



**Annual Report
1999–2000**

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Annual Report

1999–2000

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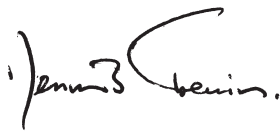
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The Honourable Joe Hockey, MP
Minister for Financial Services and Regulation

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 2000.

This report complies with subsection 63(1) of the *Public Service Act 1999*, which requires that I, as Agency Head, must give a report to the Agency Minister, for presentation to the Parliament.

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Trewin.', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Dennis Trewin
Australian Statistician

6 September 2000

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

The 1999–2000 ABS Annual Report is located at:
<http://www.abs.gov.au/websitedbs/D3110126.NSF>

ABS Mission Statement

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

1 THE ABS IN 1999–2000: AN OVERVIEW

INTRODUCTION

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia's official national 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, both in Australia and overseas.

This report provides information on the operations of the ABS during 1999–2000, as follows:

- Chapter 1 provides an overview of ABS operations;
- Chapter 2 presents the Australian Statistician's review of key performance highlights for the ABS, contains summaries of financial and staffing resources, and features a special article on the retirement of the Australian Statistician, Mr Bill McLennan;
- Chapter 3 reviews servicing regional data requirements;
- Chapter 4 reviews statistical benchmarking as a means of improving performance;
- Chapters 5 and 6 provide information about the two outputs of the ABS: Economic Statistics Output; and Population and Social Statistics Output. Each chapter discusses the objectives of the output, the program components, and each component's achievements in meeting corporate objectives;
- Chapter 7 discusses the objectives, components and achievements of corporate and statistical support areas in supporting the delivery of key ABS outputs;
- Chapter 8 presents the audited ABS financial statements; and
- Appendix 21 presents an aggregated record of ABS achievements during 1999–2000 against identified performance.

ROLE AND OPERATION OF THE ABS

Outcome and Outputs

ABS 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.

Australian Bureau of Statistics

ABS Output Group

As a broad Output Group, The *Australian Bureau of Statistics—National Statistical Service*, produces and disseminates statistics in two key areas.

Output 1—Economic Statistics; and

Output 2—Population and Social Statistics

The process of producing and disseminating these statistics is, in turn, assisted by a wide range of support services.

Organisational Structure and Senior Management

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

The Statistical Operations of the ABS are divided into two groups: the Economic Statistics Group and the Population Statistics Group. Each group is headed by a Deputy Australian Statistician. These two groups represent the key dichotomy of ABS statistics between economic statistics and, population and social statistics.

Each of the Deputy Australian Statisticians is supported by a First Assistant Statistician, one for the Economic Accounts Division, and one for the Social and Labour Division. Other First Assistant Statisticians are responsible for the Technology Services, Methodology, Information Services, and Corporate Services Divisions, all of which support the statistical operations.

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 particular statistical collections, but overall program responsibility remains in Central Office. Regional Offices have a key role in maintaining close contact with State clients, particularly State government agencies, and ABS data providers.

Operation

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 works to ensure that its statistical standards and concepts are applied as widely as possible to ensure that statistical outputs from all agencies are consistent and of good quality.

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 available to all users. Almost 114,000 copies of ABS publications were provided at no cost to media organisations in 1999–2000, 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. The new ABS@ and AusStats subscription services provided users with ready access to ABS material in electronic format, including all ABS publications and a range of multi-dimensional datasets.

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.

Major documents providing additional information on the operations of the ABS include:

- ABS Corporate Plan;
- Forward Work Program 2000–01 to 2002–03;
- Client Service Charter;
- Business Surveys Charter; and
- ABS News (staff magazine).

These documents are available on request.

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 that users can access through our subscription services including ABS@ and AusStats.

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 coordination 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 coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia;
- (b) annual and longer term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services; and
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services'.

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 *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 secrecy of information collected under the Act.

ABS CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

ABS corporate governance arrangements ensure transparency in decision making and operation, and accountability to stakeholders by promoting strong leadership, sound management and effective planning and review. The scope of internal management and review and external advisory and review bodies is described below.

The Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)

As described above, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council was established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* to assist the ABS to fulfil its role. The Council provides valuable input to the directions and priorities of the ABS work program and reports annually to Parliament. Three Council meetings are held each year in March, July and November.

Senior Management Committees

An important feature of ABS corporate governance is the role played by senior management committees. These committees are active in identifying ABS priorities, ensuring appropriate planning and implementation to address these priorities, and effective monitoring of ABS activities. These major senior management committees are as follows:

- ABS Management Meetings (ABSMM)

ABS Management Meetings involve the Australian Statistician, the Deputy Australian Statisticians, First Assistant Statisticians and Regional Directors. Expert advisers are also called as required. The Management Meetings play a major role in determining ABS strategic directions, priorities and resource allocations. The meetings occur twice a year. Among other things, the Management Meeting agrees on the forward work program which is taken to ASAC for comment and approval before finalisation.

- Executive Meetings (EM)

Executive Meetings are held weekly and involve the Australian Statistician, the Deputy Australian Statisticians and all First Assistant Statisticians. Regional Directors also provide written input to each meeting. Each Assistant Statistician and Regional Director in the ABS reports to the Executive Meeting annually in respect of their area of functional responsibility. They cover matters such as significant achievements, indicators of performance, emerging issues, strategies adopted to manage them, and resource management. In addition, the meetings address emerging corporate issues.

- Audit Committee (AC)

The ABS Audit Committee is chaired by a First Assistant Statistician, and includes 3 other First Assistant Statisticians from the Technology, Dissemination and Statistical areas of the ABS. Other members are also called as required. The Committee sets a work program for reviews drawing on recommendations from ABS managers and the ANAO. The audit work program covers primarily compliance issues undertaken by external audit contractors. A broader review program, involving internal and external reviewers looks at other issues of efficiency and effectiveness. The Committee meets at least twice each year and reports to each ABS Management Meeting on internal and external reviews undertaken, and the outcomes of those reviews. It also reports to the Executive Meeting as appropriate.

- Information Resources Management Committee (IRMC)

IRMC is chaired by a First Assistant Statistician and consists of all Deputy Australian Statisticians, all First Assistant Statisticians, a nominated Regional Director and appropriate Assistant Statisticians. The Committee considers matters of strategic significance concerning data and information management and related policy, and major issues relating to the application of information and communication technology in the ABS. It also has responsibility for the strategic management of cost recovery activities of the Information Technology and Technology Services areas of the ABS. The Committee meets a number of times each year, and reports to each Management Meeting and the Executive Meeting as appropriate.

- Human Resource Strategy Committee (HRSC)

The HRSC is chaired by the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services. The Committee involves all First Assistant Statisticians, a nominated Regional Director and the Assistant Statistician, Human Resources Branch. This Committee provides the ABS with high level guidance on key human resource issues. Policy issues that are considered by this Committee include workforce planning, staff development and training, remuneration, occupational health and safety, and workplace diversity. The Committee meets several times each year, and reports to each Management Meeting and the Executive Meeting as appropriate.

Other Internal and External Scrutiny

The operations and performance of the ABS are subject to both internal and external scrutiny. The results of this scrutiny inform senior management discussion.

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. Internal reviews cover both the effectiveness and efficiency of various ABS activities. Several reviews commenced, or were completed, in 1999–2000, including reviews of: international trade statistics; the household survey program; sample and frame maintenance procedures; the engineering construction survey; and dissemination practices and entitlements to meet public good obligations;
- benchmarking, which 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. A number of benchmarking studies are currently being undertaken in the ABS, including comparisons between the statistical operations of a number of international statistical agencies and the ABS; comparisons between ABS statistical collections; and comparisons of corporate service functions across Commonwealth government agencies. See Chapter 4 for more detail;
- annual reports from all Assistant Statisticians (in Central Office) and Regional Directors to the Executive Meetings as discussed above; and
- an internal audit program, conducted by external service providers, covering different facets of ABS operations and overseen by the Audit Committee. A number of compliance and performance audits commenced or were completed in 1999–2000, including: a review of the Statistical Clearing House; a review of compliance of secondary distributors with ABS terms and conditions; a review of information architecture within the ABS; an evaluation of the project management framework; an assessment of compliance with ABS policy relating to the use of computing facilities; and an assessment of the preparedness of the ABS for the implementation of the GST.

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 1999–2000, but participated in six cross-agency audits. These included: the preliminary study of procurement and contract management processes; the Australian public sector travel survey; financial control and administration audit of financial management information system implementations in the Commonwealth budget sector; the internal audit benchmarking study; the survey of fraud control arrangements in the Australian public service; and the study on benchmarking the finance function;
- audits of ABS financial statements by the ANAO, which issued the following report—Audit Report No. 21 Financial Statement Audit, *Audits of the Financial Statements of Commonwealth Entities for the Period Ended 30 June 1999*, Summary of Results and Financial Outcomes;
- review of statistical activity by various advisory committees and user groups. 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, the National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics and the National Education and Training Statistical Unit. 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.

During 1999–2000, the ABS undertook a Fraud Risk Assessment and revised its Fraud Control Plan. The revised Fraud Control Plan is yet to be endorsed by the Commonwealth Law Enforcement Board.

There were no adverse comments from the ANAO, Ombudsman, courts or tribunals during 1999–2000.

Information on Freedom of Information is provided in Appendix 10. Information on documents tabled in Parliament is provided in Appendix 12. Information on inquiries by Parliamentary Committees and reports by the Auditor-General are provided in Appendix 11.

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 June 2000) 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 5, 6 and 7. 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.

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 if so, were 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 for this purpose. Survey Liaison Officers were identified in each Commonwealth government 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 clearance 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 2000, for the 1999–2000 financial year. Of the 117 completed reviews, all but three have resulted in approval to proceed. However, Statistical Clearing House intervention has resulted in 30 instances of improved survey design and/or reduced provider load.

STATISTICAL CLEARING HOUSE—STAGES OF REVIEW OF STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS, 1999–2000

<i>Agency</i>	<i>Completed</i>	<i>In progress</i>
ABS	36	31
Other	81	10
Total	117	41

The ABS has been monitoring the total annual load imposed on providers by its own collections for several years. For 1999–2000, this has been estimated at 415,000 hours, a decrease of 4.2% on the 1998–99 figure. This is the second year the Clearing House has been able to assess the annual load imposed by surveys conducted by non-ABS Commonwealth agencies. For 1999–2000, the annual load imposed on providers by non-ABS surveys reviewed by the Clearing House has been estimated at 24,500 hours, a 22.5% increase on the 1998–99 non-ABS figure, and approximately 6% of the ABS figure.

A significant by-product of the Statistical Clearing House program is the Commonwealth Register of Surveys of Businesses (available on the Internet at www.scb.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 has become an important element of the clearance process as it is 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. There are 203 surveys currently on the website.

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 1999–2000 have been reviewed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT/MONITORING

Provider Load

The 1996 report of the Small Business Deregulation Task Force, *More Time for Business*, reported that statistics accounted for around one per cent of the total time small business spent on paper and compliance work. Since that report, the ABS has made substantial reductions in the the load it places on all businesses, and in particular on small businesses, and is continuing to develop strategies which will make further reductions possible.

