

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Annual Report

1998–99

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The Honourable Joe Hockey, MP
Minister for Financial Services and Regulation

In accordance with the provisions of subsection 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 1999.

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

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'W. McLennan', written in a cursive style.

W. McLennan
Australian Statistician

22 September 1999

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Note

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

Further information

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This report and guides to ABS services, other selected documents, and a range of ABS statistics, are available on the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au).

1 THE ABS IN 1998–99: AN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia's official statistical agency. It provides statistics on a wide range of economic and social matters, covering government, business and the population in general. It also has an important coordination function with respect to the statistical activities of other official bodies.

This report provides information on the operations of the ABS during 1998–99, as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an overview of ABS operations.
- Chapter 2 discusses the review of the ABS household survey program undertaken in 1998–99.
- Chapter 3 discusses ABS experience in workplace relations.
- Chapters 4 and 5 provide information about the two sub-programs of the ABS. The objectives of the two sub-programs are shown, together with sub-program performance indicators and reviews of the achievements of program components.
- Chapter 6 provides ABS financial statements.

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

In 1998–99, for Commonwealth Government program budgeting purposes, the ABS is a single program within the Treasury portfolio, with two sub-programs: *statistical operations* and *corporate services*.

These sub-programs were made up of 53 components. The *statistical operations* sub-program comprised 47 of these components, while the *corporate services* sub-program comprised six.

Appendix 1 lists the program/sub-programs/components structure of the ABS.

CORPORATE STRUCTURE AND SENIOR MANAGEMENT

The ABS is headed by the Australian Statistician—a statutory office. Appendix 2 lists the senior management which supports the Australian Statistician and their program responsibilities.

The Statistical Operations sub-program is jointly headed by two Deputy Australian Statisticians who are responsible for the Economic Statistics Group and the Population Statistics Group. These two groups represent the key dichotomy of ABS statistics between economic statistics and social and labour statistics.

Each of the Deputy Australian Statisticians is supported by a Division Head, one for the Economic Accounts Division and one for the Social and Labour Division. Other Division Heads are responsible for the Technology Services, Methodology and Information Services Divisions, all of which lie within the Statistical Operations sub-program. The Corporate Services sub-program is managed by the Division Head of the Corporate Services Division.

The ABS has a Central Office in Canberra and eight Regional Offices—one in each State and Territory capital city. The Regional Offices have operational responsibility for the national operations of particular statistical collections, but overall program responsibility remains in Central Office. Regional Offices also allow the ABS to maintain close contact with State clients, including State government agencies, and ABS data providers.

AUTHORITY AND LEGISLATION

The principal legislation determining the functions and responsibilities of the ABS are the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

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.’.

The *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* also established the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC). Subsection 18(1) of the Act specifies that the functions of the Advisory Council are to advise the Minister and the Australian Statistician in relation to:

- ‘(a) the improvement, extension and co-ordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia;
- (b) annual and longer term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services; and
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.’.

All State and Territory governments are represented on ASAC, and the remaining Council members are drawn from a wide variety of organisations and interests. The Council provides valuable input into the directions and priorities of the ABS work program. It provides an annual report on its operations to Parliament.

The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* provides the Australian Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections, including the Census of Population and Housing, and, when necessary, to direct a person to provide statistical information. The Act requires the ABS to publish and disseminate compilations and analyses of statistical information and to maintain the confidentiality of information collected under the Act.

ROLE AND OPERATION OF THE ABS

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.

The ABS maintains close contact with its users through a variety of mechanisms, including advisory committees, user groups, outposted statistical officers, conferences and seminars, and day-to-day contact in the course of disseminating statistical information. The Australian Statistician determines which statistics are to be collected, after full discussion with users, clients and the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, and makes the results widely available. The independent status of the Australian Statistician is specified in law, and the ABS has always received strong Parliamentary and community support.

In order to provide official statistics, the ABS undertakes a large number of collections. These include the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing, monthly and quarterly surveys that provide current economic indicators and less frequent collections from industry and households that provide detailed information on specific economic and social issues.

The ABS also devotes considerable effort, in close cooperation with Commonwealth, State and Territory administrative agencies, to producing statistics as a by-product of administrative systems. The ABS also tries to ensure that its statistical standards and concepts are applied as widely as possible.

In releasing statistics, the ABS follows long established principles that results of statistical collections should be made available as soon as practicable and should be equally available to all users. Almost 100,000 copies of ABS publications were provided at no cost to media organisations in 1998–99 and the principal results from ABS publications were highlighted daily in the print and electronic media and on the ABS website. Also, a large core set of statistics was made available through public, technical and tertiary libraries across Australia and around 6,000 complimentary copies of ABS publications were provided to members of 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 Regional Director 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 and Territory governments on statistical priorities.

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

During 1998–99, the ABS continued to provide a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service. This section highlights new information products released during the year and other notable releases. It also highlights important statistical developments, ABS's international involvement, improvements in infrastructure and coordination, and ABS management initiatives.

Information products

The ABS released 288 publication titles in 1998–99. This represented a decrease of 61 from the previous year which included many 1996 Census of Population and Housing products. New releases included:

- *Census of Population and Housing: Australia in Profile—A Regional Analysis* (Cat. no. 2032.0), providing commentary and data on a number of key social indicators from the 1996 Census, with the focus on regional distribution and comparisons.
- *Census of Population and Housing: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People, Australia* (Cat. no. 2034.0), presenting information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians based largely on information from the 1996 and earlier censuses.
- *Occasional Paper: Population Issues, Indigenous Australians* (Cat. no. 4708.0), examining why Australia's Indigenous population has experienced large increases in population counts in recent censuses.

- *Year 2000 Problem, Australia* (Cat. no. 8152.0), presenting data on the awareness of, preparedness for, and activity on this issue within Australian industry.
- *Retrenchment and Redundancy, Australia* (Cat. no. 6266.0), presenting information on the number and characteristics of persons who have been retrenched or accepted redundancy packages in the three years to 30 June 1997.
- *Gambling Industries, Australia* (Cat. no. 8684.0), containing information on the income, expenses and employment of organisations involved in gambling industries in Australia.
- *Corrective Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 4512.0), containing information on persons in custodial corrective services in Australia.
- *National Health Survey: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Results, Australia* (Cat. no. 4806.0), presenting data from the 1995 National Health Survey about the health of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians (excluding those living in remote areas).
- *How Australians Measure Up* (Cat. no. 4359.0), presenting findings from an analysis comparing Australians' self-reported height, weight and body mass index recorded in the 1995 National Health Survey with measured height, weight and body mass index from the 1995 National Nutrition Survey.
- *National Nutrition Survey: Foods Eaten, Australia* (Cat. no. 4804.0), a joint publication between the ABS and the Department of Health and Aged Care presenting detailed information on the food intake of Australians aged two years and over.
- *Information Paper: Upgraded Australian National Accounts* (Cat. no. 5253.0) and *Information Paper: Upgraded Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (Cat. no. 5254.0), providing details of the impact on the national accounts of the implementation of revised international standards contained in the 1993 version of the System of National Accounts (SNA93).
- *Information Paper: Introduction of the 13th Series Australian Consumer Price Index* (Cat. no. 6454.0), outlining the implementation of decisions made in the 13th series review of the CPI and presenting the new item classification and weights.
- *Public Attitudes to the Arts, Australia* (Cat. no. 4157.0), a joint venture between the ABS and the Australia Council providing a statistical overview of the Australian public's attitudes to the arts.

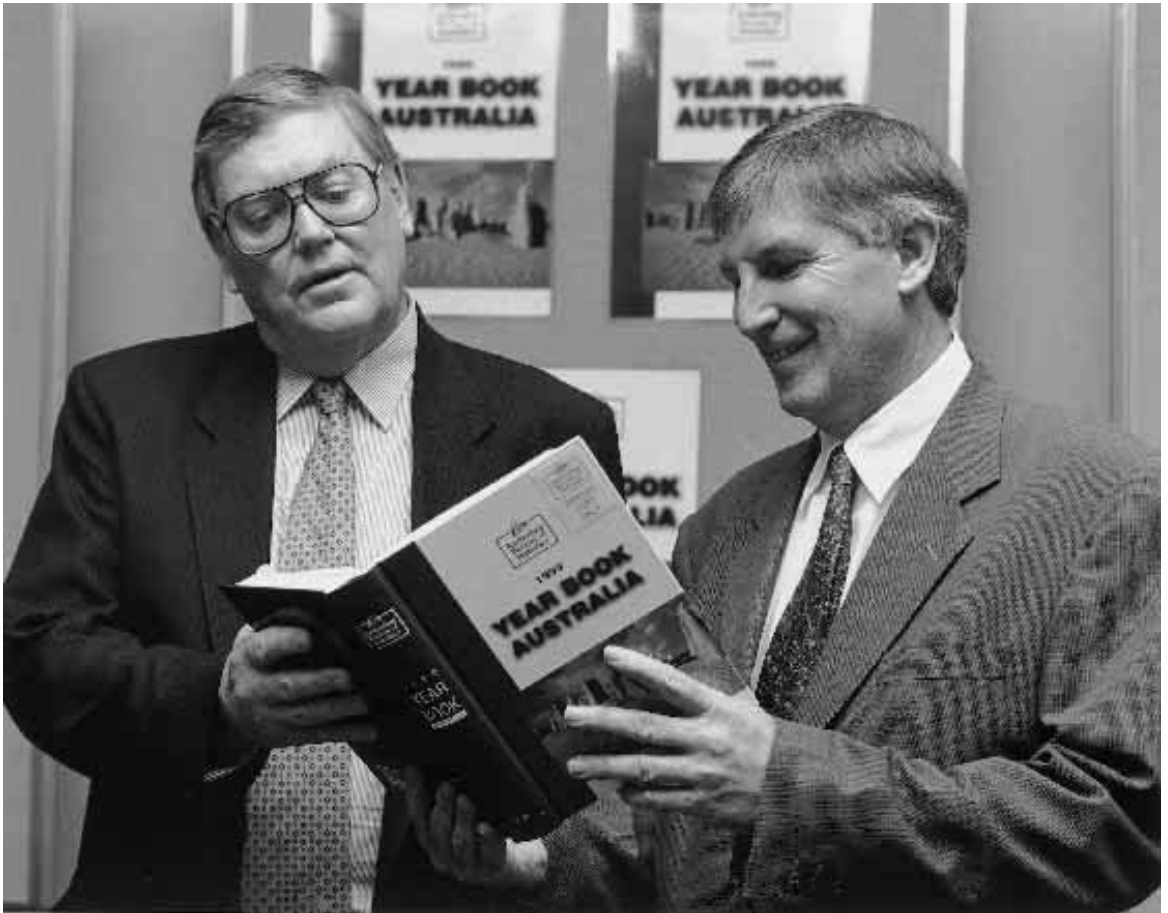
Other notable releases during the year were:

- *Australian Social Trends* (Cat. no. 4102.0), the sixth edition of this publication describing Australian society and how it is changing over time. Several articles address themes relevant to older people, as 1999 is the International Year of Older Persons.

- *Children, Australia: A Social Report* (Cat. no. 4119.0), presenting a range of population and social statistics on Australian children.
- *Time Use Survey, Australia—User's Guide* (Cat. no. 4150.0), presenting a different perspective on topics such as paid work, leisure and parenting, facilitating the measurement of household work and sharing of domestic responsibilities.
- *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (Cat. no. 4430.0), examining the age, sex, living arrangements and educational and labour force experience of people with disabilities.
- *Schools, Australia* (Cat. no. 4221.0), presenting statistics on schools, students, teaching and non-teaching staff involved in the provision or administration of primary and secondary education, in government and non-government schools for all States and Territories.
- *Education and Training in Australia* (Cat. no. 4224.0), containing a wide range of ABS and non-ABS statistics covering schools, higher education, technical and further education, vocational education and training, and training providers and activities in Australia.
- *Recorded Crime, Australia* (Cat. no. 4510.0), containing uniform national crime statistics which provide indicators of the level and nature of recorded crime in Australia and a basis for measuring change over time.
- *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (Cat. no. 4602.0), providing data on environmental behaviour and practices of Australian households and individuals.
- *Underemployed Workers, Australia* (Cat. no. 6265.0), providing information on visible underemployment, that is, persons who worked less than 35 hours in the week prior to the survey.

There were also some important releases of electronic products which included:

- ABS Dissemination Database (*ABS@*), a newly launched database which releases all ABS publications directly on the intranets of particular key clients. This service is expected to be made available to other key clients in the near future.
- *Historical Publications on CD-ROM* (Cat. no. 1124.0), containing copies of every printed publication produced in 1998.
- *Year Book Australia on CD-ROM* (Cat. no. 1301.0.30.001), including electronic searching, bookmarking and annotation, and pictorial material not in the printed book.



Pictured at the launch of the Year Book Australia at the National Library in February 1999 are, from the left, Warren Horton, Director General of the National Library and Dennis Trewin, Deputy Australian Statistician, Economics Statistics Group.

- *Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia* (Cat. no. 2033.0.30.001), a CD-ROM product providing lifestyle groupings of Australia's communities based on data from the 1996 Census. CD-ROMs have also been released with SEIFA information for each State and Territory.
- *CDATA96 Add-on Datapaks* (Cat. no. 2040.0.30.001), a CD-ROM product containing the Indigenous, Usual Residents, Expanded and Working Population Community Profiles and Estimated Resident Population. These datapaks can easily be imported into the CDATA96 operating environment.
- *TranStats* (Cat. no. 9312.0.30.001), a CD-ROM product containing detailed information from the annual motor vehicle census and monthly new motor vehicle registrations collection.
- *Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification* (Cat. no. 4706.0.30.001), a CD-ROM product providing maps of Indigenous geographical classification levels.

Statistical developments

The implementation of the revised System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA93) was a major achievement in 1998–99. In the September quarter 1998 issue of *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0), SNA93 was implemented as the conceptual basis underlying the statistics. Also, chain volume measures were introduced as the main measure of volume growth (replacing constant price estimates) and, for the first time, the quarterly national accounts were integrated with balanced annual supply-use tables. The opportunity was also taken to make a number of other methodological changes and to re-design the publication. These changes were very well received across the spectrum of users of the Australian National Accounts, particularly the Treasury and the Reserve Bank.

The implementation of the revised international standards for balance of payments and international investment position statistics contained in SNA93 was also completed in 1998–99. These changes, introduced concurrently with the changes to the Australian National Accounts, mean that, for the first time, the Australian balance of payments, international investment position and the national accounts statistics are fully harmonised. The year also saw publication of a revised *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (Cat. no. 5331.0).

In 1998–99, the financial accounts were converted to conform to SNA93, and information from financial institutions was collected according to the revised international standards for financial accounts statistics contained in SNA93.

The 13th Series CPI was introduced in the September quarter 1998, following the most comprehensive review of the CPI since its inception in 1960. The key outcome of the review was that the focus of the CPI would change from the measurement of changes in the living costs of wage and salary earner households, to the measurement of price inflation for the household sector as a whole. Details were provided in

Information Paper: Introduction of the 13th Series Australian Consumer Price Index (Cat. no. 6454.0). *A Guide to the Consumer Price Index 13th Series* (Cat. no. 6440.0) was published to further assist user understanding of the new series.

Significant progress was made on a long term project to establish producer price indexes for the output of industries in the service sector of the economy. The *Information Paper: Producer Price Index Developments* (Cat. no. 6422.0), published in March 1999, introduced experimental producer and international trade price index series within a Stage of Production framework. This represents an important element of the ABS strategy for the systematic analysis of inflation. The paper also presented experimental producer price indexes for the output of a selection of transport and storage, and property and business services industries. The indexes will play an important role in improving the quality of the Australian National Accounts.

During 1998–99, a number of surveys were conducted of business and government uses of information technology. The ABS published a range of information technology statistics, including *Year 2000 Problem, Australia* (Cat. no. 8152.0), *Business Use of Information Technology, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8133.0), *Household Use of Information Technology, Australia* (Cat. no. 8146.0), and *Use of the Internet by Householders, Australia* (Cat. no. 8147.0).

The ABS continued to resource the important area of statistical coordination. Key outcomes during the year included the production of regional profiles in a number of States which drew on data from various government and other sources and progress on the development of regional economic indicators from the Australian Taxation Office's individual income taxpayer and business income tax datasets.

Implementation of the Commonwealth Government's Tax Reform Plan is expected to offer considerable opportunities for improvements in the infrastructure used to support ABS business surveys. The ABS has continued to work closely with the Australian Taxation Office on the implementation of a new tax system and remains confident that the new tax arrangements will improve the statistical service and reduce the reporting load placed on businesses by the ABS.

ABS household surveys produce many of the statistics used in developing, evaluating and monitoring public policies and programs. In 1998–99, a comprehensive review of the ABS household survey program was undertaken. The impetus for the review came from a recognition that the current level of demand for such information exceeded the capacity of ABS resources, and that consequently there were some important gaps in the statistics available. The review is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

Significant progress was also made during the year on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics. This included improving the quality, availability and use of administrative data as part of a plan to improve statistics from administrative collections. Following extensive discussions with users and the Indigenous community, a survey strategy has been developed to address the highest priority user needs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics and related measurement issues.

Key elements of the survey strategy are the supplementation of the Indigenous sample in selected national household surveys and a periodic general social survey of Indigenous persons. The year also saw publication of *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* (Cat. nos. 2034.0–8).

During 1998–99, the ABS continued to provide national statistics on crime, criminal courts and corrective services. A highlight of the year's activity was completion of a joint project with the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, to develop a national framework for statistics on illicit drugs.

Planning for the 2001 Census of Population and Housing continued during 1998–99. Intelligent character recognition (ICR) hardware and software have been installed under a contract signed with IBM Global Services Australia Pty Ltd for the development and implementation of an ICR solution for the processing of the 2001 Census. This will increase the efficiency of systems used to process the census forms, and is expected to improve the quality of census results and allow the results to be released earlier. Additional features of the year were the conduct of large scale topic testing, and progress toward development of the output program for the 2001 Census.

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 wide range of ABS business-based surveys) and a corresponding population survey framework which supports household surveys.

The ABS also continued to focus on coordinating its activities with those of other agencies, and on minimising the reporting burden being placed on data providers. The Statistical Clearing House, which was set up in July 1997, plays a key role in the coordination of statistical collections conducted by Commonwealth agencies.

Further progress was made during the year on the development of the ABS information warehouse (the ABSDB). The ABSDB, which is now in production, provides facilities to store the output from statistical collections, together with detailed metadata describing the statistics and the underlying statistical concepts and methodologies. All regular, sub-annual collections and many annual collections are loaded into the ABSDB and most statistical dissemination, on paper and electronically, is undertaken from it. The year saw development and implementation of links from the ABSDB to the new publication production facilities, a generalised publication production workbench to provide an automated method for producing publications from data stored in the ABSDB.

The ABS central register of employing businesses plays a key role in integrating economic statistics by providing consistent frameworks of businesses for ABS business surveys. The 1998–99 year saw the commissioning of the new business register system. It also saw the expansion of the use of data provided by the Australian Taxation Office for updating the register.

The ABS reviewed the arrangements for the provision of staff training during 1998–99. Outcomes from the review were implemented during the year. Internal delivery arrangements were retained for the statistics stream but new external provider arrangements were put in place for the delivery of leadership and management, and technology training. A new training stream covering publishing and dissemination skills was added.

Year 2000 issues

During 1998–99, testing continued in the Year 2000 Test Laboratory to ensure that ABS systems will correctly support operations in the transition to Year 2000 and that there will be continuity in the operation of the national statistical service. The ABS expects no Year 2000 related problems with its computer systems and has developed contingency plans for all of its systems as part of a comprehensive remediation and testing process. All electronic products marketed by the ABS have been tested and signed off as Year 2000 ready.

During 1998–99, compliance testing of ABS business systems and information technology infrastructure continued, using facilities provided by a dedicated test laboratory. All business-critical computer systems and the products on which they depend are now Year 2000 ready. Significant progress has been made in relation to all other computer systems. Testing of all systems will be completed by September 1999.

International involvement

The ABS is widely acknowledged to be one of the world's leading statistical agencies and is an important and active member of the international statistical community. It participates in a variety of international forums, and ABS staff keep abreast of the latest techniques and developments in other leading national statistical agencies. In addition, the ABS is committed to sharing its knowledge, and it provides technical assistance to statistical agencies in other countries. The ABS also places importance on ensuring that Australia's statistics are internationally comparable.

During the year, Dennis Trewin (Deputy Australian Statistician, Economic Statistics) was elected to the position of President-Elect of the International Statistical Institute (the peak international professional body for statisticians in government, academic, business and private organisations) from 1999, becoming President in 2001 for two years.

Australia has been asked to host the 2005 Session of the International Statistical Institute. It is expected to bring about 1,500 overseas visitors.

Other highlights included:

- contributing through the United Nations (UN) Statistical Commission (the peak intergovernmental body for official statistics) to international statistical developments. Australia is represented on the Commission by the ABS. Significant contributions by the ABS at the Commission session in March 1999 included:
 - documents on problems with the UN International Comparison Programme and statistical concerns about the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard. These documents attracted considerable support in the Commission;
 - strong support for more tightly-focused work programs and outcome orientations for international groups working on particular problems in individual fields of statistics. The Commission generally adopted this approach; and
 - strong support for a draft resolution for annual meetings of the Commission. The Council adopted the resolution at its session in July 1999;
- drafting a handbook on census management, at the request of the UN Statistics Division. The handbook will be published in five languages;
- participating in the activities of the Committee on Statistics of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Recently the Committee has focused on the implications of the Asian crisis for national statistical offices in the region, assistance to countries in the region to implement the 1993 System of National Accounts and participation in the year 2000 round of population censuses, improving the measurement of poverty, and information technology matters including the Year 2000 issue. At the November 1998 meeting of the Committee, Australia was elected to the Bureau of the Committee—a group of six countries that manages the Committee business between the Committee's annual meetings, determines the agendas for the meetings, and oversees the work program of the Statistics Division of the ESCAP Secretariat;
- hosting meetings in Australia of the Food and Agriculture Organization's Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, and the Siena Group on Social Statistics, as well as an International Statistical Output Database Conference. In addition, the ABS made contributions in meetings overseas of a number of other international groups specialising in individual fields of statistics. The work of these groups is, in general, reviewed and coordinated by the UN Statistical Commission.



Pictured from the left, Donal Murphy, Director General, Central Statistics Office, Ireland; Dr Garret FitzGerald (former Irish Prime Minister); Seamus Brennan, Government Chief Whip and Minister of State in the Department with responsibility for the Central Statistics Office, and Bill McLennan, Australian Statistician, on the occasion of the Irish Central Statistics Office 50th Anniversary Seminar 'Official Statistics in the New Millennium', Dublin Castle, 11 June 1999.

- contributing to international statistical training through the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). The Institute provides training for staff of national statistical offices in the developing countries of the region in all aspects of producing relevant, timely and high-quality statistics, and assists countries in strengthening their own statistical training capacities. Australia is currently a member of the SIAP Governing Board, and is represented by Tim Skinner (Deputy Australian Statistician, Population Statistics). He was re-elected Chairman of the Board at its session in November 1998;
- conducting, or participating in, international training seminars, mainly for developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region, on time series analysis, population census management, information technology, human development indicators and statistical analysis;
- cooperating with the Singapore Department of Statistics on the development of electronic commerce statistics. The aim is to improve the range and quality of data produced by each organisation and help produce internationally comparable data to meet new demands for statistics in this rapidly changing field. This followed the signing in February 1999 of the Australia-Singapore Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in information technology;
- commencement of a significant program of technical assistance to Papua New Guinea to prepare for its population census in 2000. This was done in conjunction with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID);
- assistance to Indonesia, which was provided under a Memorandum of Understanding between the ABS and the Indonesian statistical agency (BPS) on cooperation in statistics. Funding came from a grant under AusAID's Australia-Indonesia Government Sector Linkages Program (GSLP);
- securing GSLP grants to enable continuation in 1999–2000 of technical assistance to the BPS Indonesia, and to enable the ABS to purchase Australian-developed data manipulation and tabulation software for the BPS Indonesia, to meet a need for a more efficient and flexible system;
- development, in conjunction with AusAID, of an 18-month program of technical assistance to Thailand to improve its national accounts statistics. The program is commencing in early 1999–2000;
- signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the Department of Statistics of India for development of statistics and promotion of best statistical practices. It is expected that this will lead to significant technical assistance by the ABS to India;

- technical assistance to other overseas statistical agencies, including those in American Samoa, China, Iran, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Samoa, the Solomon Islands, South Africa and Vietnam. Assistance to these agencies, together with the other assistance mentioned above, involved ABS staff spending a total of almost 70 weeks overseas, and the ABS receiving visits from overseas for a total of over 20 weeks.

Management

Notable developments during 1998–99 included the following:

- the approval and certification of workplace agreements for 521 Australian Workplace Agreements, the ABS Certified Agreement 1999–2000 covering some 2,600 Public Service Act employees and the ABS Interviewers Certified Agreement 1999–2000 covering some 620 interviewers;
- implementation of output-based accrual budgeting and associated arrangements in line with Government financial reforms;
- substantial revision of ABS human resource management policies and delegations following introduction of arrangements under the new workplace agreements;
- introduction of a new remuneration strategy for senior staff (SES and Executive Level 2) based on performance/productivity outcomes;
- establishment of a Human Resource Strategy Committee to focus on human resource management priorities including recruitment, selection, succession planning, learning and development issues;
- development and introduction of the first ABS workplace diversity program;
- introduction of new learning and development management strategies which provide for a mix of internal and external program delivery arrangements; and
- selection through a tender process of a new payroll provider to replace services previously provided by the Department of Finance and Administration.

ABS experience in workplace relations in 1998–99 is covered in Chapter 3.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES SUMMARY

The ABS compiles its financial statements on an accrual basis. The 1998–99 financial statements can be found in Chapter 6. The 1998–99 operating expenses totalled \$228 million, compared with \$240 million in 1997–98. The revenue from the sale of statistical products and provision of services, and other revenue from independent sources totalled \$23.1 million, a decrease of \$8.7 million compared with 1997–98 (\$31.8 million).

A summary of the appropriations to the ABS and the program outlays, as estimated at the presentation of the 1998–99 Commonwealth Budget (updated by the Additional Estimates and Advance to the Minister for Finance), is shown in the table below.

RECONCILIATION OF SUB-PROGRAMS AND BUDGET APPROPRIATION(a) ELEMENTS FOR 1998–99 (\$'000)

<i>Sub-program</i>	A <i>Approp. Acts Nos 1 & 3</i>	+B <i>Approp. Acts Nos 2 & 4</i>	+C <i>Special Approps</i>	+D <i>Annotated Approps(b)</i>	=E <i>Budget Program Approps</i>	-F <i>Adjust- ments(c)</i>	=G <i>Budget Program Outlays</i>
Statistical Operations	192 751	2 210	0	25 800	220 761	25 800	194 961
Corporate Services	28 194	0	0	200	28 394	260	28 134
Total	220 945	2 210	0	26 000	249 155	26 060	223 095

(a) As at presentation of the 1998–99 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.

FINANCIAL AND STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99
ACCRUAL BASIS (\$'000)			
Expenses			
Employee expenses	239 874	170 619	155 600
Other administrative expenses	87 056	69 710	72 275
Total expenses	326 930	240 329	227 875
Revenue (including administered revenue)	23 657	31 791	24 593
Total assets	72 971	87 996	126 960
Total liabilities	71 646	72 257	68 528
Total staff years(a)	3 980	3 202	2 985

(a) Comprises full-time staff and part-time at their full-time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. Further details on staffing are provided in Appendix 3.1. Includes revisions to previous year's staffing levels as indicated in Appendix 3.1.

STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY

At 30 June 1999, the ABS employed 3,162 staff under the *Public Service Act 1922*. During 1998–99, 2,985 staff years were provided under the Act. In addition, 201 staff years of service were provided in 1998–99 by persons (mostly household survey interviewers) engaged under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

The average number of paid staff for each office over the past three years is shown in the following table.

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

Office	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Operative Staff			
Central Office (Canberra)	1 610	1 537	1 492
New South Wales	350	340	309
Victoria	330	300	294
Queensland	238	225	215
South Australia	196	208	190
Western Australia	235	221	214
Tasmania	146	142	132
Northern Territory	58	52	53
Australian Capital Territory	11	11	13
Population Census			
Data Processing Centre (NSW)	728	92	0
<i>Total operative staff</i>	3 902	3 128	2 911
Paid inoperative staff(b)	78	74	74
Total average paid staff	3 980	3 202	2 985

(a) Comprises full-time staff and part-time staff at their full-time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. Includes revisions to previous year's staffing levels as indicated in Appendix 3.1. (b) For example, staff on approved leave for periods of 12 weeks or longer.

More detailed staffing information is given in Appendix 3.

PLANNING

The provision of a high quality national statistical service is a complex management exercise because of the diverse nature of user requirements and, in most instances, the lead time required to develop statistical collections. While the ABS recognises that it is impossible to satisfy all demands, it seeks to react positively and responsibly to the demonstrated 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 Corporate Plan (released in 1994-95) re-affirms 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 program is based on 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 ABS 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; and
- the relative share of resources spent on statistical and non-statistical work.

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

The culmination of the year's planning cycle is a comprehensive document describing for each ABS program the outputs, clients and uses of the statistical information, and the main medium term developments. Resources used for each ABS program are also provided. This document is available for public scrutiny and comment.

INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL SCRUTINY

The operations and performance of the ABS are subject to both internal and external scrutiny.

Internal scrutiny takes the form of:

- periodic reviews of statistical collections and service functions. In reviews of statistical collections, external users are widely consulted and in some instances, external users assist the review team. Several reviews commenced, or were completed, in 1998–99, including reviews of tourism and transport statistics; the use of Australian Tax Office data in the economic activity survey and the retail census; labour cost index methodology; the business register units model and maintenance strategy; the agriculture finance survey and the ABARE annual farm financial survey; industrial disputes statistics; and information consulting service levels and costs. Internal reviews cover both the effectiveness and efficiency of various ABS activities. During 1998–99, benchmarking of a range of ABS statistical activities was commenced, involving both comparisons with overseas agency practice and outcomes, and comparisons among ABS statistical collections;
- annual reports from all Branch Heads (in Central Office) and Regional Directors to the Division Heads' Meetings, which comprise the Australian Statistician, Deputy Australian Statisticians and Division Heads. The reports cover activities of the Branch or Regional Office for the previous year, emerging issues and strategies, and indicators of performance; and

- an internal audit program, conducted by external service providers, covering different facets of ABS operations. An Audit Committee, chaired by the Division Head, Corporate Services Division, establishes the audit work program. Internal audit recommendations are reported to this Committee. A number of compliance and performance audits commenced or were completed in 1998–99, including a review of tendering and contract management procedures; review of travel arrangements; business risk assessment into the introduction of Australian Workplace Agreements; International Trade Special Returns Application review; Year 2000 progress review; a review into the efficiency of ABS IT resources; staff compliance with ABS policy on the use of computing facilities; the efficiency of the Oracle database management and security; management of ABS software acquisition; and a review of the current and future use in the ABS of Lotus NOTES.

