on particular topics of interest.

The expanding range of electronic products and dissemination services includes data available on floppy disk, magnetic tape and CD-ROM; data provided by e-mail; and PC-Ausstats which is an ABS database of 100,000 time series able to be accessed by modem, allowing users to download their own selection of data for further manipulation.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Development and progressive implementation of a new Publications Assembly System, designed to improve consistency in the application of publishing standards and the efficiency of publication production.
- Continued implementation of new formats for ABS publications so that they are easier to read and understand. The formats are being developed from research undertaken in conjunction with the Communications Research Institute of Australia.
- Release of a Windows version of the ABS online time series service, PC-Ausstats, making the service and selection of tables of time series simpler and able to exploit advantages of the Microsoft Windows® environment.

- Further development of the ABS World Wide Web homepage on Internet (<http://www.abs.gov.au>) and the Internet service for the Council of Australian University Librarians (CAUL) to provide university staff and students with access to ABS time series data.
- Release of the *1995 Historical Publications on CD-ROM* (Catalogue No. 1124.0) which contains all titles published by the ABS in 1995. The product incorporates hierarchically indexed searching capabilities allowing clients to find ABS publications and issues easily. Brief abstracts describing each publication are also provided.

## Marketing

The marketing sub-component provides leadership on a range of marketing issues and is responsible for the marketing and promotion of ABS products and services. The activities of the sub-component include the development and maintenance of strategic and individual product marketing plans, and the identification of market segments as a basis for achieving widespread use of ABS statistics. Information on advertising and market research costs is provided in Appendix 10.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Development of a range of business plans for new products and services such as the Business Plan for the 1996 Census.
- Market research projects to identify the needs of clients for ABS products and services, particularly for electronic delivery of statistics such as online time series data through PC-Ausstats, and for 1996 Census products and services.
- Continued development and implementation of specialised training for ABS staff in sales and marketing skills.
- Continued development of 'What Figures...', a mail order catalogue which brings new and significant releases to the attention of ABS clients.
- Continued release of *Census Update*, a newsletter which informs clients about progress throughout the Population Census cycle and about information available from the Census.
- Review of ABS Marketing activities as input to the development of a new ABS Marketing Strategy.
- Increased coordination of ABS marketing activities.

## Media and Public Relations

The aim of the media and public relations sub-component is to ensure that there is good communication between the ABS and the media, politicians, other opinion leaders, providers of information to statistical collections, and the community in general.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Development and implementation of a communication strategy and plan for the 1996 Census of Population and Housing.
- A campaign targetting all outlets of the Community Broadcasting Association to encourage awareness of ABS activities and services amongst ethnic and Indigenous groups.
- Address by the Australian Statistician to the National Press Club in Canberra, telecast live through the ABC, on the role and activities of the ABS.
- Production and dissemination of 165 news releases to gain widespread print and electronic media coverage of major statistical collections and their published results.
- Continued media liaison, media events and briefing of journalists to encourage prominent print, radio and television reporting of the ABS's collections and releases.
- Preparation of responses to more than 2,300 media inquiries for a wide range of statistical data, interviews and comment.
- Continued media training and media awareness courses for ABS officers, aimed at developing competent ABS spokespersons, including a specific program for the 1996 Census.

#### National Accounts

The national accounts component produces statistics which form the core of the Australian system of national accounts. These statistics summarise, in a systematic and comprehensive way, the economic transactions that take place in the Australian economy and between Australia and the rest of the world. The usefulness of the accounts derives largely from the way in which data are brought together from all available sources and presented in a conceptually consistent way both for a given period and over time. The accounts basically accord with the recommendations contained in the 1968 issue of the United Nations' A System of National Accounts (SNA).

Chapter 2 of this report discusses the development program being undertaken to implement the System of National Accounts, 1993 (SNA93) and other methodological improvements including the use of input-output tables to balance the three alternative approaches to measuring gross domestic product (GDP).

Summary national income, expenditure and product accounts (incorporating estimates at both current and constant prices) are published as soon as possible after the end of each quarter to present an up-to-date picture of the national economy. However, much of the more reliable information needed for the accounts does not become available until some time after the publication of preliminary figures. Therefore, estimates for the most recent quarters are revised as additional information becomes available.

A more detailed and firmer picture of the national economy is provided in annual and periodic national accounts statistics such as annual national income, expenditure and product estimates, and the input-output tables. In addition, annual capital stock and multi-factor productivity statistics are compiled.

Senior staff of the component attend meetings of the Joint Economic Forecasting Group to provide advice on the statistics used as input to the forecasting process.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Most developmental work involved detailed investigations into various aspects of implementing SNA93. There was particular emphasis on problems associated with implementing the recommendations with respect to valuing the services provided by financial institutions. The ABS proposals on this matter have largely been adopted internationally.
- The quarterly publication *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (Catalogue No. 5242.0) was revamped during 1995-96, with additional series on international trade in goods and real gross State income being included for the first time.
- Nine papers on national accounts, largely covering ABS research into emerging national accounting issues, were produced and presented at various conferences during 1995-96.
- Following on from two detailed reviews of various aspects of national accounting methodology in 1993 and 1994, a short review was conducted in September quarter 1995 to evaluate the performance of the program from a user perspective; to assess current and future compilation approaches and methodologies in terms of international best practice; and to assess the appropriateness of future directions for the national accounts work program including the priorities that should be accorded to the various elements.
- Work continued on implementation of the recommendations of the detailed review of input-output statistics to better integrate these data with those in the national income, expenditure and product accounts. This work is being conducted in tandem with work on the implementation of the new international standards set out in SNA93 and both streams should be completed in 1998.
- The computer processing system used to produce the quarterly and annual accounts is being redeveloped using a time series system produced by Fame Information Services. When fully implemented in 1996-97, the online graphics capability of the new system is expected to significantly strengthen checking processes as an integral part of compilation.

## International Accounts

The international accounts component produces statistics and related information on the balance of payments, international trade in services and international investment position. It also participates with other government agencies in the work of the Joint Economic Forecasting Group, through its Balance of Payments Sub-Committee. Balance of payments and international investment position statistics are published in monthly, quarterly and annual releases. More detailed statistics are available on request.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Continued work on implementation of the revised international standards for balance of payments and international investment position statistics contained in the fifth edition of the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Manual and the 1993 System of National Accounts.
- Development and publication of a paper *Quality of Australian Balance of Payments Statistics* (Catalogue No. 5342.0) which includes an outline of steps taken by the ABS to maintain the quality of the statistics and developments that are expected to lead to improvements in data quality.
- Conduct of feasibility studies into collecting quarterly inward and outward investment data from custodians (covering both flows and positions at market value), and from share registries in respect of holdings of shares by non-residents.
- Leading and coordinating the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Trade and Investment Data Review Project. This included extensive liaison with China in organising a technical experts workshop and Project Working Group, in Shanghai.
- Conducting a regional technical workshop for a new APEC database system which was largely developed by the ABS. The APEC database on international trade and investment data aims to bring together relevant bilateral data for the region and to make them as comparable as possible.
- Continued contributions to the work of the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Committee, aimed at improving the measurement and international comparability of balance of payments statistics. As well, there were contributions to an IMF Taskforce aimed at improving the measurement and international comparability of portfolio investment statistics.

## International Trade

The international trade component produces statistics on the value, composition, destination and source of Australia's merchandise exports and imports. The statistics are available in a range of output media, including publications, floppy disk, magnetic cartridge and paper reports, and through special returns which provide regular



information on specific commodities, tailored to the needs of individual clients.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Implementation of changes to Australia's merchandise trade classifications as a result of changes to the international Harmonised System, which came into operation on 1 July 1996.
- Commencement of bilateral reconciliations of Australia's merchandise trade flows, for the 1994 calendar year, with the United States of America, New Zealand, Japan and Indonesia.
- Participation in the Expert Group which is reviewing the United Nations concepts and definitions for international trade statistics.
- Publication, in the September quarter issue of *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (Catalogue No. 5422.0), of an article on the 'Quality of Australia's international merchandise trade statistics'.

Prices (Includes Productivity)

The prices component is responsible for compiling the consumer price index (CPI); a range of producer and foreign trade price indexes; and development work on the measurement of productivity, requiring improved measures of outputs and inputs in real terms.

The CPI measures the change each quarter in the cost of purchasing a fixed basket of consumer goods and services. House price indexes compiled for use in calculating the mortgage interest charges component of the CPI are published separately and provide estimates of the change each quarter in housing prices. The producer and foreign trade price indexes address broader economic concerns and include price indexes of inputs and outputs of manufacturing industry, materials used in the building industry, exports and imports.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Substantial completion of redevelopment work on the computer processing systems used to calculate the consumer and producer price indexes.
- Extension of work on the development of producer price indexes for the output of a range of transport and property services industries, as a first step in the provision of an expanded range of price indexes for the services sector.
- Continuation of an ongoing program of reviewing samples and progressively rebasing the producer price indexes. Rebasing of the *Price Indexes of Materials Used in Manufacturing Industries* (Catalogue No. 6411.0) and *Price Index of Materials Used in House Building* (Catalogue No. 6408.0) was finalised and work commenced on rebasing the *Price Indexes of Articles Produced by*

*Manufacturing Industry* (Catalogue No. 6412.0) and foreign trade indexes (Catalogue Nos 6405.0 and 6414.0).

- Preparation of draft proposals for developing a comprehensive framework for the measurement of inflation in the Australian economy, to form the basis for user consultation.
- Establishment of a program of work to improve productivity estimates. Initial work is concentrated on improved measures of real output of general government entities.

#### Financial Accounts

The financial accounts component produces statistics as part of the Australian system of national accounts, showing the financial profile of each sector of the economy and the market for various categories of financial instruments. There are also tables showing inter-sectoral financial transactions.

The component also produces statistics on the lending activity and balance sheets of financial institutions including banks, building societies, finance companies, credit unions, unit trusts and superannuation funds.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Start of a Survey of Superannuation in conjunction with the Insurance and Superannuation Commission.
- Negotiations with data providers to collect financial information according to the revised international standards for financial accounts statistics contained in the 1993 System of National Accounts.
- Collection and publication of housing finance commitments by mortgage managers in the lending activity collections.
- An upgrade of the seasonal adjustment methods used in housing finance statistics.

#### Public Sector Accounts

The public sector accounts component produces statistical information on revenue, outlays, financing transactions and financial assets and liabilities of the Commonwealth Government, State, Territory and local governments, and their trading enterprises. In addition to a range of annual publications, quarterly statistics are compiled for inclusion in the national accounts, and detailed financial statistics about individual local government authorities are provided on request. The component provides advice on the statistics used as input to the forecasting work of the Public Sector Subcommittee of the Joint Economic Forecasting Group.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Publication of an Exposure Draft on Introduction of an Accruals Basis in Government Finance Statistics.
- Provision of training in government finance statistics concepts and classifications to delegates of the Central and Provincial Ministries of Finance of the People's Republic of China.
- Conduct of the third government finance statistics conference involving Commonwealth and State Treasuries and the Commonwealth Department of Finance, as well as the Commonwealth Grants Commission (CGC). This conference addressed issues related to the classification and coordination of Government Finance Statistics (GFS). An important outcome was the 'agreement in principle' to integrate data collection by the ABS and CGC and the progressing of modification of GFS classifications to accommodate CGC requirements. The conference also discussed arrangements to trial the integrated data collection process in a number of States and Territories during 1996.

#### Agriculture

The main elements of the agriculture component are the conduct of an annual commodity census, a monthly livestock slaughtering collection, a monthly collection of wool receivals by brokers and dealers, and an annual agricultural finance survey. The component produces a range of derived statistics including estimates of the value of agricultural commodities produced and the apparent consumption of foodstuffs and nutrients. Statistics from the annual census are available for local areas.

Senior staff participate in the Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Completion of the 1994-95 agricultural census. Funding provided by users enabled the collection of detailed data on apples, pears, avocado and grape varieties on a national basis, and environment related data for Victoria.
- Completion of the 1993-94 nursery industry collection, covering the agricultural, wholesale and retail nursery sectors. User funding was obtained to include in the collection the wholesale and retail sectors of the industry.
- Development and commencement of the 1995-96 'short form' agricultural census (the second of this type) which allows capacity for additional topics. The 1995-96 collection included detailed questions on a range of environment-related topics and data required for the National Collaborative Project on Indicators for Sustainable Agriculture which was established by the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Resource Management (SCARM). User funding was provided to include these questions.

- Release of preliminary results from the 1994–95 agricultural finance survey, prior to the 1996 National Agricultural and Resources Outlook Conference.
- Collection, in the 1994–95 agricultural finance survey, of data on expenditure on land management, adding to the ABS database relating to the environment.

## Mining

The mining component conducts annual censuses of the mining, electricity and gas industries. The censuses provide data on the structure, operations and output of the industries, comparable with data available in respect of other industries covered in the ABS economic census and survey program. Quarterly collections of actual and expected mineral and petroleum exploration are also undertaken. Surveys on the use of technology in the mining industry are conducted triennially.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Release of preliminary results from the 1994–95 census of mining establishments, well before the National Agricultural and Resources Outlook Conference.
- Release of details of the mining industry for 1993–94 in *Australian Mining Industry, Australia* (Catalogue No. 8414.0). This was the first issue of this compendium publication which includes, in addition to the range of financial and commodity data collected and published by the Program, information on employment, industrial relations, environmental protection expenditure, overseas trade and world commodity production.
- Development and conduct of the Water and Sewerage Survey as part of the 1994–95 utilities census.
- Release of the results of the 1993–94 survey of mining technology in *Mining Technology Statistics, Australia* (Catalogue No. 8413.0).
- Inclusion of supplementary questions, in the June quarter 1995 mineral exploration collection, about overseas exploration expenditure by Australian resident companies and exploration drilling methods. These questions were funded by users of the data.

## Manufacturing

The manufacturing component provides statistics on the structure, performance and production of the manufacturing industry. Data collected and disseminated include monthly and quarterly commodity production statistics; quarterly indexes of industrial production; and extensive statistics on the structure, financial operations, performance and other characteristics of manufacturing industry collected in the annual manufacturing industry survey.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Extension of the range of information collected on industry performance and industry costs and production. In particular, more detailed cost profiles and more frequent information on commodities produced will be used to support improvements to the quality of the annual and quarterly national accounts.
- Greater focus on sample design, to reduce both aggregate and individual business reporting load in future manufacturing surveys.
- Publication of comprehensive 1992-93 and preliminary 1993-94 manufacturing industry data on the basis of the new Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification.
- Publication of an Information Paper: *Availability of Statistics Related to Manufacturing, 1996*.
- A review of the policy and related uses to which monthly and quarterly manufacturing production data are put.

#### Construction

The construction component produces statistics on the structure, performance and other characteristics of the construction industry, and timely indicators of activity for the three components of construction: residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction. This information is obtained from a series of collections including monthly building approvals and dwelling commencements reported by approving authorities, and quarterly surveys of building activity and engineering construction. The ABS also conducts a construction industry survey about every five years, to provide measures of the structure of the construction industry as a whole.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Transfer of responsibility for the Building Activity Survey to a National Project Centre in South Australia. One of the achievements of the NPC has been a significant improvement in the quality of preliminary estimates of building activity provided for inclusion in the quarterly National Accounts.
- Establishment of a national project centre in South Australia for the collection and processing of monthly Building Approvals and Dwelling Unit Commencements.
- Commencement of development work which will lead to the next Construction Industry Survey, in respect of 1996-97.

#### Transport

The transport component provides monthly and annual statistics on new motor vehicle registrations and quarterly statistics on freight movements. It undertakes a periodic Survey of Motor Vehicle Use and

an associated motor vehicle census. Other activities include compilation of compendium publications and directories of transport statistics.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Conduct of a number of statistical field trials designed to ascertain the most appropriate way to collect statistics on motor vehicle use.
- Conduct of a Survey of Motor Vehicle Use in respect of 1995. Results are to be published early in 1996-97.
- Commencement of a methodological and user review of the Freight Movements Survey.
- Conduct of a Motor Vehicle Census in respect of 1995, the results of which were published in July 1996.
- Conduct of a study of the transport statistics needs of Queensland users, with particular emphasis on transport planning and data needs in high growth areas of the State.
- Continued liaison with major transport statistics users, particularly via the Transport Statistics User Group.

#### Tourism

The tourism component produces quarterly statistics on capacity and demand for tourist accommodation in Australia. Other activities include development and promotion of statistical frameworks and classifications, production of a quarterly analytical publication *Tourism Indicators, Australia*, and occasional production of a directory of tourism statistics.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- The first meeting, in April, of the ABS Tourism User Consultative Group.
- Compilation of the 1996 *Directory of Tourism Statistics* (to be published early in 1996-97).
- Participation in the Bureau of Tourism Research 'Review of Australian Tourism Statistics'.
- Conduct of supplementary collections and publication of results as follows: Survey of Inbound Tour Operators, Survey of Overseas Tourism Marketing Expenditure, Origin of Guests (staying in commercial accommodation).

Service Industries (including Retail Survey)

The service industries component produces statistics on the size, structure, operations and output of a variety of service industries, comparable with those available in respect of other industries covered in the ABS economic statistics program.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Release of a range of publications from the 1993-94 motion picture, radio and television industries collection.
- Release of a publication on the casino industry in respect of 1994-95.
- Release of a publication on medical practitioners in respect of 1994-95. This publication is a precursor to a more comprehensive publication to be released shortly on medical businesses.
- Completion of a survey of the sport, recreation and gambling industries in respect of 1994-95.
- Methodological research and user consultation in relation to proposed surveys of the community services industry and the business services industry, in respect of 1995-96.
- A major user consultation program as part of a review of the proposed retail census and wholesale industry survey to be conducted in respect of 1997-98.

The retail survey sub-component undertakes the monthly Retail Trade Survey, which provides data on retail turnover by State and industry. As well as being important in its own right as an indicator of economic activity, retail turnover forms a substantial component of private final consumption expenditure measures in the national accounts.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Establishment of a national project centre for the Retail Survey, located in Canberra.
- A review of the interview programs which complement the Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) collection system. The improvements are being introduced progressively from June 1996.
- Development of new CATI software, compatible with the ABS computing environment and providing greater flexibility for interviewers.
- A program of visits to major data users, to inform them about methodology and procedures used in the conduct of the Retail Survey.

#### Economy Wide Statistics

The economy wide statistics component is responsible for a range of annual statistics on business financial operations and performance, covering all industries of the Australian economy. The component also conducts a quarterly survey of expectations of short and medium-term business performance, covering all parts of the economy except Agriculture and General Government, and all business sizes.

Major activities and achievements during the year included:

- Conduct of the fifth annual economic activity survey, in respect of 1994–95. An expanded range of data items were collected for the first time as part of the strategy to compile the National Accounts within an input-output conceptual framework.
- Continued liaison with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) to develop common concepts and definitions for the collection of business information which can be used for statistical purposes. A trial project has commenced as part of a strategy to make more extensive use of data provided by businesses to the ATO, to augment and/or replace direct collection of data in ABS surveys. This will reduce the reporting load placed on respondents, and potentially result in the availability of more accurate and detailed industry statistics.
- An evaluation of the Business Expectations Survey to assess the uses to which the data are being put, the survey's effectiveness, and its reliability in terms of indicating future economic activity.

#### Investment and Profits Surveys

The investment and profits surveys component produces some of the indicators of current and future economic activity through the publication of quarterly estimates of company profits, new capital expenditure, stocks, and manufacturers' and wholesalers' sales.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Testing and introduction of new survey questionnaires for the survey of new capital expenditure. There were two reasons for this. The first was to overcome some reporting errors detected in a 1994–95 investigation into the quality of data reported by businesses. The second was to collect dissections of expenditure data by type of asset in order to effect improvements in the quality of data used for national accounting estimates in constant price terms.
- Preparations for the introduction in the September 1996 quarter, of an expansion of the existing survey of stocks and manufacturers' and wholesalers' sales, to provide an ongoing quarterly measure of performance of the service industries sector.
- A study into the feasibility of replacing the existing quarterly surveys of capital expenditure, stocks and sales and company profits with a single, quarterly economic activity survey. This would



achieve quality improvements in the quarterly national and State accounts and enhance the range of statistics available quarterly for the service industries sector.

- Enhancements to the methodology under which estimates for newly commenced businesses are made each quarter in the surveys of new capital expenditure, and stocks and sales.
- A post enumeration survey for the survey of company profits to investigate quality of reported data and to identify any areas where improvements and/or modifications to survey procedures may be warranted.
- A study conducted in response to the recommendations made by the Quarterly National Accounts Review in respect of revisions to capital expenditure data between preliminary and final estimates. The study investigated the downward bias in the capital expenditure preliminary estimates and developed statistical procedures to overcome the bias. Revised procedures are expected to be introduced in 1996-97.

#### Small Business

The small business component produces a range of data about the size, structure and performance of small and medium-sized businesses to assist policy makers, researchers and the community to understand the behaviour of the sector. Work in 1995-96 concentrated on expanding the available data by conducting a survey to establish a longitudinal survey database and conducting the first ever household survey on the characteristics of small businesses and their operators.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Conduct of the first year's collection in the small business longitudinal survey designed to track the experience of selected businesses over a five-year period. Results will be released early in 1996-97.
- Development of plans for the second year's collection for the small business longitudinal survey.
- Publication of results from the February 1995 household survey measuring the characteristics of small business operators and their businesses. A further survey will be conducted in February 1997.
- Release of the two yearly compendium publication *Small Business in Australia* (Catalogue No. 1321.0)

#### Science and Technology

The science and technology component provides statistics on research and experimental development (R&D), innovation and information technology. To enable Australia's performance to be compared with that of other countries, science and technology indicators are being developed in line with international standards.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Publication of the results of the 1994–95 R&D survey for the business enterprise sector.
- Completion of data collection for the higher education and general government sectors in the 1994–95 R&D surveys. Publication of the results from these surveys will occur early in 1996–97.
- Publication of the results of the 1993–94 surveys of innovative activities in the manufacturing and services sectors.
- Completion of data collection for the surveys of information technology use and production of non-marketed information technology activities in the general government and business enterprise sectors of the economy. Results are expected to be released early in 1996–97.
- Completion of development work for household surveys of the use of information technology and telecommunication goods and services, being undertaken in 1996. Results of the first survey undertaken in respect of February 1996 are expected to be released early in 1996–97.
- Completion of development work associated with the 1995–96 survey of producers of information technology and telecommunication goods and services.
- Contribution to the development of statistical standards for science and technology statistics within OECD countries, most notably in the fields of innovation and information technology statistics.

