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Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy Up and Running

During 2004–05 the ABS implemented the Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy. This initiative seeks to improve the way the ABS works with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in both collecting statistics and providing information back to ensure that its statistics can be readily accessed and used by all Australians.

Implementation of the strategy has involved the recruitment of state and territory based Indigenous Engagement Managers, (IEMs). IEMs have been recruited in all regional offices.

The strategy also provides resources to develop more appropriate material to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organisations to access and use statistical information.



*Indigenous Engagement Managers
Liz Milewicz (Tas.), Marissa Russ (WA), Gowan Bush (NT), Dena Dodd-Ugle (Qld), John Austin (Vic.)*

Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy Up and Running— *continued*

Through the Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy, IEMs aim to:

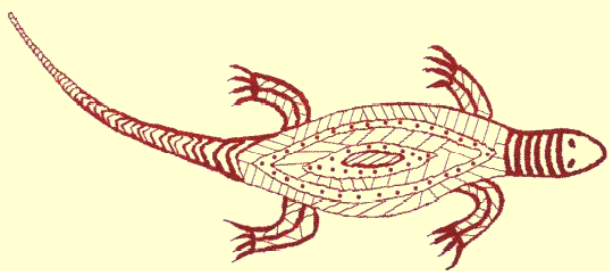
- provide an ongoing communication channel with Indigenous communities (both discrete communities and community groups);
- engage in Indigenous enumeration in the census, in ABS Indigenous surveys and in the ABS Monthly Population Survey;
- undertake consultation and follow-up in regard to business surveys;
- undertake a dissemination role, returning appropriate information to Indigenous communities and Indigenous organisations in their preferred format and in ways which support the use of statistics for their own purposes.

A workshop for IEMs was held in March 2005. This was the first opportunity for the IEMs to come together as a group. John Austin, who has worked in a similar position in our Victorian Office since 2001, was able to give valuable insights about what working on the Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy might involve.

The workshop provided a good forum for IEMs to further develop their knowledge of ABS work. It also helped to clarify the role that IEMs might take on in order to contribute to ABS collections, and it enabled discussion around how participation in collections can help to accomplish the objectives of the Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy.

Presentations at the workshop included coverage of previous Census experiences in WA, 'independent observers' in 2001 Census by the Centre for Aboriginal Economic and Policy Research in NT communities and a case study in returning information — the Western Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey.

For further information contact Beth Edwards on 08 8943 2195 or <beth.edwards@abs.gov.au>.



Mature Age Statistical Profile Set Complete

Mature age persons (those aged 45–64 years) have been identified as a key population group in terms of policy development. Broad issues affecting the ageing population include ensuring adequate retirement incomes, labour force participation, healthy ageing, and provision of community support, health services and aged care.

A set of *Mature Age Statistical Profiles* (cat. no. 4905.0.55.001) has been produced to provide an insight into the characteristics of mature age persons. The last profile of this set was released on 10 March 2005.

Population and Cultural Diversity (released 12 October 2004)

This profile focuses on the demographic characteristics, geographic distribution and cultural diversity of the mature age population.

Labour Force (released 4 November 2004)

This profile focuses on the labour force characteristics of mature age people. It describes current labour force participation compared with that 20 years ago and for those employed, looks at hours worked, type of employment and the industries and occupations where they are employed. It also describes the extent to which their labour may be underutilised.

Health (released 23 November 2004)

This profile provides a picture of the health status of the mature age population. It provides a measure of those who are experiencing illness or disability; have recorded risk factors; and are using health services.

Mature Age Statistical Profile Set Complete

— continued

Housing (released 21 December 2004)

This profile draws data from the 2002–03 Survey of Income and Housing (SIH) and examines the housing characteristics, household income and housing costs of the mature age population.

Education and Training (released 1 February 2005)

This profile presents information about the education and training experience of mature age persons. Information is drawn from the ABS Survey of Education and Work, 2004 and the Survey of Education and Training, 2001.

Community Life (released 15 February 2005)

This profile focuses on the community life aspects of the mature age population, focusing on factors that impact on social and community participation. It draws on data from the General Social Survey (GSS) conducted by the ABS in 2002.

Living Arrangements (released 10 March 2005)

This profile presents information on the family and household structure of mature age persons. Detailed examination of the dwelling and structures, people and relationships and the quality aspects of living arrangements are discussed. It draws primarily on data from the Census of Population and Housing.