The following table shows the provider load (measured in thousands of hours taken to complete statistical forms) imposed on businesses from 1996–97 to 1999–2000.

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

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000
Small businesses(a)	239	249	197	190
Other businesses	330	274	236	225
All businesses	569	523	433	415

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

Under the Commonwealth Government's 1996 Small Business Deregulation Task Force, the ABS was committed to a 20% reduction in provider load. This target has been substantially exceeded. The overall reduction since 1995-96 is 38% for all businesses and 44% for the small business sector. Since 1996-97, the reductions have been 27% for all businesses and 21% for small businesses.

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 other government agencies, and in particular from the Australian Taxation Office;
- reducing the frequency of some collections, for example, the agricultural census, manufacturing census, producer price indexes, and waste management and environmental expenditure collections; and
- reducing the sample size for some collections, including the recently conducted retail industry survey, the wholesale industry survey and veterinary and hire industries surveys.

The uneven nature of the ABS's forward work program prevents continued annual reductions in provider load, with some slight increases expected to occur in the short term. However the ABS is exploring other initiatives which are expected to reduce provider load in the short to medium term. These include:

- expanding the use of taxation data expected to become available as a result of The New Tax System, to reduce the size of samples by substituting taxation data for ABS direct collection, and improve the efficiency of samples by using the Business Activity Statement data;
- implementing electronic data capture strategies including capture of data via the Internet using data security technologies which comply with government requirements; and
- exploring ways of better managing the distribution of provider load on medium sized businesses.

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 1999–2000, 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, the 1999 Housing Survey was conducted.

In 1999–2000, the ABS published a wide range of statistics relevant to social justice and equity. The second edition of *The Health and Welfare of Australia's and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Cat. no. 4704.0) was published, together with two Occasional Papers on health issues: *Mortality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (Cat. no. 3315.0) and *Hospital Statistics—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1997–98* (Cat. no. 4711.0). Results from the 1999 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey were released in *Housing and Infrastructure in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities* (Cat. no. 4710.0). Following the completion of a strategic planning process for Indigenous statistics, an Information Paper was released: *Directions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics*. The ABS has also produced an Internet resource introducing students to Indigenous statistics. The product is known as WISE (Website Indigenous Statistics Education) and is now live on the ABS website. Other publications included the first release of data from the 1998–99 Household Expenditure Survey, results from the fourth national household survey of crime and safety, and results from the 1999 Child Care Survey, the latest in the series conducted since 1969. In recent years, suicide has emerged as a major public health issue. The publication *Suicides, Australia; 1921 to 1998* (Cat. no. 3309.0) contains summary statistics on suicides over the period and examines characteristics of those who commit suicide.

The ABS also produced a number of other broad ranging social reports. These included the seventh edition of the annual report *Australian Social Trends 2000* (Cat. no. 4102.0), and a report in the series focused on special groups entitled *Older People, Australia, a Social Report* (Cat. no. 4109.0), based on ABS and other official sources. The ABS also provided a detailed statistical appendix for the publication *Women in Australia, 1999* released by the Commonwealth Office of the Status of Women.

Service Charters

The ABS used two service charters during 1999–2000.

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. During 1999–2000, 14 complaints from clients were recorded. The subjects of these complaints were: data availability (5), quality of service (4), ABS charging policy (2), lack of notification of changes to outputs (2), and data quality (1). All complaints were responded to.

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 businesses which may have complained about their inclusion in ABS collections, to ask for a review of the complaints handling process. During 1999–2000, there were 665 complaints from businesses which had been selected in ABS economic surveys. A response was sent to all of these businesses, and one requested the Complaints Review Officer to review either the process or the outcome.

The Charter was developed in consultation with representatives of small business interests and ABS staff. The Charter was sent to businesses selected to complete a range of ABS economic survey forms in 1999–2000. It was reviewed and a revised version was released in June 2000. The Charter is provided to new respondents in collections involving businesses. It 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 relationships 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 First Assistant Statistician, Technology Services Division.

The legal requirement 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 secrecy 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 secrecy 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 and monitored by closed circuit television. Anyone entering ABS premises is required to wear an identity pass. Particularly sensitive output data are subject to further physical security measures, including additional access control, supervision and secure storage.

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 their duties.

The ABS computer network has a secure gateway which allows connection to some Internet services. The secure gateway has been established in accordance with Commonwealth guidelines and has been accredited by the national communications and computer security advisory authority, Defence Signals Directorate.

Security Audits

ABS has an ongoing programme of security audits and reviews of computer systems and the physical environment.

2 REVIEW BY AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN

PERFORMANCE HIGHLIGHTS

The ABS continued to provide a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service throughout 1999–2000. This section highlights key information products released during the year, important statistical developments, improvements in corporate and statistical support, ABS's international involvement and management initiatives.

Information Products

The ABS is committed to providing high quality and relevant statistical information to its clients. The ABS produced 247 publication titles, which equated to 877 individual publication releases in 1999–2000. New releases in 1999–2000 included:

- *Finance, Australia, 1999* (Cat. no. 5611.0), includes comprehensive tables, graphs, commentaries, feature articles and technical notes about: finance sector enterprises; the finance industry; the labour force, labour costs, and contribution to GDP; and data about the financial markets, such as statistics on interest rates, exchange rates and Australian Stock Exchange indexes, as well as selected international comparisons;
- *Information Paper: ABS Statistics and The New Tax System* (Cat. no. 1358.0), details the expected statistical impacts of The New Tax System on a range of ABS series;
- *Information Paper: Price Indexes and The New Tax System* (Cat. no. 6425.0), discusses the introduction of the 14th Series Consumer Price Index (CPI), and key changes arising from The New Tax System;
- *Producer Price Indexes for Selected Service Industries, Australia* (Cat. no. 6423.0), presents quarterly price indexes for the output of most of the industry classes within the Transport and storage, and Property and business services divisions of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification;
- reports on a range of allied health industries *Dental Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8551.0), *Physiotherapy Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8552.0), *Optometry and Optical Dispensing Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8553.0) and *Chiropractic and Osteopathic Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8550.0);
- *Market Research Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8556.0), contains information about the market research services industry. Includes major sources of income, components of expenditure, characteristics of employment, performance ratios and key characteristics by State;
- first releases of information on farm use of information technology: *Use of Information Technology on Farms, Australia, Preliminary, 1998–99* (Cat. no. 8134.0), and the more detailed *Use of Information Technology on Farms, Australia: Data Report, 1997–98* (Cat. no. 8150.0.40.001);

- *Directory of Mining Statistics* (Cat. no. 8416.0), contains comprehensive information on sources of mining statistics in the public and private sectors;
- *Environment Expenditure, Local Government (Experimental Estimates), Australia 1997–98* (Cat no. 4611.0), presents estimates of expenditure on environment protection, and natural resource use and management, by Australian local government authorities;
- *Water Account for Australia, 1993–94 to 1996–97* (Cat. no. 4610.0), focuses on the physical characteristics of Australia's water resources;
- *Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Questionnaire Redesign* (Cat. no. 6294.0), provides information about the redesigned questionnaire, and the strategies for testing, evaluating and implementing it;
- *Information Paper: Wage Cost Index, Australia* (Cat. no. 6346.0), describes the conceptual and statistical framework behind the Wage Cost Index, including recent methodological enhancements;
- *Information Paper: 2001 Census of Population and Housing, Nature and Content* (Cat. no. 2008.0), outlines the content of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing, and the procedures to be followed in collecting, processing and releasing the data;
- *Household and Family Projections, Australia* (Cat. no. 3236.0), projects households, families and living arrangements by State for the period 1996–2021;
- *Older People, Australia: A Social Report* (Cat. no. 4109.0), presents a wide range of information about people aged 65 and over living in Australia;
- *Forms of Employment, Australia* (Cat. no. 6359.0), examines some key factors relating to the nature of employment arrangements; and
- three Occasional Papers containing in-depth analyses of selected data from the longitudinal survey of employment and unemployment patterns (Cat. no. 6293 series).

Other notable releases during the year included:

- *Australian Economic Indicators* (Cat. no. 1350.0), a monthly compendium of key national, state and international economic time series;

- *Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia* (Cat. no. 8140.0), presents estimates from the Economic Activity Surveys (EAS) for the three financial years 1997–99. This publication also contains experimental estimates for selected industries, using a combination of data from the EAS, and business income tax data provided to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO). These estimates provide a more detailed annual picture of financial data for the services sector;
- *Small and Medium Enterprises, Business Growth and Performance Survey, Australia* (Cat. no. 8141.0), contains summary results about businesses with changing employment, and business with changing income during 1997–98 and the previous three years;
- *Business Use of Information Technology* (Cat. no. 8129.0), presents statistics on the use of technology and telecommunications, in particular, use of the Internet by businesses;
- *Agricultural Industries, Financial Statistics, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 7506.0), contains preliminary financial year estimates of turnover, expenditure, value added, cash operating surplus, value of selected assets, capital expenditure, indebtedness and net worth of farm businesses;
- *Agriculture, Australia* (Cat. no. 7113.0), a compendium on the structure of the Australian farming sector;
- *Agricultural Commodities, Australia* (Cat. no. 7121.0), contains final estimates for selected agricultural commodities;
- *Directory of Tourism Statistics, 2000* (Cat. no. 1130.0), contains information on sources of tourism statistics in the public and private sectors;
- *Cleaning Services Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8672.0), contains the number of enterprises, employment, wages and salaries, items of income and expenses, net operating surplus and data by size of cleaning services businesses;
- the *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (Cat. no. 1216.0), 1999 edition, and associated digital boundary files;
- the seventh edition of *Australian Social Trends* (Cat. no. 4102.0), presents statistical analysis and commentary on a wide range of current social issues;
- *Crime and Safety, Australia* (Cat. no. 4509.0), summarises details on: household and personal crime and safety, by demographic characteristics in the 12 months prior to the survey;
- the second edition of *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Cat. no. 4704.0); and

- *Occasional Paper: Mortality of Indigenous Australians* (Cat. no. 3315.0), reports Indigenous mortality data, both overall, and by cause of death; and *Occasional Paper: Hospital Statistics—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1997–98* (Cat. no. 4711.0), provides the reasons for which Indigenous people are hospitalised, their characteristics, the procedures which are performed on them in hospital, and comparisons with the rest of the Australian population.

Some important releases of electronic products included:

- a sector wide agreement with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee to provide university students and staff with access to AusStats, the ABS web-based statistical service. This agreement will support teaching and academic research across the entire Australian university network infrastructure;
- *TranStats99* (Cat. no. 9312.0.30.001), a CD-ROM product that combines motor vehicle census results with other related transport and demographic statistics;
- the *Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB), Australia* (Cat. no. 1353.0), incorporating new, easier to use, software. The IRDB provides clients with access to a broad range of information about Australia's regions;
- Website Indigenous Statistics Education (WISE), an Internet resource which introduces students to Indigenous statistics;
- theme pages on the ABS website for tourism, transport, and mining;
- *Summary of Industry Performance, 1992–93 to 1997–98* (Cat. no. 8140.0.40.002), includes estimates of income, profit, assets and liabilities, as well as ratios measuring performance of businesses and industries;
- *Industry Concentration Statistics, 1997–98*, (Cat. no 8140.0.40.001), shows the proportion of sales, persons employed, and industry gross product that are concentrated among the 20 largest enterprise groups operating in each industry; and
- *Statistical Concepts Library* (Cat. no. 1361.0.30.001), contains a comprehensive reference library of ABS publications describing the concepts, sources and methods used to compile Australia's major economic and social statistics.