## Environment

The environment component provides a focus for ABS statistical activities (data collection, analysis and publication) concerned with environmental statistics and environmental accounting. For these fields, it coordinates client inquiries and provides access to ABS data holdings, statistical expertise, and industry and household collections.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Publication of *Australians and the Environment* (Catalogue No. 4601.0). This is the ABS's second environment statistics compendium publication and it explores the relationships between the economy, population and the natural environment.
- Finalisation of the first resource account (energy) of the environmental accounts project. The publication *Energy Accounts for Australia* (Catalogue No. 4604.0) is close to release.
- Completion of work on the publication *Australian Agriculture and the Environment* (Catalogue No. 4606.0) which explores the issues associated with sustainable agriculture.

- Following approval in the 1995 Commonwealth Budget for the development of environmental and resource accounts; the preparation of a public discussion paper covering possible developments in environment statistics; extensive consultation to determine requirements; extension of the existing environment protection expenditure accounts; and the formation of the Environment Statistics Advisory Group.
- The third household survey on environmental issues was conducted in March and April 1996.
- Development in 1995-96 data collections to extend the coverage and content of the environmental protection expenditure accounts.
- Substantial contributions to the international development of indicators for sustainable development and of environmental accounting concepts.

Classification (economic)

The classification component develops, maintains and promotes the use of standard economic classifications in statistical series. This ensures compatibility and comparability of data across collections and over time. The component produces documents and publications on the classifications; develops and maintains computer-based coding systems, concordances, and indexes; and provides advice, training and consulting services.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Release of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Commodity Classification (ANZSCC) covering all goods and services. This classification will replace the Australian Standard Commodity Classification, which covered only transportable goods. The new classification will significantly enhance the comparability of commodity statistics within and between both countries.
- Development of the ANZSCC in electronic form and a computer-assisted coding system for release internally and to external users.
- Maintenance and promotion of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) computer-assisted coding package, the ANZSIC in electronic form and the ANZSIC Alphabetic Index, all of which are available to users in the public and private sectors.
- Implementation of ANZSIC classification and computer-assisted coding package in Australian Taxation Office registration and income tax returns systems.
- Release of the first edition of the *Statistical Concepts Reference Library on CD-ROM* (ABS Catalogue Number 1361.0). The Concepts Library includes concepts, sources and methods for: the

national accounts, population estimates, balance of payments, government finance statistics and price indexes.

#### Integration and Large Business Unit

The integration sub-component develops, maintains and promotes the use of standard data items and units in statistical series, which in turn helps ensure the compatibility and comparability of data across collections. It issues papers and publications on these standards and provides advice, assistance and training in their use. It is developing a business reporting model aimed at improving ABS and business understanding of statistical reporting issues, and facilitating different and more effective data capture options.

The Large Business Unit sub-component profiles large businesses and arranges for their structures to be updated on the ABS business register. It coordinates the despatch of annual economic collections for those businesses personally visited as part of profiling. For selected large businesses, it manages most aspects of the relationship (referred to as key provider management) including examination of the coherence of data reported through the various surveys.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Review of the need for both the establishment and location units on the ABS business register and how they are maintained, as well as other development and review activity on survey unit requirements.
- Completion of a major review of factors contributing to inconsistencies in statistical output from ABS business collections, with particular focus on statistical reporting by selected large businesses. Wide ranging recommendations from the review are being progressively implemented.
- Further development and testing of a business reporting model aimed at reducing provider load and improving the quality of economic statistics produced by business collections.
- Phased implementation of 'key provider' management during 1995-96 with the objective of reducing inconsistencies between statistical outputs arising through reporting problems for selected large businesses.
- Conduct of a substantial empirical study into how data requirements from labour employer surveys might best be satisfied, aimed at improving data quality and reducing provider load.

#### Business Register

The business register component is responsible for the maintenance of the ABS central register of businesses. Over 800,000 businesses and their relationships are recorded on the register. Maintenance involves applying about one million changes to the register each year. The register plays a key role in integrating economic statistics by providing consistent population frameworks for ABS surveys of businesses.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Centralising the business register program in a national project centre in Melbourne to achieve processing and management efficiencies as well as to better manage the quality of register services.
- Enhancements to the source data provided by the Australian Taxation Office for updating the business register.
- Continuation of a project to redevelop business register systems to provide greater efficiencies and to take advantage of modern technologies.

## SPEED

The SPEED (Standard Processing Environment for Economic Data) component is responsible for the development and implementation of a computer processing environment to serve a range of ABS statistics collections. The new environment, which is based on client/server architectures (facilitating desktop access to greater computing power), relational databases, graphical interfaces and new user-friendly tools, forms part of a wider move across the ABS to harness these newer technologies to its work.

The development approached completion this year in accordance with project objectives, laid down in 1993. Already some 15 ABS collections have completed migration to SPEED systems, or are in the process of doing so. Migration of the remaining economic collections, along with many of the household collections, to the new environment will continue over the next few years.

## Geography

The geography component is responsible for developing and maintaining geographic products and services for use within ABS, government agencies and private businesses. Activities include: the production of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) and associated products; provision of geography and Geographic Information System (GIS) advisory services and customised products; production of customised maps; and continuing development of the ABS's Integrated Regional Data Base (an annual CD-ROM product).

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Release of Version 3 of the *Integrated Regional Data Base* (Catalogue No. 1353.0), providing a greatly expanded range of regionally-integrated data covering social, economic and environmental themes. Released in April 1996, the product also provides facilities to relate data on different boundaries (e.g. postal areas) and improve geographic selection and mapping.
- Update of the *Australian Standard Geographical Classification* (Catalogue No. 1216.0). ASGC maps and boundary sets are now available in hard copy and electronic formats on an annual basis.

- Update of the National Localities Index (NLI). The NLI allows users to code addresses to the ASGC using the suburb or locality name, thereby enabling data to be readily analysed with a wide range of ABS geographically-based statistics. The NLI is available in electronic form for use on desktop computers.

## Census

The census component develops and conducts the Census of Population and Housing required by legislation to be held every five years. The results are used to revise population estimates for each of the States and Territories, and to provide detailed statistics on the population and its housing within small geographic areas and for small groups within the population. These statistics are in turn used for electoral purposes, for the distribution of government funds and for a variety of planning, administration and policy activities of government, business and other users.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Successful conduct and processing of the Dress Rehearsal for the census to be conducted on 6 August 1996. The Dress Rehearsal involved 20,000 households and testing of the various collection and processing systems and procedures.
- Publication of *1996 Census of Population and Housing: ABS Views on Census Products and Services* (Catalogue No. 2011.0). The publication was used to report the outcomes of earlier consultations with users of census data and to consult further regarding the proposed products and services from the 1996 Census.
- Publication of *1996 Census of Population and Housing: How Australia takes a Census* (Catalogue No. 2903.0). This publication describes the different phases in conducting the Census and the uses of Census data.
- Successful completion of all preparations for the Census including commissioning of the Collection Operation Management System; printing of forms, maps and other material; distribution of collection material to Field Managers and Group Leaders; recruitment of some 35,000 staff for the 1996 Census; and commissioning of the Census payroll system.
- Completion of plans for the Census Hotline (inquiry and interpreter) service.
- Release of a Schools Resource Kit to all primary schools and a 25-minute video on uses of Census data to all secondary schools to promote awareness of the Census.

## Demography

The demography component produces estimates of the total population by age, sex, birthplace, marital status and geographical distribution; estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

population; and estimates of households and the household population. Regular statistics are also produced on the input to these estimates, namely, births, deaths, marriages, divorces, overseas arrivals and departures, and internal migration. Projections of the population according to specified demographic assumptions are published on a regular basis and produced for individual clients.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Release of *Household Estimates, Australia, 1986, 1991-94* (Catalogue No. 3229.0) representing the first release of a new series of estimates of households and the household population.
- Publication of *Experimental Projections of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Population, June 1991 to June 2001* (Catalogue No. 3231.0).
- Release of *Projections of the Populations of Australia, States and Territories, 1995-2051* (Catalogue No. 3222.0).
- Production of *Migration, Australia* (Catalogue No. 3412.0) and *Marriages and Divorces, Australia* (Catalogue No. 3310.0).
- Creation of a National Project Centre for Vital Statistics, in the Queensland Office, to achieve efficiencies and improve the quality of data.
- Conducting a dress rehearsal for the post-enumeration survey to be conducted after the 1996 Census of Population and Housing. This will measure the extent of the net undercount of persons and households.

#### Social Statistics

The social statistics component produces statistics relating to health (including causes of death, health status and risk factors, use of health services by the population and statistics about private health establishments); crime and justice (including crime victimisation, reported crime and criminal courts); and culture and recreation (including participation and activity). It also produces a wide range of statistics about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The component designs data collections, which are implemented through ABS household and business survey systems or as a by-product of government administrative systems. It undertakes the compilation, analysis and reporting of statistical information from these collections.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Publication of *Children's Immunisation, Australia* (Catalogue No. 4352.0); *Children's Health Screening, Australia* (Catalogue No. 4337.0); and *Breastfeeding in Australia* (Catalogue No. 4394.0).
- Conduct of the 1995 National Health Survey. Results are expected to be progressively released from late 1996.

- Conduct, jointly with the Department of Health and Family Services, of a National Nutrition Survey in conjunction with the National Health Survey. First results are expected in late 1997.
- Development of a survey to measure the prevalence of specific mental disorders, the disablement associated with these disorders, the use made of health and human services, and consequently, the level of met and unmet need.
- Establishment of a National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics with overall responsibility for criminal justice statistical activities within the ABS, including an analytic unit to provide statistical analyses of crime trends and criminal justice policy issues.
- Participation in the Working Groups on Police, Courts Administration and Corrective Services of the 1995 Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision.
- Publication of results from the first national household survey examining *Sports Attendance* (Catalogue No. 4174.0).
- Development of a survey of the Australian music industry, funded by the Department of Communications and Arts.
- Establishment of the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics to advance the quality and effective use of statistics about Australia's Indigenous peoples and to service the need for statistics about this population group.
- Participation with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare in a joint Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and welfare information program.
- Release of results from the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey for each of the 36 ATSI regions. Thematic publications were released on employment outcomes for Indigenous Australians (in conjunction with the Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research of the Australian National University) and on Australia's Indigenous youth .

#### Labour Statistics

The labour component provides statistical information on the composition and characteristics of the labour force, operations of the labour market, earnings and other conditions of employment, and issues relating to education and training.

Labour force statistics, collected in a monthly survey of households, provide timely estimates of employment and unemployment, together with basic demographic data to enable various characteristics of the employed and unemployed to be analysed. In addition, supplementary surveys are run in conjunction with the labour force survey to collect more detailed data on specific labour market issues.



Labour topics covered by supplementary surveys in 1995-96 included: job search experience of unemployed persons; persons who had re-entered the labour force; weekly earnings of employees; working arrangements; persons not in the labour force; underemployment; employment benefits; absences from work; persons employed at home; superannuation; and labour mobility. Related education topics were also covered, including educational attainment, transition from education to work and participation in education.

The labour component also conducts a range of employer surveys which provide quarterly data on employed wage and salary earners, average weekly earnings, and job vacancies and overtime. It produces annual data on the distribution and composition of employee earnings and hours, and periodic data on employers' labour costs. At irregular intervals it produces data on employers' expenditure on training, employers' training practices and the provision of training by commercial training providers. The component also produces monthly statistics on industrial disputes and annual statistics on trade unions. Indexes of award rates of pay are compiled monthly.

In conjunction with the Australian Education Council, annual statistics on schools, students and staff are collected, evaluated and published.

A senior ABS officer is outposted on a full-time basis to the Department of Employment, Education, Training and Youth Affairs in recognition of the Department's considerable needs for labour market statistics and the importance of facilitating its access to, and understanding of the data.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Development and conduct of the first 'wave' of the longitudinal Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns. This survey will follow a panel of respondents over a three-year period and is designed to provide information about the dynamics of the labour market, in particular to assist in the evaluation of labour market assistance programs.
- Initial development work for a new quarterly index of labour costs, to be implemented in stages during 1996-97 and 1997-98. The index will measure change in the average hourly cost of employing labour, encompassing wage costs and major non-wage costs.
- Development and conduct of the 1996 Survey of Aspects of Literacy, covering persons aged 15 years and over. Results will be used by government agencies to help evaluate literacy and language assistance programs and for planning and decision making, primarily in the areas of language and literacy policy.
- Development of the 1997 Survey of Education and Training, the third such household survey conducted by ABS. It will collect detailed information on participation in, and outcomes from education and training in Australia.

- Publication of an information paper *Measuring Employment and Unemployment* (Catalogue No. 6279.0).
- Publication of a number of short articles on specific aspects of the Australian labour market in *Labour Force, Australia* (Catalogue No. 6203.0). Topics covered included part-time employment, employment growth, trends in the Australian labour market, hours worked, and long-term unemployment.
- Publication of three feature articles in *Australian Economic Indicators* (Catalogue No. 1350.0) on teenage unemployment, trends in labour force participation, and female-male earnings ratios.
- Redevelopment of the Survey of Employment and Earnings with the objective of improving the relevance and quality of data used in the compilation of the National Accounts.
- Publication of two statistical reports containing multivariate analysis of training incidence and changes, based on the 1989 survey *How Workers Get Their Training*, and the 1993 Training and Education Survey.
- Publication of results of the Graduate Destination Survey in *Graduate Outcomes, Technical and Further Education, Australia, 1994* (Catalogue No. 4225.0).

#### Social Analysis, Income and Welfare

This component is responsible for social analysis and for statistical information on household income and expenditure, and on community welfare. It produces reports describing social conditions in Australia, and monitoring social well-being of the population and special population groups (such as women, children, youth, aged persons and families). The component also produces statistics on the income, expenditure and other characteristics of households, and on the economic and social aspects of housing. It is responsible for promoting standard statistical concepts, definitions and classifications in the areas of household income, expenditure, economic well-being and housing. It also produces statistics on community welfare including statistics about disability, ageing and carers, voluntary work, child care, time use, population groups such as people with disabilities, aged persons, families and children.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Publication of the third edition of *Australian Social Trends* (Catalogue No. 4102.0) and the second edition of the *Australian Women's Year Book* (Catalogue No. 4124.0).
- Development and conduct, in February–April 1996, of the Women's Safety Survey. The survey collected information on women's personal safety and their experiences of violence. Results are expected to be released in late 1996.

- Publication of the last part of the *Focus on Families* (Catalogue Nos 4420.0 – 4425.0) series of analytical reports covering family life.
- Further release of results from the 1993 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers and first release of results from the 1996 Survey of Voluntary Work.
- Release of results from the 1993–94 Household Expenditure Survey.
- Publication of results from a study of the effects of government benefits and taxes on the distribution of income among private households in Australia in 1993–94.
- Release of results from the 1994 Australian Housing Survey.

#### Population Surveys (includes Population Data Standards)

The population surveys component services other statistical components by providing classifications and other data standards for use in all population statistics, as well as developing, conducting and processing ABS's program of household surveys. The surveys include monthly population surveys which collect data needed for monthly estimates of employment and unemployment and other labour and social statistics, and regular surveys on other topics. Trained interviewers collect the information from selected samples of households. The survey responses are coded, edited and tabulated before being passed to the relevant statistical components for analysis and dissemination of survey results.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Development of a second edition of the Australian Standard Classification of Occupations, implemented in the 1996 Census of Population and Housing. A review of the Australian National Classification of Offences was almost completed and a review of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification was commenced.
- Conduct of the Women's Safety Survey, the Adult Literacy Survey, and the second half of the 1995 National Health and Nutrition Survey.
- The first annual reinterview of the panel of job seekers and other people recruited to the longitudinal Survey of Employment and Unemployment Patterns. This survey will collect comparable labour market experience data from this panel over the three-year period 1995–97.
- Development of a Survey of Education and Training, and a Survey of Mental Health and Well-being.
- Conduct of the quarterly Population Survey Monitor which collects data on a diverse range of topics (Appendix 11 lists topics covered in 1995–96).

Econometric and Time Series Analyses

*Econometric Analysis*

The econometric analysis sub-component develops analytical techniques to assist understanding of socioeconomic statistics. It provides methodological advice to ABS and external users on the application of econometric and other techniques, and on the availability and suitability of data for economic analysis. In addition, it publishes the TRYM macro-econometric model of the Australian economy (Catalogue Nos. 1364.0.15.001–002) and an associated modellers' database (Catalogue No. 1364.0.15.003) to support analysis of the economy.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Publication of the new Treasury macro-econometric model of the Australian economy [TRYM] and its associated ABS database in cooperation with the Commonwealth Treasury.
- Development of techniques for analysing productivity, price change and cyclical and structural patterns in key sectors of the economy.

*Australian Economic Indicators*

This sub-component publishes *Australian Economic Indicators* (Catalogue No. 1350.0), a monthly compendium of economic statistics, and is also responsible for the compilation and analysis of the experimental Composite Leading Indicator.

*Time Series Analysis*

The time series analysis sub-component maintains and develops facilities for the analysis of socioeconomic time series, especially for the estimation of seasonality, trading-day, trend and irregular factors. It assists ABS and external clients with the analysis, interpretation, modelling and forecasting of time series data.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Preparation of a knowledge-based time series analysis package (SEASABS) for production use, and implementing its use in conjunction with the ABS Data Management strategy.
- Training government and private sector clients in the interpretation of time series data.

Mathematical Statistics

The mathematical statistics component consists of two sub-components: statistical support, and statistical consultancy and training.

*Statistical Support*

The statistical support sub-component undertakes sample design for ABS surveys, to ensure that reliable statistics are provided efficiently

and with minimum provider load on data providers. New surveys are designed and continuing surveys revised as necessary. In addition, statistical analysis and methodological investigations are undertaken to evaluate alternative collection strategies and estimation techniques, to improve efficiency and to improve data quality. Statistical analyses are also undertaken to assist understanding of ABS data.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Review of sample design for household surveys, and development of strategies for measuring the statistical effect of using telephone interviewing and computer-aided interviewing methodologies when they are introduced for household surveys.
- Development of methods for producing estimates from household surveys of complex design, such as the surveys of employment and unemployment patterns, income and housing costs, national health, national nutrition, women's safety and literacy.
- Reviews of the methodology underlying a number of collections including the Freight Movements Survey.
- Introduction and continued development of common methodological standards and procedures across ABS business collections.

#### *Statistical Consultancy and Training*

The statistical consultancy and training sub-component helps users meet their information needs through the provision of statistical services such as survey questionnaire and form design, and data analysis. In addition it coordinates statistical training in such areas, both within the ABS and for external users.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Assistance to the Bureau of Tourism Research with a methodological review of the Regional Tourism Monitor collection.
- A feasibility study for the then Department of Housing and Regional Development into the collection of government finance statistics at the regional level.
- An outposting to Purchasing Australia to investigate and report on the availability and quality of statistics of purchasing in Commonwealth agencies.
- Survey development and analysis assistance to the Australian Science and Technology Council in connection with a survey of the Maritime Industries.
- Ongoing provision of sample design and estimation advice to the Australian Customs Service Diesel Fuel Leakage Assessment program.

- Conduct of statistical training courses for a range of internal and external clients.
- Completion of an internal review of forms production facilities to be more closely linked to the ABS's mainstream personal computing environment, and data management facilities.

#### Statistical Services and User Liaison

The statistical services and user liaison (SSUL) component primarily provides a flexible and responsive service to meet priority statistical needs of State and Territory governments, additional to those met by ongoing statistical activities of the ABS. The work is undertaken by ABS State and Territory Offices and generally takes the form of statistical consultation (such as design, development and conduct of a survey); statistical analysis; modelling of existing ABS or client data; and the presentation of seminars for a broad range of clients in the public and private sectors and in tertiary institutions. ABS officers are also outposted within State or Territory government agencies to carry out specific short-term statistical assignments.

Through the SSUL component, the ABS participates in bodies established by State or Territory governments to coordinate their statistical activities and requirements. The SSUL component also maintains bilateral contact with State and Territory government departments and agencies in order to be aware of their needs for statistics, their statistical activities and their use of information from existing collections, and to encourage the adoption of uniform statistical standards and practices.

An important role of SSUL staff is to be closely involved in the development and conduct of annual State-specific ABS household surveys, the topics of which vary from State to State. In some offices the component also undertakes special analyses of ABS data and produces publications, typically using data from ABS household-based surveys and presenting results for sub-State regions.

Activities and achievements during the year included the following which are illustrative of a wide range of activities:

- An analysis of workers' compensation data for Comcare.
- Analysis of crime and safety data, and a technical review of price elasticity models, for the Commonwealth Grants Commission.
- Assistance to the Department of Education, Employment and Training with the development of a survey on outcomes and pathways in adult education.
- Completion, for the NSW Ministry of Education and Youth Affairs, of the 1995 cohort for a longitudinal survey of school students (targeting Years 10 and 12 student population).