These profiles may be purchased through the ABS web site and at ABS e-kiosks. State and local government employees may access these through the Data Hub in GovNet.

For further information, contact Maryann Wood on 07 3222 6206 or <maryann.wood@abs.gov.au>.

South-east Queensland Has Highest Population Growth in 2003–04

South-east Queensland had the highest population growth in Australia during 2003–04, according to regional population figures released in *Regional Population Growth, Australia and New Zealand* (cat. no. 3218.0) on 23 March 2005.

The cities of Brisbane and Gold Coast grew by 17,600 and 13,200 people, respectively, the two largest increases in population of all local government areas (LGAs) in Australia. Caboolture grew by 5,500 people and Pine Rivers by 5,300 people.

Brisbane Statistical Division's (SD) population at 30 June 2004 was 1,774,900, an increase of 39,700 people since June 2003. Brisbane's growth rate of 2.3% for the year was the highest of all capital city SDs.

Brisbane and Moreton SDs together increased by 61,900 people in 2003–04, equating to an average net increase of just under 1,200 people per week. In comparison, the resident population of Melbourne SD increased by 44,800 people (an average 860 people per week), Sydney SD increased by 33,500 people (640 people per week), and Perth SD increased by 26,100 people (500 people per week).

Many coastal LGAs in Queensland also recorded strong growth. Increases were recorded in Cairns 2,800 people, Hervey Bay 2,600 people, Townsville 2,000 people and Thuringowa 1,500 people.

Elsewhere in coastal Australia, Mandurah, to the south of Perth in WA, increased by 4,300 people, while in NSW the LGAs of Tweed and Hastings increased by 1,700 and 1,300 people, respectively.

For further information contact Matthew Montgomery on 02 6252 6487 or <matthew.montgomery@abs.gov.au>.

National Regional Profile — A Five Year Time Series

The latest version of the National Regional Profile (NRP) was released on the ABS web site on 29 March 2005.

Information is available for local government areas, statistical local areas, statistical subdivisions, statistical divisions, states/territories and Australia.

Businesses, organisations and individuals can now get five years of key economic and social information about their local area, easily, free of charge and in one location — on the ABS web site. With the click of a button, people can get a picture of their local area through the NRP including population by age group, births and deaths, unemployment, income support customers, taxable income, wage and salary earners, building approvals, sources of income and motor vehicle sales.

The NRP is an easy to use self-help facility that allows users to find their selected region from a map or pick-list and then download a spreadsheet of information for that region. The NRP was developed in response to requests for more accessible information about regions and was first released in 2004.

The most significant change in the latest NRP release is that it has a 5-year time series (1999 to 2003), which will allow users to see changes in economic and social characteristics of their region over time. Other changes include the addition of new data on sources of income, and data on the value of agricultural production.

It is intended that more indicators will be added in the future, to make the profiles even more comprehensive.

The NRP can be accessed free of charge via the 'Statistics by Region' icon on the right hand side of the ABS home page.

For further information please contact Treva Richards on 08 8237 7338 or <treva.richards@abs.gov.au>.

Australian Yearbook 2005



Put Australia on your bookshelf!

The *Year Book Australia 2005* provides a comprehensive and definitive source of information about Australia. Over 900 pages long, the Year Book spans topics which cover Australia's economic position and social conditions, as well as articles about our community and the environment.

Now includes CD!

To celebrate 100 years of official statistics, both the hard copy Year Book and its CD-ROM companion are presented as a special offer in one package, making it great value for money.

The CD-ROM is the ideal resource for the business computer network and it compliments the hard cover version by giving you rapid access to every subject. A simple interface and a full electronic index make it a convenient source of information that every business needs from time to time.

Order your copy on-line at <www.abs.gov.au> or telephone **1300 135 070**, and have your credit card details ready.

Your Local Library May Have the ABS Statistics You Need

More than 6 million Australians (42% of the adult population) visit a library at least once a year, according to a 2002 survey by the ABS. This figure makes libraries the second most visited cultural venue, after cinemas.

The ABS has an ongoing commitment to promoting wide availability and free public access to ABS data across Australia.

The ABS recognises that libraries play a unique role in providing information to the community and are a valuable source of ABS statistics to the public. The Library Extension Program (LEP) is a core strategy through which the ABS addresses its Community Service Obligation.