External scrutiny takes the following forms:

- consideration by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council of ABS priorities and proposals for the forward work program. Council advises the Australian Statistician and the Minister, and produces its own annual report on issues considered and advice given;
- audits by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO), either of ABS operations specifically or as part of cross-agency audits. The ABS was not directly involved in any agency specific performance audits during 1998–99 but participated in four cross-agency audits. These included the preliminary study into business continuity planning; the survey of export development and promotion activities within Commonwealth agencies; an audit of Commonwealth agencies' preparedness for the electronic delivery of services, and the survey of internal audit practice; and
- audits of ABS financial statements by the ANAO, which issued the following report—Audit Report No.20 Financial Statement Audit, *Audits of the Financial Statements of Commonwealth Entities for the Period Ended 30 June 1998*, Summary of Results and Financial Outcomes.

The review of statistical activity by various advisory committees and user groups is another important form of external scrutiny. These include:

- standing and ad hoc expert advisory groups, comprising key government, business, academic and community representatives. The groups provide advice on statistical priorities and developments in fields such as labour, indigenous health and welfare, agriculture, economics, housing, environment, mining, statistical methodology, housing, crime and justice, tourism, transport, research and development;
- user groups established to advise the ABS on the concepts, content and dissemination programs of individual major household surveys;

- Commonwealth/State working groups or committees, often attached to Ministerial Councils, which provide advice on emerging needs, priorities and areas for cooperation; and
- advisory boards established for the National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics, the National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics, and the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics. The boards provide advice on statistical priorities and data standards, and monitor and support the implementation of agreed collections. The forward work program for each statistical centre is agreed between the Australian Statistician and the board.

The ABS Fraud Control Plan was evaluated and endorsed by the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board during 1998–99.

There were no inquiries by Parliamentary Committees during 1998–99.

There were no adverse comments from the ANAO, Ombudsman, courts or tribunals during 1998–99.

Information on Freedom of Information is provided in Appendix 7. Information on documents tabled in Parliament is provided in Appendix 8.

STATISTICAL CLEARING HOUSE

The Small Business Deregulation Task Force recommended in its 1996 report *More Time for Business* that statistical collections affecting 50 or more businesses and run by, or on behalf of, Commonwealth government departments and agencies be subject to a central clearance process. The purpose of the recommendation was to ensure that all such surveys were necessary and well designed to minimise respondent load and maximise benefit. The clearance process would also be an effective means of monitoring the load imposed on business respondents. In view of its statistical expertise and statutory coordination role, the ABS was asked to administer the clearance process.

The Statistical Clearing House was set up on 1 July 1997. Survey Liaison Officers were identified in each Commonwealth government department and agency known to have significant business survey activity. The primary role of these liaison officers is to ensure that all Commonwealth government statistical collections are vetted by the Statistical Clearing House and that the procedures are well understood by survey managers. A Statistical Clearing House User Group was established to obtain feedback from survey managers and other stakeholders and to help streamline clearance procedures.

Clearance operations began on 1 December 1997, with the aim of examining every Commonwealth government statistical collection (including ABS collections) by June 1999, starting with the largest repeating surveys, and reviewing them periodically.

The table below shows the numbers of survey reviews at various stages of completion on 30 June 1999, for the 1998–99 financial year. Of the 130 completed reviews, all but three have resulted in approval to proceed. However, Statistical Clearing House intervention has resulted in 42 instances of improved survey design and/or reduced provider load.

**STATISTICAL CLEARING HOUSE—STAGES OF
REVIEW OF STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS**

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>In Progress</i>
ABS	80	13
Other	50	16
Total	130	29

The ABS has been monitoring the total annual load imposed on providers by its own collections for several years. For 1998–99, this has been estimated at 437,000 hours. This is the first year the Clearing House has been able to assess the annual load imposed by surveys conducted by non-ABS Commonwealth agencies. For 1998–99, the annual load imposed on providers by non-ABS surveys reviewed by the Clearing House has been estimated at 20,000 hours, approximately 5% of the ABS figure. It should be noted that the proportion of non-ABS surveys identified and reviewed is expected to be much lower than for ABS surveys.

A significant by-product of the Statistical Clearing House program is the Commonwealth Register of Surveys of Businesses (available on the Internet at www.sch.abs.gov.au). The register lists the statistical collections subject to clearance and information about them provided to the Statistical Clearing House during the clearance process. The register will become an important element of the clearance process as it becomes the primary means through which organisations with particular data needs can identify collections that have already been conducted, reducing the potential for duplication. To assist those developing surveys, the register site will also be used to provide access to information on survey design standards and best practices. Progress with putting survey information on this database has been slow, with only 64 surveys currently on it.

All repeating collections, other than those currently being re-evaluated, have now been reviewed by the Statistical Clearing House, or are in the process of review. All new surveys identified during 1998–99 have been reviewed.

The Statistical Clearing House program will be subject to an independent evaluation of its effectiveness in 1999–2000.

STATISTICAL BENCHMARKING

Statistical benchmarking is a key part of the ABS strategy to assess the value for money of its statistical outputs, to understand and learn from best practice, and to improve performance.

Two types of benchmarking studies are currently being undertaken in the ABS. The first is a study involving comparisons between international statistical agencies and the ABS, and the second involves comparisons among ABS statistical collections.

International comparisons

The Statistical Benchmarking Project was established in the ABS in July 1998. The project has established a National Statistical Agencies Benchmarking Network comprising the ABS and four other national statistical agencies—Statistics New Zealand, the US Bureau of the Census, Statistics Sweden, and the UK Office of National Statistics.

The National Statistical Agencies Benchmarking Network has been established to improve the performance of the development, collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of statistical outputs. The benchmarking activities will allow us to compare the results, and the efficiencies, of collections in the network, and identify areas of best practice that could be incorporated into agency processes.

Three collections were selected for the first round of benchmarking studies:

- Consumer Price Index;
- Annual Manufacturing Survey; and
- Household Expenditure Survey.

At least three national statistical agencies are contributing to each of the studies.

Considerable information has been sought from each participating agency. The network has agreed on a standard framework of statistical activities which can be applied to all countries and all collections. This framework comprises a set of main processes such as data collection, data processing, survey analysis and dissemination. Using the standardised framework, each country is required to report on how they undertake each main process for each of the collections to which they are contributing.

Each country may have different methodologies, concepts, procedures, staffing structures, costs and performance measures. The ABS will undertake extensive analysis of the information provided by each country, in order to find areas of best practice and greater efficiency. Differences in measured performance will be identified, highlighting when they are due to non-comparable factors (such as scope or sample size), and when they are due to genuine differences in performance. It is expected that the analysis, and reports of the findings in relation to the first round of studies, will be completed by the end of 1999.

An evaluation of the operations of the network is planned for February 2000.

The first round of the benchmark project is the learning phase, and the operations and success of the network will be reviewed following completion of the first round. This will enable the ABS to refine the methodology used in future benchmarking activities, and determine the future operations of the network. At this stage, it is envisaged that future benchmarking projects are likely to be of particular statistical processes, such as household survey interviews, editing, or dissemination rather than entire statistical collections.

Internal comparisons

The second type of benchmarking study being undertaken in the ABS involves comparisons among collections in both the Population Statistics Group (PSG), and the Economic Statistics Group (ESG). These studies use a similar methodology to that used by the National Statistical Agencies Benchmarking Network. For both ESG and PSG collections, there needs to be a greater focus of attention on collection costs and performance, and benchmarking provides the opportunity to review current practices, examine what other ABS collections are doing and learn from their experiences.

In the PSG, the survey processes of four different household survey collections are being examined. The main objective of this study is to assess whether timeliness and costs can be improved in the development, conduct, processing and dissemination stages of the population surveys. Best practice outcomes identified will be built into the new household survey processing systems.

In the ESG, eight collection areas are involved in a benchmarking study. The main objectives of this study are to gain a greater awareness of operational costs, to ensure business survey operations are efficient and effective and to introduce the concept of benchmarking as a means of continuous improvement.

It is envisaged that benchmarking activities will continue in the ABS over the next few years. Integrating benchmarking into the ABS planning and review processes will be a focus of the benchmarking work over the next year.

PROVIDER LOAD

The 1996 report of the Small Business Deregulation Task Force, *More Time for Business*, reported that statistics accounted for around 1% of the total time small business spent on paper and compliance work. Nevertheless, the ABS continues to seek reductions in the load it places on all businesses, and in particular on small businesses. The following table shows the provider load (measured in thousands of hours taken to complete statistical forms) imposed on businesses from 1995–96 to 1998–99.

**PROVIDER LOAD IMPOSED ON BUSINESSES BY ABS
(hours '000)**

	1995-96	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Small businesses(a)	338	241	260	221
Other businesses	334	327	261	216
All businesses	672	568	521	437

(a) Defined as businesses with less than 20 employees.

Overall, the load imposed on all business providers in 1998-99 was 437,000 hours. This is 35% lower than the load imposed in 1995-96. The load imposed on small businesses in 1998-99 was 221,000 hours. This also represents a reduction of 35% when compared to 1995-96 and substantially exceeds the commitment of a 20% reduction announced when the Small Business Deregulation Task Force was established in 1996.

These reductions have been achieved through the introduction of a wide range of initiatives affecting nearly all business collections. The most notable of these include:

- increasing use of administrative data available from agencies such as the Australian Taxation Office;
- reducing the frequency of some collections, for example, agricultural census, manufacturing census, producer price indexes, and waste management and environmental expenditure collection;
- reducing the sample size for some collections, for example, survey of international trade in services, international investment survey and economic activity survey;
- reducing the data item content or scope of some collections, for example, the agricultural census, survey of tourist accommodation, business expectations survey, survey of international trade in services and the retail industry survey;
- continuing improvements in forms design, for example, the introduction of a simplified form in the economic activity survey; and
- promoting technological aids in the provision of data, for example, use of 'front office packages' in the survey of tourist accommodation.

SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY

ABS support for the *Charter of Public Service in a Culturally Diverse Society* is demonstrated primarily through the provision of statistical information available to government and community groups to assist in developing and monitoring strategies in relevant fields, and by taking action to overcome linguistic and cultural barriers in the collection of data.

The ABS work program takes account of the Charter principles, and government needs for information to support social justice policies, by the identification of target groups in censuses and surveys concerned with various aspects of social wellbeing. In 1998–99, the ABS survey program continued to provide data on population and vitals statistics, education, employment, unemployment and other topics relating to labour force participation, earnings and income, recorded crime and justice administration. During the year, two special social surveys were undertaken, the survey of disability, ageing and carers, and the household expenditure survey.

In 1998–99, the ABS published a wide range of statistics relevant to social justice and equity. The series of 1996 Census publications giving detailed data relating to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people was completed. Each State and Territory is now covered in a separate publication, with an overall national report. A paper on *Population Issues, Indigenous Australians* (Cat. no. 4708.0) examining measurement issues relating to high recorded levels of Indigenous population growth was also published. Another publication presented selected statistics on the health of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians, from the 1995 National Health Survey. Other publications included the first releases of data from the 1997 Time Use Survey and the 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. The ABS also produced a number of other broad ranging social reports. These included the sixth edition of the annual report *Australian Social Trends 1999* (Cat. no. 4102.0), a report in the series focused on special groups, entitled *Children, Australia, A Social Report* (Cat. no. 4119.0) and a report *Australia in Profile: A Regional Analysis* (Cat. no. 2032.0) concerned with describing differences in living conditions among people in different parts of Australia.

With regard to internal workplace practices, the ABS launched its initial workplace diversity program in August 1998. Throughout 1998–99, this inaugural program was supported by a range of activities designed to increase the appreciation and utilisation of skills and experience which individual staff bring to the workplace. The program incorporates an ongoing commitment to the principles of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) and thus addresses wrongful discrimination against members of the four EEO groups. The program was reviewed at the end of the year and a new three year program is currently being finalised.

Further information on the workplace diversity program is given in Chapter 5. The representation of EEO groups within ABS staff is given in Appendix 3.4.

SERVICE CHARTERS

The ABS released two service charters during 1998–99.

The *Client Service Charter* describes the relationship between the ABS and users of its products and services. The Charter was developed in consultation with a representative sample of clients. Copies of the Charter are available on the ABS website and through bookshops located in each ABS office.

The Client Service Charter also offers guidance to clients wishing to provide compliments or register complaints on any aspect of client relationship or services.

The *Business Surveys Charter* sets out the relationship between the ABS and businesses which provide it with information for statistical purposes. The Charter explains how businesses can seek help from the ABS and provides the opportunity for dissatisfied businesses to ask for a review of the complaints handling process.

The Charter was developed in consultation with representatives of small business interests and ABS staff. The Charter is provided to new respondents in collections involving businesses and is available in English, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Greek and Arabic. The Charter is available on the ABS website.

Both the Client Service and Business Surveys Charters include performance standards for the relationship between the ABS and its clients, and its service delivery. Performance against these standards will be the subject of ongoing review, as will the Charters themselves.

SECURITY

The ABS maintains a comprehensive security framework, overseen by a Protective Security Management Committee chaired by the Division Head, 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 the most important elements of the ABS security screen. They are reinforced by a range of measures relating to the perimeter security of all offices, the security measures protecting the computing environment from any external access, and the security measures implemented for individual data holdings.

Some features of the major elements of the security framework are described below.

Undertakings of fidelity and secrecy under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*

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 information, 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 individually coded keys. In addition, staff are required to wear photographic identity passes and supervise or escort all visitors and contractors. Particularly sensitive output data are subject to further physical security measures, including secure containers and electronic access systems. All physical security systems have been upgraded to ensure Year 2000 compliance.

Computer security

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

Additional 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 duties. All computer security systems have been, or are being, finalised for Year 2000 compliance.

MAJOR DOCUMENTS

Major documents which provide additional information on the operations of the ABS and which are available on request include:

- ABS Corporate Plan;
- Forward Work Program 1999–2000 to 2001–02;
- Client Service Charter;
- Business Surveys Charter; and
- *ABS News* (staff magazine).

In addition, a wide range of information is available on the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au) including statistical data, news releases, and conceptual and technical information.

2 REVIEW OF THE ABS HOUSEHOLD SURVEY PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The ABS household survey program was reviewed in 1998–99. This article describes the review process, the nature of the information needs of users that are to be addressed by the household survey program, and the review recommendations.

Impetus for the review came from a recognition that the current level of demand for information from ABS household surveys exceeds the capacity of ABS survey vehicles and resources. As a consequence, there are some important gaps in the statistics that are available. The review involved re-assessing continuing demands against emerging new demands, including the known gaps in the statistical program.

The current household survey program

The ABS allocates about 10% of its annual budget to the design and conduct of household surveys and to the analysis and dissemination of results from these surveys.

The current household survey program comprises:

- the monthly labour force survey (costing \$17m per annum);
- monthly supplementary surveys (costing \$2.7m per annum);
- special social surveys (costing \$7m per annum); and
- the population survey monitor (user funded).

The review process

Consultations, involving formal meetings and informal discussions, were undertaken by the review team with key government users at both State and Commonwealth level. Information was circulated to a wider group of stakeholders and their input sought.

Several papers were circulated. The first, in July 1998, introduced the review, provided the basis for initial discussions, and outlined what ABS would be seeking from users in the course of the review. The second, in August 1998, sought submissions from users on their needs for and uses made of statistics derived from the household survey program. The third, in November 1998, responded to the issues raised in the user submissions, identified the range of surveys that might form part of a future ABS household survey strategy, and presented a number of possible options. A final opportunity to comment was provided in June 1999. The review recommendations were discussed by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council in July 1999.

INFORMATION NEEDS: KEY POLICY ISSUES AND QUESTIONS

The ABS population statistics program has two broad goals:

- to provide a range of statistics required to monitor the social and economic wellbeing of the population, with particular reference to important sub-groups of the population; and
- to support the development, implementation and evaluation of government policies and programs.

To do this, the program must address contemporary social issues and policy questions which span all aspects of people's lives and all areas of concern. Across this breadth of activity, it must provide both specific and general data which forms the basic 'intelligence' or 'information platform' to support discussion, debate, development and evaluation, as well as the context within which decisions are made. It must also provide data at regular intervals so that social progress can be monitored over time, and the impacts and consequences of various policies assessed.

The population statistics program includes the population census, a range of administrative statistics (for example, vitals registrations, causes of death, overseas movement, educational enrolments and course completions, crime, courts and prison statistics) and a program of household surveys. The household survey program plays a crucial role as it alone can provide much of the personal and household information needed to assess impacts, outcomes and effectiveness.

While the broad goals of the population statistics program will drive some segments of the household survey program, it is important that the program also focuses on priority areas and on continuing and emerging issues. The review team asked key users why they considered various survey topics to be important and how the data had been, or would be, used. In addition, broad input was sought on continuing and emerging information needs and policy priorities.

Key policy issues, questions and priorities that emerged from an analysis of user responses are summarised below in terms of the subject areas of social concern. The issues and questions shown illustrate the sorts of issues to which the future household surveys program and, on occasions, other elements of the population statistics program could be expected to contribute.

Family and community

Governments assist families and communities in their role as major providers of care and support to people, by promoting a positive social environment and by providing income support to families with children, the retired, people with disabilities and their carers, students and the unemployed.

Governments also provide specialised support services when the capacity of families and communities to fulfil their roles breaks down. Understanding the nature of these elements of society is of vital importance to creating an efficient and appropriate role for governments in providing support to families.

Government program expenditure on family and community issues in 1995–96, including expenditure on welfare services, is estimated to have been \$8.9 billion.

Key issues

- changing patterns of family structure and living arrangements, and the impact of this on government income support provision;
- growth in the population of those who need support (for example, children, older people and people with disabilities), and measures to ensure that carers in families and communities are able to provide that support;
- use and accessibility of child care, to ensure that people, in particular sole parents, have access to education, training and work;
- the increased burden on families of responsibility for non-resident children and older people; and
- the nature and extent of unpaid activities in relation to older Australians, such as home-based care arrangements and volunteerism.

Health

Fundamental to developing effective health policies and programs is the availability of timely and reliable data on the determinants of health, causes and prevalence of ill-health, the patterns and trends in health outcomes, behavioural and environmental risk factors and the quality, cost and effectiveness of interventions and strategies.

Government program expenditure on health in 1996–97, including expenditure on health services, is estimated to have been \$41.3 billion.

Key issues

- the prevalence and distribution of the conditions identified as health priority areas, and the effectiveness of education, prevention and treatment strategies;
- patterns of health services use (for example health insurance coverage, access to health services, use of alternative health strategies), and the characteristics of users; and
- education and prevention strategies in promoting healthy lifestyle behaviours, and reducing harmful behaviours such as illicit drug taking, smoking and self-harm.

Education

Since the late 1980s, various government initiatives have been introduced to increase participation in education, and expand pathways for educational attainment. The increased extent of training activities undertaken by Australians, commitment to lifelong learning and the need for continuous re-skilling, and the diversity of educational pathways, require reliable information to determine the economic and personal outcomes of such activity.

Government program expenditure on education in 1996–97 is estimated to have been \$24.5 billion.

Key issues

- equity of participation in education and training, and the risk of disadvantage associated with low levels of educational attainment;
- the demand and supply of different qualifications in Australian society and the capacity of educational systems to respond to this demand;
- the level and distribution of functional illiteracy within the community, and remedial measures to assist those affected; and
- the transition from education and training to work and the work/study paths followed by youth.

Work

The structure and performance of the Australian labour market are of interest to Commonwealth and State governments, academics, employer and employee associations, and the community. There is a need for a wide range of information about the labour market, covering both economic and social areas of concern.

Work is of fundamental importance to public policy because of its link to income and economic wellbeing. There has been a rapid change in the structures of work during the 1990s. This has led to greater demand for information about issues such as job security, labour mobility, employment benefits and working arrangements.

Government program expenditure on work in 1997–98, including expenditure on unemployment benefits, is estimated to have been \$6.9 billion.

Key issues

The Australian Statistics Advisory Council identified an extensive list of information needs relating to the contemporary characteristics and performance of the Australian labour market. These include statistics on:

- the transition from education and training to work and the work/study paths followed by youth;

- characteristics of jobs creation/job losses (such as by industry, region, age group);
- youth employment and the relationship between participation in education and labour force status;
- the casualisation of the labour force (and the growth of ‘precarious’ employment);
- mature age unemployment and underemployment;
- how workers are paid (in an increasingly decentralised system);
- the changing pattern of hours worked (and hours paid);
- emergence of the ‘working poor’; and
- the trend towards early retirement.

Economic wellbeing

Government policy is directed at providing social security entitlements which are efficiently targeted to those in genuine need, and at maintaining the adequacy of income support payments. The levels of cash income for individuals and families are used as indicators of need. Other social and economic policies such as taxation, health care, housing and child care interact with the income support system to influence economic wellbeing. The level and distribution of income and expenditure are important indicators of economic wellbeing for the population and for significant population sub-groups.

Government program expenditure on economic wellbeing in 1997–98, including expenditure on family income support payments, is estimated to have been \$38.9 billion.

Key issues

- the extent and nature of inequality and poverty among Australian households;
- the dynamics of household consumption and saving, especially in terms of provision for retirement;
- the needs of disadvantaged groups in the population for government support; and
- the dynamics of government income support, and labour force participation.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people

Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience significant levels of disadvantage in the areas of health, housing, education, employment, income, law and justice. All levels of government have placed great emphasis on measuring outcomes in these critical areas, and are seeking greater transparency in the processes which produce these outcomes.

Government program expenditure on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in 1998–99 is estimated to have been \$2.0 billion.

Key issues

- the concentration of disadvantage and associated lifestyle diseases in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;
- the relationship between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' education and training and their type of work and income; and
- the extent to which Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' involvement in the design and implementation of programs and services impact on their effectiveness and achievement of outcomes.

Housing

Government policy is directed at providing households with housing which is affordable, secure and appropriate to their needs, and at providing housing assistance in a way which is fair and effective. Housing also influences investment levels, interest rates, building activity and employment and has enormous significance in the national economy. Social policies directed towards improving access to housing impinge on the economy as a whole.

Government program expenditure on housing in 1996–97, including housing and rent assistance, is estimated to have been \$3.4 billion.

Key issues

- ensuring the supply and affordability of housing, and equitable access to housing for all groups in the population; and
- the extent of overcrowded or poor quality housing in Australia (or for particular groups of the population).

Culture and leisure

Social trends such as the ageing population, increasing early retirement and part-time work, and increased 'purchasing' of tasks previously undertaken by home occupants, such as cooking and cleaning, mean that the amount of leisure time people have is likely to increase. This is likely to result in increased demand for culture, leisure or sport services and facilities.

Government program expenditure on culture and leisure in 1996–97, including expenditure on sport and recreation, is estimated to have been \$6.3 billion.

Key issues

- priorities for governments, and non-government bodies, for support and sponsorship of arts, cultural and sports organisations;
- needs for public cultural and sporting facilities, and the emergence of new activities requiring different support and facilities; and
- increased participation in sport and exercise, especially for groups which are at risk of certain health conditions, such as the aged.

Crime and justice

Crime affects the community in a direct way through actual experience of a criminal offence, but there are also indirect effects relating to the fear of crime and the perception of police effectiveness.

Crime rates in Australia are generally low. In 1998, however, 24% of people rated crime as the most important social issue in Australia, second only to health, *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (Cat. no. 4602.0).

Government program expenditure on crime and justice in 1996–97, including expenditure on public order and safety, is estimated to have been \$7.4 billion.

Key issues

- assessing and reducing community fears about crime;
- the factors which influence the transition of juveniles into criminals; and
- effectiveness of the criminal and civil justice system, and its delivery of services.

Information technology

The rapid and dramatic advances which have occurred in the area of communication and information technologies over the last decade are changing the processes of work, commerce, learning, education and training, social interaction and government. The Internet, in particular, has great potential to remove distance as a barrier to the full development of regional Australia, and to Australian businesses accessing international markets.

Government program expenditure on IT and telecommunications in 1995–96, including expenditure on infrastructure and services in regional Australia, is estimated to have been \$0.3 billion.

Key issues

- effectiveness of education and market deregulation strategies in encouraging the adoption and usage of digital technologies in Australian households; and
- the implications of electronic commerce in Australian society, especially, for groups which are disadvantaged by location or other physical restrictions.

Environment

Increasingly, environmental responsibilities are being recognised and acted on by governments at all levels and the private sector. Reducing waste emissions, efficient use of scarce resources, promotion of environmentally responsible behaviour and the conservation and presentation of Australia's natural and cultural heritage are all addressed by government policies and programs.

Government program expenditure on environment in 1995–96, including expenditure on environmental protection, is estimated to have been \$7.9 billion.

Key issues

- changes in community attitudes to environmentally advantageous behaviour, such as energy or water conservation; and
- barriers to greater adoption of environmentally advantageous behaviour such as the use of low polluting forms of transport, reductions in environmental impact and waste.

OPTIONS FOR A FUTURE SURVEY PROGRAM

Meeting the goals of the population statistics program was an important consideration in developing options for a future survey program. The role of the 5-yearly population census and the various administrative statistics produced by the ABS, as well as the wider range of surveys and administrative collections conducted by other agencies, also needed to be taken into account.

Almost without exception, in submissions to the review, a key user or a group of users indicated a high priority for every survey that had been included in the ABS household survey program in recent years. This confirmed that past household surveys have delivered valuable and relevant data, and it indicated that while gaps need to be addressed, users wanted to see many of the existing features of the program retained. Thus, it suggested there should be substantial overlap with the past program.

The review team considered that users had provided a strong case for regular data collection across all areas of social concern. However, in determining the collection frequencies and size of topic content for specific options, the review team also considered:

- the relative importance of the debates, contemporary issues and policy questions which the data address;

- the level of sophistication of users and past uses made of data;
- the extent to which household surveys are the primary or only source of data to inform discussion, analysis and research;
- whether the data supports a broad or more narrow range of policy and user interests; and
- the extent to which particular social issues warrant more or less frequent monitoring.

Proposed elements of a household survey program

In order to meet what are assessed as the highest priority needs of users, the review team considered that the ABS household survey program should have the following elements:

Monthly Labour Force Survey—to continue to provide timely estimates of employment and unemployment at both national and State/Territory level.

Monthly Labour Force Survey supplementary surveys—a program of surveys run in association with the Labour Force Survey, as a cost effective way to expand the range of information available from households.

General social surveys—to obtain at regular intervals broad information across all areas of social concern.

Special social surveys—to provide in depth information about a specific subject area or group within the population, utilising such methodologies as are appropriate for the survey objectives and for the data to be collected.

Multi-purpose household surveys—a flexible multi-topic survey vehicle able to collect and output relatively simple data in a timely fashion. It would provide a personal interviewing capacity to respond to user needs for more outcome and performance data.

Longitudinal surveys—to provide information about respondents over time, in order to explore causal relationships and the linkages between policies and outcomes.

The review team considered options for topic content of the individual program elements, topic frequency and possible combinations of the proposed programs in the context of the following cost scenarios:

Option 1—no increase to the ABS resources of \$9.7m per annum currently expended on the household survey program.

Option 2—an increase of \$1m per annum, which would allow a couple of major gaps to be accommodated.

Option 3—an increase of \$4.4m per annum, which would allow for a program which comes closer to providing the required range of information.

Proposed monthly labour force survey (LFS) program

The review team identified a number of ways in which changes might be made to the monthly labour force survey (LFS). However, users were divided on whether, and if so how, the survey might be changed. Given the substantial further user consultation that would be required before any changes to the monthly LFS could be agreed, no recommendations were made in this regard.

Proposed monthly LFS supplementary survey program

If the monthly LFS continues in its current form, the program of accompanying supplementary surveys is a cost effective way to collect a small amount of additional data. However, there are limitations to the surveys that can be included in this program. They must be suitable for telephone interviewing of 'any responsible adult', the content must not impact on the labour force statistics, and to contain response load they should generally take no longer than an average of 3 minutes of interviewing per household. Priority is given to those topics that capitalise best on the large sample available and the links to the regular labour force data.

The following table outlines the topics proposed for inclusion in a monthly LFS supplementary survey program (subject to any decisions on options for changing the LFS) over the next few years. This proposed program, along with the program of special social surveys, will be subject to annual review as part of ABS planning processes. The list should, therefore, be seen as provisional until 'locked in' following annual reviews of contemporary priorities.

MONTHLY LFS SUPPLEMENTARY SURVEY PROGRAM, FREQUENCY AND ANNUALISED COSTS

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Annualised Cost</i>
		<i>\$m</i>
Family and community		
Family characteristics	5 yearly	0.054
Child care	3 yearly	0.090
Disability module	3 yearly	0.090
Education		
Transition from education to work(a)	annual	0.405
Work		
Labour force experience	2 yearly	1.440
Labour mobility	2 yearly	
Characteristics of small business owners	3 yearly	
Persons employed at home	3 yearly	
Working arrangements	3 yearly	
Persons not in the labour force	annual	
Underemployed workers	annual	
Job search experience of unemployed persons	annual	
Multiple jobholders(b)	4 yearly	
Characteristics of migrants	3 yearly	
Retrenchment and redundancy	4 yearly	
Successful and unsuccessful job search experience	2 yearly	
Non-standard employment	3 yearly	
Retirement and retirement intentions	4 yearly	
Weekly earnings of employees(c)	annual	
Employment benefits	5 yearly	
Housing		
Rental investors(d)	4 yearly	0.068
Culture/leisure		
Attendance at culture/leisure venues	4 yearly	0.068
Work in culture/leisure activities	4 yearly	0.068
State topics	annual	0.270
Un-allocated space		0.147
Total		2.700

(a) Includes information on educational attainment, education participation and apprentices. (b) Some items also collected annually for Australian national accounts purposes. (c) Also includes items on trade union membership, leave entitlements and superannuation cover. (d) Proposed to be run as a mail survey.