- Conduct and processing, for the NSW Police Service and the NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research, of the April 1996 Crime and Safety Survey.
- Assistance to the Department of Education with a survey on educational pathways in Victoria.
- Outposting to the Department of Justice, Victoria to assist the Department assess the type and quality of criminal justice statistical data being provided from their operational areas.
- Assistance to the Papua New Guinea National Statistics Office in the development and conduct of a national demographic and health survey.
- Conduct of the South Australian Survey of Sporting and Physical Recreation Activities for the Office of Recreation, Sport and Racing.
- Conduct of a survey of awareness of fire services and fire safety for Queensland Emergency Services.
- Conduct a household expenditure and income survey on Christmas and Cocos (Keeling) Islands for the Department of Environment, Sport and Territories. Spatial price indexes were also prepared for Perth and the Islands. The final report for the project will be completed shortly.
- Conduct of a Health Issues Survey for the Tasmanian Department of Community and Health Services.
- Provision of an outposted officer to the Tasmanian Department of Community and Health Services to assist with development of a health profile of the Latrobe municipality.
- Production of regional profiles of east Indonesian provinces to support the work of various Northern Territory Government departments in identifying joint venture development, trade and business opportunities in the East ASEAN Growth Area.
- Provision of assistance to various ACT Government departments on running community consultation focus groups, developing survey questionnaires and the calculation of population estimates and projections.

#### Data Management

This component aims to: improve client service through better catalogued, more visible, and more accessible output data; integrate concepts and procedures to enhance the information content and mutual compatibility of separate data products; and reduce systems maintenance costs. These goals are being approached through the development, loading and use of a corporate information 'Warehouse' from which most, if not all, ABS data products will ultimately be generated. The Warehouse has facilities to store, catalogue, and access all the output data produced by the ABS together with the 'metadata'

describing the underlying concepts and procedures. Its development parallels data warehousing initiatives being undertaken by other organisations but has special features in support of ABS requirements such as the linking of data with metadata and the ability to generate statistical reports in a variety of formats and media.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Following a week-long review of the Warehouse facilities, world expert in statistical data, Professor Bo Sundgren from Statistics Sweden, concluded that 'the ABS system is now the world leader among data warehouses in statistical offices and organisations'.
- Through use of the new Warehouse data access and retrieval facilities (which will replace several existing systems), the capacity of non-technical staff to manipulate ABS data to suit the needs of clients has been significantly extended.
- Publications are now being produced through a new publication assembly system which incorporates automatically the latest design standards and draws data from the Warehouse.
- There has been general agreement in the ABS on the policies required to support good data management practices and integration through widespread and effective use of the Warehouse facilities.
- In conjunction with a Singaporean firm, the ABS has developed a merchandise trade and investment database and trade reconciliation facilities for APEC members, based on ABS Warehouse software.

#### Information Technology Bureau

The Information Technology (IT) Bureau component is responsible for the installation and operation of the ABS central computing equipment, mid-range equipment and communication networks for voice and data; installation and support of small-scale technology (including personal computers); development and support of systems software and program products; support of databases; and management of ABS electronic storage media.

The IT Bureau charges its internal clients for the services it provides and funds its operations from these charges.

Most ABS statistical processing is carried out on the Bureau's Fujitsu GS8400/30 mainframe, which runs ADABAS databases. In addition, the ABS has 10 Sun Microsystems UNIX servers and workstations. These computers run the Oracle database management systems and support finance, personnel, library, management information, and a growing number of statistical systems.

Access to the mainframe and 7 of the UNIX machines is through the ABS network, consisting of about 3,000 personal computers (PCs) using the Banyan Vines network operating system. The PCs run



Microsoft Windows. There is an increasing trend towards distributed processing for both statistical and administrative processing.

Three UNIX machines are used to provide services to clients outside the ABS. These machines are not connected to the ABS Network.

All ABS staff have access to Lotus NOTES, which provides work flow applications, document management and work group databases, as well as providing electronic mail and word processing capabilities.

Achievements and activities during the year included:

- Replacement of the Fujitsu M780 mainframe by a Fujitsu GS8400/30. The new mainframe requires greatly reduced floorspace, power and air-conditioning and the system software and maintenance charges are also considerably lower. The GS8400 delivers increased performance and will pay for itself in two years by reduced resource consumption and maintenance costs.
- Replacement of all mainframe disk storage by a F6493 Disk Array which like the mainframe itself has a low payback period and provides superior performance and data recoverability.
- The commissioning of an external benchmark of the ABS distributed computing environment which has found that ABS IT infrastructure service delivery achieves notable cost efficiencies and emphasises good management through world class standards, processes and controls.
- Development of a Business Resumption Plan to be invoked in the event of significant damage to ABS network or computer sites, and testing of recovery procedures for the mainframe and Unix platforms.
- Use of ISDN indial and outdial on all ABS owned PABXs to achieve savings in local call costs.
- Introduction, in line with the Government Open System Interconnection Profiles, of structured wiring to the Queensland and Victorian Offices and to renovated areas of Central Office.
- Significant progress towards rationalising and centralising ABS Unix capacities to fewer, faster servers located in Central Office.
- Installation of an object-oriented database, ODB II, for the redevelopment of the Business Register, one of the ABS's largest and most complex applications.
- Development and installation of a standard PC environment aimed at enhancing virus detection and security and providing a common user interface irrespective of location and hardware. The new environment positions the ABS well for the introduction of a 32 bit operating system to replace Windows 3.1.

- Provision of the computing infrastructure for the 1996 Population Census including support for Collection Field Managers.

#### Technology Application

The technology application component is responsible for the provision of application development and support as required throughout the ABS, third-party software product support, consultancy, and IT planning.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Completion of an independent benchmark, against world best practice, of services provided by the technology application component.
- Commissioning of an independent review of ABS computing systems with a view to enhancing their usability.
- Completion and successful testing of systems for processing of the 1996 Census of Population and Housing.
- Substantial progress towards completion of the first phase of the Business Register system using Object Oriented technologies.
- Development of a system based on portable computing equipment to support data collection from households.
- Development and implementation of applications involving automation of the flow of electronic documents in both statistical and administrative systems.
- Enhancement of over 100 software systems.
- Further development and promulgation of formal procedures covering service definition, effort recording, and full cost recovery for all technology application services, and continued emphasis on provision of a quality client service which is business-driven.
- Continued improvement and deployment of corporate systems for improved coding, data management, input processing, estimation and publishing.

#### Technology Research

The technology research component plays a lead role in identifying options, and in planning implementation, to use information technology to improve ABS performance in achieving its statistical goals.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Work with the dissemination component to improve the publishing process and to enhance quality control in publishing.

- Work to develop an IT environment which provides facilities for improved management of work flows and for measuring the quality of statistical processes.
- Ongoing work to enhance interoperability and integration within the IT environment.
- Maintenance and enhancement of physical security and IT security arrangements across ABS offices.



## 5 CORPORATE SERVICES SUB-PROGRAM

### OBJECTIVES

To assist managers to achieve ABS statistical goals through the provision of effective corporate management, and of efficient and equitable administration, planning and central support services.

### DESCRIPTION

The corporate services sub-program directly supports the ABS program by providing:

- Executive leadership.
- A corporate strategy for the planning and implementation of the ABS work program.
- Personnel services, including salaries payment, employee relations and conditions of service, recruitment, industrial relations, security, staff development and training.
- Financial management and accounting services including budgeting allocations and monitoring resource usage.
- General support services including accommodation, internal audit, policy secretariat services and coordination of international relations.

The following table shows costs and average staffing of the sub-program.

#### COST OF CORPORATE SERVICES SUB-PROGRAM AND AVERAGE STAFFING LEVEL

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Total cost (\$'000)	36 942	32 101	34 208
Cost as a percentage of ABS expenditure(%)	15	14	13
Average operative staff years(a)	439	384	367

(a) More detailed information is available in Appendix 3 Table 3.1.

### OUTPUTS

The sub-program provides the organisational infrastructure, management and planning systems, staff and facilities necessary to undertake the day-to-day operations. It also provides longer term strategic planning for the ABS program including personnel policies designed to attract, develop and retain high quality staff. The sub-program is required to anticipate the demand for services and supplies, provide control mechanisms to monitor resources, and advise management on trends and developments in the availability and usage of resources. It also provides advice and assistance to managers in monitoring and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of specific areas of operation within the ABS.

The corporate services sub-program works in close contact with the central agencies (Public Service Commission, Department of Industrial Relations, Department of Finance, Department of Administrative Services and Australian National Audit Office) in providing the necessary service support to the ABS program.

#### REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the corporate services sub-program during 1995-96.

#### Executive

For program management purposes, this component includes the Australian Statistician and the senior managers in each of the State and Territory Offices. (Prior to December 1995, the component also included the Deputy Australian Statistician.) SES officers in Central Office also provide executive leadership, but they are allocated to the support components which most closely reflect their responsibilities. However, issues affecting the SES as a whole are reported under the Executive component in the Annual Report.

The top structure and senior staff of the ABS are shown in Appendix 2, and the details of the composition of the SES are shown in various tables in Appendix 3.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- A reorganisation of the Central Office top structure, which is referred to in Chapter 1.
- The appointment of Richard Madden (formerly Deputy Australian Statistician) as Director of the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.
- The promotion of Tim Skinner and Dennis Trewin to Deputy Australian Statistician positions.

In addition, two other SES officers (including one from outside the ABS) were promoted during the year, and seven officers (all from within the ABS) were promoted into the SES (including two into Deputy Commonwealth Statistician positions in the States). Two SES officers retired, and three transferred (two on a temporary basis) out of the ABS.

#### Human Resource Management

The human resource management component is responsible for the operational aspects of personnel management (including the National Pay Centre), personnel security, and the development and implementation of personnel policies and practices (including policies and practices for Occupational Health and Safety, Industrial Democracy and Equal Employment Opportunity). It also has the responsibility for job design, job classification standards, industrial relations, and grievance and inefficiency issues. Broadly, the role of

the human resource management component is to assist ABS managers and staff at all levels by providing a working environment (as distinct from a physical environment) which will maximise the opportunity for individuals and work groups to make their best contribution to meeting corporate objectives.

*Industrial consultation*

An agreed framework for consultation with the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU) continued to provide a useful dialogue on a variety of issues, including organisation and technological change, Equal Employment Opportunity and Occupational Health and Safety.

*Enterprise bargaining*

The Service-wide agreement, *Continuous Improvement in the Australian Public Service Enterprise Agreement 1995-96* was certified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission on 22 September 1995. It incorporates a strategy for achieving continuous improvement in the productivity, efficiency and overall performance of the APS, both at Service-wide and agency levels.

The ABS is taking advantage of the Service-wide initiatives which have so far flowed from the Agreement and has successfully advanced a number of ABS specific initiatives which complement the Service-wide strategy. These include:

- Streamlining of personnel management practices and the automation of transaction processing in the key areas of leave applications, overtime, promotions, transfers and higher duties.
- Continuous improvement on many fronts in the use of information and communication technologies, including through benchmarking and pilot testing.
- Adoption of various initiatives to improve environmental efficiency.

During the year the ABS and the CPSU developed a draft Continuous Improvement Agreement for the ABS's field force of Population Survey interviewers. Interviewers are employed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1905* to conduct household surveys on a broad range of social issues.

In broad terms the draft agreement provides for the following:

- Increased cost efficiencies in field operations through the introduction of telephone interviewing.
- Productivity improvements to administrative procedures.
- Participation of interviewers in the field testing and evaluation of computer-assisted interviewing.

- Through productivity offsets an 8% pay increase for interviewers, to be delivered in four instalments between October 1995 and June 1997.

#### *Recruitment*

The annual recruitment campaign for base level graduates (Graduate Administrative Assistants, Research Officers Grade 1, Statistical Cadets and Information Technology Officers, Grade 1) was conducted. A total of 111 applicants took up appointment offers during 1995-96: 64 for work in economic, population, social and labour statistics; 21 for work in mathematical statistical areas; and 24 in information technology. Two statistical cadets, who were recruited to complete an honours year in economics or statistics, complete the total. Of the 111 recruited, 44 were appointed to positions in State offices.

In addition to the annual intake of graduates, the ABS also recruited 227 staff from other APS agencies and outside the APS during the year, against the background of 217 separations (7% of average staff levels).

#### *Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO)*

The ABS practises equality of opportunity in all employment matters and is committed to the principle of EEO through a formal EEO Program. Overall responsibility rests with the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services Division (the Senior Executive responsible for EEO), supported by State and Territory Statisticians, and managers and supervisors in all offices with whom primary responsibility for achieving EEO resides.

The Consultative Council in each Office monitors and reviews EEO implementation, and reports as necessary to the National Consultative Council.

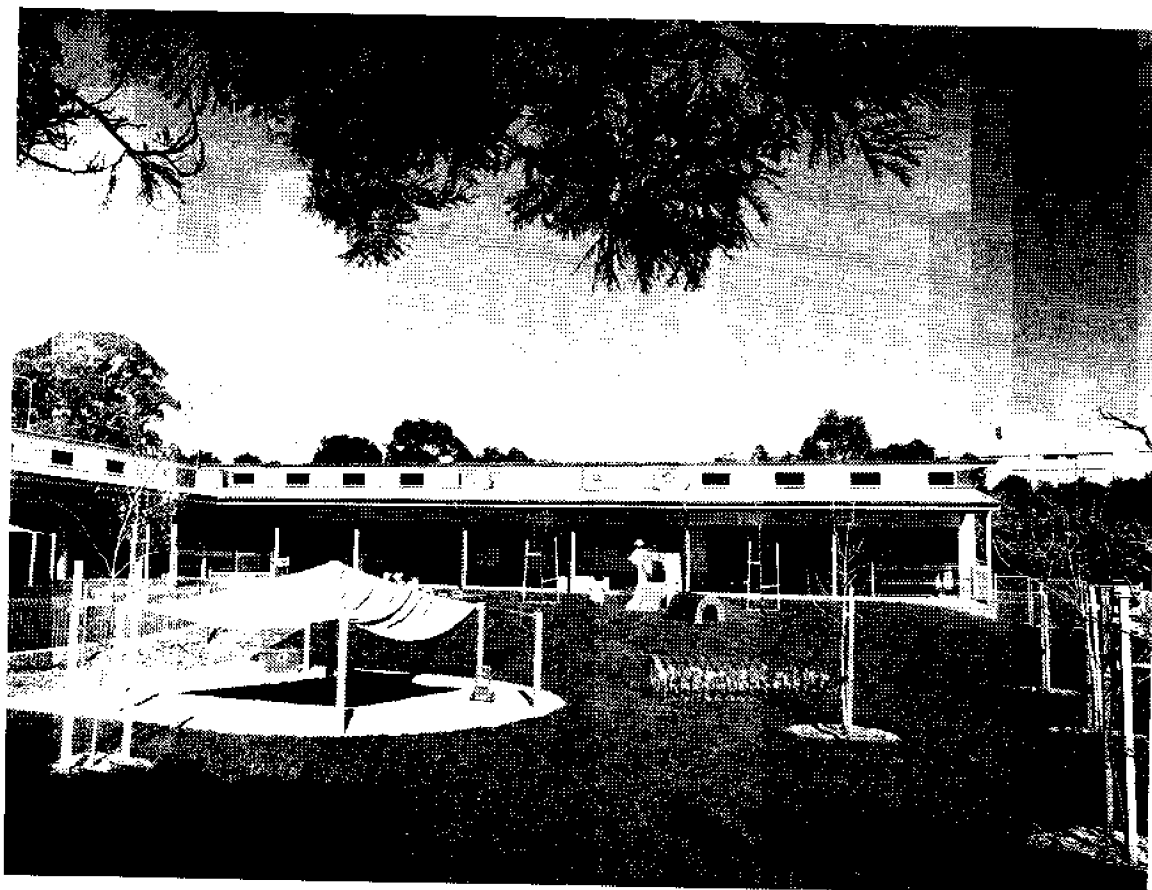
The ABS has a national network of Harassment Contact Officers and EEO Co-ordinators whose role includes handling enquiries and any informal EEO related complaints. Complaints relating to discrimination, sexual harassment and other workplace harassment are resolved through conciliation in the workplace.

Major EEO activities and achievements during the year included:

- Continued training of managers and supervisors to make EEO practices and principles an integral part of the day-to-day management and development of staff.
- Ongoing implementation of the ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Recruitment and Career Development Strategy
- Development of national selection criteria and selection procedures for Harassment Contact Officers (HCOs).

Information on numbers and percentages of staff in the EEO groups is given in Appendix 3.





*During the year the ABS, in partnership with three other nearby agencies, established a childcare centre in the Belconnen area of the ACT, for use by children of staff members. The centre is pictured above, with the ABS Central Office in the background.*

*Childcare*

During the year the ABS established an employer sponsored childcare centre in the Belconnen area of the ACT, in partnership with the Australian Taxation Office, Australian Maritime Safety Authority and Spectrum Management Agency. The centre, to be known as the Bluebell Childcare Centre, will accommodate 62 children and ABS will have priority of access to 25 places — 8 baby places, 8 toddler places and 9 preschool places.

Construction of the Centre commenced early in 1996 and was completed on time and on budget. The Centre will be managed by Sydney Day Nurseries and Nursery Schools Association (SDN), a non-profit agency that has been operating day care centres since 1905.

*Industrial democracy*

ABS continued to implement its 1993-96 Industrial Democracy Plan. More details are given in Appendix 4.

*Occupational health and safety*

A report on activities to promote occupational health and safety is given in Appendix 5.

*Training and Development*

The training and development component is responsible for technology training, personnel development, coordination of statistical training, competency-based training for Graduate Administrative Assistants, Studybank and workplace consultancies. During 1995-96 an extensive program of training and development activities continued to be provided for ABS staff in the fields of statistics, management, computing, client service, and office and interpersonal skills.

Key activities during the year included:

- Re-examining the training and development function to ensure that resources deployed are cost effective and in accordance with the ABS's core business needs for collective and individual learning programs.
- Production of a National Strategic Plan for training and development incorporating action items and performance indicators.
- Undertaking Performance Appraisal training for all SES and SOS Officers.
- Introduction of competency-based training for the 1996 ABS intake of Graduate Administrative Assistants, with most of the training and assessment being carried out in-house.

The following table shows the proportion of staff years involved in staff development activity, in terms of both participation in and provision of training.

**PROPORTION OF TOTAL STAFF YEARS SPENT ON STAFF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES(a)**  
(%)

	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Trainees	4.8	3.3	3.3
Trainers	1.5	1.4	1.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>6.3</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>4.6</b>

(a) Excludes on-the-job training.

### Financial Resources Management

#### Financial Management

The financial management sub-component provides service and advice to managers and staff in the processing of all ABS accounts, and maintains relevant manuals and instructions. It develops policy and provides advice to managers in relation to travel. It negotiates with Department of Finance in the budget process and prepares budget papers; monitors and reports on financial and staffing resources and prepares the ABS financial statements. It also provides technical, conceptual and strategic advice on accounting and financial management principles within the ABS. It develops and maintains corporate accounting policies on emerging issues and is responsible for developing and updating the principles, methods, systems and procedures for generating relevant costing information.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Introduction of a direct credit facility for payments of travel allowance to staff.
- Introduction of a direct credit facility for payments to suppliers.
- Initiating development of an electronic travel requisition system.
- Valuation of ABS software developed before 1994-95, for inclusion as assets.

#### Corporate Services Information Systems

This sub-component provides and administers corporate systems associated with financial management and human resources management.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Introduction of electronic systems for the majority of overtime and staff movements forms (the processes of lodgement, approval, automatic application to the personnel database, and automatic processing by the salary system).
- Successful upgrade of financial and personnel systems to shared hardware and operating system platforms.

- Development of a facility to electronically notify individual staff members whenever their details are amended in the salary system.
- Installation of an automated link with the Department of Finance for transmission of financial transactions data.

#### Office Support

The office support component provides for the development of policy for and operation of the following functions: property management; office maintenance services; assets management; purchasing; records management; and vehicle fleet management.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Finalisation of a new accommodation lease for the Tasmanian office.
- Refurbishment of the Queensland office.
- Relocation of the Victorian office.
- Planning, coordination and implementation of the relocation of work groups within Cameron Offices, affecting over 400 staff.
- Continuing involvement in the Cameron Offices Redevelopment Project, including conducting an independent building audit and investigating alternative accommodation solutions for the ABS Central Office.
- An independent review of records management.

In accordance with the recommendations of the energy conservation audit conducted in Central Office, the ABS has undertaken the following environmental action:

- Development of a draft Energy Management Plan.
- Installation of a lighting control system to achieve significant energy savings.
- Replacement of major elements of computer hardware, resulting in significant reduction in energy consumption by the Central Office computing facilities.

#### Secretariat

The secretariat sub-component provides a range of services including ministerial and parliamentary liaison; support for high level internal and external meetings and conferences; and legislation services.

The legislation services include: development of proposals for new and revised statistics legislation; provision of advice to ABS management and staff on statistics legislation (in particular, legislative provisions for the release of statistics); and administration within the

ABS of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (see Appendix 6 for further information), the *Privacy Act 1988* and other administrative law. Secretariat coordinates all legal action in which the ABS becomes involved, including the small number of cases where legal action is considered necessary to obtain completed forms from persons and businesses included in ABS statistical collections.

The ABS makes every effort to obtain the willing cooperation of data providers and the Statistician rarely issues a notice of direction (under the provisions of subsections 10(4) and 11(2) of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*) to a person to complete a form or answer a question. (Under subsection 14 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the ABS can initiate prosecution action against a person who fails to comply with a notice of direction.)

The number of notices of direction issued and the number of prosecution actions approved in recent years are shown in the following table.