Statistical Developments

The introduction of The New Tax System (TNTS) from 1 July 2000 is expected to impact on major ABS economic series collections. The ABS released, *Information Paper: ABS Statistics and The New Tax System* (Cat. no. 1358.0), and *Information Paper: Price Indexes and The New Tax System* (Cat. no. 6425.0), to explain the expected statistical impacts on ABS series. In addition, ABS staff conducted a series of seminars in each capital city for users of ABS data to increase awareness of those impacts.

The TNTS provides an excellent opportunity for the ABS to improve the quality and efficiency of its statistical operations through the use of the Australian Business Register, the Australian Business Number and the Business Activity Statement data. The ABS has undertaken considerable work to ensure the statistical implications and opportunities of the changed tax arrangements are managed. For example, we are ensuring the continuity and quality of statistics through the transition period, managing provider issues, and improving the statistical infrastructure. Once TNTS has bedded down, the ABS will review and re-engineer its survey processes to maximise the use of tax by-product data, thus reducing provider load. Investigations into the availability of additional State and regional economic data dissections from tax by-product data have also been a priority.

The 14th Series CPI is being introduced in respect of the September quarter 2000. This series will continue to measure final transaction prices inclusive of indirect taxes, and hence will reflect the net effect of the tax changes included in TNTS. Key changes arising from the 14th series include: new weights based on the 1998–99 Household Expenditure Survey; and a new utility-based commodity classification to better address consumer substitution between commodities in response to relative price changes arising from TNTS. The ABS will also compile an experimental constant tax rate measure which will assess the direct or first round effects of TNTS on the prices of consumer goods and services. This measure will be published in *Australian Economic Indicators* (Cat. no. 1350.0) approximately one month after the publication of the September quarter 2000 CPI.

Significant progress was made in extending the scope of the Producer Price Indexes (PPIs) into the service industries of the economy. A new quarterly publication, *Producer Price Indexes for Selected Service Industries* (Cat. no. 6423.0), released quarterly price index numbers for the output of most of the industry classes within the Transport and storage, and Property and business services divisions of ANZSIC. These PPIs will assist in improving the quality of the national accounts and will contribute to the measurement of inflation. Work is currently being undertaken to produce PPIs for building (other than house building) industry outputs, and for several of the major categories of engineering construction outputs.

In addition, new quarterly economy-wide PPIs within a Stage of Production framework were first released for the June quarter 2000.

The ABS compiled and released government finance statistics on an accrual accounting basis. In March 2000, the ABS issued *Information Paper: Accruals-Based Government Finance Statistics 2000* (Cat. no. 5517.0) to advise users of the impending change from a cash to an accrual accounting basis, and to explain the new concepts and tabular presentations. The accrual based government finance statistics were published for the first time in the 1999–2000 edition of *Government Financial Estimates, Australia, 1999–2000* (Cat. no. 5501.0).

The ABS made significant improvements in the timeliness of annual national and state accounts. The 1998–99 issues of the publications *Australian System of National Accounts* (Cat. no. 5204.0) and *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (Cat. no. 5220.0) were released in November and December 1999 respectively, about five months earlier than the release of previous issues in the series. There has been some deterioration in the timeliness of the quarterly national accounts because of delays in the availability of government finance data. We are planning to move back to previous timetables during the course of 2001.

Implementation of the quarterly economy wide survey commenced with the collection of inventories, sales and company profits data from large businesses. The extension of the survey to all businesses will occur in respect of March quarter 2001, at which time the survey will be expanded to also cover employee earnings data.

To ensure our users have the full range of statistics they require, the ABS continues to broaden the concept of ABS statistical responsibilities, to include not just statistics collected by the ABS but also data produced or (potentially) available from government and non-government agencies. Data generated as a by-product of the administrative processes of government are an important and, at times, crucial source of data, which can provide insights into the characteristics of people, their access to services, and the outcomes of policies and program interventions. These systems may provide a cost effective means of assembling statistical information, and can complement and/or substitute for data obtained through ABS surveys.

To improve the quality of non-ABS statistics, and to increase the sources of data available to users, the ABS is providing leadership on better use of administrative data for statistical purposes. Our South Australian Regional Office successfully trialled administrative data protocols during the year with South Australian State government agencies. These protocols: set out obligations and responsibilities with respect to the statistical data that administering agencies hold; provide an impetus for greater access to such data; and allow for greater exploitation of the data for statistical purposes.

The ABS is developing a Regional Administrative Data Set (RADS) to manage and disseminate a range of administrative data from Commonwealth agencies. This data set will enable the ABS to develop a set of statistical indicators which will provide a more finely textured view of social and economic conditions and population characteristics at small area levels. The ABS has reached an agreement with Family and Community Services (FaCS) to be the first project to be included in the RADS. The initial focus of the FaCS component is on income support

payments and characteristics of the customers receiving these payments. It is expected that these data will be available on the Integrated Regional Data Base in 2001.

In light of the changing nature of rural policy, and feedback from Commonwealth and State agencies, the ABS intends to broaden the focus of agriculture statistics from the traditional industry and commodity view of agriculture statistics, to one that encompasses economic, social and environmental statistics. The ABS will collect information for the 2001 Agricultural Commodity Census at the same time as information is collected for the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. This will enable linkages to be made between both sets of data for small areas.

The ABS also made substantial progress in meeting the increased demand for regional statistics. The ABS assisted government agencies: to better utilise their own data for regional analysis; to improve the usefulness of their data holdings for statistical purposes; and to improve the comparability of data across different data sets. Substantial effort has been put into obtaining, and making available, new regional statistical measures, especially those obtained from administrative data holdings. Improved user access to existing and new regional statistics has been made possible through the upgraded Integrated Regional Data Base. See Chapter 3 of this Annual Report 'Servicing Regional Data Requirements' for more details.

During 1999–2000, the ABS continued to implement its strategy for service industry statistics. Enhancements and extensions in this area will enable the production of better quarterly and annual real output measures for the service industries (for incorporation into the national accounts), as well as better productivity measures for market based service industries. A program of periodic collections has been developed which will provide users with detailed information for individual industry classes or service activities. As part of the program, the ABS is investigating alternative industry views for service activities that cut across, or involve a combination of, industry classes, for example tourism activities. In the future, it is expected that information collected from the Australian Business Register and the Business Activity Statement will provide an important new data source for service statistics, allowing continued expansion of service industry statistics.

Developments in the area of information technology statistics have been significant during 1999–2000. A study was commissioned which defined the information economy, and it highlighted the potential importance of 'information' and 'knowledge management', as distinct from information technology. The ABS has developed a new series of annual surveys of business use of information technology (including e-commerce), and a new survey of Internet service providers, covering the types of services provided, and the number and type of subscribers.

A National Education and Training Statistics Unit (NETSU) was established as a partnership between the ABS and a number of other key agencies. The new unit will enable us to meet a growing demand for enhanced education and training statistics which link education, training and work, provide information on changing arrangements and practices for the delivery of services to clients, and provide information to allow the measurement of outcomes and performance. The NETSU will also give the ABS a greater role in the coordination and leadership of statistical activity across education and training sectors and jurisdictions. This leadership role provides the opportunity for the ABS to significantly 'step up' the development of education and training statistics in Australia and will ensure the availability of regular, timely statistical information to meet public demand.

The ABS, in consultation with key users of education and training statistics, has developed a new Australian Standard Classification of Education (ASCED). The ASCED will replace the previous ABS Classification of Qualifications. The new classification will provide a national standard, which is acceptable to a wide range of users, and which provides a basis for the comparability of information collected from a range of statistical and administrative sources. The ASCED will be implemented in ABS household surveys and the 2001 Census. The classification will also be adopted by other agencies responsible for statistical and administrative data collections across the various education sectors. The ABS will be developing a concordance between ASCED and ISCED97 (the International Standard Classification of Education) in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Significant progress was made in strengthening ABS analytical capability through the establishment of an Analytical Services Branch in late 1999. Improved analytical capacity will allow the ABS, among other things, to: exploit, and add value to, the rich store of statistical data available; provide insights into data gaps and quality issues; develop new or better methods for measuring socioeconomic concepts; and develop new statistical products through the confrontation and synthesis of data from a variety of sources. The analysis work program will place a strong emphasis on extracting and enhancing the informational value of administrative datasets, as well as data from ABS statistical collections. It will be largely guided by questions that policy makers, business planners, community organisations and other users tell the ABS are important.

The ABS improved its role in the coordination, standardisation, collection and dissemination of environment and energy statistics. The publication of *Environmental Expenditure, Local Government (Experimental Estimates), 1997-98* (Cat. no. 4611.0) followed the development of environmental accounting guidelines for local government, and completion of a survey designed to collect information from local government authorities on natural resource use and management, and environment protection expenditure. Another significant publication was *Water Account for Australia, 1993-94 to 1996-97* (Cat. no. 4610.0), which was released by the ABS after the coordination of data collection from water authorities and other agencies. Both publications were well received by users.

Following last year's major review of the Household Survey Program, the ABS has developed a new 10 year survey program which will increase the flexibility and capacity of the ABS to provide statistics to inform debate on key social policy issues. This program will enhance statistics in the fields of health (including health data on Indigenous Australians), housing, employment, superannuation, and child care. The Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care (DHAC) and the ABS signed a long term funding partnership in early 2000 to support an enhanced triennial program of National Health Surveys.

The ABS has been working to improve the timeliness of its household surveys. For example, the results of the *1998-99 Household Expenditure Survey* (Cat. no. 6530.0) were released three months earlier than previous surveys.

Significant progress is being made in the area of Indigenous statistics which will enable users to monitor the social wellbeing of Indigenous Australians. In 1999-2000, the ABS released a paper, *Directions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics*, following extensive user consultation. We are progressing a program of work with other agencies to improve the quality and availability of Indigenous statistics from administrative collections, with initial priority being given to the improvement of vitals statistics in all States and Territories. Housing and infrastructure data for discrete Indigenous communities was collected in the 1999 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey. The second edition of the detailed biennial report on *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People* (Cat. no. 4704.0) was published in August 1999.

The 2001 Census of Population and Housing will be conducted on 7 August 2001. The planning, testing and infrastructure development for this Census is well advanced. In December 1999, the Government decided that people will be able to choose to have their name-identified 2001 Census information stored under secure conditions by National Archives of Australia. Information stored will be made publicly available after 99 years. An appropriate question for the Census form, giving people the choice of having their name-identified information kept or not, has been developed in association with the Privacy Commissioner. Topics for inclusion in the 2001 Census have been endorsed by Cabinet, including two additional topics relating to home use of personal computers and use of the Internet.