Proposed general social surveys program

There is increasing recognition that many social phenomena are interrelated and that social policy is becoming less sectoral as a consequence. As a result, surveys which allow interrelationships between different aspects of people's lives to be explored are important. They can also provide insight into the extent to which some people face multiple social disadvantage. Many users at both Commonwealth and State/Territory level have supported the development of surveys which regularly obtain broad information across a range of areas of social concern. They argue that such a general social survey allows data from different domains to be associated in ways not generally available, and can provide a useful background against which policy changes can be highlighted and measured.

The review team has proposed that a general social survey be conducted every three years, with the content of each survey being largely fixed (although it can be expected to evolve slowly over time) but with some spare capacity each survey to include items relating to contemporary or emerging issues. It is proposed that a sample of 17,000 persons for this survey be distributed to States/Territories in a way that favours the production of State/Territory estimates rather than national estimates. The review team also proposes that from time to time (every six years) the sample be supplemented to include 11,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in all areas, designed to produce estimates at state/territory level. The resulting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander sample would constitute a general social survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Proposed multi-purpose household survey program

The multi-purpose household survey is intended to provide a flexible vehicle to meet user requirements for small, relatively straightforward data sets. While priorities for topics to be included on this vehicle would be determined one year in advance so that ABS retains the flexibility to address the more important contemporary issues, it is envisaged that a program along the following lines would be offered. It is assumed that each survey would comprise an average of 45 minutes interviewing time per person (one person per household) of which 5 minutes would be core socio-demographic items. It is proposed the survey run two years in three in conjunction with a three yearly General Social Survey. Option 3 is a higher cost survey as it assumes a sample of 17,000 rather than 12,000 persons.

MULTI-PURPOSE HOUSEHOLD SURVEY PROGRAM, FREQUENCY, LENGTH AND ANNUALISED COSTS

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Minutes</i>	<i>Annualised cost</i>	
			<i>Options 1 and 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
			<i>(\$m)</i>	
Family	3 yearly	10	0.175	0.208
Voluntary work	6 yearly	5	0.044	0.052
Health	3 yearly	5	0.088	0.104
Education and training	3 yearly	10	0.175	0.208
Work	6 yearly	10	0.088	0.104
Assets/wealth	6 yearly	10	0.088	0.104
Housing	3 yearly	10	0.175	0.208
Sport	2 years in 3	5	0.175	0.208
Crime and justice	6 yearly	5	0.044	0.052
IT in the home	2 years in 3	5	0.175	0.208
Environment	2 years in 3	5	0.175	0.208
Total			1.402	1.664

Proposed special social surveys program

The following tables provide information on the proposed special social surveys for the different options, with their associated frequency and annualised cost. The program is mainly built around a 3–6 year frequency. Extending the survey cycle for some surveys in the current program from 5–6 years is one way to expand the capacity of the program and to address some of the excess demand. It also allows for a more balanced program over time as it better accommodates surveys with a 2 or 3 year frequency.

SURVEY FREQUENCY FOR DIFFERENT OPTIONS

<i>Survey or vehicle</i>	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
LFS supplementary surveys	monthly	monthly	monthly
Multi-purpose household survey	2 years in 3	2 years in 3	2 years in 3
General social survey	3 yearly	3 yearly	3 yearly
General social survey—Indigenous	6 yearly	6 yearly	6 yearly
Family/income/labour dynamics(a)	longitudinal	longitudinal	longitudinal
Special social surveys			
Family and housing		6 yearly*	6 yearly
Disability	6 yearly*	6 yearly*	6 yearly
Health	2–3 yearly	2–3 yearly	2–3 yearly
Child health and wellbeing	6 yearly*	6 yearly*	6 yearly
Education and training		6 yearly*	6 yearly
Income and housing costs(b)	annual	annual	annual
Household expenditure	6 yearly	6 yearly	6 yearly
Retirement provision and super			6 yearly
Time use	12 yearly	12 yearly	6 yearly
Crime and safety	6 yearly	6 yearly	3 yearly
Violence against persons			12 yearly

* Survey to contain half of the content of a 'standard' special survey.

(a) Subject to outcomes of a feasibility study and ABS consideration of a specific proposal. (b) Subject to the outcomes of a separate review of the current survey.

ANNUALISED COSTS OF SURVEYS (\$m)

<i>Survey or vehicle</i>	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
LFS supplementary surveys	2.70	2.70	2.70
Multi-purpose household survey	1.40	1.40	1.67
General social survey	0.70	0.70	0.83
General social survey—Indigenous	0.45	0.73	0.73
Family/income/labour dynamics	(a)n.a.	(a)n.a.	(a)n.a.
Special social surveys			
Family and housing	—	0.35	0.70
Disability	0.35	0.35	0.70
Health	0.84	0.84	0.84
Child health and wellbeing	0.35	0.35	0.70
Education and training	—	0.35	0.70
Income and housing costs	1.30	1.30	1.30
Household expenditure	1.13	1.13	1.13
Retirement provision and super	—	—	0.70
Time use	0.18	0.18	0.35
Crime and safety	0.35	0.35	0.70
Violence against persons	—	—	0.35
Total	9.75	10.73	14.10

(a) Cost estimates not yet made.

Proposed survey expenditure by subject field

The proposed program would see a range of surveys, or part thereof, undertaken in each subject area. A summary of the annualised expenditure by subject area is set out in the following table:

ANNUALISED EXPENDITURE BY SUBJECT FIELD (\$m)

<i>Topic</i>	<i>Option 1</i>	<i>Option 2</i>	<i>Option 3</i>
Family and Community	0.803	0.978	1.544
Health	1.278	1.278	1.644
Education and training	0.580	0.930	1.313
Work	1.528	1.528	1.544
Economic wellbeing	2.218	2.218	2.934
Housing	0.543	0.718	0.926
Culture/leisure	0.486	0.486	0.694
Crime and justice	0.394	0.394	1.102
IT and telecommunications	0.175	0.175	0.208
Environment	0.175	0.175	0.208
Multi-topic			
General social survey	0.700	0.700	0.833
General social survey—Indigenous(a)	0.450	0.730	0.730
State supplementaries	0.270	0.270	0.270
Un-allocated supplementaries	0.147	0.147	0.147
Total	9.747	10.727	14.097

(a) Indigenous data also available from the labour force survey in the work area and from supplemented samples in other areas, for example, health.

Longitudinal surveys

Many users have emphasised that the goal of monitoring the social wellbeing of the population and supporting the development and evaluation of government policy cannot be achieved through cross-sectional surveys alone. Increasingly, they report, social policy is being used to influence behaviour and social policy analysis requires answers about changes in behaviour and personal circumstances over time. Information is sought not only for a point in time but for transitions from one state to another (for example, from employed to unemployed, from married to divorced, from parental home to independent living).

The review team understood and accepted the value of longitudinal data in providing insight into the dynamics of an increasingly diverse society, including why and how often change occurs. It considered a successful longitudinal household survey would assist in monitoring wellbeing and support the development, implementation and evaluation of government policies and programs. Over the next 12 months, ABS will work with the Department of Family and Community Services on a feasibility study and specific proposal for the conduct of a longitudinal survey of family, income and labour dynamics. This work will also assess alternative proposals to a household survey such as a longitudinal study using administrative data from the Australian Taxation Office, Centrelink and others. The ability of the ABS to conduct a longitudinal household survey, should this be an outcome of the feasibility study, would be influenced by the development resources within ABS available to implement an expanded household survey program.

FUTURE WORK

Comments on the report of the review team have now been received from key users and the Australian Statistics Advisory Council discussed the report at its July 1999 meeting. A proposed forward work program for 2000–01 to 2002–03, in the context of the 10-year plan proposed by the review team, is currently being devised taking account of these final comments. It will be discussed by the ABS in its regular forward work program planning processes and a final program determined by the Australian Statistician. The forward program will then be progressively implemented over successive planning cycles.

A further report on implementation of the review will be included in next year's Annual Report.

3 ABS EXPERIENCE IN WORKPLACE RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The ABS, in accordance with the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*, has introduced fundamental changes to the way in which employee pay and conditions, working relationships and consultation are managed.

These changes are tailored to the specific needs of the organisation, emphasise efficiency and productivity, encourage improved performance, and facilitate continuous improvement in the workplace. Continued senior level management support has been a critical success factor, and an important outcome has been improved consultation processes with ABS staff.

Australian Workplace Agreements (AWAs) were offered to all staff. In total, 521 staff signed these individual contracts, including all operative Senior Executive Service and Executive Level 2 ABS employees. Also, nearly half of all AWAs made with staff below Executive Level 2 in the Australian Public Service are in the ABS.

Two Certified Agreements have been certified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, one with staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1922*, and one with household survey interviewers employed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

OBJECTIVES OF ABS AGREEMENT MAKING FOR PUBLIC SERVICE ACT STAFF

ABS sought to achieve four key objectives in the agreement making process:

- introduce a performance based culture;
- manage the work program to achieve productivity outcomes;
- streamline personnel practices and procedures; and
- introduce more flexible working arrangements.

Introduce a performance based culture

The key goals of ABS workplace agreements were to foster a more satisfying working environment and improved performance. The central strategies for achieving these goals were the introduction of a Performance Management Scheme and performance-based pay.

These strategies are intended to improve communication between managers and their staff, provide feedback to staff about their performance and to acknowledge and reward staff for their contribution and achievements. The agreements include provisions covering:

- performance management for all permanent staff;

- improved communication between staff, management and the staff associations;
- annual salary review;
- overall pay rises based on productivity outcomes;
- individual pay rises linked directly to performance outcomes;
- abolition of increments;
- market rates considerations;
- the performance management process linked to procedures for managing poor work performance; and
- introduction of a Recognition and Reward Scheme to reward individuals and teams for exceptional achievement.

By January 1999, close to 100% of ABS staff had a performance agreement or a trial performance agreement (depending on level) in place. Productivity based pay rises averaging about 7% and one-off bonuses of 3% were paid by July 1999.

Manage the work program to achieve productivity outcomes

Fundamental to the achievement of a performance-based culture is the achievement of productivity outcomes which deliver the performance improvement being sought and which fund shared benefits for staff and the work program.

Productivity outcomes are sourced both from changes to conditions arising out of the agreements and from work program efficiencies. Some of the sources of productivity improvements achieved to date have included:

- tightening of overtime and higher duties administration and provisions;
- adoption of the streamlined Australian Public Service classification structure;
- market testing and outsourcing some non-core administrative functions; and
- improved practices in survey design and collection methods.

As an example of the efficiencies achieved, ABS overtime expenditure reduced by some 20% during the first six months of operation of the new arrangements.

Streamline personnel practices and procedures

The agreement making process prompted the examination of some conditions of service which were inefficient to administer or which were previously being administered in a way which diluted managers' authority. This has led to administration being improved in the following areas:

- responsibility and authority has been devolved from central administrative areas to line managers for the administration of practically all conditions of service matters;
- a previously complex set of rules covering Personal/Carer's Leave has been simplified; and
- a single miscellaneous leave type (Other Paid Leave) has been created to replace a myriad of previous leave types.

There has been a significant increase (20%) in the proportion of leave applications processed without clerical intervention (now 87%). The removal of central roles in the management and approval of leave and other matters has also helped streamline administrative processes.

Introduce more flexible working arrangements

More flexible working arrangements are operating which are better suited to the business of the ABS and which allow employees to achieve a more acceptable balance between their work commitments and family responsibilities. These provisions include:

- an extended flextime bandwidth allowing staff to tailor their working hours between 7am and 7pm;
- variable core hours to suit the requirements of each work area;
- annual leave available as it accrues and access to purchased annual leave arrangements (for example 48/52);
- a new definition of part-time work with a 4 week settlement period; and
- more flexible arrangements for staff who work from home.

The improved flexibility in working hours is particularly attractive to staff with family responsibilities and commuters working in the larger cities. The arrangements also fit in better with the monthly cycles of statistical collections and allow better management of business in the context of east/west time differences.

CONCLUSION

The ABS considers the capacity to offer AWAs to all employees to be an important part of the agreement making process and will continue to provide this option to staff who prefer to have an individual contract rather than be covered by the ABS Certified Agreement.

Although the agreement making process has been a learning experience, the ABS is benefiting enormously from the cultural changes it has had to respond to and embrace. No doubt there is more that can be achieved by developing and sustaining this performance management culture.

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; and
- 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 1998–99 the sub-program operated using a total of 2,587 staff years, representing 89% of total ABS operative staffing. The cost of the sub-program was \$199.7 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 the Statistical Clearing House, participation in national and State statistical committees and through ABS outposted officers and statistical consultancy services);
- provision of professional statistical support; and
- development, maintenance and promotion of statistical standards, classifications and frameworks.

The work program of the 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, the availability of skilled resources to undertake the work, and the costs associated with the activities.

The sub-program depends on the corporate services sub-program for a wide range of support functions, including human and financial resource management.

Individual components within the sub-program have close links with a wide range of specific government programs which provide a source of data, with users of statistical information and with clients of the statistical coordination and consultancy services. The statistical activities of other agencies complement the statistical operations sub-program, resulting in a comprehensive national statistical service.

Appendix 1 lists the program/sub-programs/components structure of the ABS.

The cost and average staffing level of the sub-program are shown in the following table.

COST OF STATISTICAL OPERATIONS SUB-PROGRAM AND AVERAGE STAFFING LEVEL

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Total cost (\$'000)	294 237	211 490	199 711
Cost as a percentage of ABS expenditure (%)	90	88	88
Average operative staff years(a)	3 548	2 787	2 587

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

OUTPUTS

The ABS uses many avenues for the dissemination of its statistical information but, in line with client preferences, printed publications remained the prime release medium in 1998-99.

At the same time, a rapidly increasing volume of data is being delivered through an expanding range of electronic products and services. A continually expanding range of information is publicly available on the ABS website.

The ABS also provides, free of charge, a quick reference information service for basic statistical information. The service operates in response to telephone calls, email correspondence and personal visits. It also offers information consultancy services, on a fee-for-service basis, for clients requiring more complex information. More detailed statistics, and other presentations of statistics than those initially released in publications, are available through this information consultancy service. The 'Dial-a-Statistic' and 'CPI Infoline' telephone recorded message services provide the most frequently sought information.

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.

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 aim is to encourage users to identify and 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 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 515 libraries participating throughout Australia. These libraries are provided with free ABS publications and some electronic services to meet the needs of their local communities.

The following tables show information relating to ABS outputs.

**PUBLICATION TITLES, 1997-98 AND 1998-99
(number)**

	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
1997-98	116	59	33	(a)141	349
1998-99					
National	61	39	15	80	195
New South Wales	7	2	2	2	13
Victoria	6	2	2	2	12
Queensland	6	2	2	4	14
South Australia	5	2	2	3	12
Western Australia	4	3	2	4	13
Tasmania	7	1	2	2	12
Northern Territory	5	1	1	2	9
Australian Capital Territory	4	1	1	2	8
Total	105	53	29	101	288

(a) The number for 1997-98 (Other) includes Population Census products which were not released this year.

ABS RELEASES(a) CLASSIFIED BY SUBJECT MATTER AND FREQUENCY, 1997-98 AND 1998-99 (Number)

	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Economic Finance Releases (National Accounts, Balance of Payments, International Investment and Trade, Public and Private Finance)					
1997-98	15	48	49	5	117
1998-99	13	48	48	4	113
Industry Releases(b) (Agriculture, Mining, Manufacturing, Construction, Distribution, Transport, Service Industries, Science and Technology)					
1997-98	38	86	(c)148	25	297
1998-99	34	76	142	32	284
Population and Migration Releases (Population Estimates, Projections, Census, Vital and Migration Statistics)					
1997-98	67	4	12	(d)48	131
1998-99	35	4	11	19	69
Labour Releases (Labour Force, Employment Conditions, Prices, Household Income and Expenditure)					
1997-98	15	69	(c)65	17	166
1998-99	13	79	48	13	153
Social Analysis Releases (Education, Health, Welfare, Law, Order, Public Safety)					
1997-98	20	4	—	29	53
1998-99	15	9	—	35	59
Other general releases					
1997-98	29	22	121	131	303
1998-99	32	11	108	115	266
Total					
1997-98	184	233	395	255	1 067
1998-99	142	227	357	218	944

(a) Includes catalogue numbered publications and releases on microfiche and floppy disk. (b) A number of releases scheduled for 1997-98 were released in 1998-99. (c) A number of industry and labour monthly releases were converted to quarterly releases during 1997-98. (d) Includes Population Census releases.

ACCESS TO DISSEMINATION SERVICES

Service(a)	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Publications (subscribers)	11 244	11 015	11 658
PC AUSSTATS (subscribers)	220	270	255
Internet Home Page (accesses)	1 759 986	4 274 154	8 931 056
CAUL Internet (subscribers)(b)	33	29	30
International Trade (subscribers)(c)	1 104	1 289	1 204
Telephone Inquiry Service (calls completed)	209 047	189 020	193 208
Internet Inquiry Service	2 376	5 124	5 654
Dial-a-Statistic—1900 (calls)	45 560	42 004	32 081
CPI Infoline(d)	—	—	2 149
Library Extension Program (libraries)	529	528	515
Secondary providers (number)(e)	41	46	57

(a) Where the number of subscribers is shown this refers to 30 June. (b) Service for university libraries. (c) Includes clients previously using Telestats service. (d) Service commenced on 1 October 1998. (e) Various organisations which are licensed to re-sell ABS data.

**REVENUE RAISED FROM STATISTICS
(\$'000)**

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Publications			
Subscriptions	2 233	2 031	1 805
Other	1 496	1 740	1 547
Other Standard products	1 946	(a)8 921	2 982
Information Consultancy	4 578	6 488	5 500
Statistical Consultancy	798	1 023	944
User Funded Surveys	8 200	5 952	5 539
Other Products and Services	3 881	4 872	4 395
Total	23 132	31 027	22 712

(a) Increase due primarily to availability of the 1996 Census of Population and Housing electronic product, CDATA96.

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

	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Main economic indicator statistics			
Monthly	35	(a)31	29
Quarterly	60	(a)48	46
Other general releases			
Monthly	51	(b)38	36
Quarterly	89	85	93
Annual	330	387	357

(a) The improvement in release time is partially attributable to a number of monthly main economic indicator statistics converted to quarterly releases. (b) The improvement in release time is partially attributable to the cessation of a number of monthly releases.

REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the sub-program during 1998–99, except the executive support and business office components.

Dissemination

The dissemination component provides the ABS with publishing services for both printed and electronic media. It prepares the *Catalogue of Publications and Products* (Cat. no. 1101.0), reference products such as *Year Book Australia* (Cat. no. 1301.0), and electronic products and services such the ABS website and PC AUSSTATS (Cat. no. 1401.0).

During 1998–99, 288 publication titles were produced, which equated to 944 individual publication releases. Publications ranged in size from a few pages containing monthly or quarterly key economic and social indicator series, to major thematic volumes such as *Australian Social Trends* (Cat. no. 4102.0) which bring together data from different sources on particular topics of interest.

The Internet is increasingly being used to deliver statistics to clients. The expanding electronic dissemination services include the generally accessible ABS website which provides ‘public good’ information free of charge; PC AUSSTATS, an on-line service for delivering time series data to subscribers; the delivery of regular customised foreign trade statistics reports to subscribers; and a trial service for delivering publications by email as an additional option to the printed format. These electronic services are starting to be delivered as a package to the intranets of principal organisations which make heavy use of official statistics.

In 1998–99, the ABS website (www.abs.gov.au) became one of the most accessed websites in Australia. The content of the site has been substantially expanded, resulting in a steep growth in its use. The average number of documents accessed daily has risen from 17,342 in July 1998 to 30,656 in June 1999.

Publications and services are distributed by the subscription service, through bookshops located in all offices, and through commercial distributors including AusInfo bookshops. Printed and electronic catalogues and guides are produced to help clients locate the information they need.

Achievements during the year included:

- further enhancement of the ABS website on the Internet. This included the addition of *Australia Now*, comprehensive reference information which was prepared as an ‘On-line Australia’ project;
- release of a service charter for clients;
- improvements to publishing standards;

- the initial release of a state-of-the-art publishing system to improve consistency in the application of publishing standards, and the efficiency of product generation in both paper and electronic formats;
- preparations for the large-scale delivery of publications by email;
- review and upgrade of the central information consultancy service;
- development and trial release of a package of electronic products to the intranets of selected client organisations; and
- release of a CD-ROM which provides easy access to all publications released in 1998, *Historical Publications on CD-ROM* (Cat. no. 1124.0).

Marketing and Public Relations

Marketing

The marketing sub-component is responsible for raising awareness of ABS capability to satisfy the information and analytical needs of government, business and the broader community. In order to do this, the marketing area collects and disseminates information about client requirements and ABS capabilities and how these can most equitably and cost-effectively be aligned. It aims to ensure that marketing initiatives are coordinated and integrated to maximise the informed use of statistics throughout the community.

Achievements during the year included:

- continued presentation and promotion of major census products including KeyData, CDATA96 and Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA);
- continued release of complimentary journals *What Figures* and *Census Update*;
- development and implementation of a series of marketing and promotional plans with subject matter areas;
- assistance to subject matter areas in the identification of services that could better service client needs;
- market research to measure levels of client satisfaction with the information consultancy service and to establish performance benchmarks; and
- market research to evaluate the reactions of clients to the range and delivery of products from the 1996 Census of Population and Housing, and to contribute to product and services recommendations for outputs from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing.

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, parliamentarians, other opinion leaders, providers of information to statistical collections, and the community in general.

Achievements during the year included:

- provision of a comprehensive service to media, including production and dissemination of 164 media releases, organising of media events and briefing of journalists to achieve prominent print, radio and television reporting of the ABS, its collections and publications. This included coordination of responses to around 3,000 media inquiries for a wide range of statistical information, interviews and comment;
- provision of strategic communications advice on programs and management of public relations issues;
- improved public relations impact through the Internet, with accesses to media releases through the ABS website almost doubling since July 1998 to more than 50,000 per month;
- improved media training and media awareness courses for ABS Central and Regional Office staff; and
- production of four issues of the in-house information magazine *ABS News*.

Client Services

The client services component provides leadership and assistance to the ABS in pursuing its corporate mission by ensuring the continued profile of the ABS and its products and services, improving client focus and achieving client service business goals.

The component provides clients with a range of services including free supply of limited information that is quickly and routinely available; information consultancy on a fee-for-service basis for clients with more detailed or complex information needs; distribution of publications and products in printed or electronic format through information consultancy, ABS Bookshops and through a subscription mailing service; and outposting of staff to other government agencies for specialist statistical assignments.

Client services statistical support

The client services statistical support sub-component provides information consultancies which usually involve an interpretation of client needs, identification of relevant data, and the extraction, analysis and formatting of appropriate information for the client. Customised information provided to clients typically consists of statistical tables, graphs, maps, commentary, or a combination of these.

Client management and sales

The client management and sales sub-component focuses on developing and maintaining continuous relationships with clients in Commonwealth and State governments, selected business sectors, education, libraries and the media.

Achievements during the year included:

- handling of 193,000 calls by the telephone inquiry service. With this service, the majority of inquiries are answered immediately and information is generally supplied free-of-charge. The Internet inquiry service received over 5,000 requests for information;
- 32,000 uses of the recorded 'Dial-a-Statistic' telephone service (available 24 hours a day). The recorded message provides information about the consumer price index, balance of payments, national accounts, labour force, average weekly earnings and population estimates;
- introduction of a new telephone service (the CPI Infoline) in October, providing current and historical consumer price index data. It received over 2,100 calls;
- provision of information consultancies to the value of \$5.5 million for a range of clients and on a range of statistical topics. This was a decrease of \$1 million on the previous year, as a result of a fall in demand for 1996 Census of Population and Housing-based consultancies;
- consolidation of secondary distribution arrangements, following the considerable increase of 1997–98. There are currently 57 third parties providing secondary distribution services for the ABS;
- continuation of long-term outposts to several Commonwealth government agencies and arrangement of three new outposts. A number of short-term outposts to State government agencies were also undertaken; and
- trial of a Notes database that can be placed on the intranets of client organisations. The aim of this service is to provide a wide range of information on the desktop of each staff member in the client organisation.

Library Services

The ABS Library Network provides access to a wide range of statistical and research material to meet the information needs of staff and the public. It also manages the Library Extension Program and administers the distribution of Confidentialised Unit Record Files to the university sector.

Through the Library Extension Program, the ABS aims to improve community awareness by providing access to the main findings of ABS statistical collections through libraries. A location directory is maintained on the ABS website.

Achievements during the year included:

- distribution of the final release of the complimentary Census CD-ROM product (CLIB96) to public and tertiary libraries around Australia. Over 1,200 librarians were trained in the use of ABS statistics and CLIB96;
- distribution to members of a booklet outlining the aims and benefits of membership of the Library Extension Program and release of a dedicated area on the ABS website for libraries; and
- release of 86 Confidentialised Unit Record Files to university researchers. This enhances the capacity of university researchers to assess and report on Australia's social and economic trends.

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 within 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 from a number of sources are brought together and presented in a conceptually consistent way, both for a given period and over time. Australia's national accounts essentially accord with the recommendations contained in the 1993 issue of the *System of National Accounts* (SNA93), which is the international standard for national accounts statistics.

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.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Information Paper: Upgraded Australian National Accounts* (Cat. no. 5253.0), which provided details on major changes to the national accounts to be introduced from the September quarter 1998 issue of *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0);
- the introduction of SNA93 into the Australian national accounts in the September quarter 1998 issue of *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0);
- the introduction of annually re-weighted chain volume measures, which replaced constant price estimates in the September quarter 1998 issue of *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0);
- completion of the first round of annual supply-use tables. The quarterly national income, expenditure and product accounts were first benchmarked to these tables in the September quarter 1998 issue of *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0);



Speakers (from the left) at the Capital Stock and Multifactor Productivity Seminar hosted by the ABS in June 1999 are Rob Edwards, First Assistant Statistician, Economics Accounts Division; Dean Parbam, Assistant Commissioner, General Research, Productivity Commission; Derek Burnell and Charles Aspden, members of the Constant Price Estimates Section; Dr Edwin Dean, former Associate Commissioner, Office of Productivity and Technology, US Department of Labor, and Professor Peter Hill, formerly of the OECD and the Economic Commission for Europe.

- release of the 1994–95 Input-Output tables, which were the first on an SNA93 basis and which, for the first time, were fully consistent with the quarterly national income, expenditure and product accounts;
- significant improvements to the estimates of capital stock and multi-factor productivity statistics, which were released in the 1997–98 issue of *Australian System of National Accounts* (Cat. no. 5204.0);
- major re-designs of most national accounts publications, including *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0), *Australian System of National Accounts* (Cat. no. 5204.0) and the annual publication *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (Cat. no. 5220.0), to take account of changes to the statistics and to improve their useability; and
- provision of seminars to external users in all States on the changes made to national accounts statistics. A highlight was a seminar on capital stock and multi-factor productivity statistics held in Canberra.

International Accounts

The international accounts component produces statistics and related information on the balance of payments, international trade in services and the 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 quarterly and annually, while the international trade in goods and services statistics are published monthly.

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of implementation of the revised international standards for balance of payments and international investment position statistics contained in the *1993 System of National Accounts* (SNA93). These were introduced in the September quarter 1998 release of *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (Cat. no. 5302.0), concurrently with similar changes to the Australian national accounts. The changes mean that, for the first time, the Australian balance of payments, international investment position and national accounts statistics are fully harmonised. The implementation included the adoption of chain volume measures for traded goods and services, and consequent improvement in the related implicit deflators which generate analytically more useful measures of the terms of trade;
- publication of a revised *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (Cat. no. 5331.0), covering the new international statistical standards, and incorporating, for the first time, the international investment position statistics. This publication is now available for the Statistical Concepts Reference Library CD-ROM;

- expansion of the published quarterly international investment position detail to include Australia's foreign debt assets and liabilities cross-classified by currency and residual maturity. This type of detail, which has not been previously required under international statistical standards, is becoming increasingly important internationally to improve the transparency in the cross-border financial positions of compiling economies;
- continued contribution to the work of the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Committee, aimed at improving the measurement and international comparability of international and financial accounts statistics. In particular, Australia has participated in follow-up work with the International Monetary Fund to analyse the results of, and take forward into future international collaboration, the Coordinated Portfolio Investment Survey;
- participation in a Bank of England workshop and research project on financial market data for international financial stability. The results were presented to an audience of Central Bank Governors and other senior officials, as well as being circulated more widely to international financial institutions and statistical agencies; and
- continued work on projects to assist statistical agencies in the region including assistance to the Bank of Korea and the New Zealand Department of Statistics to review and make recommendations on improving the compilation and associated data sources for balance of payments and international investment position statistics.

International Trade

The international trade component produces statistics on the value, composition, destination and source of Australia's merchandise exports and imports for use in compiling the balance of payments and national accounts statistics, as well as for use by government, industry and commercial analysts. The statistics are available in a range of output media, including publications, magnetic cartridge, email, floppy disk and paper reports, and can be tailored to the needs of individual clients. A selected range of international trade statistics and special articles is also available on the ABS website.

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of bilateral reconciliations of Australia's merchandise trade flows with the European Union for the 1992 to 1997 calendar years, and publication of the results in the September quarter 1998 issue of *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (Cat. no. 5422.0);
- implementation of a change to the value threshold used in the statistical processing of import entries to exclude from processing individual transaction lines where the value of the goods is less than \$250. This has resulted in a reduction of about 30% in the number of import lines processed and a consequent reduction in editing, processing and storage costs, with little impact on aggregate import data;

- review of the usefulness of existing statistical codes compared with the cost to industry of providing the detailed information, and the cost to Government of processing it. The outcome of the review is that from 1 July 1999 there will be fewer statistical codes: reductions of about 660 (11%) for exports and about 1,580 (17%) for imports;
- publication in the June quarter 1998 issue of *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (Cat. no. 5422.0), of an article outlining the growth in merchandise trade between Australia and the member countries of the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN) from 1988 to 1997;
- completion of an investigation into the extent to which existing data sources can be used to provide an indication of the sub-State level region of origin of Australia's exports, and publication of the results in the March quarter 1999 issue of *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (Cat. no. 5422.0);
- publication in the March quarter 1999 issue of *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (Cat. no. 5422.0), of an article outlining the growth in merchandise trade between Australia and Japan from 1989 to 1998, and the first three months of 1999;
- participation with the Australian Customs Service in its Cargo Management Re-engineering project which aims to speed the clearance of cargo and to help reduce the costs to businesses of overseas trade. Subject to satisfactory testing, the first stage (the implementation of partnerships with businesses) is proposed to be implemented on 1 July 2000; and
- provision of assistance to the Central Statistical Service of South Africa in identifying major user requirements, evaluating the existing methods used to collect and process foreign trade statistics, assessing the roles and responsibilities of the agencies involved, and recommending improvements.