**NOTICES OF DIRECTION ISSUED AND PROSECUTION ACTIONS APPROVED**  
(number)

Type of statistical collection	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Notices of direction issued					
Population Census	860	..	..	..	..
Household surveys	1	..	6	..	..
Business censuses and surveys	6	15	15	10	9
<b>Total</b>	<b>867</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>9</b>
Prosecution actions approved(a)					
Population Census	192	..	..	..	..
Household surveys	..	..	..	..	..
Business censuses and surveys	2	4	3	6	..
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>..</b>

(a) Approved by the Australian Statistician for referral to the relevant office of the Director of Public Prosecutions or the Australian Government Solicitor. Each prosecution action is counted under the year in which the corresponding notice of direction was issued. Not every prosecution action approved proceeds to court (for example, because of subsequent receipt of additional evidence, or lack of sufficient information to serve a summons).

The Statistics Determination made by the Minister under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* enables the Statistician to disclose certain classes of information. Lists of names and addresses disclosed under clause 6 of the Statistics Determination, which are tabled in Parliament, are shown in Appendix 8. Disclosures of unidentifiable information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination are shown in Appendix 9.

#### Corporate Planning

The corporate planning sub-component has responsibility for the ABS budgetary planning system, coordinating the revision and implementation of the ABS Corporate Plan, coordinating the development of the ABS Forward Work Program, and coordinating and participating, wherever appropriate, in program evaluations.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Improving the forward work program development process and supporting systems.
- Implementation of an ABS Agency Evaluation Plan.
- Review of program/office performance indicators.

#### International Relations

The ABS is an important member of the international statistical community. Great importance is placed on ensuring that Australia's statistics are internationally comparable through compliance with standards set by such bodies as the International Monetary Fund, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the United Nations. As well, the ABS contributes constructively in a wide variety of international forums. During 1995-96, Australia was a member of the United Nations Statistical Commission, with the Australian Statistician being the Chairman of the Commission.

The international relations component plans, manages and coordinates ABS relations with international organisations and national statistical agencies. This is achieved through formulating policy and advising on policy issues; identifying opportunities and funding for assistance to other countries; assisting other ABS areas to keep abreast of, and contribute to, international statistical developments; coordinating the supply of statistical data to international organisations; and coordinating programs for overseas visitors to the ABS.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- ABS participation at top executive level in meetings with Statistics New Zealand and Statistics Canada. These meetings have contributed significantly to improvement in the management of the agencies involved and in working arrangements between them.
- Signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the ABS and the Central Bureau of Statistics of Indonesia concerning cooperation in a number of fields of statistics. The objective of the cooperation is to contribute to the provision of high quality, relevant and timely information to assist decision making in both countries, by governments, business and the wider community. Activities under the MOU commenced during 1995-96.
- Hosting an International Monetary Fund Regional Seminar on Money and Banking Statistics.
- Election of Australia, represented by a senior executive of the ABS, as a member of the Governing Board of the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific, which provides practical training in the region.
- Provision of technical assistance to statistical agencies in other countries, through visits by ABS staff, and visits to Australia for study tours and training. Assistance was provided to China, Fiji,

India, Indonesia (including assistance under the MOU mentioned above), Kiribati, Macau, Malaysia, Mauritius, the Federated States of Micronesia, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Turkey, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Vietnam, Western Samoa and Zimbabwe. Of particular note is the assistance to South Africa, which is being provided under AusAID's South African Public Sector Support Program and relates to the population census, economic statistics and social statistics.

#### Internal Audit

The activities of the internal audit component are governed by the ABS Internal Audit Charter issued by the Australian Statistician. The Charter provides for the component to act as specialist adviser to management concerning the adequacy of controls and procedures within the Bureau; to develop and perform the internal audit functions; and to undertake an Annual Audit Program of reviews as approved by the Audit Committee chaired by the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services Division.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- Audit of the Bureau's 'Systems Development Lifecycle' including measures to protect ABS intellectual property.
- Efficiency audit of the Technology Support Branch.
- Standard audits covering many aspects of personnel and financial management operations in all offices. The audits in some offices were undertaken by private-sector auditors.
- Audit of the Leave and Overtime Systems.
- Audit of the Census administrative systems.
- Audit of the effectiveness of the Management Information System.
- Audit of security and integrity of major administrative systems.
- Assisting in the preparation of the ABS Fraud Control Plan.

#### ANAO audits

The Australian National Audit Office (ANAO) also issued the following reports in relation to financial statements:

- ANAO Audit Report No 13 — 1995-96 Audit on the Financial Statements of Commonwealth Entities.
- ANAO Audit Report No 15 — 1995-96 Aggregate Financial Statement prepared by the Minister for Financial Year Ended 30 June 1995.

While matters relating to debt management, reconciliation of financial records and asset management were referred to ABS management, the financial statements were unqualified.





# APPENDIXES



# PROGRAM STRUCTURE

## Appendix 1

<u>Program</u>	<u>Sub-programs</u>	<u>Components</u>
Australian Bureau of Statistics	Statistical Operation	Client Services Library Services Dissemination Marketing and Public Relations National Accounts International Accounts International Trade Prices Financial Accounts Public Sector Accounts Agriculture Mining Manufacturing Construction Transport Tourism Service Industries Economy Wide Statistics Investment and Profits Surveys Small Business Science and Technology Environment Classification Integration and Large Business Unit Business Register SPEED Population Surveys Econometric and Time Series Analyses Mathematical Statistics Statistical Services and User Liaison Data Management Geography Census Demography Social Statistics

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...continued

**ABS PROGRAM STRUCTURE, 1995-96 — continued**

<i>Program</i>	<i>Sub-programs</i>	<i>Components</i>
		Labour
		Social Analysis, Income and Welfare
		Information Technology Bureau
		Technology Application
		Technology Research
		Economic Statistics Group Support
		Population Statistics Group Support
		Methodology Division Business Office
		Information Services Division Business Office
		Technology Services Division Support
	Corporate Services	Executive
		Personnel Management
		Training and Development
		Resource Management
		Office Support
		Secretariat
		International Relations Unit
		Internal Audit
		Corporate Services Division Support

# ABS TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES

## Appendix 2

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program Component</i>
<b>AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN</b> <i>Bill McLennan</i>	Executive
<b>ECONOMIC STATISTICS GROUP</b> <i>Dennis Trewin</i> Deputy Australian Statistician	Environment Statistics Economic Statistics Group Support
Economic Accounts Division <i>Rob Edwards</i>	Prices Public Sector Accounts
National Accounts Branch <i>Barbara Dunlop</i> International and Financial Accounts Branch <i>Ivan King</i>	National Accounts International Accounts International Trade Financial Accounts
Services and Small Business Statistics Branch <i>Russell Rogers</i>	Transport Tourism Service Industries Small Business Science and Technology SPEED
Production Statistics Branch <i>Alan Mackay</i>	Agriculture Mining Manufacturing Construction Economy Wide Statistics Investment and Profits Surveys
Integration Branch <i>John Struik</i>	Classification Integration and Large Business Unit Business Register
<b>POPULATION STATISTICS GROUP</b> <i>Tim Skinner</i> Deputy Australian Statistician Social and Labour Division <i>George Sarossy</i> Labour Statistics Branch <i>Robin Green</i> Social Statistics Branch <i>Marion McEwin</i>	Population Statistics Group Support Demography Labour Social Statistics Social Analysis, Income and Welfare
Population Surveys and Data Standards Branch <i>Glenn Cocking</i> Census and Geography Branch <i>Siu-Ming Tam</i>	Population Surveys Geography Census

**ABS TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES(a)**

— *continued*

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program Component</i>
<b>OTHER DIVISIONS</b>	
Methodology Division <i>Susan Linacre</i>	Methodology Division Business Office
Statistical Services Branch <i>Geoff Lee</i>	Econometric and Time Series Analysis Mathematical Statistics
Information Services Division <i>John Cornish</i>	Information Services Division Business Office Library
Dissemination Services Branch <i>Dennis Farrell</i>	Dissemination
Client Services Branch <i>Dick Crockett</i>	Client Services Marketing and Public Relations
Technology Services Division <i>Brian Pink</i>	Technology Services Division Support
Technology Support Branch <i>Paul Pentony</i>	Information Technology Bureau
Technology Application Branch <i>Dave Bennison</i>	Technology Application
Technology Research <i>Bryan Fitzpatrick</i>	Technology Research
Data Management Branch <i>Warren Richter</i>	Data Management
Corporate Services Division <i>Graham Wauchop</i>	Internal Audit Corporate Services Division Support
Policy Secretariat Branch <i>Peter Harper</i>	Secretariat International Relations Unit
Human Resources Branch <i>John Dent</i>	Personnel Management Training and Development
Financial Resources Branch <i>Steven Matheson (Acting)</i>	Resource Management Office Support

**ABS TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES(a) —**  
*continued*

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*Top structure and staff responsibilities*

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**STATE AND TERRITORY OFFICES**

New South Wales

*Greg Bray*

Victoria

*Stuart Jackson*

Queensland

*Brian Doyle (Acting)*

Western Australia

*Peter Kelly*

South Australia

*Peter Gardner*

Tasmania

*Dennis Rogers*

Northern Territory

*Bob Harrison*

Australian Capital Territory

*Dalma Jacobs*

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(a) Structure as at 30 June 1996. The names of officers managing Divisions, Branches or Offices include those who were doing so on a long term basis, but exclude those who were doing so on a short-term basis on 30 June 1996.





# STAFFING OVERVIEW

## Appendix 3

### 3.1 ABS STAFF RESOURCES EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922, BY PROGRAM COMPONENTS(a) AND LOCATION (staff years(b))

Program component	1993	1994											1995-96
	-94	-95	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld.	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	
STATISTICAL OPERATIONS(c)													
Client Services	129	125	27	27	17	13	10	12	5	3	4	0	117
Library Services	31	31	18	3	3	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	30
Dissemination	85	82	39	4	24	5	1	3	3	1	0	0	80
Marketing and Public Relations	67	60	23	5	9	7	2	2	0	1	0	0	49
National Accounts	49	55	57	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	57
International Accounts	67	72	68	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	68
International Trade Prices	52	41	39	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39
Financial Accounts	108	107	53	24	8	4	4	4	3	2	0	0	101
Public Sector Accounts	29	27	18	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
Agriculture	73	71	29	7	6	7	4	4	4	2	0	0	62
Mining	116	100	12	0	0	1	1	1	43	0	0	0	59
Manufacturing	11	11	0	0	0	0	0	9	0	2	0	0	11
Construction(a)	83	79	3	71	6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	80
Transport	55	65	10	1	7	0	4	39	1	0	0	0	63
Tourism	38	37	11	0	1	41	1	0	0	0	0	0	55
Service Industries(a)	24	21	1	0	0	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	23
Economy Wide Statistics	147	91	20	7	52	6	3	4	2	1	0	0	95
Investment and Profits Surveys	21	18	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31
Small Business	58	56	7	33	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	40
Science and Technology	2	6	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Environment	16	14	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Classification	9	8	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Integration and Large Business Unit	14	9	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9
Business Register	33	38	11	10	11	3	1	1	1	0	0	0	38
SPEED	136	110	17	9	61	5	11	1	10	0	0	0	114
Geography	7	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Census	10	11	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	14
Demography	82	87	47	9	10	6	7	5	4	5	2	37	132
Social Statistics	57	56	22	6	1	4	3	5	2	3	0	0	46
Labour	82	77	25	1	11	24	2	8	1	16	0	0	87
Social Analysis, Income and Welfare	188	160	91	1	5	0	78	1	0	0	0	0	176
Population Surveys	74	64	59	2	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	64
	236	266	120	34	28	31	23	30	9	8	0	0	283

For footnotes see end of table

**3.1 ABS STAFF RESOURCES EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922, BY PROGRAM COMPONENTS(a) AND LOCATION**  
(staff years(b))

Program component	1993	1994											1995-96
	-94	-95	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld.	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
Methodology Division Business Office(a)	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Econometric and Time Series Analyses	21	19	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	21
Mathematical Statistics	59	65	53	0	2	1	3	3	3	0	0	0	64
Statistical Services and User Liaison	86	66	0	16	11	7	8	5	9	2	3	0	60
Data Management	16	15	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	27
IT Bureau	187	189	141	10	10	10	8	7	7	0	0	0	194
Technology Application	214	204	122	10	8	9	13	8	15	1	0	0	187
Technology Research	23	22	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Economic Statistics Group Support <sup>a</sup>	37	50	19	7	9	2	4	3	3	2	0	0	47
Population Statistics Group Support	30	49	16	4	6	10	6	5	2	2	0	0	52
Information Services Division Business Office	7	12	12	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
Technology Services Division Support	5	7	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>2 874</b>	<b>2 759</b>	<b>1 351</b>	<b>312</b>	<b>306</b>	<b>221</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>162</b>	<b>128</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>2 776</b>
<b>CORPORATE SERVICES(c)</b>													
Executive	69	45	2	8	8	5	5	6	5	4	2	0	45
Personnel Management	121	97	59	12	7	5	4	3	2	1	0	0	93
Training and Development	81	68	29	6	7	6	11	4	2	1	0	0	65
Resource Management	41	42	28	4	8	2	1	4	0	1	0	0	47
Office Support	103	97	32	10	9	7	9	5	5	3	0	0	80
Secretariat	11	10	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15
International Relations Unit	2	5	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
Internal Audit	6	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Corporate Services Division Support	5	15	7	0	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>439</b>	<b>384</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>367</b>
<b>Total Operative Staff</b>	<b>3 313</b>	<b>3 143</b>	<b>1 533</b>	<b>352</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>232</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3 143</b>
Paid Inoperative Staff(d)	87	94	39	12	9	6	8	5	2	2	1	1	84
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>3 400</b>	<b>3 237</b>	<b>1 572</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>353</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>191</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3 227</b>

(a) Figures are presented on the basis of the 1995-96 program component structure. Components which differed in 1993-94 and 1994-95 are indicated. (b) Comprises full-time staff and part-time staff at their full time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. (c) Excluding paid inoperative staff. (d) Includes staff on periods of leave for longer than twelve weeks, for example, staff on long service leave, extended sick leave etc. Note: Any differences between totals and sums of components are due to rounding.

**3.2 ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922 BY LOCATION,  
SEX, AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 1996(a)**

<i>Year and classification</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>TAS</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>DPC</i>	<i>Total</i>
	MALE										
<b>1994</b>											
Total staff at 30 June	1 027	214	190	142	128	104	95	25	3	0	1 928
<b>1995</b>											
Total staff at 30 June(r)	911	195	172	126	131	108	96	25	4	12	1 780
<b>1996</b>											
Operative and paid inoperative staff(b)											
Australian Statistician	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Senior Executive Service	27	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	34
Senior Officer											
Grade A	18	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	22
Grade B	46	5	5	5	3	5	2	1	0	0	72
Grade C	122	17	18	13	12	8	5	2	1	3	201
Administrative Service Officer(c)											
Class 6	195	31	33	20	8	15	14	8	1	8	333
Class 5	110	35	46	25	33	18	16	10	1	5	299
Class 4	75	35	29	23	21	34	16	7	2	2	244
Class 3	51	36	18	20	14	11	9	1	0	2	162
Class 2	54	19	9	10	11	6	13	1	0	1	124
Class 1	21	6	3	2	14	2	2	1	0	4	55
Senior Information Technology Officer											
Grade A	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8
Grade B	21	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	26
Grade C	50	2	2	1	2	1	3	0	0	2	63
Information Technology Officer											
Class 2	66	5	5	5	9	6	10	0	0	0	106
Class 1	22	3	2	2	5	3	3	0	0	0	40
Senior Professional Officer	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Professional Officer	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
General Service Officer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other classifications	7	0	6	2	4	1	1	1	0	0	22
<i>Total operative and paid inoperative staff</i>	896	197	180	130	138	111	96	33	5	29	1 815
Unpaid inoperative staff	30	3	3	2	3	5	1	0	0	0	47
<b>Total staff at 30 June 1996</b>	<b>926</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>141</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1 862</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

**3.2 ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922 BY LOCATION, SEX, AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 1996(a) — continued**

Year and classification	CO	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA SA	TAS	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
FEMALE										
<b>1994</b>										
Total staff at 30 June	821	189	166	152	125	76	48	26	4	1 607
<b>1995</b>										
Total staff at 30 June(r)	728	159	144	121	117	79	64	30	5	1 453
<b>1996</b>										
Operative and paid inoperative staff(b)										
Australian Statistician	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Executive Service Senior Officer	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
Grade A	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3
Grade B	18	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19
Grade C	81	3	8	0	2	2	0	3	0	99
Administrative Service Officer <sup>c</sup>										
Class 6	124	12	23	6	8	3	0	2	0	181
Class 5	141	25	33	22	22	8	6	14	1	277
Class 4	112	34	38	17	29	19	5	9	4	269
Class 3	103	49	28	30	18	17	14	10	1	273
Class 2	83	34	21	32	22	27	29	1	0	249
Class 1	30	4	3	11	20	4	3	0	0	76
Senior Information Technology Officer										
Grade A	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
Grade B	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	6
Grade C	13	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	0	16
Information Technology Officer										
Class 2	31	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	36
Class 1	2	0	1	2	2	0	0	0	0	7
Senior Professional Officer	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	4
Professional Officer	4	2	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	12
General Service Officer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other classifications	5	0	2	3	1	1	1	0	0	13
<i>Total operative and paid inoperative staff</i>	763	166	160	125	126	84	62	40	7	1 547
Unpaid inoperative staff	38	9	6	6	9	7	4	0	1	80
<b>Total staff at 30 June 1996</b>	<b>801</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>1 627</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

**3.2 ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922 BY LOCATION, SEX, AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 1996(a) — continued**

<i>Year and classification</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>VIC</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>TAS</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>DPC</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<b>TOTAL</b>										
<b>1994</b>											
Total staff at 30 June	1 848	403	356	294	253	180	143	51	7	—	3 535
<b>1995</b>											
Total staff at 30 June(r)	(r)1639	354	316	247	248	187	160	55	9	(r)18	(r)3 233
<b>1996</b>											
Operative and paid inoperative staff(b)											
Australian Statistician	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Senior Executive Service Senior Officer	30	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	0	0	37
Grade A	20	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	25
Grade B	64	6	5	5	3	5	2	1	0	0	91
Grade C	203	20	26	13	14	10	5	5	1	3	300
Administrative Service Officer(c)											
Class 6	319	43	56	26	16	18	14	10	1	11	514
Class 5	251	60	79	47	55	26	22	24	2	10	576
Class 4	187	69	67	40	50	53	21	16	6	4	513
Class 3	154	85	46	50	32	28	23	11	1	5	435
Class 2	137	53	30	42	33	33	42	2	0	1	373
Class 1	51	10	6	13	34	6	5	1	0	5	131
Senior Information Officer											
Grade A	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12
Grade B	25	2	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	1	32
Grade C	63	2	2	1	3	1	5	0	0	2	79
Information Technology Officer											
Class 2	97	6	6	6	10	7	10	0	0	0	142
Class 1	24	3	3	4	7	3	3	0	0	0	47
Senior Professional Officer	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	5
Professional Officer	5	2	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	0	13
General Service Officer	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Other classifications	12	0	8	5	5	2	2	1	0	0	35
<i>Total operative and paid inoperative staff</i>	1 659	363	340	255	264	195	158	73	12	43	3 362
Unpaid inoperative staff	68	12	9	8	12	12	5	0	1	0	127
<b>Total staff at 30 June 1996</b>	<b>1 727</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>349</b>	<b>263</b>	<b>276</b>	<b>207</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>3 489</b>

(a) Includes, also, the Australian Statistician, who is a statutory office holder appointed under the Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975. Excludes casual staff employed for short periods for population surveys.

(b) Being paid at the classification shown at 30 June 1996.

(c) Includes Research Officer classifications with same maximum salaries.

(r) Revised.

**3.3 ABS STAFF BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, SEX AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 1996(a)**

Year and classification	Permanent			Temporary			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES</b>									
<b>1994</b>									
Total staff at 30 June	1864	1361	3225	38	87	125	1902	1448	3350
<b>1995</b>									
Total staff at 30 June(r)	1698	1203	2901	56	93	149	1754	1296	3050
<b>1996</b>									
Operative and paid inoperative staff <sup>9</sup>									
Australian Statistician	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Senior Executive Service	34	3	37	0	0	0	34	3	37
Senior Officer									
Grade A	22	3	25	0	0	0	22	3	25
Grade B	71	18	89	0	0	0	71	18	89
Grade C	200	89	289	0	0	0	200	89	289
Administrative Service Officer(c)									
Class 6	326	168	494	0	1	1	326	169	495
Class 5	285	244	529	12	10	22	297	254	551
Class 4	240	241	481	1	3	4	241	244	485
Class 3	157	227	384	3	19	22	160	246	406
Class 2	89	147	236	34	73	107	123	220	343
Class 1	18	26	44	34	40	74	52	66	118
Senior Information Technology Officer									
Grade A	8	3	11	0	0	0	8	3	11
Grade B	26	4	30	0	0	0	26	4	30
Grade C	61	9	70	1	0	1	62	9	71
Information Technology Officer									
Class 2	101	25	126	0	0	0	101	25	126
Class 1	40	7	47	0	0	0	40	7	47
Senior Professional Officer	1	3	4	0	1	1	1	4	5
Professional Officer	1	7	8	0	2	2	1	9	10
General Service Officer	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Other classifications	19	7	26	3	6	9	22	13	35
<i>Total operative and paid inoperative staff</i>	<i>1 701</i>	<i>1 231</i>	<i>2 932</i>	<i>88</i>	<i>155</i>	<i>243</i>	<i>1 789</i>	<i>1 386</i>	<i>3 175</i>
Unpaid inoperative staff	47	62	109	0	0	0	47	62	109
<b>Total staff at 30 June 1996</b>	<b>1 748</b>	<b>1 293</b>	<b>3 041</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>243</b>	<b>1 836</b>	<b>1 448</b>	<b>3 284</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

**3.3 ABS STAFF BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, SEX AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 1996(a)**

Year and classification	Permanent			Temporary			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>PART-TIME EMPLOYEES</b>									
<b>1994</b>									
Total staff at 30 June	23	151	174	3	8	11	26	159	185
<b>1995</b>									
Total staff at 30 June(r)	24	152	176	2	5	7	26	157	183
<b>1996</b>									
Operative and paid inoperative staff(b)									
Australian Statistician	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Executive Service	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Officer									
Grade A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grade B	1	1	2	0	0	0	1	1	2
Grade C	1	10	11	0	0	0	1	10	11
Administrative Service Officer(c)									
Class 6	7	12	19	0	0	0	7	12	19
Class 5	2	23	25	0	0	0	2	23	25
Class 4	3	25	28	0	0	0	3	25	28
Class 3	2	27	29	0	0	0	2	27	29
Class 2	1	24	25	0	5	5	1	29	30
Class 1	2	4	6	1	6	7	3	10	13
Senior Information Technology officer									
Grade A	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
Grade B	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	2	2
Grade C	1	7	8	0	0	0	1	7	8
Information Technology Officer									
Class 2	5	11	16	0	0	0	5	11	16
Class 1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Senior Professional Officer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Professional Officer	0	3	3	0	0	0	0	3	3
General Service Officer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other classifications	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Total operative and paid inoperative staff</i>	25	150	175	1	11	12	26	161	187
Unpaid inoperative staff	0	18	18	0	0	0	0	18	18
<b>Total staff at 30 June 1996</b>	25	168	193	1	11	12	26	179	205

For footnotes see end of table.