The ABS has released a population clock on the Demography Page of the ABS website. The clock projects the Australian population at the time of access, and is based on known birth, death and immigration rates. The site also includes projections of the world's population by the US Bureau of the Census.

Given the rapidly changing nature of industrial relations, the ABS has continued to ensure that its labour program is relevant to meet policy demand. Statistics in several new areas were released. For example, the ABS released a new publication, *Forms of Employment, Australia* (Cat. no. 6359.0), which examines some of the key factors relating to the nature of employment arrangements. The ABS also successfully developed and conducted a new survey of employment arrangements and superannuation in 1999–2000. This survey will produce information about the diversity of employment arrangements in Australia, people's superannuation assets and contributions, and how superannuation coverage differs across the population. The first results are expected to be published in March 2001. Concepts and definitions relating to temporary, casual and permanent employment will be reviewed in the light of findings from this survey, and from the 1998 Forms of Employment Survey. Three Occasional Papers containing in-depth analyses of selected data from the longitudinal survey of employment and unemployment patterns were published during 1999–2000 (Cat. no. 6293 series).

The Labour Force Survey (LFS) questionnaire has been redesigned to better reflect current labour market phenomena and contemporary user needs. Some minor definitional changes have also been made to improve the alignment of survey concepts with international guidelines. The new questionnaire is scheduled for implementation in March and April 2001. An *Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Questionnaire Redesign* (Cat. no. 6294.0) was released in March 2000 to provide information about the redesigned questionnaire, and the strategies for testing, evaluating and implementing it. The questionnaire redesign was undertaken within an overriding constraint of maintaining continuity of time series for core labour force data (that is, employment and unemployment data). The new questionnaire has been extensively tested, and a statistical impact study is being conducted from March to July 2000 to confirm that the continuity of core series is maintained under the new questionnaire.

A new standard offence classification was implemented in the recorded crime statistics collection, and results using the new classification were first published in June 2000. This new classification has led to significant improvements in the comparability of crime statistics at both a State and national level. The ABS has spent considerable time promoting the implementation of the new classification in other agencies responsible for statistical and administrative data collections across the various crime sectors.

The ABS is also making progress on the development of industry, product and occupation classifications of the culture and leisure sectors. This work will provide a sound basis for future data collection, dissemination and analysis. For example, we are developing a survey of children's participation in culture and leisure activities, and updating and validating a national database and directory on the sport and recreation industry.

Corporate and Statistical Support

The ABS IT environment continued to operate smoothly, even though a number of significant upgrades and changes were made to systems and infrastructure. The considerable effort invested in testing and preparing systems for the Year 2000 resulted in a problem free start to the year.

Independent benchmark studies continue to show that ABS information technology operations rate well above world average in most areas.

ABS information and knowledge management capacity was further enhanced with the upgrade to Lotus Notes Release 5.

The ABS website (www.abs.gov.au) continues to attract a steady increase in visitor numbers as the awareness and content expands. Theme and State pages have been added to provide easy access to statistical resources related to common themes (for example, education services, environment and families). In April 2000, the new AusStats service was launched. The service provides subscribers easy access, via the ABS website, to ABS publications, time series tables and Census community profiles. An agreement with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee delivers AusStats access to all Australian university staff and students, and overall demand and acceptance of the new service has been strong.

A major upgrade of the Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB) was released in April 2000. IRDB combines a database with powerful retrieval and mapping software to support analysis of a wide range of regional economic and social data from the ABS and other sources.

Subscribers to ABS publications can now elect to receive publications in electronic form via email, and this offer has received a positive response.

The popular Telephone Information Service which provides rapid, free, access to current statistics was improved during the year through the establishment of a centralised service which can be accessed via a single, toll free, number (1300 135 070).

Following a competitive tendering process, ABS signed a contract in August 1999 with Pirie Printers Holdings Pty Ltd for the provision of printing and distribution services for the next 3 years. The contract is delivering ongoing cost and quality improvements to ABS' publishing functions.

During 1999–2000, the ABS trialled public key infrastructure for secure transmission of data from providers. Several providers participated in the trial with successful data transmissions with encryption/decryption being made to the ABS. The ABS is now awaiting further development of whole of government initiatives being led by the Office of Government Online, before proceeding any further.

The Project Management Framework was launched during 1999–2000 to improve the quality of project administration throughout the ABS, and the ABS established a Centre of Project Management Excellence to assist in the successful implementation of the framework across the agency.

Significant progress was made in preparing for the fitout and occupation of our new Central Office building in Belconnen. The Commonwealth had previously called for detailed proposals for the sale and redevelopment of the Benjamin and Cameron Offices, with a new building being constructed for the ABS as part of the overall redevelopment package. The Minister for Finance and Administration announced on 22 December 1999 that a consortium, led by Bovis Lend Lease, had been successful in their bid for the redevelopment project. Actual construction commenced on 1 June 2000.

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 fora, 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.

Highlights during the year 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 this year's Commission session included:
 - Continued contribution to the further development and implementation of international standards for national accounts. Australia is one of a group of six countries endorsed by the Commission to give further consideration to proposals in this field.
 - Continued contribution to refinement of the UN International Comparison Programme. Australia has been invited to be a member of a group of nine countries to review an implementation plan and report back by the next meeting of the Commission.
 - Strong support for enhancing the forward planning of the Commission's work to improve its effectiveness.
 - Raising the reliability of the statistical component of the UN Development Programme's (UNDP) annual Human Development Report. There was strong support from other statistical representatives to ensure the statistical validity of the Report. The Commission and the UNDP took steps to this end.

- Hosting a meeting on environmental accounting by experts from national and international statistical agencies around the world (known as the London Group on Environmental Accounting), to contribute to the development of statistical standards in this field. The ABS also made significant contributions to development of international standards for household income statistics through participation in an international group of experts known as the Canberra Group on Household Income Statistics. In addition, the ABS made contributions through 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.
- Participating in a Conference of Commonwealth Statisticians. These conferences are generally held once every five years, and are generally attended by the heads of the national statistical agencies of countries of the Commonwealth of Nations. The topics on the agenda for this year's conference included managing a statistical office in a changing environment, measuring the household sector, statistical measurement of globalisation, using administrative data, statistics on the environment, implementing international standards for national accounts, the 2000 round of population censuses, and the role of development indicators. Australia organised the session on one of the topics and chaired another, and contributed papers on a number of topics. The main beneficiaries of the Conference are seen to be the developing countries of the Commonwealth.
- Participating in activities of the Committee on Statistics of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). Australia is a member of the Bureau of the Committee—a group of six countries that manages the Committee business between the annual meetings of the Committee and its Working Group, determines the agendas for the meetings, and oversees the work program of the Statistics Division of the ESCAP Secretariat. The Committee, its Working Group and the Statistics Division have recently focused on the measurement of electronic commerce, development indicators, data quality, national accounts, population and housing censuses, information technology applications, poverty statistics and standard classifications. The ABS contributed papers on national progress indicators and gender statistics for a meeting of the Working Group during the year.
- 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 services in 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. At the ESCAP Commission session in June 2000, Australia was re-elected to the SIAP Governing Board. (The Board includes representatives of eight countries elected for a five-year term). The Australian representative has been elected Chairman at each session of the Board since it was established in 1995. The Board has striven to ensure that SIAP's activities are relevant, effective and delivered efficiently. In addition, during the year the ABS provided an expert to assist in presenting a four-week SIAP training course on sample design for household and establishment surveys.

- Hosting a UN workshop on statistical classifications attended by delegates from 14 countries, mostly from the Asia-Pacific region, to contribute to development and implementation of international standard classifications.
- Contributing to a seminar and workshop on the emerging international statistical requirements for external debt data, organised by the International Monetary Fund and the Singapore Department of Statistics, for officials of 12 Asian countries. While most countries have some data for some segments (e.g. government), the international expectations are more comprehensive. Australia already compiles most of the data expected. The ABS also provided an expert to conduct two World Health Organisation training courses in the region on the international classification of diseases and mortality statistics, a resource person for a UN seminar and workshop for countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the Baltic states and Mongolia on census data evaluation and dissemination, and an expert to participate in a joint ESCAP-Asian Development Bank regional workshop on rebasing and linking national accounts series.
- Assisting the national statistical services in Japan, the Netherlands and the Philippines in reviewing their overall structure, operations and management. For Japan, the ABS hosted a high-level visit by a group which was developing recommendations for the restructuring of the Japanese statistical system, to enable the group to study the Australian statistical system. For the Netherlands, the ABS provided a considerable amount of detailed information about its management and operational arrangements, to assist the Netherlands statistical agency in considering possible approaches to restructuring to improve efficiency. For the Philippines, the ABS hosted a visit by the head of the National Statistical Office to study management in the ABS. In addition, the ABS hosted a short visit by the Head of the South African national statistical agency to study the ABS approach to leadership development.
- Participating in a meeting with Statistics New Zealand, and a meeting with Statistics Canada, involving the chief executives and senior executives of the ABS and the other agencies, to discuss management issues of common concern and improve working arrangements between the agencies. Over the past decade, meetings of this nature have been held every two years or so with Statistics New Zealand, and every three years or so with Statistics Canada. These meetings have been of considerable benefit to all three agencies.
- Continuing technical assistance to the statistical agency in Papua New Guinea, to assist in preparation for its population census in July 2000. This was done in conjunction with the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID).
- Continuing technical assistance to the statistical agency in Indonesia (BPS) in a number of fields, under a Memorandum of Understanding between the ABS and the BPS on cooperation in statistics. Funding came from a grant under AusAID's Australia-Indonesia Government Sector Linkages Program.

- Commencement of an 18-month AusAID program of technical assistance to Thailand to strengthen its macro-economic statistics.
- Convening and hosting a short meeting between the ABS, the New Zealand statistical agency, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre and AusAID on a strategy for integrating and forward planning of technical assistance in statistics for Pacific island countries. This is expected to be taken forward at a Regional Meeting of Heads of Statistics of Pacific island countries in August 2000 organised by the SPC.
- Technical assistance to other overseas statistical services, including those in China, India, Mongolia, the Philippines and South Africa. Assistance to these agencies, together with the other assistance mentioned above, involved ABS staff in spending a total of over 60 weeks overseas, and the ABS receiving visits from overseas for a total of over 30 weeks.



Dennis Trewin, Deputy Australian Statistician, Economic Statistics Group (appointed Australian Statistician on 5 July 2000), front row centre, with delegates from the sixth annual meeting of the London Group on Environmental Accounting, hosted in Canberra in November 1999.

Management

During 1999–2000, the ABS developed and released the ABS Corporate Plan 2000. The new plan emphasises the ABS's role in expanding and improving the National Statistical Service. It outlines our corporate objectives, and promulgates our ABS principles of relevance, integrity, access for all, professionalism, and trust of providers. It highlights, through the identification of mutual obligations, the critical role that staff have in ensuring the success of the ABS.

The ABS implemented a new remuneration system for APS1–EL1 staff which will generate performance improvements across the ABS. This remuneration system provides for differential pay outcomes based on individual staff performance for a particular period. (The same general arrangements had previously been introduced for EL2 and SES staff.)