Financial Accounts

The financial accounts component produces, as part of the Australian system of national accounts, statistics on the financial profile of each sector of the economy and on the markets for various categories of financial instruments. Information on inter-sectoral financial transactions is also provided.

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

Achievements during the year included:

- conversion of the financial accounts to conform to the 1993 *System of National Accounts* (SNA93), including release of *Information Paper: Upgraded Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (Cat. no. 5254.0);

- collection of financial information from financial institutions according to the revised international standards for financial accounts statistics contained in SNA93; and
- commencement of a joint project with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority to review and rationalise statistical collection arrangements from regulated financial institutions.

Public Sector Accounts

The public sector accounts component produces information on revenue, outlays, financing transactions and financial assets and liabilities of the Commonwealth, State, Territory and local governments, and their trading and financial enterprises. In addition to a range of annual publications, quarterly statistics are compiled for inclusion in the national accounts, and detailed financial statistics about the 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 Sub-committee of the Joint Economic Forecasting Group.

Achievements during the year included:

- implementation of the changes to Government Finance Statistics (GFS) associated with the introduction of the 1993 SNA;
- conduct of a conference involving staff from the ABS, Commonwealth and State and Territory departments of Finance and Treasury and the Commonwealth Grants Commission to re-assess the ABS strategy for the move of GFS to an accrual accounting basis; and
- conduct of workshops involving staff from the ABS, Commonwealth and State and Territory departments of Finance and Treasury, the Commonwealth Grants Commission and the Australian Accounting Research Foundation on the move of GFS to an accrual accounting basis.

Prices

The prices component is responsible for compiling the consumer price index (CPI) and a range of producer and international trade price indexes.

The CPI measures the change each quarter in the cost of purchasing a fixed basket of consumer goods and services. The producer and international trade price indexes include price indexes of inputs and outputs of manufacturing industry, materials used in the building industry, exports and imports.

Achievements during the year included:

- introduction of the 13th Series CPI in respect of September quarter 1998, linked to the 12th Series CPI as at June quarter 1998. Details were provided in *Information Paper: Introduction of the 13th Series Australian Consumer Price Index* (Cat. no. 6454.0). A *Guide to the Consumer Price Index 13th Series* (Cat. no. 6440.0) was published to further assist user understanding of the new series;
- the progressive introduction, in December quarter 1998 and March quarter 1999, of the geometric means formula for calculating the price movement for a sample of observations in the CPI. The geometric means formula eliminates the potential for bias associated with the arithmetic mean of price relatives formula;
- the compilation of new experimental service industry producer price index series, published in *Information Paper: Producer Price Index Developments* (Cat. no. 6422.0). The indexes relate to a selection of ANZSIC classes in the Transport and Storage Division and Property and Business Services Division of ANZSIC; and
- construction of an experimental producer price index series within a stage of production statistical framework, published in *Information Paper: Producer Price Index Developments* (Cat. no. 6422.0). These experimental series provide an economy-wide view of the inflation process. This view represents one of the key elements of the strategy articulated in the earlier *Information Paper: An Analytical Framework for Price Indexes in Australia* (Cat. no. 6421.0).

Business Statistics

Investment and Profits Surveys

The investment and profits surveys sub-component produces indicators of current and future economic activity through the publication of quarterly estimates of company profits, new capital expenditure, inventories and sales.

Achievements during the year included:

- expansion of the existing survey of inventories and sales from the March quarter 1999 to collect sales data from the service industries sector;
- continued development work on integrating the existing quarterly surveys of new capital expenditure, inventories and sales, company profits, and employment and earnings into a single, quarterly business survey. A program of phased implementation has been scheduled to commence from the September quarter 1999; and
- progress on re-development of the processing systems that support these surveys (expected to be completed by September 1999). The new systems will become the platform for the new integrated quarterly business survey.

Income Tax

This sub-component is responsible for enhancing the way the ABS uses business income tax data, provided by the Australian Taxation Office under the *Income Tax Assessment Act 1936* for statistical purposes.

Throughout the year the sub-component developed statistics from a combination of ABS (economy wide statistics) and Australian Taxation Office (business income tax) sources. Now considered operational, responsibility for ongoing production of these estimates has been transferred to the economy wide statistics component of the statistical operations sub-program. The income tax sub-component retains responsibility for ongoing development and enhancement in ABS use of income tax data.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Information Paper: Expanded Use of Business Income Tax Data in ABS Economic Statistics—Experimental Estimates for Selected Industries 1994–95 and 1995–96* (Cat. no. 5672.0);
- inclusion of estimates for the three financial years to 1996–97 in *Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia* (Cat. no. 8140.0);
- further development of the methodology and systems for combining business income tax and ABS business income and expenditure data for the service industries; and
- ongoing provision of support to the increasing number of areas investigating the use of business income tax data for finer geographic and industry classifications of economic statistics.

Economy Wide Statistics

The economy wide statistics component is responsible for a range of annual statistics on the financial operations and performance of businesses in all industries of the Australian economy. The component also conducts a quarterly survey of expectations of short and medium term business performance, which covers all business sizes and all sectors of the economy except agriculture and general government.

Achievements during the year included:

- inclusion of estimates for the three financial years to 1996–97 in *Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia* (Cat. no. 8140.0);
- conduct of the eighth annual economic activity survey, in respect of 1997–98. Data from this and previous surveys were supplemented with disaggregated income tax data during 1997–98 and the combined data set was used in the compilation of the Australian national accounts. Preliminary estimates were released in *Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8142.0); and

- analysis of seasonally adjusted estimates of business expectations, with estimates expected to be released during 1999.

Small Business Statistics

The small business statistics 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.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Small and Medium Enterprises Business, Growth and Performance Survey, Australia* (Cat. no. 8141.0);
- conduct of the fourth and final survey (relating to 1997–98) in the business longitudinal survey series;
- making available the first Confidentialised Unit Record File covering data from the first three years of the business longitudinal survey;
- development of a third survey on the characteristics of small business operators, to be conducted as a supplementary topic to the November 1999 Labour Force Survey;
- publication of *Small Business in Australia Update, 1997–98* (Cat. no. 1321.0.40.001); and
- presentation of papers for the 1998 and 1999 conferences of the Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand.

Science and Technology

The science and technology component provides statistics on research and experimental development, innovation and information and telecommunication technologies, including the Internet.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Research and Experimental Development, Businesses, Australia* (Cat. no. 8104.0);
- publication of *Research and Experimental Development, General Government and Private Non-Profit Organisations, Australia* (Cat. no. 8109.0);
- publication of the first revision of the *Australian Standard Research Classification (ASRC)* (Cat. no. 1297.0);
- publication of *Human Resources in Science and Technology (HRST), Australia* (Cat. no. 8149.0);
- publication of *Innovation in Mining, Australia* (Cat. no. 8121.0);

- conduct of the survey and publication of the results in *Year 2000 Problem, Australia* (Cat. no. 8152.0);
- publication of *Business Use of Information Technology, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8133.0);
- publication of *Household Use of Information Technology, Australia* (Cat. no. 8146.0);
- publication of *Use of the Internet by Householders, Australia* (Cat. no. 8147.0);
- publication of *Telecommunication Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8145.0); and
- contributions to the development of statistical standards for science and technology indicators by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), particularly in relation to information technology statistics.

Agriculture

The main elements of the agriculture component are conduct of an agricultural commodity collection and associated supplementary collections. The next agricultural collection on a census-basis is planned for 2001–02. Large scale surveys will be conducted in the intervening years. The component also conducts a monthly collection of livestock slaughtering, quarterly collections of poultry slaughtering and wool receivals by brokers and dealers, and an annual agricultural finance survey. A range of derived statistics, including estimates of the value of agricultural commodities produced and the apparent consumption of foodstuffs, is also produced by the agriculture component.

Senior staff participate in the Australian Wool Production Forecasting Committee which meets in Melbourne several times each year.

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of the 1997–98 agricultural commodity survey. Funding provided by users enabled the collection of detailed data on apples, pears and grape varieties;
- development and implementation of the second agricultural commodity survey for 1998–99. User-funding was provided to collect data on the use of information technology by farm households and businesses and on farm forestry and fencing nationally and land-use practices in Victoria;
- publication of *Agricultural Industries, Financial Statistics, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 7506.0), to coincide with the National Agricultural and Resources Outlook Conference;
- publication of *Agriculture, Australia* (Cat. no. 7113.0), a compendium publication on the structure of the Australian farming sector;

- release of *AgStats on CD-ROM* (Cat. no. 7117.0.30.001);
- completion of the Geocoding Survey of East and West Gippsland and arrangement for Bureau of Rural Sciences to develop the land management practices and commodities digital datasets; and
- publication of *Directory of Agricultural Statistics* (Cat. no. 7217.0).

Mining

The mining component conducts annual surveys of the mining, electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries. The component also conducts quarterly collections of actual and expected mineral and petroleum exploration as well as supplementary collections of details of overseas exploration expenditure and of drilling methods in mineral exploration.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Mining, Electricity and Gas Operations, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8401.0) to coincide with the National Agricultural and Resources Outlook Conference;
- publication of *Electricity, Gas, Water and Sewerage Operations, Australia* (Cat. no. 8226.0);
- publication of *Australian Mining Industry* (Cat. no. 8414.0); and
- holding of the second meeting of the Mining User Advisory Group.

Manufacturing

The manufacturing component provides statistics on the structure, performance and production of the manufacturing industry. Data collected and disseminated include commodity production statistics, and extensive statistics on the structure, financial operations, performance and other characteristics of manufacturing industry. The latter set of statistics is obtained from an annual manufacturing industry survey.

Achievements during the year included:

- successful conduct of the 1997–98 survey of manufacturers which will enable in depth analysis of manufacturing industry performance;
- re-design of the survey results dissemination strategy; and
- continued improvement in survey processing, leading to higher quality data input to the annual and quarterly Australian national accounts.

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. Sources of data include monthly building approvals reported by approving authorities, and quarterly surveys of building activity and engineering construction. The component also conducts a construction industry survey on an irregular basis to provide measures of the structure of the construction industry as a whole.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Building Activity, Building Work Done, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8755.0);
- publication of *Private Sector Construction Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8772.0);
- introduction of an improved questionnaire for the building activity survey; and
- completion of the methodological review of the engineering construction survey, with recommended changes to be implemented in 1999–2000.

Transport

The transport component provides monthly and annual statistics on new motor vehicle registrations and quarterly statistics on freight movements by rail, sea and air. It undertakes annual surveys of motor vehicle use and associated motor vehicle censuses. Other activities include compilation of occasional compendium publications, directories of transport statistics and data on the Australian motor vehicle fleet on CD-ROM.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of the second edition of the *Directory of Transport Statistics* (Cat. no. 1132.0);
- publication of *Motor Vehicle Census, Australia* (Cat. no. 9309.0);
- publication of *TranStats* (Cat. no. 9312.0.30.001) a CD-ROM product;
- completion of investigations for a review of the transport statistics program; and
- completion of the development of a new road freight statistics collection methodology.

Service Industries

The service industries component produces statistics on the size, structure, operations and output of service industries.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Performing Arts Industries, Australia* (Cat. no. 8697.0), *Libraries and Museums, Australia* (Cat. no. 8649.0), *Zoos, Parks and Gardens Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8699.0), *Commercial Art Galleries, Australia* (Cat. no. 8651.0), and *Waste Management Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8698.0);
- publication of *Radio and Television Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8680.0), *Film and Video Production and Distribution, Australia* (Cat. no. 8679.0), *Sound Recording Studios, Australia* (Cat. no. 8555.0) and *Travel Agency Services Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8653.0);
- publication of *Casinos, Australia* (Cat. no. 8683.0), *Gambling Industries, Australia* (Cat. no. 8684.0) and *Clubs, Pubs, Taverns and Bars, Australia* (Cat. no. 8687.0);
- publication of *Audiology and Audiometry Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8554.0);
- completion of surveys in respect of 1997–98 on allied health industries, including dental services, physiotherapy services, chiropractic services and optometry and optical dispensing services, and the accommodation industry;
- methodological research and user-consultation in relation to proposed surveys to be conducted in respect of 1998–99; and
- completion of a review of the service industries future collection program.

Retail Survey

The retail survey sub-component undertakes the monthly retail trade survey which provides statistical information on retail turnover. 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 Australian national accounts.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Seasonal Influences on Retail Trade* (Cat. no. 8508.0) and an Australian Economic Indicator article, *Easter holiday effects in retail turnover*; and
- continued release of data on a timely basis (average of 22 working days after the end of the reference month) and with minimal revisions.

Tourism

The tourism component produces quarterly statistics on capacity and demand for tourist accommodation in Australia. Other activities include the development and promotion of statistical frameworks and classifications, production of a quarterly analytical publication *Tourism Indicators, Australia* (Cat. no. 8634.0) and irregular production of a directory of tourism statistics.

Achievements during the year included:

- production refinements to new processing system for the survey of tourist accommodation;
- specification, design and development of processes for more frequent updates of the ABS register of accommodation establishments from Australian Automobile Association data files;
- production of capacity counts of accommodation establishments subsequent to updating the register;
- implementation of review recommendations for *Tourism Indicators, Australia* (Cat. no. 8634.0);
- convening of a meeting of the Tourism Statistics Consultative Group, participation in other industry groups and tourism forums and implementing enhanced Internet contact facilities with key clients; and
- development of inter-agency agreements for the ongoing maintenance of compatible tourism regions.

Environment

The environment component collects and publishes environment and energy statistics, including environment accounts. Within these fields, the component plays a coordinating role in the collection of data, undertakes research and implements international accounting frameworks to new collections and current data holdings.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Fish Account, Australia* (Cat. no. 4607.0);
- publication of the fifth edition of *Environment Protection Expenditure, Australia* (Cat. no. 4603.0);
- publication of the fourth edition of *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (Cat. no. 4602.0);
- completion of a survey designed to collect information from local government authorities on natural resource use and management and environment protection expenditure;

- progress on environment accounts, with the expected release of the Water and Energy Accounts in 1999–2000. Work has also been carried out on Forest and Waste Accounts; and
- participation in the review of the United Nations environment accounting framework, System of Integrated Economic and Environment Accounts (SEEA).

Business Register

The business register component is responsible for the maintenance of the ABS central register of employing businesses (Inteframe). Over 950,000 businesses and their relationships are recorded on Inteframe. Maintenance involves applying about one million changes each year to take account of new businesses, changes to characteristics of businesses, and removal of businesses known to have ceased. Inteframe plays a key role in integrating economic statistics by providing consistent population frameworks for a range of business surveys.

Achievements during the year included:

- commissioning of the new business register system (Inteframe), which has provided greater efficiencies through significantly revised work practices and use of modern technologies;
- expansion of the use of data provided by the Australian Taxation Office for updating Inteframe;
- re-development of the Dispatch and Collection Control system; and
- implementation of a range of initiatives from the Business Register Maintenance Strategy, designed to improve overall efficiency and effectiveness of register updating activity.

Economic Standards

Standards

The standards sub-component develops, maintains and promotes the use of standard units, data items, institutional classifications and general data collection concepts to support compatibility and comparability of data across statistical collections. The sub-component issues papers and publications on these standards, investigates issues related to their application and provides advice, assistance and training in their use. It also evaluates business survey questionnaires against these standards. The implementation of appropriate data management practices related to classifications and standards issues across economic collections is part of the sub-component's responsibility.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia (SESCA)* (Cat. no. 1218.0);

- development and implementation of the Forms Database, as part of the data management strategy of standardisation and management of collection forms and metadata;
- review of the Data Item Database, to better suit use by statistical subject matter areas and provision of training to those areas;
- development of a Determinations Database, providing an easy reference for past and current determinations relating to economic data item and unit queries;
- assistance to the Australian Taxation Office in the development of registration forms and instructions documentation for the Australian Business Register;
- the annual review of all core economic structural and derived data item metadata;
- evaluation of all ABS business survey questionnaires for adherence to approved standards; and
- provision of training in integrated economic statistics and use of metadata management facilities.

Classification (economic)

The classification sub-component develops and maintains standard industry, commodity and functional classifications and promotes their use to support compatibility and comparability of data across collections and over time. The component produces documents, publications, computer assisted coding systems, concordances and indexes related to economic classifications. Advice, training and consulting services are provided to internal and external clients.

Achievements during the year included:

- release of *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) Coder—Version 2.0* (Cat. no. 1290.0);
- release of *Australian and New Zealand Standard Commodity Classification (ANZSIC) Coder on Floppy Disk* (Cat. no. 1254.0.15.002);
- provision of training, supervision and documentation to Australian Taxation Office business registration teams, resulting in high level accuracy in industry coding;
- development of instructions to business and question wordings for Australian Business Register initial and ongoing registration forms;
- input into the development of strategies for the maintenance, advisory services and future review of United Nations economic classifications and development of training tools for use internationally;

- implementation of a Determinations Database for classification queries for ABS and Australian Taxation Office staff;
- circulation of a draft alternative view of the mining and resources industry; and
- training for staff and external clients in industry classification and the use of ANZSIC.

Business Methods

Large business unit

The large business unit sub-component profiles large businesses and updates their structure on the ABS business register. It undertakes coordinated dispatch and collection of annual survey forms for a subset of these businesses. For the largest businesses, it validates reported data across selected surveys. It is responsible for the development of a business reporting model to improve understanding of statistical reporting issues and to identify appropriate sources of data for responding to various data needs. It also looks at the most efficient way for large businesses to provide this data.

Common frame unit

The common frame unit sub-component was established to create, validate and maintain a regular series of consistent populations of businesses from the business register for use in selecting samples for various surveys. It monitors demographic information about businesses on the register, produces estimates of the number of businesses, including new businesses not represented on the register at the time survey populations are extracted, and assists survey areas to take account of those businesses in their collections.

Achievements during the year included:

- expansion of the profiling of large businesses to include a segment of the population profiled by mail;
- implementation of improvements to the 'key provider management' role for large businesses by checking for inconsistencies in data provided for the various surveys, in parallel with survey processing; and
- continued development of a business reporting model for a selection of some very large businesses.

SPEED

SPEED (standard processing environment for economic data) is part of the ABS computing infrastructure and complements standard data capture and dissemination facilities. It provides a standard computing environment in which many statistical collections undertake the majority of their statistical processing. The environment is based on client/server architectures and provides access to relational databases, graphical interfaces and user-friendly tools. SPEED is used by more than 60 economic and household collections. Other collections will move progressively to the SPEED environment over the next few years.

Achievements during the year included:

- the first use of the generalised estimation system, for the 1996–97 Construction Industry Survey;
- substantial progress on implementing the remaining elements of the generalised estimation system;
- delivery of generalised systems for winsorisation and imputation;
- development of an improved facility for transferring SAS data to and from the ABSDB (the information warehouse);
- development of a business resumption plan; and
- release of the latest version of SPEED, which increases useability for many clients and substantially improves the maintainability of the environment.

Census

The census component develops and conducts the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing. 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 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.

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of 1996 Census output program with the final release of CLIB96, Household Sample File and Socio-Economic Indicators for Areas (SEIFA);
- completion of evaluation of the output phase of the 1996 Census, with high customer satisfaction recorded for census products and services;
- release of working papers on 1996 Census data quality;

- completion of cognitive and field testing of possible questions for the 2001 Census;
- completion of consultation with users on topics to be included for the 2001 Census;
- development of the enumeration strategy for 2001 Census;
- establishment of the mapping system and procedures for collection district design for the 2001 Census;
- development of the 2001 Census processing strategy and completion of tender processes for Intelligent Character Recognition technology;
- completion of first round of consultation on the 2001 Census output strategy;
- completion of a handbook on census management which was commissioned by the United Nations Statistics Division. This handbook will be published in five languages and is currently being used as the basis for training workshops being conducted for census managers in different regions around the world; and
- provision of technical advice to Papua New Guinea on the conduct of their next census.

Demography

The demography component produces estimates of the total population by age, sex, country of birth, registered marital status and geographical distribution, estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and estimates of households and the household population. Statistics are also regularly produced on 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. The component also publishes a newsletter and conducts training in understanding demographic data.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Population Projections* (Cat. no. 3222.0), which for the first time includes projections for capital cities and balances of States;
- developmental work on household and family projections, including the release of a working paper outlining plans;
- development of a page to disseminate demographic information on the ABS website;
- commencement of development of the post-enumeration survey for the 2001 Census of Population and Housing;

- review of methods for estimating births, deaths and interstate migration, with the objective of improving the accuracy of population estimates. The review of the method of estimating interstate migration involved consultation with all State Governments, including through the Australia-New Zealand Population Workshop;
- provision of benchmarks for population surveys, including new population benchmarks for the labour force survey; and
- liaison with the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs to take account of new international passenger cards.

Labour Statistics

The labour component provides 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.

Topics covered by supplementary surveys in 1998–99 included job search experience of unemployed persons, successful and unsuccessful job search experience, employee earnings, employee benefits, trade union membership, forms of employment, persons not in the labour force, underemployment, career experience, and labour force experience. Related education topics were also covered including educational attainment, participation in education, and transition from education to work.

The 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. Price indexes of wage and salary costs for employee jobs are compiled quarterly. The component also produces biennial 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 and employers' training practices. The component also produces monthly statistics on industrial disputes.

Statistics on schools, students and staff are compiled from collections conducted in cooperation with the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. For government schools, the data are collected by State and Territory Departments of Education; for non-government schools, the data are collected by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (DETYA).

A senior officer is outposted to DETYA and the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, in recognition of their needs for labour market and education statistics and the importance of facilitating their access to, and understanding of, these statistics.

Achievements during the year included:

- implementation of new population benchmarks for the labour force survey. These benchmarks are updated every five years when census population counts become available;
- publication of *Retrenchment and Redundancy, Australia* (Cat. no. 6266.0);
- conduct of a new survey on forms of employment in August 1998;
- publication of *Australians' Employment and Unemployment Patterns* (Cat. no. 6286.0);
- publication of a number of short articles on aspects of the Australian labour market in *Labour Force, Australia* (Cat. no. 6203.0);
- publication of *Labour Costs, Australia* (Cat. no. 6348.0). Extensive data on workers' compensation costs for comparative performance monitoring of Australia's occupational health and safety and workers' compensation systems was subsequently published in the Labour Ministers' Council report of December 1998;
- publication of *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (Cat. no. 6306.0);
- completion of a methodological review of the wage cost index. This review affirmed the survey's current practices and made recommendations to ensure future quality and relevance of the survey;
- completion of a study into the feasibility of compiling statistics on the spread and impacts of enterprise and workplace agreements from administrative data sources;
- publication of *Education and Training Experience, Australia* (Cat. no. 6278.0); and
- publication of *Education and Training in Australia* (Cat. no. 4224.0).

Social Statistics

The social statistics component is responsible for social analysis and for providing information on health, welfare, housing, and household income and expenditure. The component produces reports describing social conditions in Australia, and the social wellbeing 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 wellbeing and housing. It also produces statistics on health (including causes of death, health status and risk factors, use of health services by the population, and statistics about private health establishments) and welfare (including statistics about disability, ageing and carers, voluntary work, child care, time use, and population groups such as people with a disability, aged persons, families and children).

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of the sixth edition of *Australian Social Trends* (Cat. no. 4102.0);
- publication of *Census of Population and Housing: Australia in Profile—A Regional Analysis* (Cat. no. 2032.0);
- publication of *Causes of Death, Australia* (Cat. no. 3303.0);
- release of further publications from the 1995 National Health Survey on *Injuries, Australia* (Cat. no. 4384.0), *Asthma and Other Respiratory Conditions* (Cat. no. 4373.0), and *Use of Medications* (Cat. no. 4377.0);
- release of a Confidentialised Unit Record File, containing a subset of Indigenous records from the supplementation of the 1995 National Health Survey;
- release of a Confidentialised Unit Record File from the 1997 National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing;
- publication of *Mental Health and Wellbeing: Profile of Adults, Western Australia* (Cat. no. 4326.5);
- publication of *Children, Australia: A Social Report* (Cat. no. 4119.0), the second in a series of social reports on special groups in the population;
- publication of *How Australians Use Their Time* (Cat. no. 4153.0);
- publication of *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (Cat. no. 4430.0);

- publication of *Income Distribution, Australia* (Cat. no. 6523.0); and
- completion of a review of the household survey program and presentation of options for a future survey strategy.

National Centres

The national centres provide an integrated information service, national statistical leadership and national coordination for statistics on crime and justice, culture and recreation and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population.

National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics

The National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics is responsible for national statistics on crime, criminal courts and corrective services. It also coordinates data collection activity and provides an information service in these fields. This includes provision of statistical information, training of data providers, advice on statistical standards, and development of quality control procedures.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Corrective Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 4512.0) presenting monthly information on the number and types of persons in prison custody;
- development and commencement of a national collection of community-based corrections statistics;
- publication of two issues of *Higher Criminal Courts, Australia* (Cat. no. 4513.0);
- publication of *Recorded Crime, Australia* (Cat. no. 4510.0);
- conduct of a national convention on crime and justice statistics;
- progress on the implementation of the *Australian Standard Offence Classification* (Cat. no. 1234.0) through the completion of mappings of offences in Commonwealth, State and Territory criminal legislation; and
- completion of a joint project with the Australian Bureau of Criminal Intelligence, to develop a national framework for statistics on illicit drugs.

National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics

The National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics is responsible for coordinating the development of national statistics in the field of culture and recreation. This includes the provision of advice on applicable standards and procedures for data collection and analysis, as well as the education of data users and providers.

Achievements during the year included:

- progress on the development of a statistical framework covering both the culture and sport and recreation sectors. The framework, which is expected to be completed by July 2000, will be the focus for future data collection, dissemination and analysis for the ABS and other organisations;
- publication of *Business Sponsorship, Australia* (Cat. no. 4144.0); *Public Attitudes to the Arts, Australia* (Cat. no. 4157.0); *Museums, Australia* (Cat. no. 4145.0); *Cultural Funding, Australia* (Cat. no. 4183.0); *Book Publishers, Australia* (Cat. no. 1363.0); and *Time Use on Culture/Leisure Activities, 1997* (Cat. no. 4173.0);
- production of reports for the Cultural Ministers' Council and the Sport and Recreation Ministers' Council, covering funding of culture by governments in Australia, art and craft purchases, book publishing, business sponsorship (both the arts and sport) and sport and recreation employment; and
- updating and enhancing a sport and recreation database which provides Commonwealth and State government users with information including participation, household expenditure, industry performance, employment and retail sales.

*National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander Statistics*

The National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics is responsible for coordinating, analysing and reporting on statistics on the health, welfare and other social conditions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. It is also responsible for coordinating work to improve the quality, use and availability of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics from censuses and surveys and from administrative collections. This involves developing partnerships with a wide range of stakeholders, providing technical assistance for initiatives such as the development of performance indicators for government programs, providing advice on training and procedures for collectors of data, assisting Indigenous organisations to improve their capacity to use statistics effectively, and widely disseminating statistics from a range of sources.

Achievements during the year included:

- development of an Indigenous survey strategy, addressing the highest priority user needs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics and related measurement issues;
- progress on improving the quality, availability and use of Indigenous administrative data on births and deaths, health, community services, and schools, as part of a plan for improving Indigenous statistics from administrative collections. Guidelines were also developed for best practice in training, promotion and measurement of the completeness of datasets;

- implementation of the recommendations from the National Indigenous Health Information Plan;
- conduct of a workshop on Indigenous data quality;
- development of the 1999 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey, funded by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission;
- publication of *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* (Cat. nos. 2034.0–8);
- release of *Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification* (Cat. no. 4706.0.30.001);
- publication of *National Health Survey: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Results, Australia* (Cat. no. 4806.0); and
- establishment of an outposted officer position at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, to strengthen statistical coordination and understanding of Indigenous statistical issues.

Geography

The geography component is responsible for developing and maintaining geographic products and services for use by the ABS or its clients. Activities include the production of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) and associated products, provision of geographic information system, geocoding, and mapping services to the ABS, and continuing development of the annual regional statistics CD-ROM product, the Integrated Regional Data Base.

Achievements during the year included:

- re-development of the *Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB), Australia* (Cat. no. 1353.0), to provide a standard platform for disseminating spatial statistics and to improve the flexibility and timeliness of data delivery to clients;
- release of the *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (Cat. no. 1216.0), 1998 edition, and associated digital boundary files;
- quarterly updates of the *National Localities Index*;
- implementation of a system to geocode agricultural statistics in the Gippsland region;
- evaluation and implementation of a new spatial data management system to manage 2001 Census of Population and Housing mapping data and to lay the foundations for a corporate geographical information system; and

- development and implementation of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing collection district mapping system for use by regional offices to re-design census collection district boundaries.

Population Statistics Standards

The population statistics standards component promotes the comparability, integration and quality of population statistics from the full range of ABS and external sources, by providing classifications, definitions and other data standards for use by the ABS and other agencies.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of the *Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC)* (Cat. no. 1269.0);
- progress on the development of a new Australian Standard Classification of Education; and
- development of a set of standard measures of aspects of cultural diversity for use in administrative and statistical data collections.

Statistical Coordination

The statistical coordination component is responsible for the development and operation of the Commonwealth Government Statistical Clearing House. The Clearing House was established in July 1997, in response to a recommendation of the Small Business Deregulation Task Force. All surveys conducted by, or on behalf of, the Commonwealth Government, involving 50 or more businesses, are subject to review and approval by the Clearing House prior to data collection.

The Clearing House has three main objectives: to reduce the load imposed by the Commonwealth Government on business, particularly small business, by eliminating duplication, and ensuring that the design and conduct of business surveys follows good practices; to improve the value of survey outputs by improving the quality of survey methods used; and to improve the use of survey outputs by improving access to documentation on these outputs.

Achievements during the year included:

- refinement of the survey review criteria and information template to improve the review process;
- dissemination of agency reports to agency heads and survey liaison officers;
- continuous improvement of the survey clearance process through stakeholder consultations (Statistical Clearing House Implementation Committee and User Group);

- a significant increase in the number of reviews completed annually. Of the completed reviews, 32% have resulted in an improvement to the survey or a reduction in respondent burden; and
- loading survey information to the Commonwealth Register of Surveys of Businesses (currently information from 64 such surveys has been loaded to the Register).

Analytical Services and Time Series
Analyses

Analytical Services

The analytical services sub-component develops and applies analysis techniques to enhance understanding of social and economic statistics. It provides advice to both the ABS and external users on the application of econometric and other methods, and on the availability and suitability of data for analysis. In addition, it publishes *Working Papers in Econometrics and Applied Statistics* (Cat. no. 1351.0), the *Treasury Model of the Australian Economy—TSP Version* (Cat. no. 1364.0.15.001) and an associated *Modellers' Database* (Cat. no. 1364.0.15.003).