**3.3 ABS STAFF BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, SEX AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 1996(a)**

Year and classification	Permanent			Temporary			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
<b>TOTAL</b>									
<b>1994</b>									
Total staff at 30 June	1 887	1 512	3 399	41	95	136	1 928	1 607	3 535
<b>1995</b>									
Total staff at 30 June	1 722	1 355	3 077	58	98	156	1 780	1 453	3 233
<b>1996</b>									
Operative and paid inoperative staff(b)									
Australian Statistician	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Senior Executive Service Senior Officer	34	3	37	0	0	0	34	3	37
Grade A	22	3	25	0	0	0	22	3	25
Grade B	72	19	91	0	0	0	72	19	91
Grade C	201	99	300	0	0	0	201	99	300
Administrative Service officer(c)									
Class 6	333	180	513	0	1	1	333	181	514
Class 5	287	267	554	12	10	22	299	277	576
Class 4	243	266	509	1	3	4	244	269	513
Class 3	159	254	413	3	19	22	162	273	435
Class 2	90	171	261	34	78	112	124	249	373
Class 1	20	30	50	35	46	81	55	76	131
Senior Information Technology Officer									
Grade A	8	4	12	0	0	0	8	4	12
Grade B	26	6	32	0	0	0	26	6	32
Grade C	62	16	78	1	0	1	63	16	79
Information Technology Officer									
Class 2	106	36	142	0	0	0	106	36	142
Class 1	40	7	47	0	0	0	40	7	47
Senior Professional Officer	1	3	4	0	1	1	1	4	5
Professional Officer	1	10	11	0	2	2	1	12	13
General Service Officer	1	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	1
Other classifications	19	7	26	3	6	9	22	13	35
<i>Total operative and paid inoperative staff</i>	1 726	1 381	3 107	89	166	255	1 815	1 547	3 362
Unpaid inoperative staff	47	80	127	0	0	0	47	80	127
<b>Total staff at 30 June 1996</b>	<b>1 773</b>	<b>1 461</b>	<b>3 234</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>255</b>	<b>1 862</b>	<b>1 627</b>	<b>3 489</b>

(a) Includes, also, the Australian Statistician, who is a statutory office holder appointed under the Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975. Excludes casual staff employed for short periods for population surveys.

(b) Being paid at the classification shown at 28 June 1996.

(c) Includes Research Officer classifications with same maximum salaries.

(r) Revised.



**3.4 REPRESENTATION OF EEO GROUPS: PERMANENT ABS STAFF AT 30 JUNE 1996**

Salary range	Number of Staff and percentage of Total Staff						Staff with EEO data
	Total staff	Women	NESB1	NESB2	ATSI	PWD	
\$25,938 and below (Number includes Administrative Services Officer Grade 1)	76	41	9	3	6	7	62
(%)	53.9	11.8	3.9	7.9	9.2	81.6	..
\$26,560 to \$29,453 (Number includes Administrative Services Officer Grade 2)	275	183	32	22	3	29	229
(%)	—	66.5	11.6	8.0	1.1	10.5	83.3
\$30,252 to \$32,651 (Number includes Administrative Services Officer Grade 3)	429	266	49	43	4	27	374
(%)	—	62	11.4	10.0	0.9	5.1	87.2
\$33,717 to \$36,609 (Number includes Administrative Services Officer Grade 4)	588	294	62	59	2	36	531
(%)	—	50.0	10.5	10.0	0.3	6.1	90.3
\$37,607 to \$39,877 (Number includes Administrative Services Officer Grade 5)	573	280	57	39	3	25	525
(%)	—	48.9	9.9	6.8	0.5	4.4	91.6
\$40,618 to \$46,658 (Number includes Administrative Services Officer Grade 6)	688	236	50	46	3	34	621
(%)	—	34.3	7.3	6.7	0.4	4.9	90.3
\$49,932 to \$54,088 (Number includes Senior Officer Grade C)	397	125	33	20	2	14	373
(%)	—	31.5	8.3	5.0	0.5	3.5	94.0
\$56,846 to \$68,477 (Number includes Senior Officer Grade B)	127	26	10	7	0	7	114
(%)	—	20.5	7.9	5.5	0.0	5.5	89.8
\$67,154 only (Number includes Senior Officer Grade A)	40	7	1	0	0	1	35
(%)	—	17.5	2.5	0.0	0.0	2.5	87.5
\$74,021 and above (Number includes Senior Executive Service)	41	3	2	0	0	3	35
(%)	—	7.3	4.9	0.0	0.0	7.3	85.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 234</b>	<b>1 461</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>239</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>2 899</b>
% of total staff	—	45.2	9.4	7.4	0.7	5.5	89.6
% of staff with EEO data	—	—	10.5	8.2	0.8	6.1	100.0

EEO groups are not mutually exclusive and any individual officer may be included in more than one group. Percentages are based on total staff. Salary groupings are based on maximum salary for a classification. Inoperative staff are included.

Key: NESB1 — People with non-English speaking background, first generation.  
 NESB2 — People with non-English speaking background, second generation.  
 ATSI — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders.  
 PWD — People with disabilities.

**3.5 STAFF ENGAGED UNDER THE CENSUS AND STATISTICS ACT 1905  
(staff years)**

<i>Purpose</i>	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Interviewer enumerated statistical collections (mainly household surveys)	263	287	293
Census of population and housing (including preparations for census)	1	2	25
<b>Total</b>	264	289	318

**3.6 CONSULTANTS ENGAGED BY ABS, 1995-96**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number of consultants engaged(a)</i>	<i>Total expenditure</i> \$'000
1994-95	87	883
1995-96	102	2 635

(a) The number of consultancy projects undertaken during the financial year. Some consultants have undertaken more than one consultancy.

**3.7 ABS INTAKE AND SEPARATIONS OF PERMANENT STAFF 1955-96(a)**  
(number)

<i>Method of intake and type of separation</i>	SES	Non-SES	Total
<b>Intake</b>			
Appointment — Annual Graduate Recruitment Campaign <sup>b</sup>	0	111	111
Appointment — Other classifications <sup>b</sup>	0	105	105
Promotion or transfer from outside the ABS	1	121	122
<b>Total intake</b>	1	337	338
<b>Separations</b>			
Promotion or transfer to outside the ABS	1	62	63
Resignation	0	110	110
Death	0	4	4
Dismissal	0	3	3
Retirement — Invalidity	0	2	2
Retirement — Under 76W, Public Service Act 1922	2	15	17
Retirement — Maximum Age	0	4	4
Retirement — Election by Officer — Age 55-59 years	0	8	8
Retirement — Election by Officer — Age 60-64 years	0	6	6
<b>Total Separations</b>	3	214	217

(a) Excludes temporary inward and outward transfers. (b) Includes appointment of staff following temporary employment.

**3.8 ABS SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE STAFF BY SALARY LEVEL, GENDER AND LOCATION, AT 30 JUNE(a)**  
(number)

Year and location	Salary band			Male	Female	Total
	1	2	3			
1994 Total	26	6	1	31	2	33
1995 Total	26	6	1	30	3	33
<b>1996</b>						
Australian Capital Territory	22	6	2	27	3	30
New South Wales	1	..	..	1	..	1
Victoria	1	..	..	1	..	1
Queensland	1	..	..	1	..	1
Western Australia	1	..	..	1	..	1
South Australia	1	..	..	1	..	1
Tasmania	1	..	..	1	..	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>36</b>

(a) Operative substantive SES staff and those acting on a long-term basis. Excludes those acting in the SES on a short term basis on 30 June.

**3.9 PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND PAY: NUMBER OF ELIGIBLE SES AND SOS OFFICERS AND TOTAL AMOUNT PAID, 1995-96**

Designation	Number	Amount paid (\$)
SES	37	173 322
SOGA and equivalent	38	163 407
SOGB and equivalent	113	352 795
SOGC and equivalent	385	338 612
<b>Total</b>	<b>573</b>	<b>1 028 136</b>

**3.10 NUMBER OF SES AND SOS OFFICERS ELIGIBLE FOR PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT AND PAY BY PERCENTAGE OF MAXIMUM PERMISSABLE PERFORMANCE PAY RECEIVED**

Range	Number of individuals	
	SES	SOS
0% — 20%		3
20+% — 40%		0
40+% — 60%		23
60+% — 80%		11
80+% — 100%		0
<b>Total</b>		<b>37</b>



The ABS believes that encouraging all staff to participate in decision making on matters affecting their working lives leads to better informed decision making, improved staff morale and quality of working life, and a greater commitment from staff in the performance of their duties.

Further, the ABS recognises and accepts responsibility for developing, implementing and monitoring the effectiveness of arrangements which promote the meaningful participation of all members of staff in corporate activity.

It is therefore ABS policy to ensure that necessary conditions and opportunities exist for the involvement of staff and their representatives in the management of ABS activities. This is reflected in the ABS Corporate Plan.

The ABS Industrial Democracy (ID) Plan covers the period December 1993 to June 1996 and recognises that the principles and practices of ID are an integral part of effective staff management. The Plan was developed in consultation with the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), endorsed by ABS State/Territory Consultative Councils and ratified by the ABS National Consultative Council (NCC).

The local Consultative Council in each ABS Office oversees implementation of ID in the ABS and reports to NCC on progress towards meeting ID objectives. Monitoring and evaluation of the ID Plan occur through analysis of quarterly ID reports and feedback received through staff perception surveys, exit questionnaires, a network of ID Coordinators and local consultative forums.

Overall responsibility for ID lies with the Australian Statistician. The First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services Division, is the Senior Executive responsible for ID. The Deputy Commonwealth Statistician in each State, the Statistician, NT and the Statistician, ACT are responsible for the implementation and monitoring of ID in their respective Offices.

Responsibility for national coordination, implementation and monitoring of ID activities is vested in a Senior Officer Grade C located in Central Office. All ABS offices have at least one officer whose duties include local implementation and coordination of ID.

The ABS has a mandatory selection criterion which requires all candidates for positions involving staff management to demonstrate that they have an understanding of, and a commitment to the principles and practices of ID, and the ability to apply them in the workplace.

ID Coordinators and staff with training and development responsibilities in each Office have continued to provide stand alone training on ID processes and have increasingly integrated ID principles into a wide range of training and development programs.

The ABS has an established structure for formal consultation with the unions. This provides an effective means of raising and discussing issues of interest to both ABS management and staff. All staff have ready access to the agenda and formal records of consultative meetings via the ABS computer network.

The major ID priorities identified for 1995-96 were to:

- Continue the ongoing actions from the 1993-96 ID Plan.
- Review and evaluate the 1993-96 ID Plan.
- Prepare an ID Plan for the period July 1996 to June 1999, in consultation with the Community and Public Sector Union.

Review of the current Plan, which included consultation with staff through focus groups, showed that ID principles are widely known and understood and that staff feel that they are becoming better informed.

Information technology introduced throughout the ABS during the life of the current Plan was recognised as significantly improving staff access to corporate information.

Expectations of staff to be well informed and to be involved in decisions affecting their working lives continues to be strong and this will be reflected in the new Plan which is being developed by a joint ABS/CPSU working party.

The draft ID priorities identified for 1996-97 are to:

- Complete and promote the new Plan to all staff.
- Continue to enhance information sharing through the ABS's information technology environment.
- Build on achievements to date by providing training and development opportunities to all staff in the practical application of ID, team work and participative management practices.

# OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

## Appendix 5

The Australian Bureau of Statistics is committed to the health, safety and welfare of all ABS employees. In Central Office, there is a dedicated unit responsible for occupational health and safety, rehabilitation and staff counselling. Each State office and the Northern Territory Office provide services in occupational health and safety and rehabilitation as required by the relevant legislation, as well as access to a counselling services for all staff.

The ABS Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Committee in each State and Territory meets regularly as required by the ABS Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Agreement, and in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act of 1991*. Issues requiring a national consultative approach are referred to the ABS National Consultative Council.

During 1995-96, 56 Health and Safety Representatives were selected in accordance with the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*. Training was provided to 44 Health and Safety Representatives during the year and action is in hand to train the remainder.

There were no notifications under Sections 30, 45, 46 and 47 of the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*. There were 2 notifications under Section 68 of the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*.

### Accidents

The number of reported accidents and incidents for the 1995-96 financial year was 484 compared with 304 in 1994-95. They fall into the following broad categories:

	1994-95	1995-96
Motor vehicle/journey related accidents	74	105
Accidents as a result of sporting injuries	20	28
Other work-based incidents and accidents	210	351
<b>Total</b>	<b>304</b>	<b>484</b>

In 1995-96 there were 267 accidents causing lost time, resulting in 1835 lost working days. The comparable figures for 1994-95 were 84 accidents and 1417 lost working days.

### Compensation Claims

During 1995-96, 246 compensation claims (compared with 245 in 1994-95) were submitted. Of these, 77 (41 in 1994-95) required implementation of a Return to Work Plan. There were 61 (34 in 1994-95) case closures for the period. Under the

Fitness for Duty Guidelines 57 cases required case management and 26 cases were closed during 1995-96.

Staff Counselling

The ABS continued to provide all staff with access to a staff counselling service using a combination of external providers and internal staff counsellors. Staff requiring specialist counselling services were referred to the appropriate external service. Feedback on the type and quality of services available to staff through external providers indicates a high level of satisfaction.

Comcare Premiums

As a result of trends across the Australian Public Service during the past twelve months and changes to the method of premium calculation, Comcare have advised the ABS that the compensation premium for 1996-97 is 1.84% of total salaries. The ABS, in close liaison with Comcare, will be making every effort in the coming year to contain this increase.

**COMCARE WORKERS COMPENSATION PREMIUM RATE**  
(%of wage and salary expenditure)

	1990-91	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96	1996-97
ABS	1.62	1.49	1.36	1.20	1.08	1.61	1.84
Agency Pool Average	2.00	1.70	1.70	1.56	1.40	1.75	1.60

Achievements

Major OHAS activities during 1995-96 included:

- Inclusion of occupational health and safety, rehabilitation and staff welfare modules in all orientation, supervision and middle management training programs. In addition, informal training sessions were conducted on a variety of OHAS issues. The number of staff attending was 1146.
- Conduct of internal safety audits and workplace assessments in all offices. This included individual assessment and training in the correct adjustment and use of ergonomic furniture (1806 workstation assessments were carried out).
- Participation in planned Workplace Investigations in consultation with Comcare in New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania and Central Office.
- Regular training and network meetings of the First Aid Officers and Occupational Health and Safety Representatives.



- Ongoing involvement with the development of the CAPI (Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing) and CATI (Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing) programs to avoid occupational health and safety risks associated with the introduction of these systems.
- Ongoing involvement in the 1996 Census of Population and Housing in the development of safe work practices for the Census operation, and negotiation with Comcare about workers' compensation premiums.
- Organisation of the ABS National Occupational Health and Safety Conference, a forum for discussion of OHAS, rehabilitation and staff counselling issues, attended by all OHAS staff.
- Participation as a selected agency in the Australian National Audit Office efficiency audit of workers' compensation case management.



# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION STATEMENT Appendix 6

As required by section 8 of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the following statement is given about the structure of the ABS and how members of the public can gain access to information held by it.

## ABS Establishment, Organisation and Functions

Chapter 1, and Appendixes 1 to 3 of this report provide details on the ABS role, structure and functions.

## Powers

The decision-making powers of the ABS and other powers associated with the discharge of its functions affecting members of the public are:

- the power to collect statistics including the power to appoint agents, to ask or require persons to provide information, and to enter into premises other than private accommodation for the purpose of collecting statistics;
- the power to initiate prosecutions against persons failing to supply information; and
- the power to publish statistics and release information.

## Consultative Arrangements

The role of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council is described in Chapter 1. Further information about the consultative arrangements operating in the ABS are in the Internal and External Scrutiny section of Chapter 1.

## Categories of Documents

*Documents open to public access upon payment of a fee:* the ABS does not hold these types of document.

*Documents available for purchase or customarily available free of charge:* see the Client Services, Library Services, Dissemination, and Marketing and Public Relations components, described in detail in Chapter 4. The ABS has a wide range of statistical publications available for sale through its Bookshops.

## Other Documents

*Government and Parliament:* various policy-related documents, ministerial briefings, ministerial correspondence, replies to Parliamentary questions, and tabling documents.

*Conferences, etc.:* agenda papers, submissions, and records of proceedings of internal and external conferences, management meetings and workshops.

*Statistical and statistical service projects:* research, development and evaluation papers; records of consultations with suppliers and users of data; statistical classifications; lists of businesses, etc.; maps; data collection, processing and publication manuals and instructions; mailing lists; statistical returns; and statistical data holdings.

*Administration and management:* work program and planning documents; finance, staff and establishment papers and manuals; personnel files; files relating to recruitment, selection and promotion of staff; staff development and training papers; office services documents; and tenders.

*Privacy:* a record of the extent and nature of the ABS's holdings of personal information, as contained in the Personal Information Digest published by the Privacy Commissioner.

*General:* correspondence, papers, etc. filed by subject, manuals or more general subjects, reviews and administrative circulars.

#### ABS Freedom of Information Activities

A major function of the ABS is to provide access to available statistical information, subject to the confidentiality provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. Application of the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* within the ABS needs to be viewed against that background.

For cases finalised in 1995-96, the average time taken to respond to requests was 15 days.

Comprehensive information on the Act has been supplied to all ABS staff. Responsibilities for matters relating to the operation of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* within the ABS is exercised by the Policy Secretariat Branch in Canberra, and authority for decision making under the Act has been delegated to the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services Division. Officers of the Policy Secretariat Branch attend meetings of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Practitioners Forum run by the Attorney-General's Department.

Implementing the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* during 1995-96 required less than one staff year of effort.

The following table provides details of FOI activities during the years 1991-92 to 1995-96 inclusive.

**FOI ACTIVITIES, 1991-92 to 1995-96**  
(number)

	1991-92	1992-93	1993-94	1994-95	1995-96
Requests received for					
Statistical information	2	2	..	..	1
Personal papers	..	3	..	..	..
Administrative documents	2	3	4	2	2
<b>Total</b>	4	8	4	2	3
Decisions made					
Access granted in full	1	2	1	2	1
Access granted in part	..	..	1	..	..
Request transferred to another agency	..	..	..	..	..
Request withdrawn	..	3	3	..	1
Access refused <sup>a</sup>	1	..	..	..	..
Documents not in existence	2	1	1	..	1
<b>Total</b>	4	6	6	2	3
Decisions outstanding at end of year	1	2	..	..	..
Review of decisions by principal officer	..	1	1	..	..
Appeals to Administrative Appeals Tribunal	..	1	1	..	..

#### Where to get information

##### *Freedom of Information Inquiries*

All inquiries concerning access to documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* may be directed to the Freedom of Information Contact Officer, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Unit 5, Cameron Offices, Chandler Street, Belconnen, ACT (PO Box 10, Belconnen, ACT 2616); telephone (06) 252 5760.

##### *General Information*

The ABS offers an initial contact point, for all requests for access to documents and information, by means of a central information service located within an Information Services Section in each ABS office, as follows:

**Central Office, Canberra**

Telephone: (06) 252 6627  
Facsimile: (06) 253 1404  
Mail: PO BOX 10  
Belconnen ACT 2616  
Counter: Unit 5, Cameron Offices  
Chandler Street, Belconnen

**New South Wales**

Telephone: (02) 268 4611  
Facsimile: (02) 268 4668  
Mail: GPO Box 796  
Sydney NSW 2001  
Counter: 5th Floor, St Andrew's House  
Corner Kent and Bathurst Streets  
Sydney

**Victoria**

Telephone: (03) 9615 7000  
Facsimile: (03) 9615 7798  
Mail: GPO Box 2796Y  
Melbourne Vic 3001  
Counter: Level 5, CU Tower  
485 Latrobe Street, Melbourne

**Queensland**

Telephone: (07) 2229 6351  
Facsimile: (07) 2229 6042  
Mail: GPO BOX 9817  
Brisbane QLD 4001  
Counter: 13th Floor, 313 Adelaide Street  
Brisbane

**Western Australia**

Telephone: (09) 360 5140  
Facsimile: (09) 360 5955  
Mail: GPO Box K881  
Perth WA 6001  
Counter: Level 16, Exchange Plaza  
Sherwood Court, Perth

**South Australia**

Telephone: (08) 237 7100  
Facsimile: (08) 237 7566  
Mail: GPO BOX 2272  
Adelaide SA 5001  
Counter: 7th Floor, 55 Currie Street  
Adelaide

**Tasmania**

Telephone: (002) 20 5800  
Facsimile: (002) 20 5995  
Mail: GPO BOX 66A  
Hobart Tas 7001  
Counter: Ground Floor  
175 Collins Street  
Hobart

**Australian Capital Territory**

Telephone: (06) 207 0283  
Facsimile: (06) 207 0282  
Mail: PO BOX 10  
Belconnen ACT 2616  
Counter: 9th Floor, FAI House  
197 London Circuit

**Northern Territory**

Telephone: (089) 432 111  
Facsimile: (089) 811 218  
Mail: GPO BOX 3796  
Darwin NT 0801  
Counter: 5th Floor, MLC Building  
81 Smith Street

# INQUIRIES BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES

## Appendix 7

Listed below are Reports of Parliamentary Committee concluded during 1995-96 which were of substantial relevance to the operation of the ABS:

**Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee:**

Inquiry into the development of a national system of indicators and policy benchmarks to measure the quality of citizenship and community life in Australia.