The ABS has also made progress in preparing for the second round of agency based industrial agreements, which will build on the gains made in the first round. In March 2000, drafts for the second round of agreements were released for consultation with employees and their representatives. An offer should be presented to ABS staff in the first half of 2000–01.

In 1999–2000, the ABS reorganised the delivery and structure of its staff development activities. Information technology, leadership and management courses are provided mainly by external contractors. Statistical training continues to be provided by ABS subject matter experts. Other significant training innovations were the introduction of an on-line learning capability and the upgrading of management training programs. These innovations are intended to improve the performance of ABS staff, and the management skills of our middle management group.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES SUMMARY

The ABS compiles its financial statements on an accrual basis. The 1999–2000 financial statements can be found in Chapter 8. The 1999–2000 operating expenses, excluding capital use charge, totalled \$256m, compared with \$228m in 1998–99. The revenue from the sale of statistical products and provision of services, and other revenue from independent sources, totalled \$23m in both 1999–2000 and 1998–99.

The ABS Budget has been prepared under an accruals framework for the first time in 1999–2000 (as for the whole Commonwealth Budget). Total output (equivalent to operating expenses plus capital use charge) for 1999–2000, at \$263.2m, was \$4.5m lower than the budgeted amount (\$267.7m) as shown in the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements. The actual split of costs between outputs varied from the budgeted amounts, with Economic Statistics Output having a higher percentage of actual costs than estimated in the Portfolio Budget Statements. This has led to the variances for output groups as shown in the following table. Work is being undertaken to refine the budgeted costs for output groups for future years. Total price of outputs for 1999–2000, at \$265m was \$2.6m lower than the budgeted amount (\$267.7m), due to lower than anticipated revenue from independent sources.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES SUMMARY (\$'000)

	Budget 1999–2000(a)	Actual 1999–2000	Variance	Budget 2000–01(b)
Administered Expenses				
Discretionary Grants(c)	—	—	—	—
Total Administered Expenses	—	—	—	—
Price of Departmental Outputs				
Output group 1.1 — National Statistical Service				
Output group 1.1.1 — Economic statistics	134 142	135 986	-1 844	141 556
Output group 1.1.2 — Population and social statistics	133 513	127 196	6 317	145 692
Total output	267 655	263 182	4 473	287 248
Revenue from Government appropriation	242 019	241 819	200	263 188
Revenue from other sources	25 636	23 205	2 431	24 060
Total Price of Outputs	267 655	265 024	2 631	287 248
Total for Outcome 1	267 655	265 024	2 631	287 248
Staff years (number)		3 115		3 075

(a) Budget 1999–2000 — Full year budget, including additional estimates.

(b) Budget 2000–01 — Budget prior to additional estimates.

(c) ABS does not administer any discretionary grants.

STAFFING RESOURCES SUMMARY

The average staffing level in the ABS, for staff employed under the *Australian Public Service Act 1999*, increased from 2,986 in 1998–99, to 3,115 in 1999–2000.

The increase occurred as a result of a strategic decision to recruit staff with stronger skills to meet new priorities in the forward work program. For example, staff with analytical capabilities were recruited to perform high level analytical and research work in a new Branch created for this purpose. In addition, the number of graduates recruited in the year 2000 intake increased by more than 50% (to 182 graduates).

217 full time staff were employed under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* on interviewer enumerated statistical collections during 1999–2000.

19 (full time equivalent) staff were employed short term to test the 2001 Census of Population and Housing forms and procedures. The number of staff employed for the 2001 Census will increase substantially during the next two years.

The following table summarises ABS staffing over the past 3 years. More detailed information is provided in Appendix 3.

NUMBER OF STAFF, BY YEAR(a)

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Staff employed under the Australian Public Service Act 1999			
Operative Staff			
Central Office (Canberra)	1 543	1 492	1 567
New South Wales	341	309	335
Victoria	301	294	295
Queensland	225	215	231
South Australia	208	190	182
Western Australia	222	214	238
Tasmania	143	132	134
Northern Territory	52	53	54
Australian Capital Territory	11	13	13
Population Census Data Processing Centre (NSW)	92	0	0
<i>Total operative staff</i>	3 139	2 912	3 045
Paid inoperative staff (b)	74	74	70
Total average paid staff	3 213	2 986	3 115
Staff employed under the Census and Statistics Act 1905			
Interviewer enumerated statistical collections	248	201	217
Census of Population and Housing	0	1	19
Total	248	202	236

(a) Comprises full time staff and part time staff at their full time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. Includes revisions to previous years' staffing levels as indicated in Appendix 3.1. (b) Paid inoperative staff includes staff on approved paid leave for periods of 12 weeks or more.

RETIREMENT OF MR BILL MCLENNAN CBE, AM, AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN 1995–2000

Mr Bill McLennan retired as Australian Statistician on 30 June 2000, after five years in office. He leaves an organisation with a strong reputation for the integrity and quality of its statistical service, which is recognised internationally as one of the world's premier statistical agencies.

His career in the Australian Public Service spanned 40 years. He started as a Statistics Cadet in 1960 pursuing studies in statistics and economics at the Australian National University. On completion of his studies, Bill commenced work in the methodology area of what was then the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics. He worked in a number of different areas of the ABS, at increasingly senior levels including as the Regional Director of the Victorian Office, and was appointed Deputy Australian Statistician in 1986 soon after Ian Castles was appointed Australian Statistician.

His significant contributions to official statistics were recognised when he was asked in 1992 to accept the challenging position of Director of the Central Statistical Office of the United Kingdom. He was the first non UK citizen to be appointed to this position. During his three year term, he made a significant contribution to the enhancement of their statistics and to the development of the European statistical system.

His love for the ABS and Australian lifestyle led him to accept the offer of appointment as Australian Statistician in 1995. At that time, the former Australian Statistician, Ian Castles, remarked that "Bill is respected within Australia and internationally for his statistical, administrative and leadership skills and qualities".

His contribution to official statistics has been officially recognised by the award in 1992 of an AM and in 1995 of a CBE for his contribution to Australian and UK official statistics. He was also elected as Chair of the United Nations Statistical Commission in 1995.

As Australian Statistician, Bill McLennan provided strong leadership in the provision of a trusted and high quality statistical service to the Australian community, leaving the ABS well placed as it moves towards its centenary in 2005. Bill had particular strengths in organisation and management which he used effectively. He was also particularly good at passing on those skills to those who worked for him.

During his five year term, disseminating statistics changed considerably with much more data being distributed electronically through the Internet and other communication channels. The legacy Bill has brought is the need to really understand the market and to not simply follow the latest fad, and a strong appreciation of the infrastructure required to support these developments over the longer term.

Bill was also responsible for leading the development of the first Certified Agreement for the ABS. This was an innovative document that linked wages and salaries to productivity outcomes, thereby providing increases in salary for our best performers. It has served us well, both the ABS and its staff, and has no doubt contributed to the relatively low turnover of skilled staff.

Bill was a great believer in teamwork and, whilst both Deputy and Australian Statistician, put great emphasis in having senior people work closely together and contributing to each other's work. He was also keen on the development of staff, and regular lateral moves of senior staff were a key part of that strategy.

One of Bill's hobby horses was to push us to make greater use of administrative data for statistical purposes. He had seen how this had been done effectively in the United Kingdom and thought that there were similar opportunities in Australia. During his time, taxation and other administrative data has been used much more extensively for economic and social statistics, most notably to satisfy the increasing demand for regional statistics. Some of the rewards for this effort are yet to come. In particular, The New Taxation System offers many opportunities to increase the availability of detailed statistical data, to reduce the reporting load we place on respondents, and reduce ABS costs in the compilation of statistical data. In addition, Bill pushed us to take a constructive interest in the statistical activities of other government and non government agencies believing that national statistics should encompass more than just those produced by the ABS.

Bill worked in the ABS during its period of most rapid change. However, he shaped much of that change. Besides the areas mentioned above, Bill can take credit for helping develop and nurturing the strategic management and planning system which has served the ABS so well including the creation of the first corporate plan, overseeing the restructuring of the *Census and Statistics Act*, the introduction of the marketing function to the ABS and the strong support for the introduction of modern data management practices in the ABS.

Bill was also the inaugural Secretary of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council when it was formed in 1976. Since then, he attended most meetings in one capacity or another.

In many forums, Bill has conveyed a clear sense of what it means for the ABS to be the national statistical agency - his commitment to its independence, and the need for objectivity, integrity and professionalism within the ABS are worthy of mention. He has also reinforced the important role official statistics play in a democracy and the need for us to ensure that the whole Australian community can access official statistics. He has vigorously defended these values and ensured that all ABS staff understand their importance.

Bill's contribution to international statistics, particularly in the Asia/Pacific region, has been outstanding. Recently, the Asian statisticians gave him a special farewell dinner to recognise this contribution to the development of official statistics in the region. At this function, the Head of the United Nations Statistics Division described Bill as a leading international statistical citizen in recognition of his contributions. Also he was responsible for renewing, and strengthening, the close working relationships the ABS has with Statistics New Zealand.

Throughout his term as Australian Statistician, Bill McLennan was a member of the Australian Electoral Commission and contributed significantly to its activities.

Bill's contribution to the ABS will be remembered for some time, both internally and externally. He certainly left his mark. His debating style was always vigorous but he had the knack of getting to the heart of a complex problem, making a decision and sticking to it. In doing so, he was prepared to challenge the conventional wisdom even when that might upset others.

The staff of the ABS wish Bill a long and satisfying retirement.



Mr Bill McLennan CBE, AM, Australian Statistician 1995–2000

3 SERVICING REGIONAL DATA REQUIREMENTS

INTRODUCTION

There has always been a requirement among policy makers and the community more generally, for statistical information on small areas, and in particular for regions outside the major metropolitan areas. Over time the ABS has sought to service this requirement in different ways through sources such as the Census of Population and Housing, other censuses and surveys, and administrative data.

The ABS currently provides a significant range of key economic and social indicators at State and Territory level. For example, major economic statistics such as labour force, the Consumer Price Index, State Accounts, international trade, manufacturing, building, agriculture and finance statistics are all published with a State and Territory dimension, which provides a key information base for policy development at this level. In addition, major social surveys such as health, crime and safety, and disability, provide information at a State level. Many surveys also provide separate information for the major metropolitan area and the area outside of the capital city. There is thus a very considerable body of information available from the ABS below the national level.

In recent years the requirement for regional data has become more marked as Commonwealth, State and local governments give increasing policy attention to rural areas and other regions outside of the capital cities. With the increase in policy interest there has also been a desire on the part of the community to understand the characteristics of the different regions of Australia. In particular, a number of social and economic issues have been the subject of analysis and investigation at both the Commonwealth and State levels. These include:

- the availability of infrastructure and services in rural and regional areas. Reports such as *Time running out: shaping regional Australia's future. Inquiry into infrastructure and the development of Australia's regional area*; and *Regional banking services: money too far away*, as well as investigations of specific areas of infrastructure such as telecommunications, have highlighted the question of infrastructure provision as an important regional issue;
- the economic growth and development of regions. This has been the subject of a number of inquiries, at both Commonwealth and State level, and is closely related to the question of economic assistance and government programs designed to improve the economic wellbeing of regions. Specific issues such as the level of investment and business activity in regions, income distribution, employment, and reliance on government benefits, are all important policy issues in this area;

- social issues and the provision of social services. Reports such as *Bush Talks* from the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission highlight areas such as health services, access to education, services for children and young people, and equity issues involving Indigenous people in particular. More generally the question of 'community building' and finding 'community based solutions' to social problems, which is a major theme to emerge from the *Regional Australia Summit Communiqué*, is an important area of policy interest to both the Commonwealth Government and State Governments; and
- allied to these issues is the question of measuring the differential effects of government programs and policies on different communities so as to identify those programs which assist regional communities, as well as to identify where there may be regional effects from more global, particularly macro-economic, policies.