Through the LEP, the ABS provides selected products and services free of charge to eligible libraries. Many LEP member libraries have access to all ABS publications from 1998 onwards via the ABS web site (eLEP), and also receive selected printed titles. Libraries also receive CLIB — the census at your library — which contains the 2001 Population Census community profile series and classification counts. In this way every Australian has the opportunity to access, at no charge, important statistical information collected by the ABS.



Tanya Lucas, LEP coordinator, Queensland

The LEP has operated since 1991, and has a membership of over 500 libraries throughout Australia, including 85 member libraries throughout Queensland. LEP member libraries include public, TAFE, university, state and parliamentary libraries.

If you would like further information on the LEP, visit the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au>, then select 'Services We Provide' then 'Library Extension Program'.

For more information on the Library Extension Program contact Tanya Lucas on 07 3222 6403 or <tanya.lucas@abs.gov.au>.



STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENTS

ABS Funding Boost Will Provide More and Better Data

The recent Federal Budget provided a welcome boost to the funding of the ABS. The Australian government has provided \$45m over 4 years to strengthen and expand statistical collections and to improve the availability of data to the community.

The majority of the new funding will be used to implement measures that strengthen and expand the range of other statistical collections. These measures include a new house price index, improvements to a range of macro-economic statistics and the incorporation of new international standards into economic statistics. New surveys will be conducted on the food industry and natural resource management, and a database will be developed to analyse small business growth and performance. The ABS will also work to improve the accuracy of regional population estimates and develop new analytical measures of the economic and social circumstances of Indigenous Australians.

Additional funding will also allow the range of data items to be collected in the 2006 Census to be increased. Additional questions on disability, unpaid work (including voluntary work and caring responsibilities), fertility and access to the Internet will assist in the planning and provision of important community services.

Part of the funding has been earmarked for the optional retention of name-identified census information by the National Archives of Australia, as was done in the 2001 Census. The information will be retained for 99 years before release.

From the 2006 Census, householders will be given the opportunity to submit their census forms over the Internet (eCensus). Funding has been allocated to invest in eCensus infrastructure and this will reduce the cost of future censuses.

To support the aim of improving access to ABS data, some of the funding will be used to make ABS statistical publications available for download free of charge from the ABS web site from 1 July 2005.

National Health Survey and National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey Now Being Collected

The 2004–05 National Health Survey (NHS), collecting information from 16,800 households, is currently in the field. Topics being collected include health status, risk factors, health related actions and demography.

In conjunction with this survey, a National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) is also being conducted, collecting similar information from approximately 5,000 Indigenous households.

Once completed, the NHS will provide information across a range of key health issues at both national and State/Territory levels and will provide health indicators for important sub-groups of the general population. Running the NHS in conjunction with the NATSIHS will enable comparisons of health outcomes of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population with the general population. The surveys will allow exploration of relationships and linkages between health and population characteristics for both populations.

The surveys are due to be completed in July 2005 and results are expected to be released by mid-2006.

For further information on the National Health Survey contact Josie Barac on 02 6252 6415 or <josie.barac@abs.gov.au>.

For further information on the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey contact Mark Lound on 02 6252 5781 or <mark.lound@abs.gov.au>.

Questionnaire Design

The design of a survey questionnaire is important as it can impact on the final results and output of a survey. A poorly designed questionnaire can be a source of non-sampling error and influence the response rate, quality of responses obtained and the accuracy of the conclusions drawn from the survey results. If a questionnaire is too long or confusing, respondents may be unwilling to complete it, or they may make mistakes.

A questionnaire should:

- provide clear instructions,
- clearly and concisely define what is to be collected,
- maintain respondents' cooperation and involvement,
- enable respondents to complete it accurately and within a reasonable time,
- use a language that is understood by the respondents,
- avoid bias in question wording,
- make the job of the respondent and/or interviewer easy,
- appear uncluttered,
- provide suitable space for responses and
- be easily processed by both people and machines.

Questions fall into two main groups, open questions where respondents answer in their own words and closed questions where a respondent chooses from a range of responses. Open questions allow many possible answers and can collect exact values from a wide range of possible values. They are often used in pilot tests to determine the range of likely responses.

An example is 'What is your occupation?' Closed questions are appropriate when most of the responses can be anticipated and when exact values are not needed. Closed questions save processing time but need more careful development and testing. Some examples of types of closed questions are given below:

- Limited choice questions require a respondent to choose one of two mutually exclusive answers. For example, yes/no.
- Multiple choice questions require the respondent to choose one of a number of responses provided.
- Checklist questions allow a respondent to choose more than one of the responses provided.
- Partially closed questions provide a set of responses where the last alternative is 'Other, please specify' and are useful when it is difficult or impractical to list all possible choices.