The report made recommendations about the collection of statistics on human well-being, and the establishment of a national system of indicators and benchmarks capable of measuring performance in the legal, economic, social and cultural areas.

The ABS is developing, with other relevant agencies, the Government Response to this report.

The ABS also provided submissions or information to the following Parliamentary Committee inquiries which were concluded during 1995-96:

**House of Representatives Standing Committee on Banking, Finance and Public Administration:** Review of devolution of running cost flexibilities in Commonwealth departments and agencies.

**House of Representatives Standing Committee on Long Term Strategies:** Inquiry into Australia's population carrying capacity.

**Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters:** Inquiry into electoral redistributions.

**Joint Committee of Public Accounts:** Review of Auditor-General's report on accrual accounting.

**Senate Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration:** Inquiry into service delivery by the Australian Public Service.

**Joint Committee of Public Accounts:** Inquiries into fiscal responsibility and whole of government reporting.

**House of Representatives Standing Committee on Community Affairs:** Inquiry into migrant access and equity.

**Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters:** Inquiry into the effectiveness and appropriateness of the redistribution provisions of Parts III and IV of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.

**House of Representatives Standing Committee on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Affairs:** Inquiry into the implementation of the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.



# DOCUMENTS TABLED IN PARLIAMENT

## Appendix 8

### PROPOSALS FOR THE COLLECTION OF INFORMATION FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES

In accordance with section 6 of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, the following proposals for collection of information for statistical purposes were tabled in both Houses of Parliament during 1995-96.

<i>Date tabled(a)</i>	<i>Statistical collection(b)</i>
22 August 1995	Survey of inbound tour operators and overseas tourism marketing expenditure 1994-95 service industries surveys — sport, recreation and gambling industries
23 August 1995	Annual collection of local government finance statistics
24 August 1995	Survey of motor vehicle use
30 August 1995	1994-95 survey on culture and recreation funding
19 September 1995	Update of ABS business register Survey of book publishers
25 September 1995	New topics in the monthly population survey: New South Wales — falls risk factors of persons aged 65 years and over Victoria — education pathways in Victoria Queensland — knowledge and use of Queensland Government seniors card Western Australia — crime and safety South Australia — participation in sporting and physical recreation activities Tasmania — health issues in Tasmania Australian Capital Territory — travel to work and educational institutions, and use of library services
27 September 1995	Survey of place of origin of guests in hotels, motels and guest houses with facilities
29 November 1995	Women's safety survey Supplementary topic for the monthly population survey: environmental practices Supplementary topic for the monthly population survey: national child care survey Survey of employer training expenditure Agricultural census
30 April 1996	Survey of aspects of literacy 1996 census of population and housing Music industry survey
30 June 1996(a)	Surveys relating to environmental protection and waste management

(a) If the proposal was tabled on different dates in the two Houses of Parliament, the earlier of the two dates is shown. (b) Unless otherwise indicated by the title, the statistical collection is a national project.

DISCLOSURE OF LISTS OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES

In accordance with clause 6 of the Statistics Determination (Statutory Rules 1983 No. 19) made under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, details of the following disclosures of lists of names, addresses and other information to the specified Department or authority, were tabled in both Houses of Parliament in 1995–96.

<u>Date tabled</u>	<u>Information released</u>
29 November 1995	Names and addresses of agricultural establishments, to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics
18 June 1996	Names and addresses of agricultural establishments, to the Australian Meat and Livestock Corporation

# DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION

## Appendix 9

The Statistics Determination made by the Minister under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, enables the Statistician to disclose certain classes of information. Disclosures of unidentifiable information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination are shown in the following table.

### STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS — DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION 1995-96

<i>Survey Title</i>	<i>Survey Date</i>
Australian Health Survey	1977-78
Australian Health Survey	1983
Australian Housing Survey	1994
Child Care Survey	1993
Household Expenditure Survey	1984
Household Expenditure Survey	1988-89
Household Expenditure Survey	1993-94
Labour Mobility Survey	1984
Labour Mobility Survey	1991
Labour Mobility Survey	1994
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey	1994
National Health Survey	1989-90
Rental Investors Survey	1993
State supplementary surveys	
Crime and Safety — Queensland	1995
Population Survey Monitor	May 1995
Population Survey Monitor	August 1995
Population Survey Monitor	November 1995
Population Survey Monitor	February 1996



# ADVERTISING AND MARKET RESEARCH Appendix 10

## AMOUNTS PAID BY, OR ON BEHALF OF, THE ABS TO ADVERTISING AGENCIES(a), MARKET RESEARCH, POLLING, DIRECT MAIL AND MEDIA ADVERTISING ORGANISATIONS, 1995-96

<i>Names of organisation</i>	<i>Amount paid</i>
<i>Names of organisation</i>	<i>\$</i>
<b>ADVERTISING</b>	
National Business Magazine	15 715
Business Product Review	9 476
Hassel, Hunt & Moore	8 395
Executive Media	8 020
Professional Public Relations	5 982
Peter Isaacson Publications	5 900
Niche Media	5 890
South Pacific Science Press	4 785
Australian Financial Press	4 391
Australian Press Services	2 675
Australian Real Estate Institute	2 250
Morgan Publications	2 100
Business Queensland	2 000
Australian Retail Business	1 980
Cramond Publications	1 980
Dynamic Small Business	1 925
Australian Retail News	1 800
Communication Partners	1 780
Direction Publishing	1 695
Scottish Pacific Business	1 404
Australympus Publishing	1 200
The House Magazine	900
WA Chamber of Industry & Commerce	600
Australian Business for Sale	575
Professional Printing	575
Women & Management Magazine	545
Market Research Society Magazine	350
VFF Pastoral Group	350
Womens Electoral Lobby	300
<b>DIRECT MAIL ORGANISATIONS</b>	
National Marketing & Mailing Pty Ltd	54 263
Action Direct Marketing	2 080
Mailing List Centre	840
Polk & Co.	483
<b>MARKET RESEARCH AND POLLING ORGANISATIONS</b>	
Woolcott Research	81 310
Australian Trade Commission	1 400

(a) Excluding payments for advertising for staff recruitment purposes.



### Topics Surveyed

	<i>Survey topics</i>
August 1995	Sports participation Children's sports Spectator sports Gambling Mental health Support for the Arts Consumer expectations Satisfaction with police services Perceptions of crime risk Housing issues Nutrient and nutrient supplement consumption Employment conditions (Victoria only) Domestic energy use (NSW only)
November 1995	Sports participation Children's sports Spectator sports Physical activity of persons aged 60 to 79 years Consumer expectations Support for the Arts Attendance at arts festivals Housing issues Employment conditions (Victoria only) Domestic energy use (NSW only)
February 1996	Sports participation Children's sports Spectator sports Breast cancer awareness Nutrient and nutrient supplement consumption Knowledge of the Australian Army Community satisfaction with police services Retirement and retirement intentions Consumer expectations Household technology use Telephone connections Attendance at arts festivals Housing issues
May 1996	Sports participation Children's sports Spectator sports Community satisfaction with police services Retirement and retirement intentions Consumer expectations Attendance at arts festivals Housing issues Household technology use Smoke detector usage (Victoria only)





## PROFESSIONAL PAPERS BY ABS OFFICERS

### Appendix 12

Officers of the ABS prepared the following professional papers which were presented or published during 1995-96.

- Michael Anderson     *Implications of the Internet*. Presented to the ESCAP Working Group of Statistical Experts, Ninth Session, Bangkok, 30 January-2 February 1996.
- Annette Barbetti     *Measuring the importance of manufacturing to the Australian economy*. Presented to the Regional Science Association Conference, Brisbane, 11-13 December, 1995.
- Phil Bell and David Signorelli with Danny Pfefferman (Hebrew University, Israel)     *Labour force trend estimation in small areas*. Presented to the U.S. Bureau of the Census Annual Research Conference, Washington, D.C., March 1996.
- Keith Blackburn and Warren Richter     *Centralised data management: can it help micro-modellers?* Published in *Microsimulation and public policy*, edited by Ann Harding, New York: North-Holland, 1996.
- Dale Chatwin     *Accessing statistical information to support research on the Internet*. Published in *Development Bulletin*, vol. 35, October 1995.
- Michael Colledge, Fred Wensing and Eden Brinkley     *Integrating metadata with survey development in a CAI environment*. Presented to the US Bureau of the Census Annual Research Conference, Washington, D.C., March 1996.
- Peter Comisari     *National accounts — sources and uses*. Presented to the 1995 ATO Compliance Research Conference 'Measurement, Evaluation and Risk Management', Canberra, 7-8 December 1995.
- Joan Cunningham     *'Ask a silly question ...': lessons on research from my desk calendar*. Presented to the Second National Rural Health Research Workshop, Darwin, 28 June 1996.

- Peter Damcevski and Dale Chatwin *Facts about the figures: issues in visibility and accessibility of metadata in numerical databases.* Published in Cataloguing Australia, vol. 21 nos. 3/4, September/December 1995.
- Anthony Davis *Innovation in census management — the Australian case — the Collection Operation Management System (COMS).* Presented to the Expert Group Meeting on Innovative Techniques for Population Censuses and Large Scale Demographic Surveys, The Hague, 22–26 April 1996.
- Jenny Dean, Marion McEwin and Denise Barrett *Towards better family statistics.* Presented to the National Social Policy Conference, University of New South Wales, Sydney, 5–7 July 1995.
- Julie Evans *Asking income in the Australian census.* Published in Diffusion, no. 13, June 1996.
- Denis Farrell *Running business in government: the Australian Bureau of Statistics experience.* Presented to the Institute of Public Administration (ACT) Seminar "Running Business in Government", Canberra, 25 July 1995.
- Stan Fleetwood *Collection of tourism expenditure statistics.* Presented to the World Tourism Organisation Regional Seminar on Tourism Statistics in the Countries of Asia and the Pacific, Jakarta, 10–12 June 1996.
- Stan Fleetwood *Overview of Australian tourism statistics.* Presented to the World Tourism Organisation Regional Seminar on Tourism Statistics in the Countries of Asia and the Pacific, Jakarta, 10–12 June 1996.
- Stan Fleetwood *Review of Australian tourism statistics: concepts, definitions and classifications used in current collections.* Presented to the Australian Tourism Research Workshop, Launceston, 9–10 November 1995.
- Stan Fleetwood *Tourism statistics in the Australian Bureau of Statistics.* Presented to Charles Sturt University, Albury, 6 March 1996.

- Stan Fleetwood *Tourism statistics' standards.* Presented to the Australian Tourism and Hospitality Research Conference, Coffs Harbour, 7-9 February 1996.
- Robin Green *Employment qualifications in the services sector: a note on the possible use of a two-stage sample survey.* Presented to the Tenth Voorburg Group Meeting, The Hague, September 1995.
- Jenny Hawkins *Using ArcView for spatial analysis of statistical data.* Presented to the Ninth Annual Australian Conference for ESRI and ERDAS Users, 'OZRI 9', Sydney, 30 August-1 September 1995.
- Tony Johnson and Daniel O'Dea *Measuring general government output and productivity: issues and a workplan for Australia.* Presented to the Joint UN ECE /Eurostat/OECD Meeting on National Accounts, Geneva, 30 April-3 May 1996.
- John Joice with Alice Born (Statistics Canada) *Natural resources in the nation's balance sheet. What do they mean?* Presented to the Twenty fourth Conference of Economists, Adelaide, 24-27 September 1995.
- Ron Just *AAS27 and all that: government finance statistics and Local Government Grants Commission data requirements.* Presented to the Local Government Grants Commission Annual Conference, Hobart, 1 November 1995.
- Harry Kroon, Maureen McDonald and Jenny Harber *Inequality in the distribution of economic well-being: the expenditure approach.* Presented to the 1995 National Social Policy Conference, Social Policy Research Centre, University of New South Wales, 5-7 July 1995.
- Geoff Lee with Geoff Hole (Statistics Canada) and Tim Jones (Central Statistical Office UK) *Development of mathematical statisticians in statistical agencies.* Presented to the American Statistical Association Meeting, Orlando, Florida, 13-17 August 1995.
- Susan Linacre *Managing complexity in survey processes.* Presented to the Fiftieth Session of the International Statistical Institute, Beijing, 21-29 August 1995.

- Susan Linacre *A window on government performance and a basis for decision making.* Presented to the National Symposium on Mathematical Sciences 'Adding to Australia', University of New South Wales, 23 February 1996.
- Alan Mackay and Steve Crabb *The business performance of Australian industry 1990-91 to 1993-94.* Presented to the 24th Conference of Economists, Adelaide, 24-27 September 1995.
- Alan Mackay, Malcolm Tuck and Julie Watkinson *Data for decision making: mining and mineral exploration statistics.* Presented to the Conference on Mining and Mineral Resource Policy Issues in Asia-Pacific - Prospects for the 21st century, Canberra ANU, 1-3 November 1995.
- W. McLennan *Address to the Australian Archives Council,* Canberra, 24 November 1995.
- W. McLennan *Australian official statistics — aims, issues and prospects.* Address to the National Press Club, Canberra, 5 July 1995.
- W. McLennan *The product of the Australian Bureau of Statistics.* Knibbs Lecture 1995, Canberra, 28 November 1995.
- W. McLennan *Statistics and business.* Address to the Committee for Economic Development of Australia (CEDA), Melbourne, 21 June 1996.
- W. McLennan *Taxation data and economic statistics.* Address to the National Tax Liaison Group Meeting, Canberra, 5 March 1996.
- Maelisa McNeil and Erica Fisher *Developing gender statistics.* Presented to the Australian Sociological Association Conference, Newcastle, 4-8 December 1995.
- Maelisa McNeil and Tim Skinner *Gender statistics in Australia.* Summary report prepared for the UN Workshop on Gender Statistics Worldwide, Beijing, 1 September 1995.
- Carl Obst *Comments on the proposal for a method of calculating and allocating FISIM.* Presented to the Joint UN ECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on National Accounts, Geneva, 30 April-3 May 1996.

- Carl Obst *The estimation of gross fixed capital formation and work in progress for livestock.* Presented to the Workshop on the Implementation of the New ESA: Capital Formation, London, 22–23 February 1996.
- Carl Obst *Financial intermediation services indirectly measured (FISIM).* Presented to the OECD meeting of the National Accounts Working Group, Luxembourg, 6 November 1995.
- Carl Obst *FISIM: an elaboration of earlier Australian proposals.* Presented to the Eurostat Meeting, Luxembourg, 26 June 1996.
- Warren Richter and John Cornish *Metadata systems to turn numbers into information.* Presented to the United National Economic Commission for Europe 1996 Lisbon Seminar for Heads of Statistical Offices, Lisbon, May 1996.
- Peter Ruthven *Demographic trends: planning for services and facilities.* Presented to the Fourth Biennial Conference of the Western Australian Local Government Librarians Association, Perth, 8 September 1995.
- George Sarossy *Social mobility in a post industrial society: The Role of an Occupation Classification and its Required Attributes.* Presented to the Siena Group Seminar, Paris, France, 6–7 June 1996.
- Dave Smith *Cognitive research and question testing.* Published in Diffusion no. 13, June 1996.
- John Struik *Statistical units and demography agency survey and request for papers.* Presented to the Ninth International Business Survey Frames Roundtable, Örebro, Sweden, 18–22 September 1995.
- John Struik *Units and demography questionnaire: analysis.* Presented to the Ninth International Business Survey Frames Roundtable, Örebro, Sweden, 18–22 September 1995.

- John Struik *Business Register redevelopment (including response burden aspects)*. Presented to the Ninth International Business Survey Frames Roundtable, Örebro, Sweden, 18–22 September 1995.
- John Struik *Use of special reporting units in ABS business surveys*. Presented to the Ninth International Business Survey Frames Roundtable, Örebro, Sweden, 18–22 September 1995.
- Ken Tallis *Survey design and signal extraction: meeting changing user expectations*. Presented to the Fiftieth Session of the International Statistical Institute, Beijing, 21–29 August 1995.
- Siu-Ming Tam and John Allen *Confidentiality*. Published in *Diffusion*, no. 13, June 1996.
- Sean Thompson *Natural resource assessment and accounting. What Australian resources are available for production, and what are they worth?* Presented to the Conference on Mining and Mineral Resource Policy Issues in Asia-Pacific — Prospects for the 21st century, Canberra ANU, 1–3 November 1995.
- Sean Thompson *Natural resource valuation — the Australian experience*. Presented to the ESCAP Conference, Bangkok, 17–24 April 1996.
- Dennis Trewin with Paul P. Biemer (Research Triangle Institute) *A review of measurement error effects on the analysis of survey data*. Presented to the Conference on Survey Measurement and Process Quality, Bristol, UK, July 1995.

## SPECIAL ARTICLES IN EARLIER ABS ANNUAL REPORTS

### Appendix 13

Special articles have been included in most ABS annual reports to present information and views on important longer-term or broad issues affecting the nation's statistical service. A list of the articles in earlier annual reports is given below, showing in brackets after each article title the year of the annual report in which the article appeared and the part of that report where it can be found.

*What the ABS Does* (1975-76; section 2).

*The collection of information* (1976-77; section 2).

*Forward planning in the ABS* (1977-78; section 2).

*Preparations for the 1981 census of population and housing* (1978-79; section 2).

*The accuracy and reliability of estimates of national income and expenditure* (1979-80; section 2).

*Minimising reporting burden* (1980-81; section 2).

*A decade's work program* (1981-82; section 2).

*The ABS program of population surveys* (1983-84; pages 7-11, supplemented by appendix 5).

*The ABS program of industry collections* (1984-85; pages 8-13, supplemented by appendix 5).

*Dissemination of statistics by the ABS* (1985-86; pages 9-14).

*ABS corporate plan* (1986-87; chapter 2).

*Health statistics and the report of the Better Health Commission* (1986-87; chapter 3).

*The role of a national statistical office* (1986-87; appendix 10).

*Statistics and privacy* (1987-88; chapter 3).

*Media liaison for ABS health survey* (1987-88; appendix 12).

*A quart out of a pint pot* (1988-89; chapter 2) — this article examines how the ABS increased significantly the range,

timeliness and quality of its statistical products and services over the preceding 13 years, with a static level of resources.

*Household expenditure surveys in Australia: A chronology* (1988–89; appendix 15).

*Complaints to the Australian Press Council* (1988–89; appendix 16).

*The ABS in the marketplace* (1989–90; chapter 2).

*The 1991 census of population and housing* (1990–91; chapter 2, Population Census).

*Security of ABS Data Holdings* (1992–93; chapter 2).

*Reducing Respondent Load* (1992–93; chapter 2).

*The 1996 Census of Population and Housing* (1993–94; chapter 2).

*Retirement of Mr Ian Castles AO, Australian Statistician, 1986–1994* (1994–95; chapter 1)

*National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey* (1994–95; chapter 2).



## INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON REQUEST **Appendix 14**

In addition to information contained in the ABS Annual Report, information on the following subjects applicable to the ABS is available on request.

The contact officer for such requests is the Director, Secretariat, Australian Bureau of Statistics, Cameron Offices, Belconnen, ACT 2616 — telephone (06) 252 5760 or facsimile (06) 253 1021

### SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

- Social justice
- Access and equity
- Status of women
- Equal employment opportunity

### STAFFING MATTERS

- Appraisal and performance pay
- Training
- Interchange program
- Senior executives classified by level, age and length of service

### FINANCIAL MATTERS

- Claims and losses
- Purchasing
- Information technology purchasing arrangements
- Payment of accounts
- Consultancy services

### INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SECURITY

- Fraud control
- Reports by the Auditor-General

### PROPERTY MATTERS

- Property usage
- Capital works management
- Environmental matters and energy usage

### COMMENTS BY THE OMBUDSMAN

- There were no comments in 1995–96.

### DECISIONS OF COURTS AND TRIBUNALS

- No decisions 1995–96.

PRIVACY COMMISSIONER INVESTIGATIONS

— None in 1995-96.

SECURITY OF ABS DATA HOLDINGS  
PLANNING PROCESSES IN THE ABS  
REDUCING PROVIDER LOAD

# FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Appendix 15

## CONTENTS

Certification of the Financial Statements

Audit Report

Operating Statement

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Program Statement

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement of Transactions by Fund

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

**STATEMENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN  
AND  
PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING OFFICER**

---

**CERTIFICATION**

We certify that the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 1996 are in agreement with the accounts and records of the Australian Bureau of Statistics, and, in our opinion, the financial statements present fairly the information required by the Financial Statements of Departments Guidelines, including the Bureau's departmental and administered financial transactions for the year ended 30 June 1996 and departmental and administered assets and liabilities as at 30 June 1996.