While there is currently a wide range of information available from the ABS and other sources which bear on these questions, the ABS is also identifying where new statistical information on regions may be required to inform debate and policy development. Censuses and large scale sample surveys are an expensive way of satisfying these needs, both to the ABS and data providers, so the ABS is working with other government agencies to make available a range of administrative data which can assist the understanding of regional Australia. In addition, the ABS is investigating ways of increasing access to the regional data which is already available.

This article identifies a number of the more important new initiatives the ABS is undertaking to service regional data requirements, as well as describing some of the existing information available from the ABS on regional issues.

NEW ABS INITIATIVES IN REGIONAL STATISTICS

For the range of policy issues outlined above, the ABS is identifying those areas where new statistical information is most required. The ABS has focused on three major areas of development in regional statistics based on an assessment of the needs of policy makers and other researchers. These are:

- creating more frequent *regional indicators* on both economic and social issues;
- providing new *measures of income distribution in regional Australia*; and
- providing statistical data bases, and other services, to allow policy analysts to *measure the differential impacts and outcomes of government policies and programs in regions*.

Regional indicators

Regional indicators are measures of the status of a region across different areas of social and economic interest. They can allow the comparison of different regions at a point in time or the analysis of the status of a single region over time. Together, they are intended to allow users to build up a picture of a particular region, and to indicate where more detailed analysis may be required. They provide a very useful means of assessing a range of economic and social issues.

Over the last two years, the ABS has undertaken a project to identify and make available a range of new regional indicators largely obtained from the administrative information systems maintained by Commonwealth, State and local government authorities. These systems provide considerable potential for expanding the range of information on regions, as they often contain detailed information about persons and businesses which the relevant government agency has obtained to assist in an administrative process. As they generally have information about all persons or businesses who are subject to these administrative processes within a region, they are a useful source of small area data which are not available for all regions through sample surveys. These sources do, however, have limitations of their own, particularly with respect to the scope of the data, which may be more restricted than would be ideal for policy analysis purposes. They may also be of variable quality in terms of the accuracy and completeness of data. There may also be difficulties in comparing data with other sources. While the ABS is working with agencies to improve the quality and comparability of administrative data, users should nevertheless bear in mind these possible limitations when using data from administrative sources.

Under the administrative data initiative, a significant range of new regional information has been obtained. This data may be available for all States and Territories, or only for particular ones, depending on whether it has been possible to obtain data which is comparable on a national basis. Regional data on important social issues, such as education, crime and health have been obtained, together with information on local government expenditure and services, and a number of measures of regional economic activity. Within the last 12 months, over 100 new data sets relevant to regional and rural areas have been published by the ABS in either hard copy or electronic form.

Future directions in this area will concentrate on further expanding the range of data available by using statistical modelling techniques to provide regional estimates from ABS surveys, and through continuing to work in partnership with Commonwealth, State and local government agencies to identify and utilise a greater range of administrative data.

Examples of new work currently under way are:

- studies examining the potential of data, compiled at a low level of regional aggregation from the Workcover Authority (SA), for measures of regional economic activity;
- a study to identify possible regional indicators from a large administrative data set maintained by the Commonwealth Department of Family and Community Services;

- in partnership with a number of State and Territory governments, development of a framework of regional indicators of wellbeing, and the identification of data sources from which such wellbeing indicators could be sourced; and
- a project working with Commonwealth Government and State government agencies to assist them to implement statistical protocols prepared by the ABS, aimed at improving the quality and comparability of administrative data. Over time, this process should yield a much greater range of regional information.

The New Tax System

In addition to the projects outlined above, there are significant opportunities for producing new regional statistics from the data which will become available under The New Tax System (TNTS). The changes to the taxation system, resulting from the GST legislation, and the associated business registration process, provide an opportunity to obtain business activity information for regions. Research is currently under way to assess the usefulness of both the data from the business registration process (ABN assignment), and the information from the Business Activity Statement, as sources of regional data. Both of these processes are potentially rich sources of information on regional economic activity. The extent to which regional and State and Territory level information can be derived will depend on whether distinct geographical boundaries for businesses can be developed from the data available. An example of research undertaken using information from TNTS, is a study examining the potential use of aggregated Australian Taxation Office individual and company taxpayer data for the development of regional indicators.

Measures of income distribution in regional Australia

The second major area of development in new regional statistics is determining the distribution of incomes in different rural and regional areas. This would provide some measure of the relative disadvantage of regions, any seasonal discontinuities in the incomes of individuals in particular regions, as well as the reliance of regions on government benefits as a source of income.

The ABS has undertaken a project examining the usefulness of individual taxpayer data, compiled at a low level of regional disaggregation from administrative records maintained by the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), as a measure of income distribution in regions. Following a successful pilot project, the ABS is currently negotiating with the ATO to obtain aggregated data at Statistical Local Area (SLA) level for wage and salary earners. Tables which may potentially be available include: occupation by wage and salary income by age and sex; median and mean wage and salary income by SLA; and wage and salary income totals by SLA.

These outputs have been validated against relevant data from other ABS collections and these new outputs have been found to be generally consistent with ABS data. It is anticipated that if this data can be disseminated, the next step will be to analyse the aggregate tax information, together with aggregated data on benefit payments to

individuals from the Department of Family and Community Services to derive measures of household disposable income, and measures of benefit dependence in different regions.

Measuring differential impacts and outcomes of government policies and programs in regions

The third major area on which the ABS is focussing is the differential effects of government policies and programs on different regions. Rather than working to directly measure these effects, the ABS is providing a statistical base to assist other organisations or individuals who are examining these issues. The regional indicators and income distribution measures described above will assist in this measurement by allowing the monitoring of different regions at one point in time, and of the same region over a period of time.

In addition, the ABS is working to support agencies who are carrying out assessment of the effects of government policy in regions. This has included support to agencies such as the Productivity Commission, the Commonwealth Department of Transport and Regional Services, Australian Bureau of Agriculture Resource Economics, and the Bureau of Rural Sciences, as well as assistance to a range of State government agencies. In all these cases, the ABS has provided statistical data and technical assistance to the agency carrying out analysis. This has proved to be an effective means of assisting in this important area of policy analysis, as well as helping to identify new areas in which the ABS should seek to obtain and disseminate regional statistics.

INCREASING ACCESS TO REGIONAL STATISTICS

In addition to the work specifically directed at providing new statistics on regional and rural areas, the ABS is also seeking to meet the increased need for regional statistics through improving access to existing information as indicated above. Many ABS collections currently provide information at the State and Territory level as well as at the national level. In addition, a number of the larger surveys and censuses can provide information for regions below State level. In many cases regional information on a topic may be available as a special data service.

It has been found, however, that many potential users of this information are unaware of the full range of data which can be made available. To address this problem a number of services have been developed specifically to meet the need for regional analysis. The major services aimed at regional statistics are:

- regional statistics publications and profiles;
- the Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB);
- CDATA, a CD-ROM product which provides a large volume of tabulated census data in an interactive environment; and
- the ABS website regional statistics page.

Regional statistics publications and profiles

Making regional indicator data available on a more frequent basis has been a major goal of the ABS. Regional statistics are now available annually for all States and Territories, providing a wide range of information on sub-State regions (principally Statistical Local Areas). These are disseminated as either a compendium publication or in electronic form in products such as the IRDB. The purpose of these products is to provide a broad overview of the social and economic status of regions. Attachment 1 lists compendium publications on regional statistics which are currently available.

More detailed information on specific regions is also available as Regional Profiles which are special data services presenting a statistical summary of key economic and social indicators for a region, tailored to the needs of individual clients. Data can be provided in time series and at a range of geographic levels, and can be compared to data on other regions as determined by clients. They are thus particularly useful for comparative analysis, or for monitoring a region over time. The profiles have so far achieved very high acceptance among potential clients, with the Commonwealth, New South Wales, South Australian, Western Australian, and a number of local governments receiving regular updates of profiles for relevant areas. Profiles are also available electronically in spreadsheet or Acrobat portable data file (pdf) format.

Regional statistics can also be obtained from the Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA) product. SEIFA provides lifestyle groupings of Australia's communities based on data from the Census of Population and Housing. There are five different indexes which group Australians according to their social and economic conditions. Each index provides information and rankings for a wide range of geographic areas, from small areas such as postal areas, to large areas such as statistical subdivisions.

SEIFA is available as a stand-alone electronic product which contains the indexes and a fully documented software package which facilitates the manipulation of the indexes, and as an add-on module for use with CDATA (see below).

Integrated Regional Data Base

The Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB) is an electronic product which provides a large range of aggregated regional data from both ABS and other government sources, together with a mapping facility to allow users to specify regions for analysis. The IRDB has been developed by the ABS to provide access to regional data using comparable spatial units. The product also contains time series information to allow regions to be analysed over time. The intention of the IRDB is to provide a sophisticated tool for more detailed social and economic policy analysis, as well as to provide in a single service, a comprehensive range of regional information.

The IRDB contains all small area data from ABS collections, such as agriculture, building and construction, demography, retail, transport and tourism as well as detailed data from the Census of Population and Housing. In addition, the IRDB contains data sourced from other government agencies on: taxpayers; labour market estimates; data on

the aged, children and the disabled; medicare payments; recipients of benefits, pensions and family payments; and some natural resource indicators.

It is intended that, as the ABS obtains a greater range of administrative data relevant to regional issues, the IRDB will become the principal repository for this new information. As such, it is anticipated that the IRDB will become, over time, the most comprehensive source of regional statistics available.

CDATA

The Census of Population and Housing is, among its many other uses, a major source of socio-demographic data for regions. The information collected in the Census is made available to governments and the community through a variety of mechanisms. CDATE, a CD-ROM product which provides a large volume of tabulated census data, is one of the major means of disseminating census data for regions. Information for the smallest units on which data is collected (Collection Districts equalling 200 households approximately), up to the whole of Australia can be accessed on CDATE. As CDATE has this flexibility, information on the demographics and other attributes of small localities and larger regions is readily accessible.

A key feature of CDATE is its mapping facilities which enable data to be plotted and displayed. The ability to map socio-demographic variables within, and across, regions has proven critical in assisting decision making on the planning and delivery of services to rural regions, and in analysing their relative advantage and disadvantage compared to like regions and to the metropolitan area. It is planned to produce a CDATE version from the 2001 Census.

