

the CensusAtSchool

NEWSLETTER

Edition Number 01

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Key Dates

CensusAtSchool Project Dates

The *CensusAtSchool* project has five key phases. Mark the dates down, or join the email list to be notified of the phases.

Now	✓	Project Development
30 Jun 05		Release Testing
01 Oct 05		Registration
01 May 06		Data Collection
22 Aug 06		Data Usage

CensusAtSchool:

SPECIAL MESSAGE FROM THE STATISTICIAN

Welcome to the first edition of the *CensusAtSchool* Newsletter. In recent years the ABS has been working with others in the statistical and education communities to work out how to best improve the statistical literacy skills of Australia's school children. Statistical literacy is an essential life skill for the information age we live in today.



Traditionally the ABS has had a program with schools as part of the lead up to each Population Census. These programs have a number of objectives but include improving awareness of the Census, providing knowledge of the reasons Australia holds a Census every five years, and some details of how a Census is run. The next Australian Population Census will be in August 2006.

CensusAtSchool is aimed at satisfying both these important needs. It builds on the successful project being run by the Noel Baker Centre in South Australia as well as a similar program run by the Queensland Office of Economic and Statistical Research prior to the 2001 Population Census.

The program provides a unique e-learning opportunity for young Australians enabling them to work with real data about themselves which increases their interest of course. It will involve a website, lesson plans and other support materials to underpin the program. Professional development activities for the teachers will also be an important part of the program.

Your participation will help to develop an educationally sound website and support materials that are classroom ready and focused on the actual needs of teachers.

If you have any questions at this time please contact Soo Kong, Director of our National Education Services Unit, on 03-9615 7360.

Dennis Trewin
Australian Statistician

Project UPDATE

Over the past six months the *CensusAtSchool* project team have been working hard to develop and formulate an overall plan for delivering a successful *CensusAtSchool* project.

We have established an overall project schedule consisting of five main project phases:

1. Development - building the project.
2. Release Testing – testing of the web site, educational resources, and the software will be carried out with both teachers and students.
3. Registration – the beginning of the marketing campaign to launch the project to the education community, and encourage teachers to register and participate.
4. Data Collection – students complete the online Questionnaire and submit their responses to the *CensusAtSchool* database.
5. Data Usage – data results are released via an online 'Random Sampler' for classroom use with the supporting educational resources.

To be notified of each phase of the project as it develops, join the *CensusAtSchool* email list.

WHAT IS *CensusAtSchool*?

CensusAtSchool has been a highly motivating e-learning experience used by many countries to help improve the statistical literacy of young people. Its introduction into Australia will allow students (Years 5-10) to collect real statistical information about themselves for use across the curriculum (Mathematics, SOSE/HISE, Health and Physical Education, English, ICT and more).

CensusAtSchool is a flexible learning tool that can be used as:

- a source of real data relevant to students.
- an engaging e-learning experience for students to learn about statistics and its application.
- a wonderful source of student focused questions for a problem solving approach to learning, e.g. "Am I a typical Year 8 Australian girl".



The *CensusAtSchool* web site will:

- enable students to complete an online questionnaire that focuses on them and their interests.
- provide students with the ability to take samples of raw data from the population of responses received Australia wide.
- contain information and activity sheets on how to carry out statistical analysis of the data.
- provide examples of how teachers can use *CensusAtSchool* in their classroom.
- provide an ongoing learning web site for the students with data collections held every two years.

Teachers are in control of how they and their students use the *CensusAtSchool* web site. *CensusAtSchool* is FREE for all students and teachers across Australia.

TEACHERS' FORUM

The project team would like to share the thoughts of teachers and intermediaries on the review activities they have taken part in.

The ABS has met with Government, Catholic and Independent school intermediaries in each state and territory. These intermediaries have been invited to use their existing networks to provide advice and review on the *CensusAtSchool* project during its development. They have all received the concept of the project very warmly - a valuable learning tool.

At the moment, feedback is being sought on the learning strategy to be used when preparing the web site. This is effectively the scoping document and feedback will result in changes. If you would like to review this document please contact Ian Wong.

CensusAtSchool Email List

To receive the *CensusAtSchool* email newsletter and notification of the key phases of the project, send an email to: censusatschool@abs.gov.au. Alternatively contact us on free call 1800 623 273.

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how can you help?

Teacher feedback and advice is an essential ingredient for a high quality e-learning resource that is valuable to schools.

ABS is currently developing the uniquely Australian version of the international *CensusAtSchool* project. At all stages of the development ABS will be seeking feedback and the assistance of teachers so that the web site is useful to teachers and provides them with the support they want.

Please lend us your expertise. If you would like to provide feedback during the development of the *CensusAtSchool* project, please contact Ian Wong, Teacher Consultant.

General Project Support Enquiries

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