W McLennan  
Australian Statistician

13 September 1996



G M Wauchop  
First Assistant Statistician  
Corporate Services Division

13 September 1996



**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS**

**INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT**

**Scope**

I have audited the financial statements of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 1996

The statements comprise:

Certificate by the Australian Statistician and the First Assistant Statistician,  
Corporate Services

Operating Statement

Statement of Assets and Liabilities

Statement of Program Expenses and Revenues

Statement of Cash Flows

Statement of Transactions by Fund, and

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

The Australian Statistician and the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information contained therein. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial statements in order to express an opinion on them.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing Standards, to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. Audit procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the financial report, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Concepts and Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and statutory requirements so as to present a view of the Australian Bureau of Statistics which is consistent with my understanding of its financial position, its operations and its cash flows.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Address all mail to: GPO Box 707 CANBERRA ACT 2601

Centenary House 19 National Circuit BARTON ACT 2600 Phone (06) 203 7300 Fax: (06) 203 7777

**Audit Opinion**

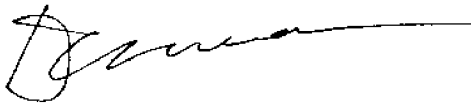
In accordance with sub-section 51(1) of the *Audit Act 1901*, I now report that in my opinion, the financial statements:

are in agreement with the accounts and records kept in accordance with Section 40 of the Audit Act;

are in accordance with the Guidelines for Financial Statements of Departments, and

present fairly in accordance with Statements of Accounting Concepts, applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements the information required by the Guidelines including the Bureau's departmental and administered operations and its cash flows for the year ended 30 June 1996 and departmental and administered assets and liabilities as at that date.

Australian National Audit Office



David C. McKean  
Executive Director

For the Auditor-General

Canberra

16 September 1996

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS  
OPERATING STATEMENT**  
for the year ended 30 June 1996

		1995-96	1994-95
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>			
<b>Expenses</b>			
Employee expenses	1g,2	153,552	142,455
Other administrative expenses	3	103,096	86,319
<b>Total expenses</b>		<b>256,648</b>	<b>228,774</b>
<b>Revenue from independent sources</b>			
User charges	1i	25,134	21,790
Other revenues from independent sources		347	415
<b>Total revenues from independent sources</b>		<b>25,481</b>	<b>22,205</b>
<b>Net cost of services</b>		<b>231,167</b>	<b>206,569</b>
<b>REVENUES FROM GOVERNMENT</b>			
Appropriations used for:			
Ordinary annual services (Net appropriations)	1i,4	236,822	191,567
Other services		5,297	1,715
Liabilities assumed by other departments	1g		15,010
Resources received free of charge from other departments	1k,5	174	196
<b>Total revenues from government</b>		<b>242,293</b>	<b>208,488</b>
<b>Excess of revenues from government over net cost of services</b>	14	<b>11,126</b>	<b>1,919</b>
Accumulated revenues less expenses at beginning of reporting period		(16,728)	(18,647)
Adjustment due to transfer of revaluation reserve	14	18	—
Adjustment due to initial adoption of accounting standard	1b	10,464	—
<b>Accumulated revenues less expenses at end of reporting period</b>		<b>4,880</b>	<b>(16,728)</b>

**ADMINISTERED EXPENSES AND REVENUES**

<b>Administered expenses</b>		Nil	Nil
<b>Total administered expenses</b>		Nil	Nil
<b>Administered revenues</b>			
Other receipts	1i	56	78
<b>Total administered revenues</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>78</b>

The above Operating Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS  
STATEMENT OF ASSETS AND LIABILITIES  
as at 30 June 1996**

		<b>1995-96</b>	1994-95
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Cash	1m	<b>634</b>	113
Receivables	1h,6	<b>2,418</b>	1,612
Inventories	1l	<b>555</b>	734
Other	1n	<b>5,564</b>	7,530
<b>Total current assets</b>		<b>9,171</b>	9,989
<b>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</b>			
Property, plant and equipment	1b,1d,1e, 1f,7,8	<b>64,258</b>	34,859
<b>Total non-current assets</b>		<b>64,258</b>	34,859
<b>Total assets</b>		<b>73,429</b>	44,848
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Creditors	9	<b>4,025</b>	3,310
Leases	1f,10	<b>1,071</b>	575
Provisions	1g,12	<b>18,151</b>	17,686
Other	1j,13	<b>3,732</b>	3,786
<b>Total current liabilities</b>		<b>26,979</b>	25,357
<b>NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>			
Leases	1f,10	<b>12,324</b>	10,148
Provisions	1g,12	<b>29,246</b>	26,053
<b>Total non-current liabilities</b>		<b>41,570</b>	36,201
<b>Total liabilities</b>		<b>68,549</b>	61,558
<b>NET ASSETS (NET LIABILITIES)</b>	14	<b>4,880</b>	(16,710)

**ADMINISTERED ASSETS AND LIABILITIES**

<b>Administered assets</b>	Nil	Nil
<b>Total administered assets</b>	Nil	Nil
<b>Administered liabilities</b>	Nil	Nil
<b>Total administered liabilities</b>	Nil	Nil

The above statement of Assets and Liabilities should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.



**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS**  
**STATEMENT OF PROGRAM EXPENSES AND REVENUES**  
for the year ended 30 June 1996

	Notes	Statistical Operations Sub-Program		Corporate Services Sub-Program		Total	
		1995-96	1994-95	1995-96	1994-95	1995-96	1994-95
		\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>NET COST OF SERVICES</b>							
<b>Expenses</b>							
Employee Expenses	1g,2	<b>133,085</b>	122,466	<b>20,467</b>	19,989	<b>153,552</b>	142,455
Other Administrative Expenses	3	<b>89,355</b>	74,207	<b>13,741</b>	12,112	<b>103,096</b>	86,319
<b>Total Expenses</b>		<b>222,440</b>	196,673	<b>34,208</b>	32,101	<b>256,648</b>	228,774
<b>Revenues from independent sources</b> 1i							
User charges		<b>25,134</b>	21,790	--	--	<b>25,134</b>	21,790
Other revenues from independent sources		--	--	<b>347</b>	415	<b>347</b>	415
<b>Total revenues from independent sources</b>		<b>25,134</b>	21,790	<b>347</b>	415	<b>25,481</b>	22,205
<b>Net cost of services</b>		<b>197,306</b>	174,883	<b>33,861</b>	31,686	<b>231,167</b>	206,569
<b>REVENUES FROM GOVERNMENT</b>							
Appropriations treated as revenues	4	<b>209,848</b>	166,161	<b>32,271</b>	27,121	<b>242,119</b>	193,282
Liabilities assumed by other departments	1g	--	12,904	--	2,106	--	15,010
Resources received free of charge	1k,5		19	<b>174</b>	177	<b>174</b>	196
<b>Total revenues from Government</b>		<b>209,848</b>	179,084	<b>32,445</b>	29,404	<b>242,293</b>	208,488
<b>Excess of revenues from government over net cost of services</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>12,542</b>	4,201	<b>(1,416)</b>	(2,282)	<b>11,126</b>	1,919

**ADMINISTERED EXPENSES AND REVENUES**

<b>Administered expenses</b>		<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Total administered expenses</b>		<b>Nil</b>	<b>Nil</b>
<b>Administered revenues</b>	<b>1i</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>Total Administered revenues</b>		<b>56</b>	<b>78</b>

The above Program Statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**  
for the year ended 30 June 1996

		1995-96	1994-95
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Inflows:			
Appropriation receipts		242,119	193,282
Section 35 receipts		24,191	19,822
		<u>266,310</u>	<u>213,104</u>
Outflows:			
Appropriation expenditure	15	(236,938)	199,419
<b>Net cash provided by operating activities</b>		<u>29,372</u>	<u>13,685</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Inflows:			
Proceeds from the sale of assets		1,064	133
Outflows:			
Expenditure on non-current assets		(28,410)	(12,935)
<b>Net cash used in investing activities</b>		<u>(27,346)</u>	<u>(12,802)</u>
<b>CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
Outflows:			
Reduction of lease liability		(787)	(244)
Interest payment		(718)	(645)
<b>Net cash used in financing activities</b>		<u>(1,505)</u>	<u>(889)</u>
<b>Net increase/(decrease) in cash</b>		<u>521</u>	<u>(6)</u>
Cash at beginning of reporting period		113	119
<b>Cash at end of reporting period</b>		<u>634</u>	<u>113</u>

**CASH FLOWS FROM ADMINISTERED TRANSACTIONS**

Inflows:			
Other receipts	1i	56	78
Outflows:			
		Nil	Nil
<b>Net cash inflows from administered transactions</b>		56	78

The above Statement of Cash Flows should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS**  
**STATEMENT OF TRANSACTIONS BY FUND**  
 for the year ended 30 June 1996

		1995-96	1995-96	1994-95
	Notes	Budget \$	Actual \$	Actual \$
<b>Consolidated Revenue Fund</b>				
RECEIPTS				
Section 35 of the Audit Act 1901		23,000,000	24,855,432	22,475,391
Miscellaneous revenue		50,000	56,441	77,571
<b>Total receipts</b>		<u>23,050,000</u>	<u>24,911,873</u>	<u>22,552,962</u>
EXPENDITURE				
Expenditure from annual appropriations				
Appropriation Acts No. 1 & 3		237,823,000	{261,677,257	{211,522,244
Section 35 receipts		23,000,000	{ —	{ —
Appropriation Act No. 2		5,298,000	5,296,798	1,714,687
<b>Total expenditure</b>	4	<u>266,121,000</u>	<u>266,974,055</u>	<u>213,236,931</u>
<b>Trust Fund</b>				
Heads of trust				
Receipts	20	<u>584,000</u>	<u>1,176,325</u>	<u>691,876</u>
Expenditure		<u>584,000</u>	<u>1,258,753</u>	<u>699,826</u>

The above Statement of Transactions by Fund should be read with the accompanying notes.

## **NOTE 1            SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

### **(a) BASIS OF ACCOUNTING**

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the Financial Statement Guidelines for Departmental Secretaries issued by the Minister for Finance (hereinafter referred to as 'the Guidelines') which require compliance with Statements of Accounting Concepts and relevant Australian Accounting Standards, and other relevant mandatory professional reporting requirements.

The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis using the historical cost convention and do not take account of changing money values, except where stated.

### **(b) DEPRECIABLE ASSETS**

Non-current assets having a limited useful life (depreciable assets) are stated at cost except as indicated in Note 7. Assets originally costing \$2,000 or more are capitalised in the year of acquisition. Component items purchased separately but which are configured into larger items such as office work stations and personal computer workstations and their software are considered to be depreciable assets if the aggregate cost is \$2,000 or more. Similarly, items of furniture, equipment and plant acquired as part of major refurbishing exercises are capitalised notwithstanding that the costs of certain individual items may be less than \$2,000.

Software developed inhouse is capitalised where the direct development costs (ie before attributing a share of overheads) amount to \$500,000 or more. This accounting policy was adopted in 1994-95 and applies to costs incurred in developing software commencing 1 July 1994. Software developed in earlier years has been valued by the Australian Valuation Office, as at 30 June 1996, and is stated at replacement cost. Details of the valuation are given in Note 7(c) below.

The increment in the Bureau's assets arising as a result of the valuation referred to above has been adjusted against 'accumulated expenses less revenues' as stipulated in AAS 1 and AAS 29.

### **(c) HISTORICAL STATISTICAL DATA**

Statistical information has accumulated over many years and is stored for reference purposes. The costs of storing and maintaining this data is treated as an operating expense. The data is not treated as an asset because it is not possible to arrive at a cost or other value of such data which can be measured reliably. The revenue generated through the use of such historical data forms an insignificant part of the Bureau's total revenue which is substantially derived from the use of current data.

### **(d) DEPRECIATION**

Depreciable assets are written off over their estimated useful lives. Depreciation is calculated using the straight line method which is consistent with the consumption of the service potential of the Bureau's depreciable assets.

The estimated useful lives of the major assets are as follows:

	<i>Life in Years</i>
Computer hardware	3 to 5
Computer software — proprietary	5
Computer software — developed inhouse	8 to 20
Furniture & fittings	10
Plant	10
Office equipment	5

#### **(e) CAPITAL WORK IN PROGRESS**

Capital work in progress represents assets under construction or development and are not depreciated until the year in which the development phase is completed and the asset is operational. Where use of the asset commences after substantial completion of the development phase, but some improvements or enhancements to the system continue to be made, the date of substantial completion is treated as the date of completion and depreciation commences from this date. The costs incurred in making improvements subsequent to this date are written off as incurred.

#### **(f) LEASES**

The Bureau has entered into a number of operating lease agreements for office accommodation. Payments under operating leases are treated as expenses and charged to the Operating Statement.

##### **Fitout incentives**

During the year the QLD office of the Bureau, as part of an office lease agreement, acquired certain furniture, fittings and equipment. The costs of these items were initially borne by the lessor and are to be repaid by the Bureau as part of future rental payments. Similarly, in 1994-95, the NSW and WA offices acquired certain furniture, fittings and equipment as part of office lease agreements.

The above fitout items have been treated as subject to finance lease arrangements as defined in Australian Accounting Standard (AAS) 17. Accordingly the Bureau's rights and obligations under these leases, so far as the fitout items are concerned, are initially recognised as assets and liabilities equal in amount to the present value of the minimum lease payments. The fitout assets are disclosed as plant, equipment, furniture and fittings and computer hardware and software under lease and are amortised to the operating statement over the period during which the Bureau is expected to benefit from the use of the leased assets. Minimum lease payments are allocated between interest expense and reduction of the lease liability, according to the interest rate implicit in the lease.

#### **(g) EMPLOYEE ENTITLEMENTS**

Employee entitlements include entitlements to salaries, long service leave, recreation leave, leave bonus and superannuation.

##### **Leave**

Long service leave is recognised on a pro-rata basis in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date. Liabilities in respect of these entitlements are assessed having regard to such factors as separation rates and length of

service. In 1995-96 the Bureau has estimated the liability for long service leave using the parameters determined by the Australian Government Actuary and recommended by the Department of Finance for the Australian Public Service as a whole. Thus the Bureau's liability for long service leave is estimated at 95% of the average of the liabilities

- for all employees with 3 or more years of completed service, and
- for all employees with 4 or more years of completed service.

The determination of current and non-current portions is based on past history of payments.

#### **Superannuation**

Staff of the Bureau contribute to the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme and the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme. Employer contributions in relation to these schemes have been expensed in these financial statements. Prior to 1995-96, the Bureau was not required to make employer contributions in relation to staff membership of these schemes. The costs of superannuation in 1994-95 was a liability assumed by other departments.

#### **(h) RECEIVABLES**

A provision is made for any doubtful debts based on a review of all outstanding accounts as at year end. Bad debts are written off during the year in which they are identified.

#### **(i) REVENUE**

User charges include revenue from the sale of publications and other products and the provision of statistical services. Other revenue includes profit from the sale or disposal of assets, contributions from officers towards the provision of communications services and motor vehicles and contributions and fees associated with conferences and seminars. Revenues controlled by the Bureau are recognised as departmental revenue. Other revenues are classified as administered.

#### **(j) REVENUE IN ADVANCE**

Revenue in advance includes revenue for subscriptions for statistical publications and for consultancies and surveys.

#### **(k) RESOURCES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE**

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue where the amounts can be reliably measured. Use of those resources is recognised as an expense.

#### **(l) INVENTORIES**

Inventories comprise significant items held for resale and are stated at the lower of cost or net realisable value.

Consumable stores and supplies are considered to be immaterial and are not recognised as inventories.

#### **(m) CASH**

Cash includes cash at bank and cash on hand.

**(n) OTHER CURRENT ASSETS**

Other current assets includes accrued income and prepayments for telephones, maintenance contracts, office rent, security and subscriptions.

**(o) ALLOCATION OF COSTS AND REVENUES AND ASSETS AND LIABILITIES TO DEPARTMENTAL PROGRAMS**

Direct costs such as salaries, overtime, information technology and travel have been allocated against the sub-program which incurred these costs. Corporate overheads have been allocated to sub-programs on bases which reflect the benefits derived by the programs.

Sundry revenue received has been allocated to the Corporate Services sub-program and revenue associated with statistical products and services has been allocated to the Statistical Operations sub-program. Resources received free of charge have been allocated to both sub-programs on the basis of benefits received by the respective sub-programs.

Assets and liabilities have not been allocated to sub-programs. Sub-programs share resources in such a way that, until a methodology for allocation of resources can be delineated, any division of assets and liabilities may be misleading.

**(p) INSURANCE**

In accordance with Government policy, assets are not insured, and losses are expensed as they are incurred.

**(q) TAXATION**

The Bureau's activities are exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax.

**(r) ROUNDING**

Amounts have been rounded to the nearest \$1,000 except in relation to the following items:

- Act of grace payments, waivers and write-offs,
- Remuneration of executives, and
  - Statement of Transactions by Fund

**(s) CORRESPONDING AMOUNTS**

Certain corresponding amounts have been reclassified in order to conform with the current year's presentation.

**NOTE 2 EMPLOYEE EXPENSES**

	<b>1996</b>	1995
	<b>\$'000</b>	\$'000
Salaries and related items paid during the year	<u>131,185</u>	<u>130,205</u>
Superannuation	<b>22,314</b>	17,531
Increase/(decrease) in provisions for employee entitlements (excluding salaries)	<b>3,438</b>	(3,149)
Increase/(decrease) in accrued salaries	<b>(9)</b>	594
	<u>156,928</u>	<u>145,181</u>
Less: Amounts capitalised in respect of software developed inhouse	<b>3,376</b>	2,726
Total employee expenses	<u>153,552</u>	<u>142,455</u>

**NOTE 3 OTHER ADMINISTRATIVE EXPENSES**

	<b>1996</b>	1995
	<b>\$'000</b>	\$'000
Depreciation	<u>10,510</u>	<u>14,625</u>
Amortisation of lease asset (re office fitout)	<b>1,522</b>	1,059
Finance charges relating to lease liability (re office fitout)	<b>718</b>	645
Property expenses	<b>26,406</b>	24,792
Interviewers' wages and expenses	<b>14,723</b>	12,060
Office requisites, telephone and postage	<b>7,638</b>	7,125
Other	<b>41,579</b>	26,013
Total	<u>103,096</u>	<u>86,319</u>

The 1995-96 expense excludes \$0.5 million (1994-95: \$0.6 million) capitalised in respect of software developed inhouse.



## NOTE 4 REVENUES FROM GOVERNMENT — APPROPRIATIONS

### (a) SUMMARY

	1995/96 Appropriation	1995/96 Expenditure	1994/95 Expenditure
	\$	\$	\$
<b>Appropriation Act 1 and 3</b>			
<b>Div 671— Australian Bureau of Statistics</b>			
1. -Running Costs	237,754,000	261,670,810	211,405,343
S35 receipts deemed appropriated	24,855,432	—	
2. -Other Services			
01. Compensation and legal expenses	69,000	6,447	116,902
02. Advance to the Minister for Finance	—	—	
Total Division 671	<u>262,678,432</u>	<u>261,677,257</u>	<u>211,522,245</u>
Conversion cost admin to salaries — for superannuation	—	—	2,520,000
<b>Total Appropriation Act 1 and 3</b>	<u><b>262,678,432</b></u>	<u><b>261,677,257</b></u>	<u><b>214,042,245</b></u>
<b>Appropriation Act 2 and 4</b>			
<b>Div 979— Australian Bureau of Statistics</b>			
1. Capital Works and Services			
01. Plant and equipment	5,298,000	5,296,798	1,214,819
02. Construction of facilities	—	—	499,868
Total Division 959	<u>5,298,000</u>	<u>5,296,798</u>	<u>1,714,687</u>
<b>Total Appropriation Act 2 and 4</b>	<u><b>5,298,000</b></u>	<u><b>5,296,798</b></u>	<u><b>1,714,687</b></u>

### (b) CARRYOVER FROM 1994-95 INTO 1995-96 AND BORROWINGS FROM FUTURE PERIODS

An amount of \$2.6 million was carried over from 1994-95 into 1995-96 and was included in the 1995-96 appropriation. This arose primarily because of the borrowing from future years in anticipation of expenditures in 1995-96, which did not eventuate. Carryovers and borrowings are permitted under the Department of Finance's Running Costs arrangements.

## NOTE 5 RESOURCES RECEIVED FREE OF CHARGE

The following resources received free of charge have been recognised in the Operating Statement.

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
Australian National Audit Office — audit of financial statements	90	75
Department of Finance — provision of accounting, budgeting and salary services	84	102
ACT Government — provision of floor space for the ACT Statistician at FAI House	—	19
<b>Total resources received free of charge</b>	<b>174</b>	<b>196</b>

The following services received free of charge are not recognised in the Operating Statement as estimates of the costs were not able to be provided by the service provider:

- Department of Administrative Services - arranging standard purchasing contracts.
- Department of Industrial Relations — provision of advice and representation on industrial relations matters.