ABS website regional statistics page

The ABS has created separate pages on its website specifically for regional statistics. The regional statistics page is intended to improve access to, and information about, regional data. Information on the page is provided under four main headings:

Statistics: provides a brief summary of every region, which may assist users to identify regions which will warrant further analysis, as well as providing information of interest in its own right;

Products and Services: provides information about, and samples of, ABS publications, profiles and links to the IRDB;

News and Information: includes news on regional data development projects underway in the ABS; and

Regional Statistics Directory: provides information on the range of regional data available from the ABS and other sources, and is intended to assist users to both obtain data for studies of regions, and to identify gaps in the range of data currently available.

CONCLUSION

Overall, the ABS has made substantial progress in meeting the increased demand for regional information, both through obtaining and making available new statistics, and through improving the accessibility of existing regional information. In addition, the work of identifying and working with administrative data from government agencies has allowed the ABS to develop closer partnership arrangements with other areas of government. It is hoped that as a result of these improved relationships, the ABS will be able to assist agencies to better utilise their own data for regional analysis, to improve the usefulness of their data holdings for statistical purposes, and to improve the comparability of data across different data sets, as well as making more data on regional issues available to policy analysts and members of the public.

The regional statistics initiative is aimed at further developing the national statistical system which goes beyond the direct collection, analysis and dissemination activities of the ABS.

REFERENCES

Time running out: shaping regional Australia's future. Inquiry into infrastructure and the development of Australia's regional areas. House of Representatives Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Regional Services. Canberra 2000

Regional banking services: money too far away. Report from the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration. Canberra, Canprint Communications 1999

Bush Talks. Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission
Canberra, Stirling Press 1999

Regional Australia Summit Communiqué. Regional Australia Summit,
Canberra October 1999

ATTACHMENT 1: REGIONAL STATISTICS PUBLICATIONS

Cat. no. 1362.1: *New South Wales, Regional Statistics, 2000*
(Statistical Divisions, Statistical Subdivision and Statistical Local Area levels)

Cat. no. 1362.2: *Regional Statistics, Victoria, 2000*
(Local Government Area level)

Cat. no. 1362.3: *Regional Statistics, Queensland, 1999*
(Local Government Area, Statistical District and Statistical Division levels)

Cat. no. 1362.4: *Regional Statistics, South Australia, 2000*
(Statistical Subdivision and Local Government Area levels)

Cat. no. 1362.6: *Regional Statistics, Tasmania, 1999*
(All levels)

Cat. no. 1362.7: *Regional Statistics, Northern Territory, 2000*
(Statistical Division level and NT Government Administrative Regions)

Cat. no. 1362.8: *Regional Statistics, Australian Capital Territory, 2000*
plus a chapter on the Australian Capital Region in *ACT in Focus*
(Cat. no. 1307.8) (Statistical Local Area level)

Note: Several Regional Offices release regional profiles that are special data services presenting statistical summaries of key economic and social indicators. Western Australia releases regional data through regional profiles in preference to formal publications. In 1999–2000, WA produced regional profiles on Statistical Divisions and Regional Development Commission Boundaries.

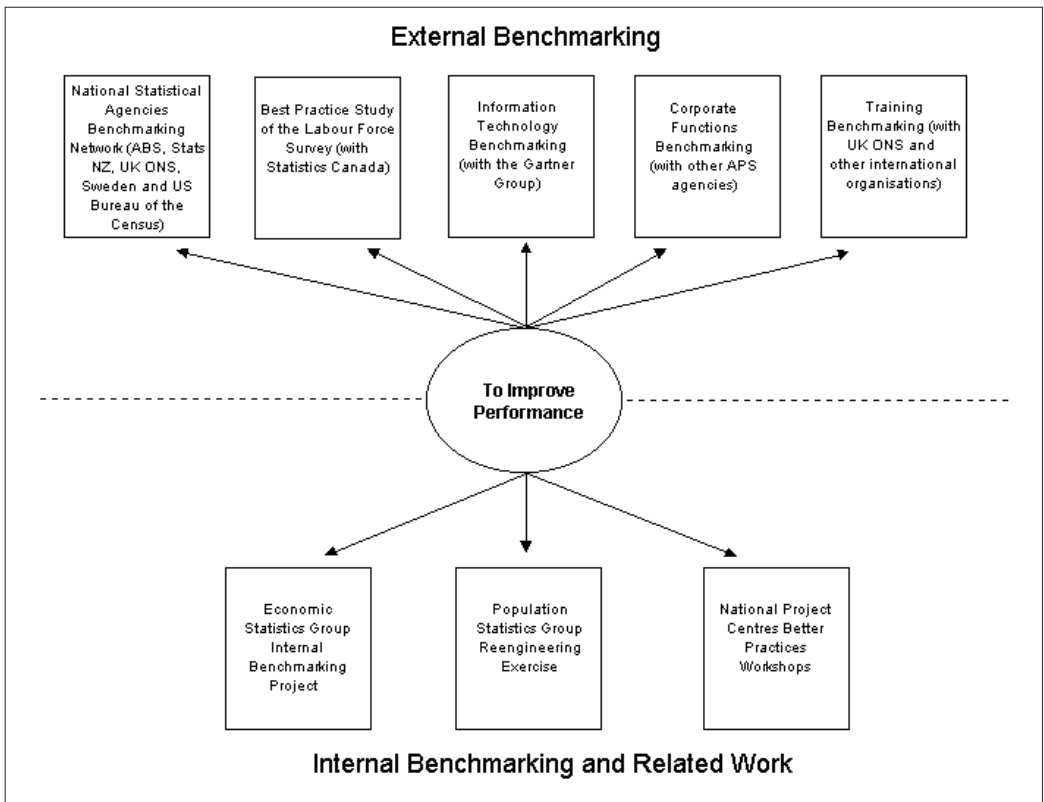
4 STATISTICAL BENCHMARKING AS A MEANS OF IMPROVING PERFORMANCE

INTRODUCTION

The ABS has established a broad, systematic performance measurement system which highlights different aspects of ABS performance. The system provides signals about ABS performance that will enable the ABS to report on achievements in efficiency and effectiveness, improvements in quality, and whether trade-offs have occurred between, for example, cost and quality. Benchmarking is a crucial element of the performance measurement scheme which can identify areas where the ABS can improve practices and achieve better results.

Benchmarking is an ongoing process which identifies, and introduces better practice into an organisation. It provides a means for the ABS to compare its performance with other organisations operating in similar fields, and allows adoption of good practice in a sustained, selective and strategic way.

There are currently a number of benchmarking and related activities being undertaken by the ABS which compare performance of activities within the ABS, or compare performance of the ABS with external organisations. The following diagram displays the range of these activities.



The external and internal benchmarking studies are being managed by different areas in the ABS in a coordinated way, and they use similar methodologies.

THE NATIONAL STATISTICAL AGENCIES BENCHMARKING NETWORK

As part of a move to better understand its performance, the ABS was instrumental in setting up a network of overseas statistical agencies, the National Statistical Agencies Benchmarking Network, to be involved in benchmarking statistical activities. The intended outcome of statistical benchmarking is to understand and improve performance on the development, collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of statistical outputs. The network compares methods and efficiency between benchmarking partner organisations, and identifies areas of best practice that could be incorporated into agency processes.

a. Network participants

Four international statistical agencies are participants in the network. They are; Statistics New Zealand, US Bureau of the Census, Statistics Sweden, and the Office for National Statistics in the UK (ONS).

b. Benchmarking projects

In 1998–2000, three key statistical surveys were benchmarked. The studies examined the full range of development, collection, processing and analysis activities for each of the surveys.

The collections benchmarked were:

- the Household Expenditure Survey;
- the Consumer Price Index (CPI); and
- the Annual Manufacturing Survey.

Not all statistical agencies participated in all of the first round projects, although the ABS participated in all projects.

A second round of the studies has just commenced, and the scope of activities has been broadened on the basis of the valuable experience gained from the first round. Agencies have been asked to consider topics they would like to benchmark, such as a whole survey (similar to the studies undertaken in the first round), a single process within a survey cycle, a high cost activity or collection, or a corporate function. From early discussions, it appears that a cross section of all of these topics may be suggested for in-depth analysis.

c. Method of benchmarking in the first round

The information required to compare collections revolved around a standard framework of statistical activities. This framework comprised a set of main processes such as data collection, data processing, survey analysis and dissemination, that were comparable across all countries and collections. Using the standardised framework, each country was required to report on how they undertook each main process for each of the collections which they benchmarked.

It was recognised that international agencies did not adopt the same methodologies and survey practices. However, it was still possible to identify genuine differences in performance not related to these differences in methodology. For example, 'collection of statistical data' is a comparable activity for all countries, but the actual method of collecting data from providers may differ (eg it is possible to collect data using a mail based questionnaire, through interviewers, or by outsourcing the data collection to another organisation) and these differences could lead to differences in performance.

Within the standard framework, considerable information was sought for each survey, from each contributing country, including:

- information describing the detailed statistical processes within each of the broad framework activities, and the areas undertaking each of the processes;
- information about the survey, and descriptive details of aspects of data collection and processing activities. Each country provided information on scope, methodology, concepts, procedures, and staffing structures;
- survey costs, collected at the broad level, in the local currency. The ABS converted the costs to a comparable measure; and
- performance indicators covering quality, effectiveness and efficiency aspects of performance. Indicators were both quantitative and qualitative.

Considerable attention was given to ensuring that identified differences in performance were based on comparable data, and not due to, for example, differences in scope and size of the collection.

Non-comparability was taken into account by judgement and discussion, rather than simple adjustments to bring indicators to a standard base.

d. Outputs and outcomes

The first round of benchmarking activity achieved the establishment of the network, and the preparation of guidelines and documentation by the ABS to enable the collection of the information required to compare surveys. The data was collected from each country on an ABS write-enabled website, which was developed to enable the statistical agencies to communicate easily about the benchmarking project. Once the data was collected, preliminary reports of the three surveys were written, highlighting areas of best practice, and suggesting areas for

further investigation. Finally, an evaluation of the first round was held in the United Kingdom in March 2000 to discuss how to improve the methodology, and to discuss the future operations of the network.

In addition to the outputs described above, the benchmarking studies contributed to cultural change in all agencies, leading to a more systematic approach to measuring costs and performance in statistical areas. The first round of studies made agencies aware of many existing best practice activities in other agencies, and encouraged active sharing of information about statistical activities within the ABS.

In terms of specific survey outputs, the Consumer Price Index study is the most advanced of all the first round benchmarking studies. A draft report was circulated to the contributors late in 1999, and their comments on this draft were incorporated into the final report. Discussions about the report have been conducted between the collection areas, and the ONS visited the ABS in August 2000 to further the discussions and to develop plans to ensure improvements are incorporated into CPI processes.

The first round Manufacturing study is still underway. After the March 2000 meeting in the UK, it was clear that countries involved in the study needed to revise and expand the data provided. These countries are currently updating their information. Once this data has been received, the report will be finalised, and discussions on statistical improvements will be arranged with the respective countries involved in the study.