Proper question design will reduce error. Use of jargon, ambiguity, double-barrelled questions, leading questions, unbalanced questions and intrusive or sensitive questions will introduce error into a survey. The tone of wording used in a question will also result in a change in responses and subsequent error.

Recall and memory error can also affect the quality of data collected. Where possible, questions should be framed so that respondents can refer to their own records (e.g. with financial information). Minimising the recall period also helps to reduce memory bias.

To ensure you capture every possible response from a respondent, ensure categories (response options) are sufficient to answer the question asked, e.g. the possible responses to a question on age group should cover the target population age groups without gaps or overlaps. The number of response options can influence the quality of the data as both too few and too many categories can cause errors. Too many can cause respondent fatigue and too few can cause difficulties in finding one which accurately describes their situation.

Structure and Layout of the Questionnaire

The sequence of questions should be logical to the respondents. Regardless of the method used to administer the questionnaire, the sequence should flow smoothly from one question to the next. Questionnaires should be physically set out to minimise the time needed to interview, respond and process the results.

Questionnaire Design

— continued

To save respondent time and improve the quality of results, use filter questions at the front of the survey form if appropriate e.g. Q2 'Were you born overseas?' If 'Yes' go to Q3, if 'No' go to Q7.

The order of questions can affect survey results and introduce bias. Also, questions which would tend to put a respondent in a negative (or positive) frame of mind can affect responses to later questions. For example: 'Do you think there are too many unemployed young people? Are you in favour of conscription?' compared with 'Do you think young people should be taught how to use weapons? Are you in favour of conscription?'

Be aware that the order of response options may introduce bias. The options presented first may be selected because they make an initial impact on respondents, or because respondents do not hear or read the remaining options.

Another aspect of form design which can impact on the quality of the results is layout. For questionnaires which are completed by respondents, the physical design may contribute to errors. Poor layout can cause respondents or interviewers to follow an incorrect sequence or enter responses in the wrong response box.

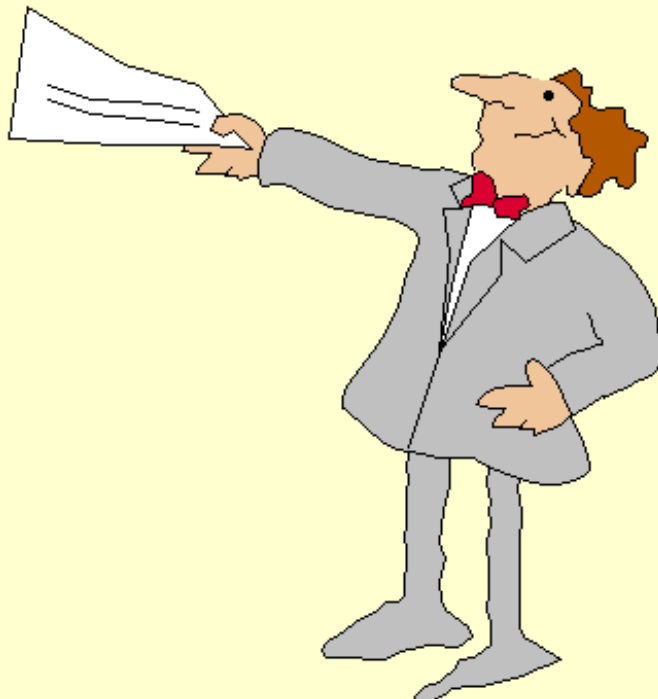
Layout problems to avoid include:

- poor legibility (unclear printing or very small text),
- graphics which result in violation of the normal reading path of the respondent (from top left to bottom right for English readers),
- putting instructions in a place or type font which can be easily overlooked,
- failing to leave adequate space for answers.

Summary

Questionnaire design begins by clarifying the objectives of the survey, determining the data which is to be produced by the survey and devising a list of questions to obtain this data. Careful consideration should be given to a number of factors, including the type of questions to be used, the logical sequence and wording of questions, and the physical design of the form. It is important to test each of these aspects of questionnaire design with a group of respondents before using the questionnaire in a survey. If necessary, the form can then be modified and retested until respondents can complete it accurately and quickly with a minimum of errors.