## NOTE 6 RECEIVABLES

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
Trade debtors	2,508	1,662
Less: provision for doubtful debts	90	50
<b>Total receivables</b>	<b>2,418</b>	<b>1,612</b>
<i>Age analysis:</i>		
Not overdue (less than 30 days)	1,441	1,348
Overdue		
– less than 30 days	624	151
– between 30 and 60 days	94	64
– more than 60 days	349	99
	<b>2,508</b>	<b>1,662</b>

Those receivables have been categorised as follows:

	1996	1995
From:	\$'000	\$'000
Commonwealth Departments	794	449
Entities controlled by the Commonwealth	123	116
Trade	1,591	1,097
Total receivables	<u>2,508</u>	<u>1,662</u>

## NOTE 7 PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

### (a) Summary

	<i>Land &amp; building</i>	<i>Plant, equipment, furniture &amp; fittings</i>	<i>Computer hardware &amp; software</i>	<i>Capital work in progress</i>	<i>Total</i>
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Cost or valuation</b>					
As at 1 July 1995	100	25,760	63,489	3,354	92,703
Additions					
Finance lease	—	3,521	—	—	3,521
Reclassification	—	(617)	617	—	—
Other	—	8,353	26,271	4,250	38,874
Disposals	(100)	(671)	(23,654)	—	(24,425)
As at 30 June 1996	<u>—</u>	<u>36,346</u>	<u>66,723</u>	<u>7,604</u>	<u>110,673</u>
<b>Accumulated depreciation/amortisation</b>					
As at 1 July 1995	—	5,203	52,641	—	57,844
Eliminated on disposals	—	(605)	(22,856)	—	(23,461)
Reclassification	—	(91)	91	—	—
Charge for the year	—	3,229	8,803	—	12,032
As at 30 June 1996	<u>—</u>	<u>7,736</u>	<u>38,679</u>	<u>—</u>	<u>46,415</u>
<b>Net book value</b>					
As at 30 June 1996	<u>—</u>	<u>28,610</u>	<u>28,044</u>	<u>7,604</u>	<u>64,258</u>
As at 30 June 1995	<u>100</u>	<u>20,557</u>	<u>10,848</u>	<u>3,354</u>	<u>34,859</u>

**b) Assets under lease**

Included in the above are assets under lease as follows:

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Plant, equipment, furniture and fittings under lease</b>		
At cost	13,507	10,604
Less accumulated amortisation	2,354	1,014
Net book value	<u>11,153</u>	<u>9,590</u>
<b>Computer hardware and software under lease</b>		
At cost	752	135
Less accumulated amortisation	227	45
Net book value	<u>525</u>	<u>90</u>
Total assets under lease	<u>11,678</u>	<u>9,680</u>

**c) Assets at valuation**

Certain internally developed computer software has been valued by the Australian Valuation Office as at 30 June 1996, and is included in computer hardware and software at replacement cost as follows:

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Internally generated software</b>		
At replacement cost	27,921	—
Accumulated depreciation	17,457	—
	<u>10,464</u>	<u>—</u>

A telelift system was revalued by the Australian Valuation Office in 1993, and is included in plant, equipment, furniture and fittings at replacement cost as follows:

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Telelift system</b>		
At independent valuation	1,700	1,700
Accumulated depreciation	510	354
Net book value	<u>1,190</u>	<u>1,346</u>

**NOTE 8 CAPITAL WORK IN PROGRESS**

Capital work in progress comprises software being developed inhouse to facilitate the Bureau's statistical operations. As explained in note 1(b), costs incurred in developing software since 1 July 1994 have been capitalised and are shown below. This year capital work in progress also includes the Bureau's share (40%) in the Bluebell Childcare Centre, under construction. Bureau staff will have access to 25 places (from a total of 62) in which to place their children in day care when the Centre commences operations in September 1996.

	<b>Cost capitalised</b>	<i>Estimated final cost</i>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Business register	<b>1,772</b>	3,595
ABS database	<b>2,894</b>	4,557
Household survey	<b>1,432</b>	3,400
Prices system	<b>795</b>	1,208
Labour cost index	<b>289</b>	780
Bluebell childcare centre	<b>422</b>	422
Total capital work in progress	<b>7,604</b>	13,962

**NOTE 9 CREDITORS**

	<b>1996</b>	1995
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Accrued salaries	<b>1,078</b>	1,087
Accrued superannuation	<b>183</b>	
Statistical services for State Governments	<b>534</b>	546
Other creditors	<b>2,230</b>	1,677
Total creditors	<b>4,025</b>	3,310

**NOTE 10      FINANCE LEASES**

At the reporting date, the Bureau had the following obligations under finance leases (the sum of which is recognised as a liability after deduction of future finance lease charges included in the obligation):

	<b>1996</b>	1995
	<b>\$'000</b>	\$'000
Not later than one year	<u>1,767</u>	<u>1,208</u>
Later than one year but not later than two years	<b>1,921</b>	1,331
Later than two years but not later than five years	<b>6,753</b>	4,944
Later than five years	<b>6,560</b>	6,864
Minimum lease payments	<u>17,001</u>	<u>14,347</u>
Deduct: future finance charges	<b>3,606</b>	3,624
 Total finance lease liability	 <u><b>13,395</b></u>	 <u>10,723</u>
 Classified as		
Current	<b>1,071</b>	575
Non-current	<b>12,324</b>	10,148
 Lease liability	 <u><b>13,395</b></u>	 <u>10,723</u>

## NOTE 11      AGREEMENTS EQUALLY PROPORTIONATELY UNPERFORMED

Amounts payable not recognised in the financial statements, from agreements equally proportionally unperformed (AEPU), are:

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
Operating leases relating to office accommodation:		
Not later than one year	15,130	18,659
Later than one year but not later than two years	14,353	12,906
Later than two years but not later than five years	40,564	37,689
Later than five years	32,272	63,736
Total commitments	<u>102,319</u>	<u>132,990</u>

## NOTE 12      PROVISIONS

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Current</b>		
Recreation Leave	14,907	12,972
Recreation Leave Bonus	1,040	2,187
Long Service Leave	2,204	1,504
Performance Based Pay	Nil	1,023
Total current provisions	<u>18,151</u>	<u>17,686</u>
<b>Non-current</b>		
Long Service Leave	28,848	25,875
Other	399	178
Total non-current provisions	<u>29,247</u>	<u>26,053</u>

**NOTE 13 OTHER LIABILITIES**

	<b>1996</b>	1995
	<b>\$'000</b>	\$'000
Receipts in advance	<u>3,732</u>	<u>3,786</u>
Total other liabilities	<u><b>3,732</b></u>	<u><b>3,786</b></u>

**NOTE 14 NET ASSETS/(LIABILITIES)**

	<i>Accumulated Operating Results</i>	Revaluation Reserve	<i>Total</i>
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at the beginning of the year	<u>(16,728)</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>(16,710)</u>
Excess of revenues from government over net cost of services for the year	11,126		11,126
Adjustment due to transfer of revaluation reserve	18	(18)	Nil
Adjustment due to initial adoption of accounting standard	10,464		10,464
Balance at the end of the year	<u><b>4,880</b></u>	<u><b>Nil</b></u>	<u><b>4,880</b></u>



**NOTE 15 CASH FLOW RECONCILIATION**

The following is a reconciliation of the cash outflows related to operating activities (as shown on the cash flow statement) and the accrual based net cost of services (as shown on the operating statement).

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
Cash outflows from operating activities	<u>236,938</u>	<u>199,419</u>
Section 35 receipts (excluding proceeds on sale of assets)	(24,191)	(19,822)
Liabilities assumed by other departments	0	15,010
Resources received free of charge	174	196
Interest on finance lease	718	645
Expenses funded by finance lease/(Discounts received)	(62)	228
Depreciation/amortisation	12,032	15,684
(Gain)/loss on disposal of non-current assets	(100)	878
Increase/(decrease) in provision for doubtful debts	40	39
(Increase)/decrease in receivables	(846)	(63)
(Increase)/decrease in inventories	179	1,531
(Increase)/decrease in other assets	1,966	(5,346)
Increase/(decrease) in creditors	715	592
Increase/(decrease) in revenue in advance	(54)	549
Increase/(decrease) in provisions	3,658	(2,971)
Net cost of services	<u>231,167</u>	<u>206,569</u>

**NOTE 16 NON-CASH FINANCING AND INVESTING ACTIVITIES**

As explained in note 1(f), the Bureau acquired certain assets in connection with the fitout of NSW, WA and QLD offices under finance lease arrangements. These non-cash financing and investing activities may be summarised as follows:

	1996	1995
	\$'000	\$'000
Balance at 1 July	<u>10,723</u>	<u>2,961</u>
Assets acquired	3,521	7,778
Expenses written off/(Discounts received)	(62)	228
Repaid during the year	(787)	(244)
Total finance lease liability	<u>13,395</u>	<u>10,723</u>

**NOTE 17 EXECUTIVE REMUNERATION**

(a) Fixed remuneration

Salary Band	1996	1995
	No. of Executives	No. of Executives
\$100,000 to \$110,000	1	26
\$110,000 to \$120,000	25	Nil
\$120,000 to \$130,000	Nil	6
\$130,000 to \$140,000	6	Nil
\$140,000 to \$150,000	1	1
\$200,000 to \$210,000	Nil	1
\$210,000 to \$220,000	1	Nil

(b) The amounts of fixed remuneration and performance pay received/receivable by all executive officers are as follows:

Total fixed remuneration	\$4,204,426	\$3,958,853
Performance pay	Nil	\$160,000

**NOTE 18 ACT OF GRACE PAYMENTS, WAIVERS AND AMOUNTS WRITTEN OFF**

(a) ACT OF GRACE PAYMENTS

There were no Act of Grace payments made in accordance with s.34A, *Audit Act, 1901*.

(b) WAIVERS OF RIGHTS TO PAYMENTS

The following table indicates the waiver of amounts due to the Commonwealth made during the financial year 1995-96 under Section 70C(2) of the *Audit Act, 1901*.

No. of waived rights to payments of moneys	1996	1995
	\$	\$
1	176.76	Nil

(c) AMOUNTS WRITTEN OFF

The following details are furnished in relation to amounts written off during the 1995-96 financial year under sub-section 70C(1) of the *Audit Act, 1901*.

	1996	1995
	\$	\$
Losses or deficiencies of public moneys	236	39
Irrecoverable amounts of revenue	Nil	24,325
Irrecoverable debts and overpayments	900	Nil
Amounts of revenue, debts or overpayments, the recovery of which would, in the opinion of the Minister, be uneconomical	17,220	Nil
Lost, deficient, condemned, unserviceable or obsolete stores	22,489	56,152
Total	<u>40,845</u>	<u>80,516</u>

**(d) LOSSES AND DEFICIENCIES IN PUBLIC MONEYS AND OTHER PROPERTY**

The following action was taken during the financial year 1995-96 under Part XIII A of the *Audit Act, 1901*.

	<i>Total number</i>	<i>Total amount</i>	<i>No. where officer judged liable</i>	<i>Total assessed liability</i>	<i>No. where officer not held liable</i>	<i>No. pending action</i>
		\$		\$		
Public moneys						
Losses	5	236	Nil	Nil	4	1
Deficiencies	..	..	..	..	..	..
Property						
Losses	..	..	..	..	..	..
Destruction	..	..	..	..	..	..
Damage	1	250	Nil	Nil	1	Nil

**NOTE 19 CONTINGENCIES**

The Bureau has contingent liabilities pending the finalisation of legal proceedings.

**NOTE 20 TRUST FUNDS**

(a) COMCARE TRUST FUND

*Legal Authority* Section 60 Audit Act 1901

*Purpose* — To process incapacity payments from Comcare for loss of salary due to compensable conditions under Section 19 of CERC Act 1988.

	1995-96	<b>1995-96</b>	1994-95
	<i>Budget</i>	<b><i>Expenditure</i></b>	<i>Expenditure</i>
	\$	\$	\$
Opening Balance	111,995	<b>111,995</b>	120,072
Receipts	582,000	<b>622,596</b>	670,648
Expenditure	(582,000)	<b>(705,511)</b>	(678,725)
Closing Balance	<u>111,995</u>	<u><b>29,080</b></u>	<u>111,995</u>

(b) OTHER TRUST FUNDS

*Legal Authority* — Section 60 Audit Act 1901

*Purpose* — For the receipt of moneys temporarily held in trust for other persons, and for moneys received without sufficient information for crediting to the correct head of revenue at time of receipt.

	1995-96	<b>1995-96</b>	1994-95
	<i>Budget</i>	<b><i>Expenditure</i></b>	<i>Expenditure</i>
	\$	\$	\$
Opening Balance	2,415	<b>2,415</b>	2,288
Receipts	2,000	<b>553,729</b>	21,288
Expenditure	(2,000)	<b>(553,242)</b>	(21,201)
Closing Balance	<u>2,415</u>	<u><b>2,902</b></u>	<u>2,415</u>

**NOTE 21      PROPOSED APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE  
1996-97 REPORTING PERIOD**

	<b>1996-97 Appropriation</b>
	\$
<b>Appropriation Bill 1</b>	_____
<b>Div 671— Australian Bureau of Statistics</b>	
1. -Running Costs	300,831,000
S35 receipts deemed appropriated	24,000,000
2. -Other Services	
01. Compensation and legal expenses	71,000
Total Division 671	324,902,000
<b>Total Appropriation Bill 1</b>	<u><b>324,902,000</b></u>
<b>Appropriation Bill 2</b>	
<b>Div 979— Australian Bureau of Statistics</b>	
1. Capital Works and Services	
01. Plant and equipment	1,459,000
Total Division 959	1,459,000
<b>Total Appropriation Bill 2</b>	<u><b>1,459,000</b></u>



## **ESTIMATES OF COST BY COMPONENT**      **Appendix 16**

The following table shows the total operating expenses for the ABS program with an estimated dissection by program component. The table also shows an estimate of the full cost of each statistical component.

The cost allocations have been compiled on the following basis:

- Direct and overhead costs comprise all expenses directly attributable to each component (such as salaries, overtime, travel, information technology, etc.) plus an estimated distribution of major corporate service costs (such as accommodation, telephones, etc.). To the extent practicable, overhead costs are allocated on the basis of estimated usage.
- Full cost for each statistical component comprises direct and overhead costs for the component plus an estimate of costs for services received from other components less an estimate of the cost of services provided to other components. To the extent practicable, service costs are allocated on the basis of estimated usage.

**ESTIMATES OF COST BY COMPONENT, 1995-96**  
 (\$'000)

Components	Direct & overhead costs	Cost of services received	Cost of services provided	Statistical Components FULL COST	%(a)
(A)	(B)	(C)	(A+B-C)		
<b>STATISTICAL OPERATIONS</b>					
Client Services	8 904	2 657	8 198	3 363	1.5
Library Services	2 586	1 150	3 736	..	..
Dissemination	8 691	3 079	11 770	..	..
Marketing and Public Relations	4 475	1 231	5 706	..	..
National Accounts	4 830	4 340	1 310	7 861	3.6
International Accounts	5 944	3 464	..	9 408	4.3
International Trade	3 482	1 740	..	5 222	2.4
Prices	6 957	4 232	..	11 189	5.1
Financial Accounts	2 140	1 503	..	3 643	1.7
Public Sector Accounts	4 684	2 517	..	7 201	3.3
Agriculture	4 168	4 288	2	8 454	3.9
Mining	807	883	..	1 690	0.8
Manufacturing	4 790	5 368	1 180	8 978	4.1
Construction	4 295	3 211	..	7 505	3.4
Transport	4 215	2 574	84	6 705	3.1
Tourism	1 446	991	..	2 437	1.1
Service Industries	6 905	6 637	..	13 542	6.2
Economy Wide Statistics	2 384	5 353	..	7 737	3.5
Investment and Profit Surveys	2 846	4 519	..	7 365	3.4
Small Business	1 156	1 095	..	2 251	1.0
Science and Technology	1 121	644	..	1 765	0.8
Environment	799	562	..	1 360	0.6
Classification	752	222	974	..	..
Integration and Large Business Unit	2 982	853	3 835	..	..
Business Register	8 010	4 768	11 461	1 317	0.6
SPEED	1 294	155	1 449	..	..
Geography	1 225	479	530	1 174	0.5
Census	31 396	38 288	32 267	37 417	—
Demography	3 290	2 812	..	6 102	2.8
Social Statistics	6 055	6 836	..	12 891	5.9
Labour	13 115	37 455	592	49 978	22.8
Social Analysis, Income and Welfare	7 084	7 707	..	14 791	6.7
Population Surveys	34 103	10 650	38 981	5 772	2.6
Econometric & Time Series Analyses	1 726	868	996	1 598	0.7
Mathematical Statistics	4 964	1 403	5 258	1 109	0.5

For footnotes see end of table.



**ESTIMATES OF COST BY COMPONENT, 1995-96**  
 (\$'000) — *continued*

<i>Components</i>	<i>Direct &amp; overhead costs</i>	<i>Cost of services received</i>	<i>Cost of services provided</i>	<i>Statistical Components FULL COST</i>	<i>%(a)</i>
(A)	(B)	(C)	(A+B-C)		
<b>STATISTICAL OPERATIONS — <i>continued</i></b>					
Statistical Services and User Liason	4 439	2 380	..	6 819	3.1
Data Management	2 706	553	3 259	..	..
Information Technology Bureau(b)	0	2 743	2 743	..	..
Technology Application <sup>h</sup>	2 482	2 812	5 294	..	..
Technology Research	597	109	706	..	..
Economic Statistics Group Support	4 641	572	5 213	..	..
Population Statistics Group Support	1 786	74	1 860	..	..
Methodology Division Business Office	107	..	107	..	..
Information Services Div Business Office	1 440	108	1 548	..	..
Technology Services Division Support	620	74	694	..	..
<i>Sub-program</i>	222 440	183 961	149 753	256 648	..
<i>Sub-program excluding Census(a)</i>	191 044	145 673	117 486	219 231	100.0
<b>CORPORATE SERVICES</b>					
Executive	5 465	885	6 349	..	—
Personnel Management	3 884	824	4 708	..	—
Training and Development	6 053	1 328	7 381	..	—
Resource Management	8 496	1 987	10 483	..	—
Office Support	6 549	1 344	7 893	..	—
Secretariat	1 186	309	1 495	..	—
International Relations Unit	565	114	679	..	—
Internal Audit	337	99	437	..	—
Corporate Services Division Support	1 673	90	1 763	..	—
<i>Sub-program Total</i>	34 208	6 979	41 187	..	—
<b>PROGRAM TOTAL</b>	<b>256 648</b>	<b>190 940</b>	<b>190 940</b>	<b>256 648</b>	<b>—</b>

(a) The cost of the Population Census component varies so widely over the 5 yearly census cycle that it distorts the percentages applying to other statistical components. Accordingly, the full cost of the Population Census has been excluded in the calculation of the share of costs attributable to other components.

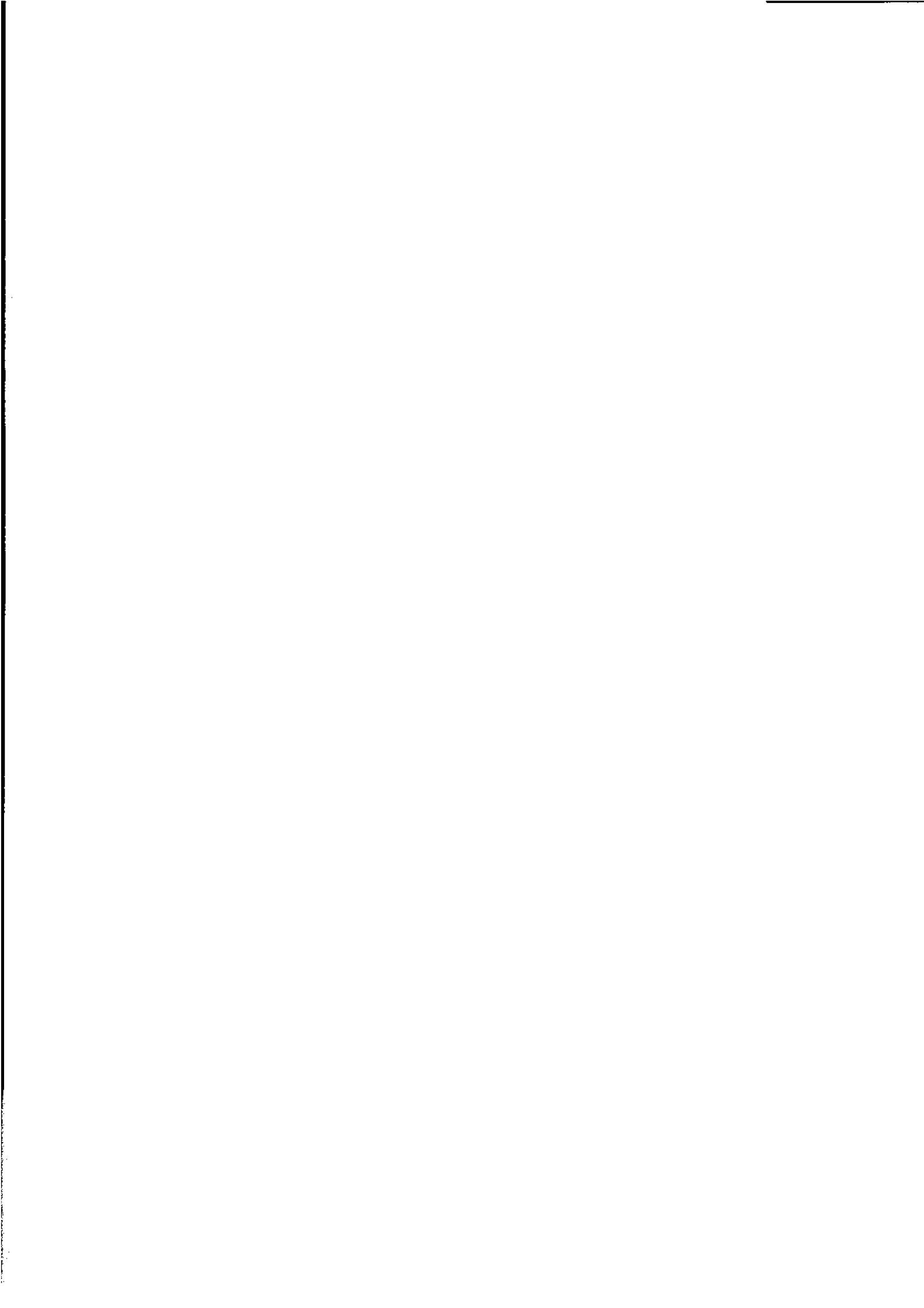
(b) The costs of this component were 'recovered' from other components through an internal cost recovery process. The amount shown against this component represents the residual costs allocated to the component which were not subject to cost recovery.



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