Achievements during the year included:

- construction of input and output measures for non-market industries;
- examination of techniques for measuring quality adjusted labour inputs;
- exploration of methods to improve the consumer price index through analysis of supermarket scanner data;
- investigation of longitudinal analysis techniques and models of firm performance using data from the growth and performance survey; and
- construction of a new set of labour force participation rate projections.

Time Series Analysis

The time series analysis sub-component maintains and develops facilities for the analysis of social and economic time series, especially for the estimation of seasonally adjusted time series and trend series. It assists both the ABS and external clients including policy makers, business planners and other analysts with analysis, interpretation, modelling and forecasting of time series data. The component is also responsible for investigating and improving the methodology used in these tasks.

Achievements during the year included:

- investigation into the use of concurrent seasonal adjustment methods;

- investigations into the seasonal influences on retail trade, including publication of *Information Paper: Seasonal and Trading Day Influences on Retail Trade in December* (Cat. no. 8508.0), and the impact of Easter on March and April retail trade, and April labour force estimates;
- investigations into the aggregation structure of the building approval series;
- re-analysis of the Australian national accounts under SNA93, and the introduction of a pseudo-additive method of analysing time series with zero production in some quarters; and
- enhancements to the ABS time series analysis and adjustment software.

Australian Economic Indicators

The Australian economic indicators sub-component publishes *Australian Economic Indicators* (Cat. no. 1350.0), a monthly compendium of key national, State and international economic time series. It also contains feature articles, provides a quarterly economic review of the economy and reports an experimental composite leading indicator of the Australian business cycle.

The February 1999 issue contained longer time spans of data than the regular monthly issues, for example, the last 40 observations of quarterly national accounts data, complementing *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product, Main Tables* (Cat. no. 5206.0) which contained only the last nine observations of quarterly national accounts data.

Mathematical Statistics

Statistical Support

The statistical support sub-component undertakes sample design for surveys to ensure that reliable statistics are provided efficiently and with minimum 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 data quality. Statistical analyses are also undertaken to assist understanding of data. This sub-component also provides assistance to business survey areas in the development and evaluation of collection forms (both paper and electronic).

Achievements during the year included:

- further developmental work on the incorporation of income tax data in the economic activity survey, to reduce the reporting load imposed on small businesses;

- development of survey design, estimation and quality assurance methods for new and redesigned household surveys, including the surveys of household expenditure, housing (and its Indigenous supplement), health, and community housing and infrastructure needs;
- evaluation of possible changes to the methodology of the Monthly Population Survey arising out of the 1997 Review of Population Surveys and the 1998–99 Review of Household Survey Program, including the effects of using new sample rotation methods and composite estimation, disproportionate allocation, continuous re-basing of sample, exclusion of special dwellings and extending the weeks of enumeration;
- development of a generalised methodology for weighting complex household surveys and for estimating and processing standard errors for complex estimators;
- investigative work on the design of the proposed quarterly economy wide survey, with a particular focus on developing and evaluating techniques to minimise the reporting load on businesses;
- quality investigations of the labour cost index, stocks and sales survey, international investment survey and the engineering construction survey;
- development of variance estimation modules for a generalised estimation system;
- investigation of statistical issues related to removing inactive taxation units from the ABS business register;
- development and evaluation of new approaches to detection of outliers, significance editing and prioritising follow up of non-respondents; and
- development of specifications for generalised facilities for imputation and treatment of outliers.

Statistical Consultancy and Training

The statistical consultancy and training sub-component helps ABS and external users to meet their information needs through the provision of sample and survey design, statistical methods, data analysis and statistical training services.

Achievements during the year included:

- assistance to the Department of Family and Community Services with a methodological review of the data requirements for the Children's Services Program;
- analytical assistance to the Australian National Audit Office, the Australian Taxation Office and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs;

- survey development and analysis for the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, in connection with the Survey of Senior Executive Service Remuneration in Australian Public Service agencies;
- weighting advice for the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs on the longitudinal survey of immigrants to Australia;
- sample design and selections for the proposed West Australian Aboriginal Child Health Survey for the TVW Telethon Institute for Child Health Research;
- selection advice on the survey of job network clients for the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs;
- provision of other sample design and estimation advice to government departments including the Australian National Audit Office, the Australian Taxation Office, the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, and Centrelink; and
- conduct of statistical training courses for government clients.

Population Surveys

The population surveys component develops, conducts and processes the program of population surveys, using trained interviewers to collect information from respondents in randomly selected households. Survey responses are coded, edited and tabulated by the component before being passed to the relevant statistical components for analysis and dissemination of survey results. The component also evaluates the effectiveness of surveys in meeting statistical objectives and outcomes.

Achievements during the year included:

- conduct of the Monthly Population Survey (a list of supplementary topics is shown at Appendix 11);
- conduct of the Population Survey Monitor on a quarterly basis (a list of topics is shown at Appendix 12);
- conduct of the 1998–99 Household Expenditure Survey;
- conduct of the 1998–99 Agricultural Finance Survey;
- preparation for the re-introduction of the survey of income and housing costs in 1999–2000;
- commencement of development of the 1999 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey;
- continuation of development of the 1999 Australian Housing Survey;

- continuation of development of the revised 2001 Labour Force Survey questionnaire;
- commencement of development of the 2000 Survey of Employment Arrangements and Superannuation;
- commencement of development of the 2001 National Health Survey;
- commencement of development of the 2001 Post Enumeration Survey;
- testing for the 2001 Census of Population and Housing;
- commencement of a business process re-engineering project to determine better practices, improve timeliness in producing survey output, and reduce costs; and
- commencement of a program effectiveness project to improve practices, data quality and reduce costs in survey operations.

Statistical Services and User Liaison

The statistical services and user liaison (SSUL) component 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 Regional 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, statistical training and the presentation of seminars for a broad range of clients. Officers are also outposted to State or Territory government agencies to carry out specific short-term statistical assignments.

Through this component, the ABS participates in bodies established by State or Territory governments to coordinate their statistical activities and requirements. This 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 is to be closely involved in the development and conduct of annual State-specific household surveys, the topics of which vary from State to State.

Achievements during the year included:

- investigation, collection and analysis of data from New South Wales and Victorian courts for the Justice Research Centre;
- conduct and processing of a survey on crime and safety for the New South Wales Police Service and the New South Wales Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research;

- conduct of a survey on household safety for the New South Wales Department of Health;
- design and development of a survey on transport usage and migration patterns for the Australian Capital Territory Department of Urban Services;
- conduct of a series of statistical training courses, in various States and Territories, for government agencies and other interested external participants;
- conduct of a survey of South Australian households to determine their ownership of energy-using appliances and consumption of energy for the South Australian Office of Energy Policy;
- research into the cause of peaks in the daily consumption of electricity for the South Australian State Energy Research Advisory Committee;
- investigation into the feasibility of a range of options for the collection of interstate trade data for the South Australian government;
- development of a survey of land owners to determine the number and value of their holdings for the South Australian State Taxation Office;
- conduct of a survey on community safety for the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Council (Tasmania);
- provision of an outposted officer to the Tasmanian Department of Treasury and Finance to develop a framework for the compilation of quarterly real GSP estimates for Tasmania;
- provision of an outposted officer to the Tasmanian Department of State Development to assist the industry audit teams to identify any data they might need, and to facilitate the acquisition of that data from the ABS;
- provision of an outposted officer to the Crime Prevention and Community Safety Council (Tasmania) to identify possible criminal justice and social demographic sets that could be used to develop a statistical profile of local government areas;
- conduct of a survey of persons 50 years and over for the Queensland Department of Health;
- assistance to the Queensland Department of Primary Industries in the development and conduct of a survey of commercial fishers in Queensland;
- conduct of a Northern Territory State supplementary survey;

- coordination of non-ABS data holdings with various Northern Territory and Commonwealth government agencies to improve the availability of regional data;
- provision of an outposted officer for six months to the Office of Courts Administration to establish a Criminal Justice Statistics Unit;
- continued provision of an outposted officer to the Productivity Commission to identify areas in which the ABS can be of assistance to the Commission, with particular emphasis on the review of government service provision;
- provision of an outposted officer to the Victorian Department of Treasury and Finance and co-located with the Department of Premier and Cabinet to build contacts between the ABS and the two agencies best placed to provide guidance on the Victorian Government's overriding statistical priorities;
- provision of five other outposted officers to various Victorian Government departments to identify ways in which the ABS can better service their information needs and assist them in the development of appropriate statistical practices and infrastructure;
- conduct of a survey on safety in the home undertaken for the Victorian Department of Human Services;
- conduct of a survey of public transport usage and migration patterns for the Australian Capital Territory Government;
- ongoing provision of monthly retail survey data for the Australian Capital Territory Government;
- provision of an outposted officer to Australian Capital Territory Workcover to undertake a joint review of the agency's administrative data collections;
- provision of analysis to assist the Australian Capital Territory Department of Urban Services with policy development on the environment and transport infrastructure;
- independent review of survey methodology and output from surveys conducted for the Western Australian Ministry of Health by private consultants;
- provision of a number of outposted officers to various Western Australian Government agencies. Work included continuing review of the Western Australian Police Service statistical information and performance indicator needs; development of a performance indicator information system for the Department of Local Government and an initial evaluation to ascertain the extent to which assistance might be provided to the Ministry of Education in the development of a system for tracking students' movements within the education system from entry to final exit;

- compilation of a price index for Western Australian-produced hardwoods for the Western Australian Department for Conservation and Land Management and the Forest Industries Federation of Western Australia;
- development and testing activity associated with an Aboriginal child health survey for the Institute of Child Health Research; and
- conduct of a survey of housing motivations and intentions for the Western Australian Government.

Information Technology Bureau

The Information Technology (IT) Bureau component is responsible for the installation, management and operation of the ABS computing environment, including mainframe and mid-range equipment, communication networks for voice and data, small-scale technology (including personal computers), software products and databases.

Most statistical processing is carried out on the Fujitsu GS8400/30 mainframe using ADABAS and SAS and Sun Microsystems UNIX servers using ORACLE's database management system. The ABS also uses Banyan Vines for file and print services and Windows NT as applications servers and Lotus NOTES Servers. These platforms also support finance, personnel, library, management information and workgroup systems.

Access to all facilities is through the network. This consists of about 3,000 personal computers which use the Banyan network and run Microsoft Windows 95. There is an increasing trend towards distributed processing for both statistical and administrative processing.

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

Three UNIX machines and a small number of other servers are used to provide services to clients outside the ABS and the ABS website. These machines are not connected to the internal network.

Achievements during the year included:

- significant upgrades to the production IT environment to ensure Year 2000 readiness;
- provision of a comprehensive Year 2000 test environment for testing applications;
- introduction of plans for management of the actual transition to Year 2000, including staffing requirements and sequencing for an orderly shut down and reinstatement of the infrastructure;
- implementation of new divisional change management processes, covering IT and business infrastructure;

- upgrading of the network infrastructure of Central Office to better handle network load;
- implementation of improved alert escalation facilities, and monitoring and reporting of performance metrics;
- expansion of Optical Character Recognition and paper handling services to cover increased demands from statistical collections;
- introduction of streamlined processes and guidelines for IT purchases; and
- improvements to the ABS website.

Technology Application

The technology application component is responsible for the development, implementation and support of application systems.

Achievements during the year included:

- preparation of the majority of systems for Year 2000, with progress well on track for remaining systems;
- in conjunction with the Information Technology Bureau, implementation of new divisional change management processes, covering IT and business infrastructure;
- completion of an annual benchmarking exercise of technology application activity by the Gartner measurement service;
- in conjunction with ABS Technology Research Branch, development of publication production workbench utilising Lotus NOTES;
- development of a generalised imputation facility within the SPEED system;
- implementation of a new business register system, using object oriented technology;
- development of business survey systems for capital expenditure, profits, stocks and sales;
- development of a multi-collection Dispatch and Collection Control facility; and
- implementation of the first stage of a re-developed retail trade system.

Data Management

The data management component aims to improve management of statistical collections and client service through the development, loading and use of a corporate information warehouse (the ABSDB). The ABSDB provides a central output data source in addition to facilities to store corporate history and knowledge relating to collections. It also provides corporate systems and repositories to manage and utilise various forms of metadata, and is an important component of the strategy for introducing a suite of standard facilities to meet the business needs of the ABS, to replace a range of diverse, purpose-built systems. Implementation of these facilities and policies will lead to improvements in the consistency and quality of collection activities.

The ABSDB is improving client servicing by the provision of a single, authoritative corporate repository for publishable data from which most data products will ultimately be generated. Concepts and procedures can also be integrated with data sourced from the ABSDB to enhance the information content and mutual compatibility of separate data products.

The warehouse development parallels data warehousing initiatives by other organisations. However, the range and complexity of data and metadata, unique requirements such as the need to support information dissemination in a variety of formats and media, and the need to provide sophisticated metadata and information concepts management facilities, mean that the ABS makes a significant contribution to the advancement of statistical data warehousing.

Achievements during the year included:

- re-development, testing and release of a new version of all warehouse facilities in a 32-bit environment to replace the old 16-bit based facilities;
- consolidation of data and metadata loading so that the ABSDB supports dissemination of most regular, sub-annual collections;
- substantial progress towards development of metadata systems to ensure that more rigorous and effective statistical procedures are adopted;
- development and implementation of links from the ABSDB to the new publication production facilities;
- joint development work to integrate ABSDB facilities with other systems infrastructure; and
- management of the third international conference on statistical output databases, held in Australia in March 1999.

Technology Research

The technology research component plays a leading role in identifying options for using information technology to improve ABS performance in achieving its statistical goals. The component is also responsible for security.

Achievements during the year included:

- working in conjunction with dissemination services and technology application components to improve the publishing process and to enhance quality control in publishing and electronic dissemination. Phase 1 has involved development of a generalised publication production workbench to provide a significantly automated method for producing publications from data stored in the ABSDB (the information warehouse);
- consolidation of the corporate directory which provides ready access for both staff and IT systems to information on structures, persons, roles, and responsibilities;
- maintenance and enhancement of physical and IT security arrangements; and
- operation and further development of the firewall which provides a controlled gateway for Internet email and limited web access, while providing a high level of protection to the ABS IT environment.

5 CORPORATE SERVICES SUB-PROGRAM

OBJECTIVE

The corporate services sub-program assists managers to achieve the statistical goals of the ABS through the provision of effective corporate management, efficient and equitable administration, planning and central support services.

DESCRIPTION

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

- executive leadership;
- a corporate strategy for the planning and implementation of the work program;
- personnel services, including salaries payment, employee relations and conditions of service, recruitment, workplace relations, staff development and training;
- financial management and accounting services, including budgeting and monitoring resource usage;
- policy secretariat services;
- coordination of international relations; and
- general support services, including accommodation.

Appendix 1 lists the program/sub-programs/components structure of the ABS.

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

COST OF STATISTICAL OPERATIONS SUB-PROGRAM AND AVERAGE STAFFING LEVEL

	<i>1996-97</i>	<i>1997-98</i>	<i>1998-99</i>
Total cost (\$'000)	32 693	28 839	28 164
Cost as a percentage of ABS expenditure (%)	10	12	12
Average operative staff years(a)	354	341	324

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

OUTPUTS

The sub-program provides infrastructure, management and planning systems, staff and facilities for the ABS. It also provides longer term strategic planning for the work 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 and Merit Protection Commission, Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, Department of Finance and Administration and Australian National Audit Office) in providing the necessary service support to the work program.

REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the sub-program during 1998–99, except the executive support component.

Executive

For program management purposes, this component includes the Australian Statistician and the senior managers in each of the Regional Offices. Senior Executive Service (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 in this component.

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

During the 1998–99 financial year, three people were promoted into the SES. These officers were Graeme Oakley, who was promoted to an Assistant Statistician position in Central Office, and Zia Abbasi and Ian Crettenden who were promoted to Regional Director positions. Glenn Appleyard was appointed to the SES in the position of Regional Director.

One Central Office SES officer, Warren Richter, left the ABS to take up a promotion. One Central Office SES officer, Don Efford, retired. Two Regional Directors resigned during the year. These officers were Peter Gardner and Glenn Appleyard. One Regional Director, Denis Rogers, retired during the year.

Human Resources

The human resources component provides a range of personnel services to the ABS and its staff. The component aims to provide comprehensive, timely and cost-effective delivery of services to assist managers and staff to contribute to the achievement of corporate objectives.

Its main functions are:

- personnel policy development, implementation and advice;
- workplace diversity, Industrial Democracy (participative work practices) and occupational health and safety administration;
- personnel services in relation to recruitment, pay, conditions, discipline, grievances and excess staffing administration;
- human resource systems development and maintenance;
- organisation, learning and development activities; and
- workplace relations agreements and support.

Personnel Policy

Achievements during the year included:

- development of guidelines to support the implementation of employment conditions arising out of new workplace agreements;
- development and implementation of the workplace diversity program; and
- development and support of the performance management scheme.

These involved consultation with management, staff and unions, including formal reviews, discussions at consultative forums and focus groups and the exchange of information through feedback mechanisms.

The performance management scheme for Australian Public Service Level 1–6 staff involved a trial which operated for over 12 months, concluding at the end of June 1999. From July 1999, all ABS staff will be covered by performance management arrangements which link directly to remuneration outcomes.

Workplace Diversity

The ABS prepared a twelve month national workplace diversity program in August 1998. Progress was made on implementing this inaugural program, with a range of activities occurring throughout the ABS in support of the program objectives. The workplace diversity program encompassed Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) objectives as part of a broader program aimed at fully utilising ABS staff. Regional Offices were responsible for developing local workplace diversity plans in line with objectives outlined in the national program but reflecting local issues.

The workplace diversity program was developed against the background of the ABS Certified Agreement 1998–2000, which identifies a clear commitment to the principles of fairness, equity and diversity, and a commitment to eliminating all forms of discrimination in the workforce.

The Certified Agreement also recognises a number of employment conditions that support the principles of workplace diversity, including home-based work, flextime, and purchased annual leave.

An education campaign for managers and staff was a key element of the workplace diversity program implementation plan.

As part of its ongoing commitment to EEO principles, the ABS Indigenous Cadetship Program continues to operate successfully, with two cadets completing their courses of study and obtaining permanent positions with the ABS.

Achievements during the year included:

- inclusion of workplace diversity in induction material and selection documentation for all line management positions;
- development of people management tools for managers, including a diversity bookmark, managing diversity checklist, and a diversity information kit;
- invigoration of the Harassment Contact Officer networks through regular network meetings, and expansion of the Harassment Contact Officer role to incorporate aspects of workplace diversity;
- continuation of a tutoring program to assist staff from non-English speaking backgrounds;
- a series of women's forums covering such issues as mentors, career development and balancing carers' responsibilities;
- establishment of carers' rooms in several offices, and a quiet room in Central Office for activities such as research, prayer and meditation; and
- the development of a generic set of workplace diversity objectives that may be included in individual performance agreements.

The EEO profile of the ABS is shown in Appendix 3.4.

Industrial Democracy (Participative Work Practices)

The ABS continued to foster good participative work practices in line with its corporate plan. More details are given in Appendix 5.

Occupational Health and Safety

A report on activities to promote health and safety is given in Appendix 6.

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. In total, 116 applicants were appointed during 1998–99: 72 for work in economic, population and social and labour statistics, information dissemination, or in mathematical statistical areas, and 41 in information technology. Three statistical cadets were recruited to complete an honours year in economics or statistics. Of the 116 graduates recruited, 39 were appointed to positions in Regional Offices.

In addition to the annual intake of graduates, the ABS recruited 46 staff from other public sector agencies or from outside the Australian Public Service during the year.

Personnel Services

Achievements during the year included:

- payment and re-alignment of services arising out of the implementation of workplace agreements;
- participation in the preparation of policy guidelines underpinning employment conditions;
- development and introduction of streamlined selection procedures;
- seminars on values, behaviour, and managing under performance;
- education and advice to managers on the interpretation of conditions of service; and
- management of discipline cases arising out of inappropriate use of the ABS network.

Several activities were assessed against alternative delivery systems during the year. Outcomes were:

- reviews of rehabilitation case management and employee assistance services resulted in engaging external service providers for the provision of a high proportion of these services;
- a review resulted in a decision to obtain external assistance with the promotion, application culling and initial screening aspects of graduate recruitment;
- a review of temporary staff contracting resulted in confirmation of practices involving the use external employment services in some areas of temporary staff recruitment;

- aspects of organisation and people development services were subject to tender processes; and
- a tender for payroll services formerly provided by the Department of Finance and Administration resulted in agreement of a contract with CITEC (a commercialised business of the Queensland government) to continue to provide existing services for at least the next two years.

Organisation and People Development

ABS staff attended some 7,000 formal training days during the year covering statistics, leadership and management and technology training.

Outcomes from a review of organisation and people development activities in Central Office undertaken during 1997–98 were implemented in 1998–99. Internal delivery arrangements were retained for the statistics stream, but new external provider arrangements have been put in place for the delivery of leadership and management and technology training. First courses under these arrangements commenced in late June 1999.

Achievements during the year included:

- the establishment of the ABS Human Resource Management Strategy committee. The committee met twice in 1999 to consider national learning and development priorities for the ABS. Its original charter has been broadened to cover other aspects of human resource management including recruitment, selection and succession planning;
- addition of a new stream covering publishing and dissemination skills, to provide a focus for the development of analytical and technical skills to assist staff to produce high quality statistical outputs; and
- commencement of work to develop an on-line learning capability in the ABS. A unit has been established in the Queensland Office to undertake development and an experimental project has been set up with the Griffith University.

Workplace Relations

Agreement making under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* continued to dominate the workplace relations environment during 1998–99.

In July 1998, a ballot of eligible ABS employees rejected a Certified Agreement offer. After an industrial dispute and several conciliation hearings before the Australian Industrial Relations Commission (AIRC), a revised offer was referred to a ballot of eligible employees. On this occasion the offer was endorsed by majority of employees and the *ABS Certified Agreement 1998–2000* was certified by the AIRC in November 1998. The agreement is made with employees under Section 170LK of the Workplace Relations Act.

All ABS Public Service Act employees were offered the option of an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA) as an alternative to having their employment conditions covered by the Certified Agreement. In total, 520 staff have taken up this offer, including almost 100% of employees in the Senior Executive Service (SES) and Executive Level 2 job classifications.

The new agreement-making arrangements have provided an important opportunity for the ABS to introduce conditions of employment which are more closely aligned with ABS business priorities and staff needs. Many aspects of administrative processing have been improved, more flexible working arrangements have been introduced, performance management arrangements have been adopted and pay increases have been funded through productivity gains. Performance pay arrangements were introduced for SES and Executive Level 2 employees in January 1999 and similar arrangements will apply to all other Public Service Act employees from January 2000.

In October 1998, the AIRC certified the *Australian Bureau of Statistics (Interviewers) Agreement 1998–2000*. This agreement is also made under Section 170LK of *Workplace Relations Act 1996* and covers approximately 650 population survey interviewers who are employed under Regulation 3 of the Statistics Regulations and Subsection 16(2) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. This agreement provided for improved productivity and efficiency in the collection of household survey data and enhanced employment provisions for interviewers.

Substantial progress was made in negotiations on the simplification of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics (Interviewers) Award 1993*, and conversion of that award to a minimum rates format as required under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*. Concurrent with this, negotiations have progressed to extend redundancy benefits to interviewers.

Financial Resources

Financial Management

The financial management sub-component provides services and advice in the processing of accounts, receipts and debts and maintains relevant manuals and instructions. It prepares the financial statements and monitors and reports on financial resources. In conjunction with the Corporate Planning and Secretariat component, it negotiates with Department of Finance and Administration in the Budget process and prepares agency contributions to Budget papers. 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.

Achievements during the year included:

- development of the first external output based accrual budget for the ABS, in accordance with specifications from the Department of Finance and Administration;

- re-development of internal cost attribution model used in the costing of outputs;
- revaluation of fixed assets, including furniture and fittings, office equipment and computer hardware, in line with the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*;
- improvement of the methodology for accounting for internally generated software assets; and
- implementation of new banking arrangements with the Reserve Bank of Australia, in accordance with devolved banking requirements specified by the Department of Finance and Administration.

Facilities Management

The facilities management sub-component has responsibility for building and office maintenance, vehicle fleet management, domestic travel, mail, freight, courier services and paper records management.

Achievements during the year included:

- management of rectification works in Cameron Offices (the ABS Central Office building); and
- introduction of improved building emergency procedures within Cameron Offices.

National Accommodation Strategy

The national accommodation strategy sub-component has responsibility for national property management policies, principles, standards and procedures; strategic planning for office accommodation requirements nationally; monitoring property management expenditure; and negotiation of leases for properties occupied by the ABS.

Achievements during the year included:

- finalisation of documentation for a new Central Office building, following the Department of Finance and Administration's call in December 1997 for expressions of interest for the sale of government offices in Belconnen, ACT, including the offices occupied by the Central Office staff;
- evaluation of proposals from short-listed developers for a new Central Office building; and
- finalisation of the Northern Territory Office refurbishment.

Corporate Planning and Secretariat

Corporate Planning

The corporate planning sub-component is responsible for:

- coordinating and supporting ABS strategic planning activities, including advising senior management on strategic directions and resource implications; managing the Portfolio Budget process to ensure appropriate resourcing of the organisation; and production of the ABS 3-Year Forward Work Program;
- coordinating the monitoring of, and reporting on, the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation, with a view to ensuring that plans are realised and program and organisational performance are continuously improved. The newly established Statistical Benchmarking project represents an extension of the resources directed at the corporate review and performance improvement components of the ABS planning cycle; and
- managing the operation and performance of the ABS internal audit program, and coordinating the cooperative relationship between the ABS and the Australian National Audit Office in reviewing selected aspects of ABS activity.

Achievements during the year included:

- initiation and leading of benchmarking studies by the Statistical Benchmarking project, in partnership with other overseas organisations, and assistance with such studies within the ABS;
- development of a broad strategy for measuring and highlighting ABS performance through an integrated set of performance indicators. There are a number of dimensions to describing the effectiveness of the national statistical service. These include an assessment of the coverage and quality of ABS outputs, the objectivity and reliability of the statistics, public confidence in the output, and the accessibility of the data. The ABS defined a single outcome (*informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community based on the provision of a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service*) and two broad outputs (*economic statistics and population and social statistics*) in its Agency Budget Proposal submission, and described broadly the type of performance information to be provided in the future; and
- enhancement of the efficiency of operation of the internal audit program and significant improvement to the availability of audit specifications, reports and recommendations. The ABS Fraud Control Plan was cleared by the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Bureau.

Secretariat

The secretariat component provides a range of services including ministerial and parliamentary liaison, policy documentation and advice, support for high level internal and external meetings and conferences, and legislative services.

Parliamentary and Policy

Achievements during the year included:

- the release of the first component of the revised *ABS Policy and Legislation Manual*.

Legislation

The legislative services include: raising organisational awareness of the intent of the legislation; provision of advice to ABS management and staff on statistics legislation (in particular, legislative provisions for the release of statistics); administration within the ABS of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*, the *Privacy Act 1988* and other administrative law and the coordination of 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 Australian Statistician rarely issues notices of direction (under the provisions of subsections 10(4) and 11(2) of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*) to persons to complete a form or answer a question, (under section 14 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the Australian Statistician 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(a)

Type of statistical collection	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99
Notices of direction issued					
Population Census	—	—	946	—	—
Household surveys	—	—	1	—	1
Business censuses and surveys	10	9	20	21	13
Total	10	9	967	21	14
Prosecution actions approved (a)					
Population Census	—	—	48	—	—
Household surveys	—	—	—	—	—
Business censuses and surveys	6	—	3	2	2
Total	6	—	51	2	2

(a) Approved by the Australian Statistician for referral to the relevant office of the Director of Public Prosecutions or the Australian Government Solicitor. Any particular prosecution approval may pertain to a number of notices of direction. Each prosecution action approval is counted under the year in which the corresponding notices of direction are issued. Not every prosecution action approved proceeds to court (for example, because of subsequent receipt of the required information, 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 Australian Statistician to disclose certain classes of information. Lists of names and addresses disclosed under clause 6 of the Statistics Determination are tabled in Parliament and are shown in Appendix 8. Details of disclosures of unidentifiable information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination are shown in Appendix 9.

Achievements during the year included:

- strengthening of conditions for disclosure under clauses 6 and 7 of the Statistics Determination to ensure accountability and compliance in relation to the requirements of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*; and
- achievement of consistency in engagement of contractors, to ensure that the intent of the statistics legislation is adhered to.

International Relations

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

Significant ABS achievements and outcomes in international relations during the year are described in Chapter 1.

6 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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Schedule of Contingencies

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements



INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT

To the Treasurer

Scope

I have audited the financial statements of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 1999. The statements comprise:

- Statement by the Australian Statistician and Principal Accounting Officer
- Agency and Administered statements of:
 - Revenues and Expenses
 - Assets and Liabilities
 - Cash Flows
- Schedule of Commitments
- Schedule of Contingencies, and
- Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements.

The Australian Statistician and the First Assistant Statistician are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the financial statements and the information they contain. I have conducted an independent audit of the financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to you.

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 statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with Australian Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and statutory requirements so as to present a view of the Bureau 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.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion,

- (i) the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Finance Minister's Orders, and
- (ii) the financial statements give a true and fair view, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements and Schedule 2 of the Finance Minister's Orders, of the financial position of the Australian Bureau of Statistics as at 30 June 1999 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Allan M. Thompson', written in a cursive style.

Allan M. Thompson
Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra

21 September 1999

STATEMENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN

AND

PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements give a true and fair view of the matters required by Schedule 2 to the Finance Minister's Orders made under section 63 of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*.