For further information contact Kylie Lane on 07 3222 6168 or <kylie.lane@abs.gov.au>.



Enhancing the 2006 Census: Developing a Longitudinal View

On 26 April 2005 the ABS released a Discussion Paper: *Enhancing the Population Census: Developing a Longitudinal View* (cat. no. 2060.0).

This discussion paper details ABS views on the enhancement of data from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing by combining it over time, with data from future censuses and other ABS data.

The paper includes details of the proposal, reasons why the ABS is considering enhancing the population census dataset and details of the benefits of this enhanced dataset for statistical and research purposes.

The discussion paper informs the public and ABS data users of the commencement of the public submission process and the mechanisms for making a submission.

The ABS encouraged the public and other interested parties to submit their views on the proposal.

To request a copy of the discussion paper and submission form, or for more information on the proposal, contact client services on 1300 135 070 or <client.services@abs.gov.au>.

Add-on Datapacks — Adding Value and Flexibility to CDATA 2001

CDATA 2001 contains data from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing for areas as small as a collection district (about 200 dwellings) to as large as a state/territory or the whole of Australia. It contains a wealth of information on our communities — age, education, income, ethnicity, occupation, computer use, religion and much more.

Add-on Datapacks add value and flexibility to CDATA 2001. Each Datapack builds on the information contained in CDATA 2001 by focussing on a different population characteristic or providing more detailed map features.

The Add-on Datapacks that are available are the Expanded Community Profile, the Working Population Profile, the Usual Residents Profile, the Indigenous Profile, the Estimated Resident Population Profile and the Detailed Base Map (mapping a comprehensive road network in addition to airports, railway stations, police stations, schools, churches, hospitals and much more). SEIFA (Socio-Economic Index For Areas) is available as both a stand alone product and an Add-on Datapack.

Add-on Datapacks are quickly and easily imported into either CDATA 2001-Full GIS or CDATA 2001-Quickbuild with a seamless interface, allowing you to start creating maps, graphs and reports straight away.

Each Add-On Datapack is individually priced according to the state or territory purchased.

For further information or to order any of these products please contact Sarah Keating on 07 3222 6042 or <sarah.keating@abs.gov.au>.

OTHER

Selected Recent and Expected Releases

Key Releases

5206.0

Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product — generally released on the first Wednesday of March, June, September and December

6202.0

Labour Force, Australia — generally released on the first Thursday of each month

6401.0

Consumer Price Index, Australia — generally released on the last Wednesday of January, April, August and October

General Publications

1379.0.55.001

National Regional Profile, 1999 to 2003

1383.0.55.001 NEW

Measures of Australia's Progress: Summary Indicators 2005

1383.0.55.002 NEW

Measures of Australia's Progress: At A Glance 2005

2060.0 NEW

Discussion Paper: Enhancing the Population Census Dataset: Developing a Longitudinal View 2006

Social Publications

3218.0

Regional Population Growth, Australia and New Zealand, 2003–04

4720.0.55.001 NEW

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey: Expanded Confidentialised Unit Record File 2002

4905.0.55.001

Mature Age Persons Statistical Profiles

4908.0 NEW

Information Paper: Key Issues Relating to Children and Youth, 2005

4909.0 NEW

Information Paper: Children and Youth Information Development Plan — Project Plan

4910.0 NEW

Information Paper: Field of Children and Youth Statistics 2005

Economics Publications

4618.0 NEW

Water Use on Australian Farms, 2002–03

5506.0

Taxation Revenue, Australia 2003–04

6104.0

Labour Statistics in Brief, Australia 2005

6541.0.30.001

Survey of Income and Housing: Confidentialised Unit Record File on CD-ROM/RADL 2002–03