W McLennan
Australian Statistician

20 September 1999



G M Wauchop
First Assistant Statistician
Corporate Services Division

20 September 1999

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
AGENCY REVENUES AND EXPENSES
for the year ended 30 June 1999

	Notes	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
NET COST OF SERVICES			
Expenses			
Employees	2h, 3a	155,600	170,619
Suppliers	3b	49,115	50,633
Depreciation and amortisation	2o, 3c	20,054	15,133
Interest		578	638
Write down of assets	3d	-	1,346
Other costs of providing goods and services		2,528	1,960
Total expenses		227,875	240,329
Revenues from independent sources			
Sales of goods and services	2d	22,702	31,027
Net gains from sales of assets		43	284
Reversals of previous asset write-downs		26	-
Other revenues from independent sources		375	442
Total revenues from independent sources		23,146	31,753
Net cost of services		204,729	208,576
REVENUES FROM GOVERNMENT			
Appropriations used for:			
Ordinary annual services	2c, 5b	201,477	218,871
Other services	2c, 5a	2,210	1,455
Resources received free of charge	2f, 5c	746	83
Total revenues from Government		204,433	220,409
Operating surplus/(deficit)		(296)	11,833
Accumulated results at 1 July	9	15,739	1,325
Change in accounting policy	2m, 9	23,612	2,581
Accumulated results at 30 June		39,055	15,739

The above Statement of Revenues and Expenses should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
ADMINISTERED REVENUES AND EXPENSES

for the year ended 30 June 1999

	Notes	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
REVENUES			
Other receipts	2d	<u>1,447</u>	<u>38</u>
Total revenues		<u>1,447</u>	<u>38</u>
Net contribution to government		<u><u>1,447</u></u>	<u><u>38</u></u>
TRANSFERS			
Cash to Official Commonwealth Public Account		<u>1,447</u>	<u>38</u>
Total transfers		<u>1,447</u>	<u>38</u>
Net change in administered net assets		<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

The above Statement of Revenues and Expenses should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
AGENCY ASSETS AND LIABILITIES
as at 30 June 1999

	Notes	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
DEBT			
Leases	2g, 7	<u>11,015</u>	<u>12,312</u>
Total debt		11,015	12,312
PROVISIONS AND PAYABLES			
Employees	2h, 8a	53,409	53,918
Suppliers	8b	1,414	1,200
Unearned Revenue	2e, 8c	2,489	3,620
Other	8d	<u>201</u>	<u>1,207</u>
Total provisions and payables		57,513	59,945
EQUITY			
Accumulated results	9	39,055	15,739
Capital	9	11,250	-
Asset Revaluation Reserve	9	<u>8,127</u>	<u>-</u>
Total equity		58,432	15,739
		<u>126,960</u>	<u>87,996</u>
FINANCIAL ASSETS			
Cash	2i	221	484
Receivables	2j, 10a	12,645	10,964
Other	2l, 10b	<u>227</u>	<u>375</u>
Total financial assets		13,093	11,823
NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS			
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	2m,n,o,p }	38,429	34,100
Intangibles	11a,b,c }	64,513	31,739
Inventories	2q, 11e	4,218	4,126
Other	2r	<u>6,707</u>	<u>6,208</u>
Total non-financial assets		113,867	76,173
		<u>126,960</u>	<u>87,996</u>
Current liabilities		28,225	30,110
Non-current liabilities		40,303	42,147
Current assets		24,018	22,157
Non-current assets		102,942	65,839

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

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
ADMINISTERED ASSETS AND LIABILITIES

as at 30 June 1999

	Notes	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
ASSETS		-	-
LIABILITIES		-	-

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

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
AGENCY CASH FLOWS
for the year ended 30 June 1999

	Notes	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Appropriations		211,831	212,182
Sales of goods and services		<u>23,757</u>	<u>29,719</u>
Total cash received		<u>235,588</u>	<u>241,901</u>
Cash used			
Employees		(154,005)	(169,263)
Suppliers		(56,602)	(57,573)
Borrowing costs		<u>(578)</u>	<u>(638)</u>
Total cash used		<u>(211,185)</u>	<u>(227,474)</u>
Net cash from operating activities	12	<u>24,403</u>	<u>14,427</u>
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from sales of infrastructure, plant and equipment		<u>246</u>	<u>254</u>
Total cash received		<u>246</u>	<u>254</u>
Cash used			
Purchase of infrastructure plant and equipment		(10,003)	(4,549)
Capitalisation of internally generated software		<u>(14,909)</u>	<u>(9,805)</u>
Total cash used		<u>(24,912)</u>	<u>(14,354)</u>
Net cash from investing activities		<u>(24,666)</u>	<u>(14,100)</u>
Net increase in cash held		(263)	327
add cash at 1 July		<u>484</u>	<u>157</u>
Cash at 30 June		<u>221</u>	<u>484</u>

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

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
ADMINISTERED CASH FLOWS**

for the year ended 30 June 1999

	Notes	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
Cash Received			
Other receipts	2d	<u>1,447</u>	<u>38</u>
Total cash received		<u>1,447</u>	<u>38</u>
Cash Used			
Cash to Official Commonwealth Public Account		<u>(1,447)</u>	<u>(38)</u>
Total cash used		<u>(1,447)</u>	<u>(38)</u>
Net cash from administered transactions		<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>-</u></u>

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

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS
as at 30 June 1999

	Notes	Agency	
		1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
BY TYPE			
CAPITAL COMMITMENTS			
Infrastructure, plant and equipment		133	800
Total capital commitments		<u>133</u>	<u>800</u>
OTHER COMMITMENTS			
Operating leases	2g	67,741	73,422
Other commitments		3,271	-
Total other commitments		<u>71,012</u>	<u>73,422</u>
COMMITMENTS RECEIVABLE			
		-	-
Net commitments		<u><u>71,145</u></u>	<u><u>74,222</u></u>
BY MATURITY			
All net commitments			
One year or less		17,759	15,007
From one to two years		15,020	14,470
From two to five years		25,364	28,394
Over five years		13,002	16,351
Net commitments		<u><u>71,145</u></u>	<u><u>74,222</u></u>
Operating lease commitments			
One year or less		14,355	14,207
From one to two years		15,020	14,470
From two to five years		25,364	28,394
Over five years		13,002	16,351
Total operating lease commitments		<u><u>67,741</u></u>	<u><u>73,422</u></u>

The above Schedule of Commitments should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
SCHEDULE OF CONTINGENCIES**

as at 30 June 1999

	Notes	Agency	
		1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
CONTINGENT LOSSES			
Claims for damages/costs ¹		<u>27</u>	<u>60</u>
Total contingent losses		27	60
CONTINGENT GAINS			
		-	-
Net contingencies		<u><u>27</u></u>	<u><u>60</u></u>

Details

¹ The amount represents an estimate of the ABS' liability.

The above Schedule of Contingencies should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes.

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
for the year ended 30 June 1999

NOTE 1 OBJECTIVES OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

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.

For Commonwealth Government program budgeting purposes, the ABS is a single program comprising two sub-programs - Statistical Operations and Corporate Services. The Corporate Services sub-program consists of overheads which have been allocated to the Statistical Operations sub-program in these Financial Statements.

Further information on ABS sub-programs and objectives can be found in this Annual Report at Chapters 1, 4 and 5.

NOTE 2 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

(a) Basis of accounting

The financial statements are required by section 49 of the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997* (FMA Act) and are a general purpose financial report.

The statements have been prepared in accordance with Schedule 2 to the Financial Management and Accountability Orders (Amendment) 1998 made by the Minister for Finance and Administration.

The financial statements are prepared in compliance with Australian Accounting Standards, Accounting Guidance Releases, Urgent Issues Group consensus views, and having regard to Statements of Accounting Concepts. The financial statements have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets which, as noted, are at valuation. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

(b) Changes in accounting policy

Changes in accounting policy have been identified in this note under their appropriate headings.

(c) Appropriations

Appropriations for agency operations other than running costs are recognised as revenue to the extent that the appropriations are spent.

Appropriations for agency running costs have, until 1998/99, been recognised as revenue in the year of appropriation, except to the extent that:

- (i) amounts unspent at year end are not automatically carried over into the new financial year, and
- (ii) the appropriations involve running costs borrowings, the repayment of which has effected a reduction in the appropriation actually received in the year of repayment. Interest may also be charged on borrowings.

With the introduction of accrual budgeting by the Commonwealth for 1999/2000, any reappropriation to an agency of the automatic running costs carryover for 1999/2000 will be by way of a capital rather than a revenue appropriation. Accordingly, the carryover is not recognised as revenue but as equity in the financial statements for 1998/99.

(d) Revenues from independent sources

Sales of goods and services includes revenue from the sale of publications and other products and the provision of statistical services. Other revenues 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 ABS are recognised as departmental revenue. Other revenues are classified as administered.

(e) Unearned revenue

Unearned revenue includes revenue from subscriptions to statistical publications, provision of statistical consultancies and revenue from other agencies for statistical surveys.

(f) 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.

(g) Leases

Operating lease payments are charged to the statement of Agency Revenues and Expenses on a basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased asset.

The fitout component of the Operating Leases previously classified as Finance Leases have been reclassified as Lease Incentives and accounted for under Urgent Issues Group (UIG) Abstract 3 Lessee Accounting for Lease Incentives Under a Non-Cancellable Operating Lease. A lease incentive, in the form of a rent free period and/or a contribution to fit-out costs, is a financing of the lessee's entry into the lease and is repaid by the lessee out of future lease payments that are higher than they would be if no incentive was provided.

In these financial statements, the lease incentive is recognised as a liability, which is reduced by allocating lease rental payments between interest (calculated by applying the interest rate implicit in the lease to the outstanding amount of the liability), rental expense and reduction of the liability. The allocation of lease rental payments is made such that rental expense is recognised on a basis which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the rental property.

The net present value of future net outlays in respect of surplus space under non-cancellable lease agreements is expensed in the period in which the space becomes surplus.

(h) Employee entitlements

Leave

The liability for employee entitlements includes provision for annual leave and long service leave. No provision has been made for sick leave as all sick leave is non-vesting and the average sick leave expected to be taken in future years by employees of the ABS is estimated to be less than the annual entitlement for sick leave.

The liability for annual leave reflects the value of total annual leave entitlements of all the employees at 30 June 1999 and is recognised at the nominal amount. The non-current portion of the liability for long service leave is recognised and measured at the present value of the estimated future cash flows to be made in respect of all employees at 30 June 1999. In determining the present value of the liability, the ABS has taken into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and other pay increases.

Separation and redundancy

Provision is also made for separation and redundancy payments in circumstances where the ABS has formally identified positions as excess to requirements and a reliable estimate of the amount of the payments can be determined.

Superannuation

Staff of the ABS contribute to the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme or the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme. Employer contributions in relation to these schemes have been expensed in these financial statements. No liability is shown for superannuation in the statement of Agency Assets and Liabilities as the employer contributions extinguish fully the accruing liability which is assumed by the Commonwealth.

(i) Cash

Cash includes cash at bank and cash on hand.

(j) Receivables

A provision is made for any doubtful debts based on a review of all outstanding accounts as at year end (refer Note 10a). Bad debts are written off during the year in which they are identified.

(k) Financial instruments

Accounting policies for financial instruments are stated in Note 16. The ABS is complying with the requirements of AAS33 *Presentation and Disclosure of Financial Instruments*.

(l) Other financial assets

Other financial assets represents accrued revenue (refer Note 10b).

(m) Depreciable assets

Asset recognition threshold

Non-current assets having a limited useful life (depreciable assets) are stated at cost, except as indicated in Note 11. 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 associated software are considered to be depreciable assets if the aggregate cost is \$2,000 or more.

Revaluations

Schedule 2 requires that property, plant and equipment be progressively revalued in accordance with the 'deprival' method of valuation by no later than 1 July 1999 and, thereafter, be revalued progressively on that basis every three years.

ABS has implemented its progressive revaluations as follows:

- (i) leasehold improvements, whether at cost or as part of a lease incentive, are initially being revalued over the financial years 1998/99 to 1999/2000 on a geographical basis;
- (ii) plant and equipment assets, whether at cost or as part of a lease incentive, are initially being revalued over the financial years 1998/99 to 1999/2000 by type of asset and on a geographical basis. In 1998/99 all computer hardware assets were revalued.

Assets in each class acquired after the commencement of the progressive revaluation cycle will be reported at cost for the duration of the progressive revaluation then in progress.

The application of the deprival method by ABS values land at its current market buying price and other assets at their depreciated replacement cost. Any assets that would not be replaced or are surplus to requirements are valued at net realisable value.

Internally generated software

In its role as Australia's national statistical agency, the ABS builds and maintains a significant set of internally generated software (IGSW) assets. These assets are added to over time in line with the increasing range of statistical information sought by government, business and the general community, and the increasing use of technology, particularly in relation to collection, analysis and dissemination activities.

All software developed in-house since 1 July 1994 has been capitalised. The \$100,000 threshold limit applied to recognition of software in 1997/98 has now been eliminated resulting in some software assets being recognised for the first time in 1998/99. In addition, the costing methodology has been reviewed and modified resulting in the capitalisation of direct salary and on costs, applicable information technology costs and some direct external costs. General, administration and overhead costs relating to software development have not been capitalised. The change in the capitalisation policies has led to an adjustment to the accumulated results of \$23.612 million which were previously expensed.

(n) Historical statistical data

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

(o) 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 ABS' depreciable assets.

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

	<u>Life in Years</u>
Computer hardware	3 to 5
Computer software – proprietary	5
Computer software – internally generated	2 to 19
Furniture & fittings	10
Plant	10
Office equipment	5

The aggregate amount of depreciation allocated for each class of asset during the reporting period is disclosed in Note 11(d).

(p) Capital work in progress

Capital work in progress represents software assets under development which 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.

(q) Inventories

Inventories comprise significant items held for resale and are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. In 1998/99 provisions have been made for inventory which may become obsolete, and for inventory which may be supplied free of charge as part of a community service obligation.

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

(r) Other non-financial assets

Other non-financial assets includes prepayments for telephones, maintenance contracts, office rent, rights to childcare places at Bluebell Childcare Centre, security and subscriptions.

(s) Insurance

A new Commonwealth insurable risk managed fund, called 'Comcover', commenced operations as from 1 July 1998. From November 1998, ABS has insured with the fund for risks other than workers compensation, which is dealt with via continuing arrangements with Comcare. The new arrangements replace the previous policy of non-insurance and require the systematic identification, quantification, reporting and management of risk across the department.

(t) Taxation

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

(u) Rounding

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

- (i) act of grace payments and waivers;
- (ii) transactions of the Consolidated Revenue Fund and the Reserve Money Fund;
- (iii) remuneration of executives; and
- (iv) remuneration of auditors.

(v) Comparative figures

Where necessary, comparable figures have been adjusted to conform to changes in presentation in these financial statements.

NOTE 3 GOODS AND SERVICES EXPENSES**(a) Employee expenses**

	<u>1998/99</u> <u>\$'000</u>	<u>1997/98</u> <u>\$'000</u>
Remuneration (for services provided)	136,682	138,601
Superannuation	21,376	21,998
Interviewers' wages and superannuation	7,411	8,552
Separation and redundancy - abnormal item	<u>2,849</u>	<u>6,711</u>
Total remuneration	168,318	175,862
Other employee expenses	<u>2,211</u>	<u>2,798</u>
Total	170,529	178,660
Less: Amounts capitalised in respect of internally generated software	14,929	8,041
Total employee expenses	<u><u>155,600</u></u>	<u><u>170,619</u></u>

(b) Suppliers' expenses

Supplies of goods and services	<u><u>49,115</u></u>	<u><u>50,633</u></u>
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The 1998/99 expense excludes \$0.7 million (1998/99: \$1.8 million) capitalised in respect of internally generated software.

(c) Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation of infrastructure, plant and equipment	11,201	10,453
Amortisation of leased assets, intangibles and prepayments	8,853	7,285
Adjustment to prior years' accumulated depreciation	<u>-</u>	<u>(2,605)</u>
Total expense	<u><u>20,054</u></u>	<u><u>15,133</u></u>

(d) Write down of assets

Financial assets		
Receivables	-	31
Non-financial assets		
Plant & equipment	-	183
Inventory	<u>-</u>	<u>1,132</u>
Total write down of assets	<u><u>-</u></u>	<u><u>1,346</u></u>

NOTE 4 RECEIPTS OF THE CONSOLIDATED REVENUE FUND

	1998/99 Budget \$	1998/99 Actual \$	1997/98 Actual \$
Sales of goods and services			
Section 31 of the <i>Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997</i> - to be credited to Running Costs - Division 671	26,000,000	24,265,909	29,584,719
Administered receipts	60,000	1,447,475	38,219
Total receipts	<u>26,060,000</u>	<u>25,713,384</u>	<u>29,622,938</u>

NOTE 5 EXPENDITURE FROM ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS

(a) Summary

	1998/99 Budget Estimates	1998/99 Additional Appropriations	1998/99 Total Appropriation	1998/99 Actual Expenditure	1997/98 Actual Expenditure
ORDINARY ANNUAL SERVICES OF GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATION ACT	Act No 1 \$	Act No 3 \$	\$	\$	\$
Division 671 – Australian Bureau of Statistics					
1 Running Costs *	236,892,909	8,244,000	245,136,909	233,886,624	240,281,035
2 Other services					
01 Compensation and legal expenses	74,000	-	74,000	-	30,913
Total – Appropriation Acts No 1 and 3	<u>236,966,909</u>	<u>8,244,000</u>	<u>245,210,909</u>	<u>233,886,624</u>	<u>240,311,948</u>
OTHER ANNUAL SERVICES OF GOVERNMENT APPROPRIATION ACT	Act No 2 \$	Act No 4 \$	\$	\$	\$
Division 979 – Australian Bureau of Statistics					
1 Capital works and services					
01 Plant and equipment	2,210,000	-	2,210,000	2,209,928	1,455,426
Total – Appropriation Acts No 2 and 4	<u>2,210,000</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>2,210,000</u>	<u>2,209,928</u>	<u>1,455,426</u>

* The budget figure includes section 31 deemed appropriations.

	<u>1998/99</u> <u>\$'000</u>	<u>1997/98</u> <u>\$'000</u>
(b) Reconciliation of agency running costs		
Running Costs appropriation spent (Div 671-1)	233,887	240,281
Less: appropriation under FMA Act section 31	<u>24,266</u>	<u>29,585</u>
	209,621	210,696
Add: carryover 30 June	-	8,144
Less: carryover 1 July	<u>8,144</u>	<u>-</u>
Running Costs revenue (included in Statement of Revenues and Expenses)	201,477	218,840
Other agency spending - ordinary annual services appropriations	<u>-</u>	<u>31</u>
Revenue from Government - ordinary annual services (per Statement of Revenues and Expenses)	<u><u>201,477</u></u>	<u><u>218,871</u></u>

(c) Resources received free of charge

The following resources received free of charge have been recognised in the Statement of Agency Revenues and Expenses.

Australian National Audit Office - audit of financial statements *	80	75
Department of Defence – supply of surplus computer hardware	20	-
Department of Finance and Administration- provision of accounting, budgeting and salary service	-	8
Department of Finance and Administration- payment of ‘Comcover’ premium (refer Note 2(s))	522	-
Fujitsu – Supply of computer hardware	124	-
Total resources received free of charge	<u><u>746</u></u>	<u><u>83</u></u>

* The cost of the Australian National Audit Office audit of the financial statements was \$80,000 (1997/98: \$75,000). No other services were provided by the Auditor-General.

NOTE 6 RECEIPTS AND EXPENDITURE OF THE RESERVED MONEY FUNDS

(a) Comcare Trust Fund

Legal authority - *Financial Management and Accountability Act, 1997, s20*

Purpose - to process incapacity payments from Comcare for loss of salary due to compensable conditions under s19 of CERC Act 1988.

	1998/99	1998/99	1998/99	1997/98	1997/98	1997/98	1997/98
	Cash	Investments	Total	Cash	Investments	Total	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Opening balance	-	30,000	30,000	59,080	-	59,080	59,080
Receipts:							
from operations	405,056	-	405,056	583,435	-	583,435	583,435
from realisation of investments	30,000	(30,000)	-	-	-	-	-
			405,056			583,435	583,435
Expenditure:							
for operations	(405,056)	-	(405,056)	(612,515)	-	(612,515)	(612,515)
for purchase of investments	-	-	-	(30,000)	30,000	-	-
			(405,056)			(612,515)	(612,515)
Closing balance	30,000	-	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	30,000

NOTE 6 (cont)

(b) Other trust funds

Legal authority - *Financial Management and Accountability Act, 1997: s20*

Purpose - for receipt of moneys temporarily held on trust or otherwise for the benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth.

	1998/99	1998/99	1998/99	1997/98	1997/98	1997/98	1997/98
	Cash	Investments	Total	Cash	Investments	Total	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Opening balance	1,956	10,000	11,956	7,068	-	7,068	
Receipts:							
from operations	-	-	-	5,348	-	5,348	
from realisation of investments	10,000	(10,000)	-	-	-	0	
							5,348
Expenditure:							
for operations	(1,577)	-	(1,577)	(460)	-	(460)	
for purchase of investments	-	-	-	(10,000)	10,000	-	
							(460)
Closing balance	10,379	-	10,379	1,956	10,000	11,956	

NOTE 7 DEBT**(a) Lease incentive****(i) Lease movement**

	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
Balance at 1 July	11,512	12,688
Repaid during the year	1,497	1,176
Total lease liability	<u>10,015</u>	<u>11,512</u>

(ii) Lease liability

Not later than one year	2,154	2,111
Later than one year but not later than two years	2,154	2,154
Later than two years but not later than five years	6,457	6,462
Later than five years	<u>1,015</u>	<u>3,164</u>
Minimum lease payments	11,780	13,891
Deduct: future interest charges	1,765	2,379
Total lease liability	<u>10,015</u>	<u>11,512</u>

Lease liability is represented by:

Current	1,647	1,522
Non-current	8,368	9,990
	<u>10,015</u>	<u>11,512</u>

(b) Rental incentive

Balance at 30 June	1,000	800
Total rental incentive	<u>1,000</u>	<u>800</u>
Total debt	<u>11,015</u>	<u>12,312</u>

NOTE 8 PROVISIONS AND PAYABLES**(a) Employee liabilities**

	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
Salaries	2,853	4,955
Superannuation	447	325
Recreation leave	15,826	15,465
Long service leave	34,283	32,986
Voluntary redundancies	-	112
Performance based pay	-	75
Total employee liabilities	<u>53,409</u>	<u>53,918</u>

(b) Suppliers

Trade creditors	1,254	1,200
Sundry creditors	160	-
Total suppliers	<u>1,414</u>	<u>1,200</u>

(c) Unearned revenue

Receipts in advance	2,489	3,620
Total unearned revenue	<u>2,489</u>	<u>3,620</u>

(d) Other

Provision for surplus lease space	201	1,207
Total other	<u>201</u>	<u>1,207</u>
Total provision and payables	<u>57,513</u>	<u>59,945</u>

NOTE 9 EQUITY

	Capital		Accumulated Results		Asset Revaluation Reserve		Total	
	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
Balance 1 July 1998	-	-	15,739	1,325	-	-	15,739	1,325
Operating result	-	-	(3,347)	11,833	-	-	(3,347)	11,833
Change in accounting policy - recognition of assets previously expensed	-	-	11,615	2,581	-	-	11,615	2,581
Net revaluation increases	-	-	-	-	8,127	-	8,127	-
Appropriation carryover	11,250	-	-	-	-	-	11,250	-
Balance 30 June 1999	<u>11,250</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>24,007</u>	<u>15,739</u>	<u>8,127</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>43,384</u>	<u>15,739</u>

NOTE 10 FINANCIAL ASSETS**(a) Receivables**

	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
Goods and services	1,419	2,890
Less: provision for doubtful debts	<u>30</u>	<u>70</u>
	1,389	2,820
Sundry Receivables	6	-
Appropriation - carryover	11,250	8,144
Total receivables	<u><u>12,645</u></u>	<u><u>10,964</u></u>
Receivables (gross) which are overdue are aged as follows:		
Overdue by:		
less than 30 days	334	214
30 to 60 days	51	89
more than 60 days	326	759

(b) Accrued revenues

Goods and services	227	148
Rent	<u>-</u>	<u>227</u>
Total accrued revenues	<u><u>227</u></u>	<u><u>375</u></u>

NOTE 11 NON-FINANCIAL ASSETS

(a) Assets at cost

	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
Plant, equipment, furniture and fittings		
At cost	13,973	22,405
Accumulated depreciation	5,583	8,396
Net book value	<u>8,390</u>	<u>14,009</u>
Computer hardware		
At cost	561	40,784
Accumulated depreciation	561	30,425
Net book value	<u>-</u>	<u>10,359</u>
Intangibles		
At cost	57,405	29,972
Accumulated amortisation	20,905	12,335
Net book value	<u>36,500</u>	<u>17,637</u>

(b) Assets at valuation

Furniture and fittings and certain plant items, including the telelift system, were revalued by the Australian Valuation Office in 1999, and are included in plant, equipment, furniture and fittings at replacement cost as follows: (The 1997/98 figure represents the telelift system only, revalued by the Australian Valuation Office in 1993).

Plant, equipment, furniture and fittings		
At replacement cost	17,599	1,700
Accumulated depreciation	9,430	864
Net book value	<u>8,169</u>	<u>836</u>

Computer hardware was revalued by the Australian Valuation Office in 1999, and is included in computer hardware at replacement cost as follows:

Computer hardware		
At replacement cost	42,723	-
Accumulated depreciation	28,341	-
Net book value	<u>14,382</u>	<u>-</u>

Certain internally generated software was valued by the Australian Valuation Office as at 30 June 1996, and is included in intangibles at replacement cost as follows:

Internally generated software		
At replacement cost	27,921	27,921
Accumulated amortisation	23,617	21,933
Net book value	<u>4,304</u>	<u>5,988</u>

(c) Assets under lease

	1998/99	1997/98
	\$'000	\$'000
Plant, equipment, furniture and fittings under lease		
At cost	14,321	13,848
Less accumulated amortisation	6,833	5,280
Net book value	7,488	8,568
Computer hardware under lease		
At cost	200	746
Less accumulated amortisation	200	418
Net book value	-	328
Total assets under lease	7,488	8,896

(d) Infrastructure, plant and equipment - movement summary

	Plant, equipment, furniture & fittings	Computer hardware	Intangibles	Capital work in progress	Total
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Cost or valuation					
As at 1 July 1998	37,953	41,530	57,893	8,114	145,490
Additions:					
Adjustment	-	-8	-	-	-8
Reclassification	546	-560	14	-	-
Other	1,518	7,605	27,419	15,595	52,137
Disposals	-698	-3,056	-	-	-3,754
Revaluation	6,574	-2,027	-	-	4,547
As at 30 June 1999	<u>45,893</u>	<u>43,484</u>	<u>85,326</u>	<u>23,709</u>	<u>198,412</u>
Accumulated Depreciation/amortisation					
As at 1 July 1998	14,540	30,843	34,268	-	79,651
Depreciation on Additions	73	827	51	-	951
Eliminated on disposals	-546	-3,052	-	-	-3,598
Adjustments	-15	45	2,954	-	2,984
Reclassification	233	-233	-	-	-
Revaluation	2,467	-6,046	-	-	-3,579
Charge for the year	5,094	6,718	7,249	-	19,061
As at 30 June 1999	<u>21,846</u>	<u>29,102</u>	<u>44,522</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>95,470</u>
Net book value					
As at 30 June 1999	<u>24,047</u>	<u>14,382</u>	<u>40,804</u>	<u>23,709</u>	<u>102,942</u>
As at 30 June 1998	<u>23,413</u>	<u>10,687</u>	<u>23,625</u>	<u>8,114</u>	<u>65,839</u>
Depreciation rates used for each class of depreciable asset	10-20%	16-33%	8-50%		

(e) Inventories

	1998/99 \$'000	1997/98 \$'000
Inventories	5,165	5,130
Less provision for obsolescence	421	446
Less provision for community service obligations	526	558
Total inventories	<u>4,218</u>	<u>4,126</u>

NOTE 12 CASH FLOW RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation of net cost of services to net cash provided by operating activities.

Net cost of services	204,729	208,576
Revenue from Government	<u>204,433</u>	<u>220,409</u>
Operating result	(296)	11,833
Depreciation/amortisation	20,054	15,133
Capitalised depreciation	(383)	(1,168)
(Profit)/loss on sale of non-current assets	(43)	(284)
Write down of assets	-	1,346
Reversals of previous asset write downs	(26)	-
Resources received free of charge	(144)	-
Adjustment prior year asset balances	(114)	(39)
Change in assets and liabilities		
Decrease (increase) in receivables	1,425	(1,048)
Decrease (increase) in appropriation receivable for operating purposes	8,144	(8,144)
(Increase) in inventories	(92)	(3,604)
Decrease (increase) in prepayments	(541)	102
Decrease (increase) in other assets	148	(311)
(Decrease) in lease debt	(1,497)	(1,176)
Increase (decrease) in employee liabilities	(509)	1,402
Increase (decrease) in supplier liabilities	214	(451)
Increase (decrease) in other liabilities	<u>(1,937)</u>	<u>836</u>
Net cash provided by operating activities	<u>24,403</u>	<u>14,427</u>

NOTE 13 EXECUTIVE REMUNERATION

(a) The number of executive positions for which remuneration of \$100,000 or more was paid or due:

	1998/99	1997/98
	Number of	Number of
	positions*	positions*
\$100,000 to \$110,000	1	-
\$110,001 to \$120,000	1	14
\$120,001 to \$130,000	15	4
\$130,001 to \$140,000	4	5
\$140,001 to \$150,000	8	3
\$150,001 to \$160,000	2	1
\$160,001 to \$170,000	-	1
\$170,001 to \$180,000	2	-
\$180,001 to \$190,000	-	1
\$250,001 to \$260,000	1	-
\$270,001 to \$280,000	-	1
\$280,001 to \$290,000	-	1
\$290,001 to \$300,000	-	1
\$300,001 to \$310,000	-	1
\$380,001 to \$390,000	-	1

* Executive remuneration has been reported on a qualifying positions basis. Total remuneration includes actual salary earned in the SES position, actual employer superannuation contributions and an estimate of the non-salary component of SES packages (e.g provision of a car). It also includes performance pay and separation and redundancy expenses, including associated leave/long service leave payments.

(b) The aggregate amount of total remuneration of executive positions shown above.*	\$4,886,149	\$5,480,006
(c) The aggregate amount of performance pay paid during the year to executive officers shown above. (In 1998/99 there was a change in the basis on which performance pay is determined because of the introduction of Australian Workplace Agreements).	Nil	\$75,828
(d) The aggregate amount of separation and redundancy payments paid during the year to executive officers shown above (excluding associated leave/long service leave payments).	Nil	\$346,615

NOTE 14 ACT OF GRACE PAYMENTS AND WAIVERS

(a) Act of grace payments

There were no Act of Grace payments made in accordance with section 33 of the *FMA Act 1997*. (1997/98 - Nil).

(b) Waivers of rights to payments

There were no waivers of rights to payments to the Commonwealth made during the financial year 1998/99 under section 34(1) of the *FMA Act 1997*. (1997/98 - Nil).

NOTE 15 AVERAGE STAFFING LEVELS

For Commonwealth Government program budgeting purposes, the ABS is a single program (Program 3.0) within the Treasury portfolio comprising two sub-programs. Average staffing levels by sub-program and in total were as follows:

	<u>1998/99</u> <u>Number</u>	<u>1997/98</u> <u>Number</u>
Sub-program 3.1 Statistical Operations	2,587	2,787
Sub-program 3.2 Corporate Services	324	341
Paid inoperative staff	74	74
	<u>2,985</u>	<u>3,202</u>

NOTE 16 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

a) Terms, conditions and accounting policies

Financial Instrument	Notes	Accounting Policies and Methods	Nature of Underlying Instrument
Financial Assets		Financial assets are recognised when control over future economic benefits is established and the amount of the benefit can be reliably measured.	
Cash	2i	Deposits are recognised at their nominal amounts. Interest is credited to revenue as it accrues.	The ABS holds a small amount of funds with a commercial bank for encashment facilities. Interest is earned on the daily balance at rates based on the 30 day Bank Bill Swap Reference Rate less 30 basis points. Rates have averaged 4.7% for the year. Interest is paid monthly.
Receivables	10a	The receivables are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any provision for bad and doubtful debts. Collectability of debts is reviewed at balance date. Provisions are made when collection of the debt is judged to be less rather than more likely.	All receivables are with entities internal and external to the Commonwealth. Credit terms are net 30 days (1997/98: 30 days).
Accrued revenue	10b	Revenue accrues and is recognised at the time the goods are provided and/or the services are performed.	As for receivables.
Financial Liabilities		Financial liabilities are recognised when a present obligation to another party is entered into and the amount of the liability can be reliably measured.	
Lease incentive liabilities	7	Liabilities are recognised at the present value of the minimum lease payments at the beginning of the lease. The discount rates used are estimates of the interest rates implicit in the leases.	At the reporting date, the ABS had lease incentives with terms averaging 10 years and a maximum of 10 years. The interest rate implicit in the leases averaged 6% (1997/98: 6%). The lease liabilities are secured by the lease assets.

Financial Instrument	Notes	Accounting Policies and Methods	Nature of Underlying Instrument
Surplus lease space	8d	A liability for surplus lease space is recognised at the time it is first determined that leased space will be of no future benefit to the ABS. The liability is measured as the total expected outlay relating to the surplus space. The amount of the liability is reduced on a straight line basis over the life of the lease by allocating lease payments between rental expense and reduction of the liability.	The liability of \$201,340 arises under the ABS' non cancellable operating leases for office accommodation.
Trade creditors	8b	Creditors and accruals are recognised at their nominal amounts, being the amounts at which the liabilities will be settled. Liabilities are recognised to the extent that the goods and services have been received.	Creditors are entities both external and internal to the Commonwealth legal entity. Settlement is usually made net 30 days.

(b) Net fair value of financial assets and liabilities

The net fair value of financial assets and liabilities, described below in Note 16(d), equals their carrying amount.

c) Credit risk exposures

The ABS' maximum exposure to credit risk at reporting date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the Statement of Assets and Liabilities.

The ABS has no significant exposures to any concentrations of credit risk.

NOTE 16 FINANCIAL INSTRUMENTS

Interest rate risk: agency

Financial instrument	Notes	Floating interest rate		Fixed interest rate								Non interest bearing			Total			Weighted average effective interest rate	
		1997/98		1 to 2 years		2 to 5 years		> 5 years		1997/98		1997/98		1997/98		1997/98		1997/98	
		\$'000	\$'000	1998/99	1997/98	1998/99	1997/98	1998/99	1997/98	1998/99	1997/98	1998/99	1997/98	1998/99	1997/98	1998/99	1997/98	1998/99	1997/98
Financial Assets																			
Cash at bank	2i	-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	221	454	221	484	4.7	4.2
Receivables	10a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,645	10,964	12,645	10,964	n/a	n/a
Financial assets (recognised)		-	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,866	11,418	12,866	11,448		
Total assets														153,960	87,996	153,960	87,996		
Financial liabilities																			
Use incentive liabilities (redeemable by creditors plus lease)	7	-	-	1,647	1,523	1,727	1,639	-	5,705	5,425	936	2,925	-	1,000	800	11,015	12,312	6	5.3
	8b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1,414	1,200	1,414	1,200	n/a	n/a
	8d	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	201	1,207	201	1,207	n/a	n/a
Total financial liabilities (recognised)		-	-	-	1,523	-	1,639	-	-	-	-	2,925	-	2,615	3,207	12,630	14,719		
Total liabilities														68,528	72,257	68,528	72,257		

APPENDIXES

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Appendix 1

ABS PROGRAM STRUCTURE, 1998–99

<i>Program</i>	<i>Sub-programs</i>	<i>Components</i>
Australian Bureau of Statistics	Statistical Operations	Dissemination Marketing and Public Relations Client Services Library Services National Accounts International Accounts International Trade Financial Accounts Public Sector Accounts Prices Business Statistics Economy Wide Statistics Small Business Statistics Science and Technology Agriculture Mining Manufacturing Construction Transport Service Industries Tourism Environment Business Register Economic Standards Business Methods SPEED Census Demography Labour Statistics Social Statistics National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics

...continued

ABS PROGRAM STRUCTURE, 1998–99—continued

<i>Program</i>	<i>Sub-programs</i>	<i>Components</i>
	Statistical Operations—continued	Geography Population Statistics Standards Statistical Coordination Analytical Services and Time Series Analyses Mathematical Statistics Population Surveys Statistical Services and User Liaison Information Technology Bureau Technology Application Data Management 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 Human Resources(a) Financial Resources(b) Corporate Planning and Secretariat International Relations Unit Corporate Services Division Support

(a) Includes the Organisation and People Development component. (b) Includes the Facilities Management component (formerly the Office Services component).

TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT Appendix 2

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

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program Component</i>
AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN	
<i>Bill McLennan</i>	Executive
ECONOMIC STATISTICS GROUP	
<i>Dennis Trewin</i>	Economic Statistics Group Support Environment
Economic Accounts Division <i>Rob Edwards</i>	Public Sector Accounts Prices
National Accounts Branch <i>Peter Harper</i>	National Accounts
International and Financial Accounts Branch <i>Ivan King</i>	International Accounts International Trade Financial Accounts
Services and Small Business Statistics Branch <i>Russell Rogers</i>	Small Business Statistics Science and Technology Transport Service Industries Tourism SPEED
Production Statistics Branch <i>Robin Slater</i>	Business Statistics Economy Wide Statistics Agriculture Mining Manufacturing Construction
Integration Branch <i>Alan Mackay</i>	Business Register Economic Standards Business Methods
POPULATION STATISTICS GROUP	
<i>Tim Skinner</i>	Population Statistics Group Support Population Statistics Standards
Social and Labour Division <i>Barbara Dunlop</i>	National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics
Labour Statistics Branch <i>Garth Bode</i>	Labour Statistics
Social Statistics Branch <i>Marion McEwin</i>	Social Statistics

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

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

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program Component</i>
Census, Demography and Geography Branch <i>John Struik</i>	Census Demography Geography
OTHER DIVISIONS	
Methodology Division <i>Susan Linacre</i>	Methodology Division Business Office Statistical Coordination Analytical Services and Time Series Analyses
Statistical Services Branch <i>Geoff Lee</i>	Mathematical Statistics
Population Surveys Branch <i>Siu-Ming Tam</i>	Population Surveys
Information Services Division <i>Jonathan Palmer</i>	Information Services Division Business Office Library Services
Dissemination Services Branch <i>Glenn Cocking</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 Infrastructure Branch <i>Jenine Borowik</i>	Information Technology Bureau
Technology Application Branch <i>Dave Bennison</i>	Technology Application
Business Infrastructure Branch <i>Graeme Oakley</i>	Data Management
Technology Research Branch <i>Bryan Fitzpatrick</i>	Technology Research
Corporate Services Division <i>Graham Wauchop</i>	Corporate Services Division Support
Policy Secretariat Branch <i>Robin Green</i>	Corporate Planning and Secretariat International Relations Unit
Human Resources Branch <i>Denis Farrell</i>	Human Resources
Financial Resources Branch <i>Steve Matheson</i>	Financial Resources

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

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

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program Component</i>
REGIONAL OFFICES(b)	
New South Wales	
<i>Greg Bray</i>	
Victoria	
<i>Zia Abbasi</i>	
Queensland	
<i>Brian Doyle</i>	
Western Australia	
<i>Colin Nagle</i>	
South Australia	
<i>Ian Crettenden</i>	
Tasmania	
<i>Vacant</i>	
Northern Territory	
<i>Robyn Elliott</i>	
Australian Capital Territory	
<i>Dalma Jacobs</i>	

(a) Structure as at 30 June 1999. The names of officers managing Groups, 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. (b) Includes the Statistical Services and User Liaison component.

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	1996-97	1997-98											1998-99
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
STATISTICAL OPERATIONS(c)													
Dissemination	84	78	37	3	21	2	2	—	3	—	—	—	68
Marketing and Public Relations	51	51	23	6	5	1	3	4	—	—	—	—	43
Client Services	124	129	29	28	18	24	7	12	5	4	4	—	133
Library Services	28	27	16	3	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	24
National Accounts	57	65	63	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	63
International Accounts	79	67	52	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	52
International Trade	34	33	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	31
Financial Accounts	27	26	18	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26
Public Sector Accounts	67	61	26	6	7	5	4	4	3	2	—	—	57
Prices	112	102	60	21	7	4	4	6	3	2	—	—	107
Business Statistics	49	50	9	41	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	50
Economy Wide Statistics	41	36	35	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	36
Small Business	10	11	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
Science and Technology	12	16	14	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	15
Agriculture	66	66	8	—	—	1	1	1	40	—	—	—	50
Mining	11	11	1	—	—	—	8	—	—	3	—	—	11
Manufacturing	77	77	5	56	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	62
Construction	62	77	2	—	—	—	54	—	—	—	—	—	56
Transport	41	40	6	—	—	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	37
Service Industries	98	85	41	2	43	4	—	2	—	—	—	—	92
Tourism	20	18	1	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Environment	13	12	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Business Register	91	92	13	7	46	5	1	1	11	—	—	—	84
Economic Standards	11	17	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	16
Business Methods	50	40	13	13	15	3	1	2	—	—	—	—	47
SPEED	6	6	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
Census	821	148	55	1	4	—	3	—	2	—	1	—	67
Demography	48	47	23	4	—	11	4	2	2	1	—	—	47
Labour Statistics	206	181	64	—	4	—	—	90	—	—	—	—	158
Social Statistics	105	100	70	3	—	20	—	2	—	—	—	—	94
National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	48	53	4	3	16	2	12	2	—	15	—	—	54

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

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

Program Component	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99										
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
<i>STATISTICAL OPERATIONS(c)—continued</i>													
Geography	13	16	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24
Population Statistics Standards	—	18	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	21
Statistical Coordination	—	6	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
Analytical Services and Time Series Analyses	24	25	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26
Mathematical Statistics	70	71	52	4	5	1	4	4	3	—	—	—	73
Population Surveys	273	219	77	27	21	23	23	18	9	6	—	—	204
Statistical Services and User Liaison	57	62	—	10	14	9	8	8	14	3	5	—	70
Information Technology Bureau	205	187	141	9	7	9	7	8	7	2	—	—	192
Technology Application	194	214	147	11	6	11	11	13	14	—	—	—	213
Data Management	28	15	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Technology Research	12	7	6	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7
Economic Statistics Group Support	48	46	13	6	13	2	3	8	2	2	—	—	48
Population Statistics Group Support	53	54	17	5	6	4	7	4	1	2	—	—	47
Methodology Division Business Office	3	4	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Information Services Division Business Office	12	14	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
Technology Services Division Support	7	7	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7
Total	3 548	2 787	1 327	279	263	186	170	191	119	42	10	—	2 587
<i>CORPORATE SERVICES(c)</i>													
Executive	46	46	1	9	7	5	5	5	6	5	2	—	45
Human Resources	153	144	81	13	9	15	5	8	4	2	—	—	138
Financial Resources	120	115	56	8	15	7	7	9	4	3	—	—	109
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	15	13	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14
International Relations Unit	4	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Internal Audit	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Corporate Services Division Support	15	19	9	—	—	2	2	2	—	—	—	—	15
Total	354	341	165	30	31	29	19	23	14	10	2	—	324
Total operative staff	3 902	3 128	1 492	309	294	215	190	214	132	53	13	—	2 911
Paid inoperative staff(d)	78	74	38	9	8	5	3	8	2	—	—	—	74
Total staff(e)	3 980	3 202	1 530	317	302	220	193	222	135	53	13	—	2 985

(a) Figures for 1996-97 and 1997-98 have been adjusted to reflect changes to the program structure for 1998-99. (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 12 weeks, for example, staff on long service leave, extended sick leave etc. (e) Previous year's figures have been revised.

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(a)

<i>Year and classification</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>DPC</i>	<i>Total</i>
MALE											
1997											
Total staff(b)	920	201	178	123	121	125	99	21	5	460	2 253
1998											
Total staff(b)	881	192	167	112	117	123	89	20	4	—	1 705
1999											
Operative and paid inoperative staff(c)											
Australian Statistician	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Senior Executive Service Executive Officer	25	1	1	2	1	1	1	—	—	—	32
Executive Officer Level 2	92	4	7	5	6	7	4	1	—	—	126
Executive Officer Level 1	173	20	21	9	11	12	10	3	1	—	260
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	267	38	30	19	24	19	20	2	1	—	420
APS Level 5	124	31	37	29	17	22	15	3	1	—	279
APS Level 4	90	46	35	21	39	26	18	4	1	—	280
APS Level 3	43	37	14	20	9	15	9	5	—	—	152
APS Level 2	29	7	5	6	7	6	11	—	—	—	71
APS Graduate	15	—	—	2	—	1	4	—	—	—	22
APS Level 1	2	2	—	3	—	5	—	—	—	—	12
APS Cadet	2	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	4
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	863	187	150	116	114	114	92	19	4	—	1 659
Unpaid inoperative staff	25	—	2	—	—	2	1	—	—	—	30
Total staff	888	187	152	116	114	116	93	19	4	—	1 689

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

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

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	SA	WA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
FEMALE											
1997											
Total staff(b)	805	165	158	118	93	114	59	29	9	281	1 831
1998											
Total staff(b)	734	142	136	110	100	121	52	38	10	—	1 443
1999											
Operative and paid inoperative staff(c)											
Senior Executive Service	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	32	2	1	—	—	—	—	3	1	—	39
Executive Officer Level 1	110	4	10	3	6	5	4	3	—	—	145
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	194	13	31	10	6	8	3	7	—	—	272
APS Level 5	141	29	32	12	14	26	6	6	1	—	267
APS Level 4	117	31	27	21	18	20	16	7	5	—	262
APS Level 3	76	31	17	37	16	20	10	5	2	—	214
APS Level 2	54	9	11	20	13	17	17	—	—	—	141
APS Graduate	14	—	2	2	2	4	1	—	—	—	25
APS Level 1	5	3	3	8	3	14	1	1	—	—	38
APS Cadet	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	749	122	134	113	78	114	58	32	9	—	1 409
Unpaid inoperative staff	38	6	3	6	5	4	—	2	—	—	64
Total staff	787	128	137	119	83	118	58	34	9	—	1 473

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

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

<i>Year and classification</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>Qld</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>DPC</i>	<i>Total</i>
TOTAL											
1997											
Total staff(b)	1 726	364	336	241	213	240	158	50	14	741	4 083
1998											
Total staff(b)	1 614	334	303	222	217	244	141	58	14	—	3 147
1999											
Operative and paid inoperative staff(c)											
Australian Statistician	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Senior Executive Service Executive Officer	30	1	1	2	1	1	1	—	—	—	37
Executive Officer Level 2	124	6	8	5	6	7	4	4	1	—	165
Executive Officer Level 1	283	24	31	12	17	17	14	6	1	—	405
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	461	51	61	29	30	27	23	9	1	—	692
APS Level 5	265	60	69	41	31	48	21	9	2	—	546
APS Level 4	207	77	62	42	57	46	34	11	6	—	542
APS Level 3	119	68	31	57	25	35	19	10	2	—	366
APS Level 2	83	16	16	26	20	23	28	—	—	—	212
APS Graduate	29	—	2	4	2	5	5	—	—	—	47
APS Level 1	7	5	3	11	3	19	1	1	—	—	50
APS Cadet	3	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	5
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 612	309	284	229	192	228	150	51	13	—	3 068
Unpaid inoperative staff	63	6	5	6	5	6	1	2	—	—	94
Total staff	1 675	315	289	235	197	234	151	53	13	—	3 162

(a) Includes 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) Previous year's figures have been revised. (c) Being paid at the classification shown at 30 June 1999.

3.3 ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922: BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, SEX AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE(a)

Year and classification	Permanent			Temporary			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
FULL-TIME EMPLOYEES									
1997									
Total staff	1 752	1 335	3 087	468	316	784	2 220	1 651	3 871
1998									
Total staff(b)	1 637	1 176	2 813	37	74	111	1 674	1 250	2 924
1999									
Operative and paid inoperative staff(c)									
Australian Statistician	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Senior Executive Service Executive Officer	32	5	37	—	—	—	32	5	37
Executive Officer Level 2	121	34	155	—	—	—	121	34	155
Executive Officer Level 1	249	124	373	2	1	3	251	125	376
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	411	229	640	1	2	3	412	231	643
APS Level 5	277	223	500	1	1	2	278	224	502
APS Level 4	272	228	500	4	8	12	276	236	512
APS Level 3	139	164	303	9	17	26	148	181	329
APS Level 2	42	49	91	23	67	90	65	116	181
APS Graduate	22	25	47	—	—	—	22	25	47
APS Level 1	4	11	15	5	15	20	9	26	35
APS Cadet	4	1	5	—	—	—	4	1	5
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 574	1 093	2 667	45	111	156	1 619	1 204	2 823
Unpaid inoperative staff	30	54	84	—	—	—	30	54	84
Total staff	1 604	1 147	2 751	45	111	156	1 649	1 258	2 907

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

3.3 ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922: BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, SEX AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE(a)—continued

Year and classification	Permanent			Temporary			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
PART-TIME EMPLOYEES									
1997									
Total staff	32	173	205	1	6	7	33	179	212
1998									
Total staff	30	180	210	2	11	13	32	191	223
1999									
Operative and paid inoperative staff(b)									
Executive Officer									
Executive Officer Level 2	4	5	9	1	—	1	5	5	10
Executive Officer Level 1	9	20	29	—	—	—	9	20	29
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	8	40	48	—	1	1	8	41	49
APS Level 5	1	43	44	—	—	—	1	43	44
APS Level 4	4	25	29	—	1	1	4	26	30
APS Level 3	3	31	34	1	2	3	4	33	37
APS Level 2	3	16	19	3	9	12	6	25	31
APS Level 1	—	1	1	3	11	14	3	12	15
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	32	181	213	8	24	32	40	205	245
Unpaid inoperative staff	—	10	10	—	—	—	—	10	10
Total staff	32	191	223	8	24	32	40	215	255

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

3.3 ABS EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1922: STAFF BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, SEX AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE(a)—continued

Year and classification	Permanent			Temporary			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
TOTAL									
1997									
Total staff	1 784	1 508	3 292	469	322	791	2 253	1 830	4 083
1998									
Total staff(b)	1 667	1 356	3 023	39	85	124	1 706	1 441	3 147
1999									
Operative and paid inoperative staff(c)									
Australian Statistician	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Senior Executive Service Executive Officer	32	5	37	—	—	—	32	5	37
Executive Officer Level 2	125	39	164	1	—	1	126	39	165
Executive Officer Level 1	258	144	402	2	1	3	260	145	405
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	419	269	688	1	3	4	420	272	692
APS Level 5	278	266	544	1	1	2	279	267	546
APS Level 4	276	253	529	4	9	13	280	262	542
APS Level 3	142	195	337	10	19	29	152	214	366
APS Level 2	45	65	110	26	76	102	71	141	212
APS Graduate	22	25	47	—	—	—	22	25	47
APS Level 1	4	12	16	8	26	34	12	38	50
APS Cadet	4	1	5	—	—	—	4	1	5
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 606	1 274	2 880	53	135	188	1 659	1 409	3 068
Unpaid inoperative staff	30	64	94	—	—	—	30	64	94
Total staff	1 636	1 338	2 974	53	135	188	1 689	1 473	3 162

(a) Includes 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) Previous year's figures have been revised. (c) Being paid at the classification shown at 30 June 1999.

3.4 REPRESENTATION OF EEO GROUPS: PERMANENT ABS STAFF AT 30 JUNE 1999

Salary range	Number of staff and percentage of total staff						EEO Coverage
	Total Staff	Women	NESB1	NESB2	ATSI	PWD	
Australian Public Service Level 1 and equivalent classifications	21	13	1	3	4	2	20
%	—	61.9	4.8	14.3	19.0	9.5	95.2
Australian Public Service Level 2 and equivalent classifications	167	100	16	12	—	12	147
%	—	59.9	9.6	7.2	—	7.2	88.0
Australian Public Service Level 3 and equivalent classifications	352	208	40	37	7	21	316
%	—	59.1	11.4	10.5	2.0	6.0	89.8
Australian Public Service Level 4	543	264	79	44	2	29	482
%	—	48.6	14.5	8.1	0.4	5.3	88.8
Australian Public Service Level 5	555	276	53	53	2	19	495
%	—	49.7	9.5	9.5	0.4	3.4	89.2
Australian Public Service Level 6	711	282	70	46	2	30	637
%	—	39.7	9.8	6.5	0.3	4.2	89.6
Executive Level 1	412	149	33	18	2	15	380
%	—	36.2	8.0	4.4	0.5	3.6	92.2
Executive Level 2	171	41	10	5	—	6	154
%	—	24.0	5.8	2.9	—	3.5	90.1
Senior Executive Service	42	5	1	1	—	4	33
%	—	11.9	2.4	2.4	—	9.5	78.6
Total	2 974	1 338	303	219	19	138	2 664
% of total staff	—	45.0	10.2	7.4	0.6	4.6	89.6

EEO groups are not mutually exclusive and any individual officer may be included in more than one group. Percentages are based on total staff. Inoperative staff are included. EEO Coverage is the number of staff who have elected to provide EEO information.

Key

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

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

<i>Purpose</i>	1996-97	1997-98	1998-99
Interviewer enumerated statistical collections (mainly household surveys)	290	248	201
Census of population and housing (including preparations for the Census)	1 232	—	—
Total	1 522	248	201

**3.6 ABS INTAKE AND SEPARATIONS OF PERMANENT STAFF 1998-99(a)
(number)**

<i>Method of intake and type of separation</i>	SES	Non-SES	Total
Intake			
Appointment—National Graduate Recruitment Campaign	—	116	116
Appointment—other	1	102	103
Promotion or transfer from outside the ABS	—	46	46
Total intake	1	264	265
Separations			
Promotion or transfer to outside the ABS	1	98	99
Resignation	2	127	129
Death	—	2	2
Dismissal	—	4	4
Retirement—Invalidity	—	2	2
Retirement—Under 76R, <i>Public Service Act 1922</i>	—	—	—
Retirement—Under 76W, <i>Public Service Act 1922</i>	—	66	66
Retirement—Maximum Age	—	2	2
Retirement—Election by Officer—Age 55-59 years	1	11	12
Retirement—Election by Officer—Age 60-64 years	1	5	6
Total separations	5	317	322

(a) Excludes temporary inward and outward movements.

**3.7 ABS SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE STAFF BY SALARY LEVEL, GENDER AND LOCATION
AT 30 JUNE 1999 (number)**

<i>Year and location</i>	<i>Salary Band</i>			<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>
	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>			
1997 Total	25	6	2	30	3	33
1998 Total	27	6	2	30	5	35
1999						
Australian Capital Territory	19	6	2	23	4	27
New South Wales	1	—	—	1	—	1
Victoria	1	—	—	1	—	1
Queensland	1	—	—	1	—	1
South Australia	1	—	—	1	—	1
Western Australia	1	—	—	1	—	1
Tasmania	1	—	—	1	—	1
Total	25	6	2	29	4	33

3.8 NET ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURE ON STAFF TRAINING(a)

	<i>1998-99</i>
Total ABS operative staff (staff years)(b)	2 911
Number of staff attendances at training	15 272
Staff attendances (days)	15 363
Trainers (days)	1 726

(a) Excludes on-the-job training. (b) Comprises full-time and part-time staff at their full-time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff.

CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Appendix 4

Policy on selection and engagement of consultants

ABS policy on selection and engagement of consultants is consistent with Commonwealth Procurement Guideline No. 13, Contracting for Consultancy Services, and is contained in the ABS Purchasing Manual.

Selection procedures

The ABS selects and engages consultants in a way that is consistent with the objectives of 'open and effective competition' and 'value for money'. The ABS identifies qualified and available consultants on the basis of open tender, selective tender, successful tender for a similar project, previous work done and known or assessed capability, as appropriate in each case.

Purposes for which consultants were engaged in 1998–99

The purposes for which consultants were engaged by the ABS in 1998–99 have been classified into eight main categories. These are shown in the table below. In all categories, the predominant reasons for the use of consultancy services were the need for specialised skills and to allow efficiency and flexibility in operations by making additional personnel available.

Consultants under engagement in 1998–99

The total number of consultants engaged in 1998–99 and the total amount paid to them during the year, with subtotals for the main purpose for which they were engaged, are shown in the following table:

CONSULTANTS UNDER ENGAGEMENT BY ABS, 1998–99: SUMMARY

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Consultancies no.</i>	<i>Amount Paid in 1998–99 \$</i>
Accounting	7	323 046
Audit	2	427 260
General Support Services	7	269 019
Human Resource Management	15	221 395
Information Technology	32	1 148 490
Legal	3	130 284
Marketing/PR	3	86 475
Statistical Support	21	192 995
Total	90	2 798 964

Consultants engaged in 1998–99 are listed in the following table. The project for which each was engaged and the amount paid in 1998–99 are also shown. The consultants are listed under the main purpose for which they were engaged. The justification for recourse to consultancy arrangements, and the type of tender used, is indicated in each case by an alphabetic and a numeric symbol, which is explained in a key at the end of the table.