8127.0

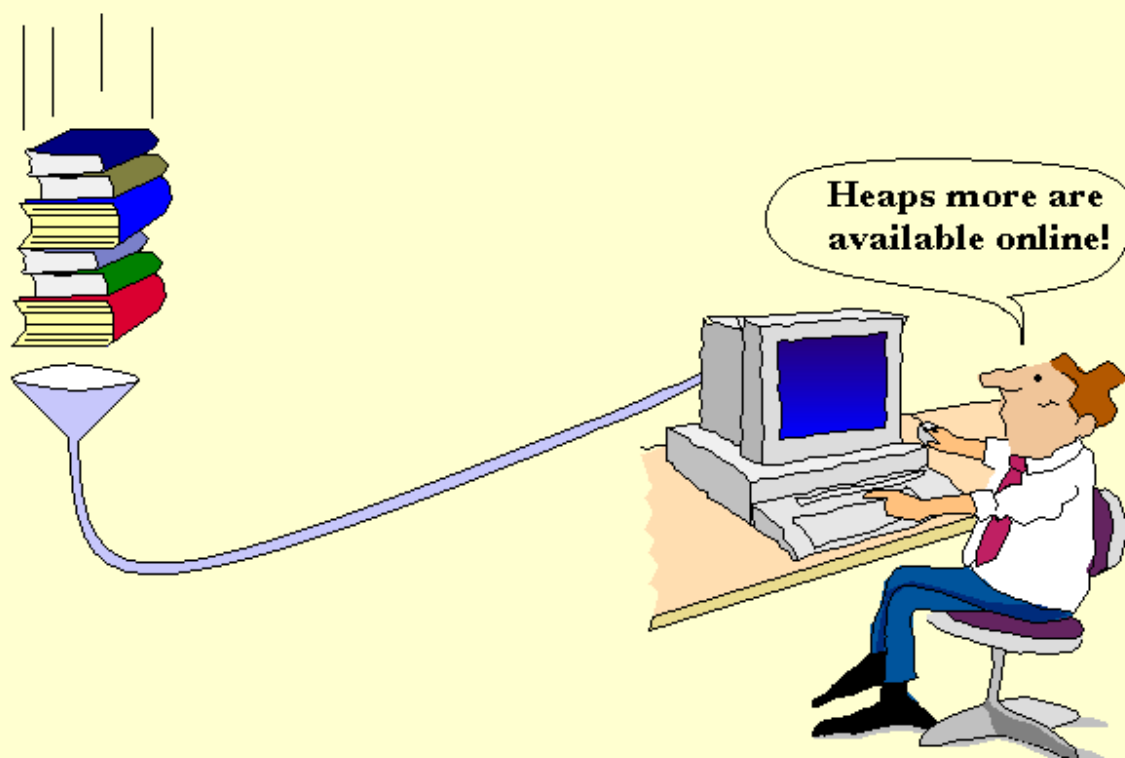
Characteristics of Small Business, Australia 2004

8129.0

Business Use of Information Technology, 2003–04

8710.3.55.001 NEW

Housing Motivations and Intentions, Queensland 2004



POPULATION CLOCK

The ABS has an automatic counter which will give you an up to the minute estimation of the population of Australia. It can be found on the ABS web site <www.abs.gov.au> under the link Australia's Population.

An example of the output of the population clock (taken at the time and date indicated) is given below.

On 2 June 2005 at 13:59:20 (Canberra time), the resident population of Australia is projected to be:

20,329,482

This projection is based on the estimated resident population at 30 September 2004 and assumes growth since then of:

- one birth every 2 minutes and 4 seconds,
- one death every 3 minutes and 55 seconds,
- a net gain of one international migrant every 4 minutes and 9 seconds leading to
- an overall total population increase of one person every 2 minutes and 8 seconds.

These assumptions are consistent with those used for Series B in *Population Projections, Australia 2002 to 2101* (cat. no. 3222.0).

ABS QLD CONTACT POINTS

National Information and Referral Service

Telephone: 1300 135 070

TTY: 07 3222 6325

Consultants will assist with your information inquiries

Internet Site

www.abs.gov.au

email: clientservices@abs.gov.au

E-kiosk

Electronic copies of ABS publications as far back as 1998 are available for sale. Hard copy will be produced for those who require it. Visit us on the 18th floor at 313 Adelaide Street and browse. We are open 8.30 a.m. – 4.30 p.m.

Library

The Library is situated alongside our bookshop and provides a complete range of ABS current and historical publications.

Queensland & Local Government Employees

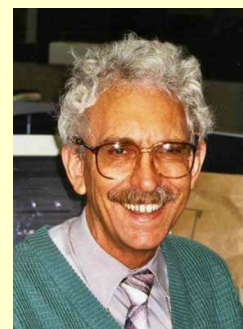
1 Go to GovNet

2 Click on the GovInfo button

3 Click on the Data Hub

4 Click on ABS Data

If you wish to subscribe to *Statistical Update* and receive it free of charge to your computer or change your subscription in any way, please contact Arthur Poulter on 07 3222 6084 or <arthur.poulter@abs.gov.au>.



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☐ I no longer require *Statistical Update*

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