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT

	<i>Amount paid in 1998–99</i>	<i>Justification and whether advertised</i>
	\$	
Accounting		
Acumen Alliance		
Provision of accountancy services	136 600	(a,c) (1)
Apex Consulting Services Pty Ltd		
Accrual budgeting—conceptual framework	24 000	(a,c) (1)
Australian Valuation Office		
Revaluation of ABS leasehold improvements, furniture and fittings	12 000	(a) (1)
Ernst & Young		
Specialist accounting advice	45 261	(a) (1)
Corporate Integrators Pty Ltd		
Accrual accounting and valuation of intellectual property	9 150	(a,c,d) (2)
Morisons Consulting		
Accountancy services	10 249	(a,c) (1)
Stanton Partners		
Oracle financial systems and process improvements	85 786	(a,c) (1)
Audit		
Ernst & Young		
Compliance and efficiency auditing	187 131	(a,c) (2)
Stanton Partners		
IT auditing	240 129	(a,c) (2)
General Support Services		
Butterworth Russell & Partners		
Architectural and engineering advice	13 300	(a,c) (2)
DEGW Asia-Pacific Pty Ltd		
Expert advice on new building	59 920	(a) (2)
J.G. Service Pty Ltd		
Strategic property market advice	53 415	(a) (1)
Lincoln Scott Pty Ltd		
Environmental management services	59 507	(a,c) (2)
Meinhardt (Vic) Pty Ltd		
Engineering advice on proposals for new building	22 257	(a,c) (1)
Peddle Thorp NT Pty Ltd		
Office design and contract administration services	52 500	(a,c) (1)
T4 Protective Security		
Protective security risk review	8 120	(a,c) (2)

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT—continued

	Amount paid in 1998–99	Justification and whether advertised
	\$	
Human Resource Management		
Australian Representation Services Pty Ltd Internal communication in ESG	22 944	(a,d,e) (1)
CHR Consultancy Researching the scope for market testing of graduate recruitment and temporary staff	5 800	(a) (1)
Ernst & Young Services in relation to project financial management issues	7 000	(a) (1)
Forte Solutions Pty Ltd Staffing management consultancy	20 240	(a) (1)
Greethed Partners Pty Ltd Implementation of review of Divisional Support Units	6 699	(a,c) (1)
Hay Group Advice on remuneration policy	64 513	(a,c) (2)
Heaney Blaylock & Associates Professional industrial relations services	13 203	(a) (1)
Hume Consulting Group Training for making performance agreements	22 675	(a,c) (2)
Innovative Thinking & Systems Stage 2 of the Management Development Program	3 876	(a,c) (1)
Facilitation of Senior Officer Strategic Planning Off-site	3 876	(a,c,e) (1)
Pandesic Pty Ltd Preparation for replacement of payroll services	8 656	(a,c) (1)
Public Service & Merit Protection Commission Investigation & report on application under Reg 83	9 300	(d) (1)
Simsion, Bowles and Associates Review of senior management remuneration strategy	12 000	(a,c,d) (1)
Review of the individual performance management scheme	14 438	(a,c,d) (1)
Windover Consultants Pty Ltd Evaluation of team effectiveness in the Financial Management Section	6 175	(a,e) (1)
Information Technology		
Anderson Contracting SQL Windows development for Household Survey Project	22 813	(a,c) (1)
Banyon Systems Australia Strategic development for Year 2000	15 000	(a,c) (1)
CDM IITS Internet & IT Security Integration of security software into the ABS test network environment	8 800	(a,c) (2)
Citadel Security Management Systems Pty Ltd On-site assistance in the installation and configuration of BSDI version 3.1	2 700	(a,c) (2)
Class Technology Pty Ltd Object oriented analysis and design technologies for an ABS project	4 016	(a,b,c) (2)
Communication Measurement Improving communication with clients	14 354	(a,c) (2)
Computer Associates Pty Ltd Investment analysis of current network and systems management	30 000	(a,c) (2)

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT—continued

	<i>Amount paid in 1998–99</i>	<i>Justification and whether advertised</i>
	\$	
Information Technology—continued		
ComputerPlus Integrations Pty Ltd SAS programming for household surveys	30 901	(a,c) (2)
Datfor Communications Pty Ltd Voice communication services	15 329	(a,c) (2)
ESRI Australia IRDB redevelopment	220 000	(a,c) (2)
Execom Software Fact Data and mediation services	29 828	(a,c) (2)
Fujitsu Australia Scope specification and cost estimation in IT projects	3 150	(a) (1)
Full Spectrum Pty Ltd BMC Patrol Trial	6 000	(a,c) (2)
Heming, Terry Review and re-design of ABS computer based IT cost recovery system	23 281	(a,c) (1)
Hiser Consulting Group Development of ABS Corporate Style Guide	22 560	(a,c) (1)
IT Negotiations Limited Completion of draft market testing documentation	40 900	(a,c,d) (2)
Acquisition of an intelligent character recognition solution for 2001 Census	17 500	(a,c,d) (2)
Jabawoc Pty Ltd Analysis, design and programming work	21 871	(a,c) (2)
Manpower Technical High level analysis and programming services	52 994	(a,c) (2)
Investigation and development for a new electronic dissemination system	33 225	(a,b,c) (1)
Mapinfo Australia Software services for final release of census data	74 710	(a,c) (2)
Mastech Asia Pacific SAS programming services—household surveys facilities development	173 899	(a,c) (2)
Development and updating of Lotus Notes administrative systems	9 880	(a,c) (2)
Microhelp Consultancy for scoping of SLA work	4 500	(a) (1)
Paul Pentony Consulting Review requirements for complex classification system	3 400	(a,c) (2)
Review of cost recovery mechanism	11 960	(a,c) (2)
Paxus People Data Warehouse	19 529	(a) (2)
Reverse Tech Pty Ltd Phoenix Pilot Study	9 452	(a) (2)
Richards, Wayne Development of dissemination management & publications systems	100 500	(a) (1)
RnD Pty Ltd Security review of Windows NT servers	16 800	(a,c) (2)
Sigma Management Science Project management framework	103 650	(a,c) (2)
Storage Technology of Australia Fujitsu MSP mainframe	4 988	(a) (1)

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT—continued

	Amount paid in 1998–99	Justification and whether advertised
	\$	
Legal		
Clayton Utz		
Property management	114 332	(a) (1)
Corrs Chambers Westgarth		
Legal services—competitive tender	11 974	(a,c) (2)
Legal fees	3 978	(a,c) (2)
Marketing/PR		
Media Skills		
Media Coach Pilot	3 691	(a,c) (1)
The Wallis Group		
Information consultancy—client satisfaction research	30 928	(a,d) (2)
1996 Census output evaluation	51 856	(a,d) (2)
Statistical Support		
Coles Rutishauser		
Validation and dissemination of data from the 1995 National Nutrition Survey	3 260	(a,c) (1)
CSIRO		
Advice on ABS graph	5 652	(a) (1)
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu		
Benchmarking statistical outputs	16 137	(a,c) (1)
Business process re-engineering exercise and benchmarking of survey costs	12 490	(a,c,d,e) (1)
Energy Strategies Pty Ltd		
Assistance in compilation of energy statistics	2 000	(a,b,d) (1)
Finegan, Brian		
Provision of expert statistical advice	7 582	(a,c) (1)
Geodesign Pty Ltd		
Evaluation of the 1996 Census CD map production	3 250	(a,c) (2)
Giles, M.D.		
Provision of expert statistical advice	17 600	(a) (1)
External review of articles for Australian Social Trends	8 000	(a) (1)
Kate Sullivan and Associates		
Study of responses to the ABS standard of questions on Indigenous statistics	16 474	(a,c,d) (3)
Lamberton, Don		
Provision of independent and expert statistical advice	5 000	(a) (1)
Market Attitude Research		
Provision of focus group testing services	34 716	(a) (2)
Monash University		
Provision of expert statistical advice	2 730	(a) (1)
Neutze, Max		
Provision of independent and expert statistical advice	5 000	(a) (1)
Rod O'Connor & Associates P/L		
Provision of a preliminary assessment of the Indigenous Community Collection	7 010	(a) (1)
Siciliano, Frank		
Training in the collection of health data for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders	8 216	(a,c) (1)

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT—continued

	Amount paid in 1998–99	Justification and whether advertised
	\$	
Statistical Support—continued		
Statistical Access		
Review and examine future options for the Agriculture Statistics Program	3 673	(a,d,e) (1)
TVW Telethon Institute for Child Health Research		
Comparison of Indigenous status at birth	4 400	(a) (1)
US Bureau of Labor Statistics		
Multifactor productivity—assistance in improvement of ABS estimates	21 255	(a) (1)
Von Reibnitz, F.		
Production of CD-ROM on concepts sources and methods	5 550	(a,c) (1)
Yanbali Pty Ltd		
Feasibility assessment of alternative methods of assessing Indigenous mortality in Australia	3 000	(a,c) (1)

Key

Justification for recourse to consultancy arrangements:

- (a) Need for specialised skills.
- (b) Need for access to the latest technology and experience in its application.
- (c) Lack of available in-house resources.
- (d) Need for an independent study.
- (e) Need for a change agent or facilitator.

Type of Tender:

- (1) No tender
- (2) Selective tender
- (3) Open tender.

Above table includes consultants where total payments, or total value of contract awarded, are more than \$2,000 in the reference period.

Excludes standard services such as:

- scribes
- medical, counselling, and other individual consultations
- presentation of standard/pre-existing training courses
- travel contracts, IT Help Desk and IT maintenance contracts.

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY (PARTICIPATIVE WORK PRACTICES)

Appendix 5

Consistent with the Australian Public Service value of establishing *cooperative workplace relations based on consultation and communication*, it is ABS policy to ensure that conditions and opportunities exist for the involvement of staff in the management of its activities.

This policy is reflected in objective 4 of the ABS Corporate Plan: *A team of people with the skills and motivation to achieve the ABS mission*. The strategy to achieve this objective includes the fostering of participative management practices through a number of means.

The approach to agreement making under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* is important in this regard, with Certified Agreements (with Public Service Act and Census and Statistics Act employees) being directly made with employees under section 170LK of that Act.

These agreements contain commitments to provide all employees with information on workplace issues that affect them, and to provide them with opportunities to contribute their views on these issues. Local consultative forums with representatives from management, staff and unions have been, or are in the process of being, established to support this commitment.

The agreement with Public Service Act employees requires line managers to assist staff to understand corporate directions and how these translate to teams and individuals.

There has been extensive consultation with Public Service Act employees and their representatives on the preparation of policy guidelines to support the implementation and operation of their Certified Agreement.

The ABS continues to have 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, participative work practices.

The use of contemporary information technologies throughout the ABS continues to foster employee access to corporate information.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Appendix 6

The ABS is committed to the health, safety and welfare of all its employees. A dedicated unit in Central Office, complemented by individual officers in Regional Offices, ensures that the requirements of the relevant legislation are observed.

A network of Occupational Health and Safety (OHAS) Committees is the vehicle for consultation on issues affecting all staff.

During 1998–99, 15 staff were selected and trained as Health and Safety Representatives under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* (OHAS Act).

There was one notification under sections 30, 45, 46 and 47 of the OHAS Act. Nine notifications occurred under section 68 of the Act.

Accidents

The number of reported accidents and incidents for the 1998–99 financial year was 277. This compares with 313 in 1997–98. The reported accidents fall into the following broad categories:

REPORTED ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

	1997–98	1998–99
Motor vehicle/journey related accidents	81	66
Accidents as a result of sporting injuries	13	17
Back injuries	27	14
Occupational overuse syndrome	49	44
Stress	8	1
Other work-based incidents and accidents	135	135
Total	313	277

In 1998–99, 68 accidents resulted in 236 lost working days, in comparison with 65 accidents and 508 lost working days in 1997–98.

Compensation claims

During 1998–99, 115 compensation claims (compared with 104 in 1997–98) were submitted for this period, 58 (44 in 1997–98) of which required implementation of a Return to Work Plan. There were 44 (75 in 1997–98) case closures for the period. Under the Fitness for Duty Guidelines, 65 cases required case management and 28 cases were closed during 1998–99.

Staff counselling

The ABS continued to provide all staff with access to a staff counselling service using a combination of external and internal staff counsellors. Feedback from staff on all service providers indicated a high level of satisfaction.

Comcare premiums

As a result of active injury prevention, early intervention, active case management and rehabilitation during 1998–99, the Comcare premium has declined over recent years and has been set at 0.92 % of total salary for 1999–2000.

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

	1993–94	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000
ABS	1.2	1.08	1.61	1.84	1.47	1	0.92
Agency pool average	1.56	1.4	1.75	1.6	1.2	1	1.03

Achievements during the year included:

- inclusion of occupational health and safety components in orientation, supervision and middle management training programs. On-the-job training sessions were conducted on a variety of OHAS issues and specific sessions were developed and conducted for contractors involved in the rectification project for the Central Office building, Cameron Offices;
- continuation of the Working Comfortably campaign with the introduction of the Rest and Stretch package (an in-house software program developed to promote regular keyboard breaks and exercises for operators of screen based equipment);
- continuation of the focus on safety and workplace assessments in all offices, supported by individual assessment and training in the correct adjustment to workstations and the use of ergonomic furniture;
- conduct of awareness sessions and seminars on contemporary issues by the Employee Assistance Program providers;
- conduct of a pilot program with an outsourced Rehabilitation Case Manager in Central Office to provide case management services, which resulted in a reduction in the duration of rehabilitation cases;
- consolidation of return to work procedures focusing on individual case needs to achieve an early, safe and durable return to work after accidents, illness or injuries; and
- conduct of assessments and implementation of the recommendations in a number of operational areas where potential for incidents was considered to be high.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Appendix 7

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

Establishment, organisation and functions

Chapter 1 and Appendixes 1 and 2 of this report provide details on the role, structure and functions of the ABS.

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 powers to request or direct 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 for failing to supply information if directed; and
- the power to publish statistics and release information.

Consultative arrangements

The role of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, which is the peak consultative body for the ABS, is described in Chapter 1.

Categories of documents maintained under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*

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

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

Other documents available to the public:

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, maps, data collection, processing and publication manuals and instructions, and mailing lists.

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 ABS holdings of personal information, as contained in the *Personal Information Digest* published by the Privacy Commissioner.

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

A significant part of ABS information holdings is information collected under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. This information is exempt from the provisions of the *Freedom of Information Act 1982*.

ABS Freedom of Information (FOI) activities

Comprehensive information on the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* has been supplied to all ABS staff. Matters relating to the operation of the Act within the ABS are the responsibility of the Policy Secretariat Branch in Central Office, and authority for decision making under the Act has been delegated to the Deputy Australian Statistician, Population Statistics Group and the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services Division. Policy Secretariat Branch staff attend meetings of the FOI Practitioners' Forum run by the Attorney-General's Department and other meetings conducted by private legal practitioners.

The following table provides details of FOI activities during the years 1994–95 to 1998–99 inclusive. No requests were made to the ABS under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* during 1998–99.

FOI ACTIVITIES, 1994–95 TO 1998–99 (number)

	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99
Requests received for					
Statistical information	—	1	1	—	—
Personal papers	—	—	1	—	—
Administrative documents	2	2	—	—	—
Total	2	3	2	0	0
Decisions made					
Access granted in full	2	1	2	—	—
Access granted in part	—	—	—	—	—
Request transferred to another agency	—	—	—	—	—
Request withdrawn	—	1	—	—	—
Access refused	—	—	—	—	—
Documents not in existence	—	1	—	—	—
Total	2	3	2	0	0
Decisions outstanding at end of year	—	—	—	—	—
Review of decisions by principal officer	—	—	—	—	—
Appeals to Administrative Appeals Tribunal	—	—	—	—	—

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 Canberra 02 6252 7191.

General information

The ABS offers an initial contact point for all information requests in each ABS office as follows:

Central Office, Canberra

Telephone: 02 6252 6627
Facsimile: 02 6252 7102
Mail: PO Box 10
Belconnen ACT 2616
Counter: Unit 5, Cameron Offices
Chandler Street
Belconnen

New South Wales

Telephone: 02 9268 4611
Facsimile: 02 9268 4668
Mail: GPO Box 796
Sydney NSW 1041
Counter: Level 5
St Andrew's House
Sydney Square
Sydney

Victoria

Telephone: 03 9615 7755
Facsimile: 03 9615 7798
Mail: GPO Box 2796Y
Melbourne Vic 3001
Counter: Level 5, CU Tower
485 Latrobe Street
Melbourne

Queensland

Telephone: 07 3222 6351
Facsimile: 07 3222 6283
Mail: GPO Box 9817
Brisbane QLD 4001
Counter: 18th Floor
313 Adelaide Street
Brisbane

Western Australia

Telephone: 08 9360 5140
Facsimile: 08 9360 5955
Mail: GPO Box K881
Perth WA 6001
Counter: Level 16, Exchange Plaza
2 The Esplanade
Perth

South Australia

Telephone: 08 8237 7400
Facsimile: 08 8237 7566
Mail: GPO Box 2272
Adelaide SA 5001
Counter: 7th Floor
Commonwealth Centre
55 Currie Street
Adelaide

Tasmania

Telephone: 03 6222 5800
Facsimile: 03 6222 5995
Mail: GPO Box 66A
Hobart Tas 7001
Counter: Ground Floor
200 Collins Street
Hobart

Australian Capital Territory

Telephone: 02 6252 6627
Facsimile: 02 6207 0282
Mail: PO Box 10
Belconnen ACT 2616
Counter: 9th Floor, FAI House
197 London Circuit
Canberra City

Northern Territory

Telephone: 08 8943 2111
Facsimile: 08 8981 1218
Mail: GPO Box 3796
Darwin NT 0801
Counter: 5th Floor
81 Smith Street
Darwin

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 1998–99.

TABLING—PROPOSALS FOR COLLECTION OF INFORMATION FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES 1998–99

<i>Date tabled(a)</i>	<i>Statistical collection(b)</i>
11 November 1998	Survey of cultural funding
8 February 1999	Collection of prices data from the services and construction industries Expansion of stocks and sales survey
8 March 1999	Supplementary topic for the monthly population survey: 1999 national child care survey
24 May 1999	Survey of job vacancies Service industries surveys 1998–99
27 May 1999	Information technology survey: agriculture 1998–99
21 June 1999	1999 Australian housing survey

(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 1998–99.

TABLING—DISCLOSURE OF LISTS OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES, 1998–99

<i>Data tabled</i>	<i>Information Released</i>
9 March 1999	Names and addresses of agricultural establishments to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics

DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION

Appendix 9

The Statistics Determination (Statutory Rules 1983 No. 19) made 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, 1998–99

<i>Survey Title</i>	<i>Survey Date</i>
Aspects of literacy survey	1996
Australian health survey	1977–78
Australian health survey	1983
Census 1% sample file	1991
Census 1% sample file	1996
Child care survey	1996
Disability, ageing and carers survey	1993
Education and training survey	1997
Education and training experience survey	1989
Employment and unemployment patterns survey	1994–97
Household expenditure survey	1975–76
Household expenditure survey	1993–94 (2nd edition)
Income and housing costs amenities survey	1990 (supplement)
Income and housing costs survey	1994–95
Income and housing costs survey	1994–95 and 1995–96 (combined)
Income and housing costs survey	1995–96
Income and housing costs survey	1996–97
Income distribution survey	1986 (additional items)
National health survey	1989–90
National health survey	1995
National nutrition survey	1995
National survey of mental health and wellbeing of adults	1997
Population survey monitor	February 1997–November 1997 (combined)
Population survey monitor	August 1997–May 1998 (combined)
Population survey monitor	February 1998 and May 1998 (combined)
Population survey monitor	May 1998
Population survey monitor	August 1998
Population survey monitor	November 1998
Rental investors survey	1993
Rental investors survey	1997
Time use survey	1997
Women's safety survey	1996

ADVERTISING AND MARKET RESEARCH

Appendix 10

AMOUNTS PAID BY, OR ON BEHALF OF, THE ABS TO ADVERTISING AGENCIES, MARKET RESEARCH, POLLING, DIRECT MAIL AND MEDIA ADVERTISING ORGANISATIONS

	<i>Amount</i>
<i>Name of organisation paid</i>	<i>\$</i>
Advertising	
BRW Media	3 700
CBD Publishing	3 860
Chevron Advertising	3 250
The Australian	5 383
Franchise Council of Australia	950
Hassel Hunt & More	2 338
Vic. Employers Chamber of Commerce	1 100
<i>Total</i>	<i>20 581</i>
Market Research and Polling Organisations	
Wallis Consulting	82 784
<i>Total</i>	<i>82 784</i>
Direct Mail Organisations	
National Mailing and Marketing	31 225
Canberra Mailing	46 131
Di Walker Design	1 560
Drake List Management	22 552
The List Bank	11 700
Inprint	11 700
Paragon	2 368
The Practical Group	4 293
<i>Total</i>	<i>131 529</i>
Total	234 894

SUPPLEMENTARY TOPICS SURVEYED DURING 1998–99

	Survey topics
National Surveys	Job search experience of unemployed persons Successful and unsuccessful job search experience Multiple job holding items Weekly earnings of employees Employment benefits (core) Trade union membership Non-standard employment Persons not in the labour force Underemployment Educational attendance Career experience Labour force experience Environment: Energy use and conservation Attendance at selected culture/leisure venues Transition from education to work Child care
State/Territory Surveys	Household safety (NSW) Safety in the home (Vic) Persons aged 50 years and over (Qld) Housing motivations and intentions (WA) Community safety (Tas) Public transport usage/Migration patterns (ACT)

TOPICS SURVEYED DURING 1998–99

	Survey topics
August 1998	Consumer expectations Environment Physical activity Emergency services Energy related questions (NSW and SA only) Fuel usage (NSW only) Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Migration and retirement intentions (NT only) Tobacco smoking (NT only)
November 1998	Consumer expectations Environment Physical activity Emergency services Energy related questions (SA only) Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Work in culture/leisure activities Migration and retirement intentions (NT only) Tobacco smoking (NT only)
February 1999	Concession cards Consumer expectations Environment Physical activity Emergency services Energy related questions (SA only) Organ donation Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Work in culture/leisure activities Migration and retirement intentions (NT only) Tobacco smoking (NT only)
May 1999	Concession cards Consumer expectations Environment Physical activity Emergency services Energy related questions Housing questions Organ donation Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Work in culture/leisure activities Migration and retirement intentions (NT only) Sydney Olympics

PROFESSIONAL PAPERS BY ABS OFFICERS

Appendix 13

Officers of the ABS prepared the following professional papers which were presented or published between 1 July 1998 and 30 June 1999.

- Charles Aspden *Introduction of chain volume measures—the Australian experience.* Presented to the OECD National Accounts Meeting, Paris, September 1998.
- Annette Barbetti and Doris de Silva *SNA93-based input-output tables for Australia.* Presented to the ANZRSAI 22nd Annual Conference, Tanunda, South Australia, September 1998.
- Sally Barrett, Brian Holiday and Gerry West *Measuring region of origin exports: new ABS development.* Published in Queensland Economic Forecasts & Business Review, Vol. 7, No. 2 (October 1998).
- Ian Bobbin *Current price and volume measures of capital stock statistics.* Presented to the Second Expert Meeting of the Canberra Group on Capital Stock Statistics, Paris 29 September–1 October 1998.
- Merry Branson, Sadeq Chowdhury, Glenn Cocking and Warren Richter *Structuring data with output flexibility in mind.* Presented to the Joint IAOS/IASS Conference, Aguascalientes, Mexico, September 1998.
- Ted Briggs *Designing software to maximise useability.* Presented to the ACT Oracle User Group Conference 1998, Canberra, August 1998.
- Ann Bromwich *Year 2000: the Australian Bureau of Statistics experience.* Published in The Year 2000 Problem in Computers and Strategic Issues for National Statistical Offices. Papers and proceedings of the SIAP/ESCAP Workshop held in Bangkok, 18–19 June 1998.
- Derek Burnell *The treatment of second hand assets and privatisations in the PIM.* Presented to the Second Expert Meeting of the Canberra Group on Capital Stock Statistics, Paris, 29 September–1 October 1998.
- Rhonda de Vos *Trends in fertility by mothers' countries of birth.* Presented to the 9th National Conference of the Australian Population Association, Brisbane, 29 September–2 October 1998.
- Brian Doyle *Demographic trends and regions.* Presented to the Second SEGRA (Sustainable Economic Growth for Regional Australia) Conference, Kooralbyn, QLD, 2–4 November 1998.

- Robyn Elliott *The role of the Australian Bureau of Statistics in mineral and petroleum exploration statistics.* Presented to the Northern Australian Regional Outlook Conference, Darwin, September 1998.
- Rob Edwards *Strategic directions in economic statistics in Australia.* Presented to the Office for National Statistics, London, September 1998.
- Rob Edwards *The new CPI and other prices statistics developments.* Presented to the Australian Society of Corporate Treasurers, Melbourne, 12 November 1998.
- Kiri Gaminiratne *New developments in the cause-of-death statistics in Australia: automation and multiple-cause coding.* Presented to the 9th National Conference of the Australian Population Association, Brisbane, 29 September–2 October 1998.
- Kiri Gaminiratne *The population of Vanuatu: trends and prospects.* Presented to the 9th National Conference of the Australian Population Association, Brisbane, 29 September–2 October 1998.
- Myles Hannan *Knowledge management in practice.* Presented to the FLIN (Federal Libraries Information Network) Seminar on Leveraging your Information Investment, Canberra, November 1998.
- Andrew Howe *Issues in estimating small area populations.* Presented to the 9th National Conference of the Australian Population Association, Brisbane, 29 September–2 October 1998.
- Peter Harper *Some important changes to Australia's national accounts.* Presented to the 27th Conference of Economists, Sydney, 1998.
- Shail Jain *Birth interval dynamics in Australia.* Presented to the 9th National Conference of the Australian Population Association, Brisbane, 29 September–2 October 1998.
- Shail Jain and Horst Posselt *Demographic and socio-economic trends in Australia since 1947.* Published in the statistical appendix to Australian Multiculturalism for a New Century: Towards Inclusiveness, Canberra, National Multicultural Advisory Council, April 1999.
- Shail Jain and Horst Posselt *Monitoring multicultural societies—Australia.* Published in Monitoring Multicultural Societies: a Siena Group Report. Neuchatel, Swiss Federal Statistical Office, 1998.
- David Lengyel *Lessons from ABS information warehouse development and implementation.* Presented to the International Output Database Conference, Canberra, March 1999.

- Lindsay McDougall *Geocoding of agricultural establishments in Australia.* Presented to the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, Seventeenth Session, Hobart, 2–6 November 1998.
- Bill McLennan *Flexible management and managing flexibly—are they the answer?* Presented to the Joint IAOS/IASS Conference, Aguascalientes, Mexico, September 1998.
- Bill McLennan *The future of official statistics.* Presented to the Symposium on Official Statistics, Tokyo, October 1998.
- Bill McLennan *Official statistics systems—two case studies.* Presented to the Department of Statistics, New Delhi, India, April 1999.
- Alan Mackay and Steve Crabb *ATO and ABS: a strategic partnership for the present and the future.* Presented to the Business Register Systems Board of the Australian Taxation Office, Melbourne, 25 February 1999.
- Fiona Mackie, E. Philip Davis*, Robert Hamilton*, Robert Heath* and Aditya Narain* *Financial Market Data for International Financial Stability.* Issued by the Centre for Central Banking Studies, Bank of England. London, June 1999.
- Colin Nagle and Harry Kroon *Trends in data collection—a framework for housing statistics.* Presented to the Western Australian Planning Commission Seminar, Perth, July 1998.
- Dina Neigar *Survey quality—measuring IT and communicating IT to their users.* Presented to the Joint IASS/IAOS Conference, Aguascalientes, Mexico, September 1998.
- Davin Nowakowski *Direct measurement of capital stock.* Presented to the Second Expert Meeting of the Canberra Group on Capital Stock Statistics, Paris, 29 September–1 October 1998.
- Michael Page-Hanify *Development of best practices on application of information technology in national statistical offices.* Presented to the ESCAP Seminar on Application of Information Technology in National Statistical Offices, Taejon, Korea, 15–18 December 1998.
- Kate Ross *Indigenous families and households in Australia.* Presented to the Siena Group Meeting, Sydney, December 1998.
- Lisa Short and Glen Sward *The introduction of a sample survey for the collection of agricultural commodity data in Australia.* Presented to the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, Seventeenth Session, Hobart, Australia, 2–6 November 1998.

- Tim Skinner *Recent developments in Australia's official statistics*. Presented to the ESCAP Committee on Statistics, Eleventh Session, November 1998.
- Siu-Ming Tam *Designing questionnaires for household surveys—back to basics*. Presented to QUEST 99, London, 14–15 April 1999.
- Sean Thompson *Government balance sheets—the Australian experience*. Presented to the 50th Anniversary Conference of the International Association for Research in Income and Wealth, Cambridge, United Kingdom, August 1998.
- Dennis Trewin *Development of sustainability indicators in Australia*. Presented to the Joint IASS/IAOS Conference, Aguascalientes, Mexico, September 1998.
- Andrew Webster *ABS statistics on children and child indicators*. Presented to the 9th National Conference of the Australian Population Association, Brisbane, 29 September–1 October 1998.

* Not an ABS officer.

SPECIAL ARTICLES IN EARLIER ANNUAL REPORTS Appendix 14

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. The year of the annual report in which the article appeared and the part of the report where it can be found, are shown in brackets.

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 to 11, supplemented by appendix 5).

The ABS Program of Industry Collections (1984–85; pages 8 to 13, supplemented by appendix 5).

Dissemination of Statistics by the ABS (1985–86; pages 9 to 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 3).

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).

Developments in the Australian National Accounts (1995–96; chapter 2).

Destruction of Census Forms (1995–96; chapter 3).

The Pint Pot Revisited (1996–97; chapter 2).

The 1996 Census of Population and Housing (1996–97; chapter 3).

The Destruction of Census Forms (1997–98; chapter 2).

Recent Developments in Price and Labour Cost Indexes (1997–98; chapter 3).

ESTIMATES OF COST BY COMPONENT

Appendix 15

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 costs comprises all expenses directly attributable to each component (such as salaries, overtime, travel and information technology).
- Allocated costs include overhead costs (such as corporate services costs) and inter-program costs. To the extent practicable, overhead costs and inter-program costs are allocated on the basis of estimated usage.
- Full costs for each statistical component comprise direct costs for the component plus an estimation of allocated costs.

ESTIMATES OF COST BY COMPONENT, 1998–99
(\$'000)

<i>Components</i>	<i>Direct Costs</i>	<i>Allocated Costs(c)</i>	<i>Statistical Components FULL COST</i>	<i>%(a)</i>
	(A)	(B)	(A+B=C)	
STATISTICAL OPERATIONS				
Dissemination	5 772	-5 772	—	0.0
Marketing and Public Relations	3 782	-3 782	—	0.0
Client Services	8 204	-2 931	5 273	2.5
Library Services	1 782	-1 782	—	0.0
National Accounts	4 494	4 505	8 999	4.3
International Accounts	3 717	5 327	9 044	4.3
International Trade	2 168	1 752	3 920	1.9
Financial Accounts	1 873	1 391	3 264	1.5
Public Sector Accounts	3 858	2 811	6 669	3.2
Prices	6 820	4 868	11 688	5.5
Business Statistics	3 205	4 882	8 087	3.8
Economy Wide Statistics	2 281	4 083	6 364	3.0
Small Business Statistics	1 319	847	2 166	1.0
Science and Technology	720	920	1 640	0.8
Agriculture	3 180	5 600	8 780	4.2
Mining	683	628	1 311	0.6
Manufacturing	3 606	4 465	8 071	3.8
Construction	3 340	4 750	8 090	3.8
Transport	2 488	2 371	4 859	2.3
Service Industries	5 334	6 397	11 731	5.6
Tourism	825	1 157	1 982	0.9
Environment	714	829	1 543	0.7
Business Register	6 245	-6 245	—	0.0
Economic Statistics Standards	1 079	-1 079	—	0.0
Business Methods	3 255	-3 255	—	0.0
SPEED	480	-480	—	0.0
Census	8 408	7 904	16 312	(a)
Demography	3 080	2 857	5 937	2.8
Labour Statistics	10 849	31 521	42 370	20.0
Social Statistics	6 695	18 507	25 202	11.9
National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	3 877	3 075	6 952	3.3
Geography	1 923	563	2 486	1.2
Population Statistics Standards	1 383	-1 383	—	0.0
Statistical Coordination	414	255	669	0.3
Analytical Services and Time Series Analyses	1 750	396	2 146	1.0

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

ESTIMATES OF COST BY COMPONENT, 1998–99
 (\$'000)—*continued*

<i>Components</i>	<i>Direct Costs</i>	<i>Allocated Costs(c)</i>	<i>Statistical Components FULL COST</i>	<i>%(a)</i>
	(A)	(B)	(A+B=C)	
STATISTICAL OPERATIONS <i>continued</i>				
Mathematical Statistics	4 678	-2 607	2 071	1.0
Population Surveys	23 636	-20 816	2 820	1.3
Statistical Services and User Liaison	4 673	2 756	7 429	3.5
Information Technology Bureau(b)	115	-115	—	0.0
Technology Application(b)	932	-932	—	0.0
Data Management	2 111	-2 111	—	0.0
Technology Research	840	-840	—	0.0
Economic Statistics Group Support	4 896	-4 896	—	0.0
Population Statistics Group Support	3 703	-3 703	—	0.0
Methodology Division Business Office	690	-690	—	0.0
Information Services Division Business Office	1 506	-1 506	—	0.0
Technology Services Division Support	668	-668	—	0.0
<i>Sub-program total</i>	<i>168 051</i>	<i>59 824</i>	<i>227 875</i>	—
<i>Sub-program excluding Census(a)</i>	<i>159 643</i>	<i>51 920</i>	<i>211 563</i>	<i>100.0</i>
CORPORATE SERVICES INCLUDING CORPORATELY MANAGED EXPENSES(d)				
Executive	5 555	-5 555	—	—
Human Resources	13 163	-13 163	—	—
Financial Resources	36 325	-36 325	—	—
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	1 598	-1 598	—	—
International Relations	1 043	-1 043	—	—
Corporate Services Division Support	2 140	-2 140	—	—
<i>Sub-program total</i>	<i>59 824</i>	<i>-59 824</i>	—	—
Program total	227 875	0	227 875	—

(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 from the calculation of percentages. (b) The majority of costs of this component were directly charged to other components and are not included here. (c) The format of this table is different from last year. The cost of services received and cost of services provided have been replaced by allocated costs which include overheads and inter-program allocated costs. (d) Corporate Services costs amounted to \$28.2m (after exclusion of major corporately managed expenses).

COMPLIANCE INDEX

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