The first round draft report for the HES study is expected to be completed shortly, and outstanding issues will then be addressed.

e. Evaluation of the network

At the March 2000 evaluation meeting, there was general agreement that the benchmarking initiative was worthwhile to all of the agencies, and showed great promise. However, it was considered too early to point to concrete outcomes in terms of improvements to business processes arising from the studies and relationships. The reports raised many questions about processes undertaken by each of the contributing countries, and participants believed that the key benefits are expected to arise from follow up dialogue regarding these processes. Specifically, the ABS has identified several parts of the CPI process where they will investigate possibilities for improved cost-effectiveness. In addition, participants said that producing the benchmarking information about their collections made them reflect on their own processes, which was useful in its own right, before any comparisons with others were made. The benchmarking work complemented other performance initiatives within agencies and across agencies.

Suggestions were put forward to improve the way information will be collected in the future, so as to reduce the cost and effort in providing benchmarking data. For example, many survey areas in the first round had inadequate systems in place to monitor costs of collections by main statistical processes. It was suggested that emphasis be placed on staff resources rather than costs, as this was easier to provide, and will

lessen the impact of measurement errors arising from differences in relative pay scales or currency adjustments.

All countries supported the continued operation of the network. The ABS committed to continuing the overall coordination role for the second round of benchmarking, but an alternative method of operation of the network was suggested which shares the workload associated with the studies.

OTHER BENCHMARKING STUDIES CONDUCTED WITH EXTERNAL ORGANISATIONS

Best Practice Study of the Labour Force Survey (LFS) with Statistics Canada

With the support of senior management from the ABS and Statistics Canada, both organisations shared information about statistical processes, timeliness, costs and quality of the LFS. This information was then used by the ABS to compare the operational characteristics of Australia's LFS with the Canadian survey. The study concluded that the Australian overhead costs for managing the LFS could be reduced. As a result, an inter Regional Office benchmarking study within Australia was undertaken, which resulted in new national targets for the unit cost of the LFS and substantial savings in the overheads for conducting the survey. These savings were used to meet user requirements for labour and other statistics.

Technology Services Division Benchmarking

Since mid 1994, the Technology Services Division (TSD) has contracted the Gartner Group to benchmark a large range of functional areas within TSD, as part of a quality improvement program, and to test the efficiency of TSD against peer groups of selected similar organisations. By the end of 1999–2000, over 80 per cent of TSD activities have been covered by the benchmarking work, including both applications development work and IT infrastructure. The studies compare ABS TSD functions with a large number of other government and non-government organisations internationally. Results show that the ABS information technology operations rate well above average in most areas, and above average in all areas.

Training Benchmarking

ABS participated during the year in a project to review the development of analytical skills in five national statistical agencies, the UK Office for National Statistics, Statistics Canada, Statistics Netherlands, Statistics New Zealand, and Statistics Sweden.

The project was designed to share information about the analytical skills framework operating in each agency, focusing on the recruitment, retention and development of staff across jobs which involve analytical skills.

The outcome of the review will be a report which identifies best practice in each of the focus areas across the five agencies. The report is due for delivery in the second half of 2000.

Benchmarking of Corporate Services Functions

Since 1996, the ABS has conducted several reviews of corporate functions which have recommended performance improvement strategies and/or market testing of specific functions.

In May 2000, the ABS set up a project to use benchmarking as a tool to measure performance, and to identify scope for performance improvement in a range of corporate functions. The proposed strategy is to adapt the National Statistical Agencies Benchmarking methodology for measuring the performance of five or six corporate functions, and to benchmark against a range of similar functions in APS agencies in Australia.

This project is intended to be aligned with the ongoing commitment of corporate service areas to monitor and report their performance (efficiency, effectiveness and quality) as a means of demonstrating value for money, for achieving continuous improvement in service delivery, and with a view to market testing and outsourcing as appropriate.

The initial project is expected to be completed by late 2000.

OTHER BENCHMARKING AND RELATED ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED INTERNALLY

Internal Benchmarking of Economic Surveys

The practice of benchmarking statistical surveys is a valuable means of continuous improvement within the ABS. A first round of internal studies was held in 1999–2000, comprising eight separate benchmarking studies of economic surveys throughout the organisation. The approach being taken with the studies is very similar to the National Statistical Agencies Benchmarking project, and is delivering productivity gains and efficiencies.

The objectives of the internal studies included:

- to gain 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 in survey operations.

Issues such as timeliness and costs were examined and compared, and good practice outcomes are now being built into new survey processes.

Benchmarking will continue to be applied to statistical surveys, and many survey areas have indicated that they are keen to be included in a second round of internal studies.

The Population Statistics Group (PSG)
Reengineering Exercise

The ABS undertook a reengineering study into the statistical processes for the design, development, processing and dissemination of ABS household surveys. Four different surveys, representing the different types of household surveys conducted by the ABS, mapped out their existing processes, with the objective to look for more timely, cost efficient and higher quality survey outcomes.

The study has led to the strengthening of the client liaison process and project management, through the implementation of an organisational restructure in PSG. The new structure supports the development and staged implementation of a new household survey program. The study has also resulted in savings through more streamlined processing, better use of resources, and reduced lead and lag times for the development and dissemination of surveys. The savings have allowed the expansion of the household survey program required by clients, including governments and service delivery agencies.

National Project Centres (NPCs)
Information Sharing Activities

National Project Centres (NPCs) are the organisational units with responsibility for individual ABS surveys. Their managers held a Better Practices Workshop to share information about NPC practices in 1999, and held a second workshop in August 2000. Participants at the first workshop identified areas where their collection had innovative or high quality practices, and presented sessions on those areas at the workshop.

The workshop format was successful in sharing information, and some areas came away with ideas for improvements to their collections, and new contacts to discuss and share ideas with. The workshop recommendations indicated the need to improve contact between NPCs, document the practices discussed at the workshop, and continue the best practices workshops in the future.

CONCLUSION

There is considerable management and operational support in the ABS for the benchmarking studies. In terms of external benchmarking, the benefits from the benchmarking network are in establishing long term, information sharing relationships with the other agencies, and sharing process, performance and cost information in a systematic fashion. Internally, the benchmarking work has further increased the attention given to understanding costs and performance of statistical processes.

The ABS has traditionally achieved significant efficiency gains (see 'A Quarter out of a Pint Pot', Annual Report, 1988–89, and 'The Pint Pot Revisited', Annual Report 1996–97). Benchmarking will allow continued improvement in the future.

5 ECONOMIC STATISTICS OUTPUT

OBJECTIVES

The Economic Statistics Output contributes to the following objectives of the ABS Corporate Plan:

- an expanded and improved national statistical service;
- an ABS statistical service that is timely, relevant, responsive, and respected for its integrity and quality;
- informed and increased use of statistics;
- an active contributor to international statistical activities that are important to Australia or our region;
- an organisation that encourages learning, innovation, performance and excellence in all it does;
- the trust and cooperation of our providers; and
- strong recognition and support for the ABS amongst decision makers and the community.

DESCRIPTION

The Economic Statistics Output 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.

At the broad level, the activities undertaken within the Economic Statistics Output include:

- collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of economic 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 for the collection of economic statistics.

The work program of the Economic Statistics Output 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 benefit of statistics to decision makers and researchers, the load on providers, the availability of skilled resources to undertake the work, and the costs associated with the activities.

Individual components within the Economic Statistics Output have close links with a wide range of government agencies providing data; users of statistical information; and with clients of the statistical coordination and consultancy services. The statistical activities of other agencies complement the activities of the Economic Statistics Output, resulting in a comprehensive national statistical service.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the Economic Statistics Output is enhanced by significant and wide ranging input from the corporate and statistical support areas. These inputs include methodological, technological, dissemination, human resource and financial support. Chapter 7 contains information about the services provided by these support areas.

Appendix 1 lists the components of the Economic Statistics Output.

OUTPUTS

Economic Statistics Output disseminates its statistical information through a range of printed and electronic products and services. See Chapter 7 for further information.

REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the Economic Statistics Output during 1999–2000.

Appendix 21 presents an aggregated record of achievements of the Economic Statistics Output against identified performance indicators of quality, effectiveness and efficiency during 1999–2000.

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 (comprising major Commonwealth Government economic policy agencies) to provide advice on the statistics used as input to the forecasting process.

Achievements during the year included:

- significant improvements in the timeliness of the release of the publications *Australian System of National Accounts* (Cat. no. 5204.0) and *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (Cat. no. 5220.0). The 1998–99 issues of these publications were released in November and December 1999, respectively, which was about five months earlier than the release of previous issues of these publications;
- completion of the second round of annual supply-use tables, which result in balanced measures of GDP for the periods covered by the tables;
- continued contributions to the work of the Expert Group on Capital Stock Statistics and the London Group on Environmental Accounting, including major contributions to the Manual on Capital Stock Statistics and the revised System of Environmental and Economic Accounts which are being prepared under direction from these Groups;
- publication of special articles in various issues of the quarterly publication *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0) on: the impact on the national accounts of the Year 2000 problem, the Sydney hailstorm, and the Sydney Olympic Games; measures of saving in the national accounts; and, The New Tax System and the national accounts;
- the introduction of quarterly state estimates of international exports and imports of goods in the standard release *Australian National Accounts: Quarterly State Details* (Cat. no. 5206.40.001);
- presentations on improvements in the ABS's capital stock and multifactor productivity statistics and recent developments in national accounts statistics at the 1999 Conference of Economists; and
- provision of assistance to staff from agencies in Thailand and the Philippines involved in compiling national accounts statistics.

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:

- release of a new publication, *Finance, Australia 1999* (Cat. no. 5611.0), which is a compendium publication including comprehensive tables, graphs, commentaries, feature articles and technical notes. The publication, and a companion theme page on the ABS website, are primarily reference materials, providing a broad basis for analysis and research on the Australian finance sector. The publication includes statistics on the finance sector enterprises; the finance industry and its role and contribution to the economy in terms of financial intermediation, use of the labour force, labour costs, and contribution to GDP; some globalisation indicators; and data about the financial markets. The publication also includes statistics on interest rates, exchange rates, Australian Stock Exchange indexes, and selected international comparisons;
- expansion of published information to include a more detailed commodity split of cross-border trade in business services classified by country;
- publication of special articles in the quarterly *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (Cat. no. 5302.0) on the foreign ownership of equity, and on the effects of the Sydney Olympic Games on the balance of payments estimates;
- continued contribution to the work of the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Balance of Payments Committee, aimed at improving the measurement and international comparability of international and financial accounts statistics. In particular, Australia joined with the IMF and the Singapore Department of Statistics to present a seminar on external debt for twelve East Asian, South-East Asian and Indian Subcontinent nations, as part of the development of new external debt statistical standards;
- commencement of the compilation of Australia's cross-border assets and liabilities of depository corporations for the Reserve Bank of Australia to report to the Bank for International Settlements (BIS). Expansion in the detail collected in the ABS Survey of International Investment in recent years has enabled Australia to commence reporting to BIS. Adding Australia's data to this important international data base will provide information on a consistent basis with other reporting countries, improve access to, and use of, Australia's data, and provide an improved perspective on other countries' data within the global banking system; and
- providing assistance to staff from agencies in Thailand, China, Indonesia and India on balance of payments and international investment statistics.

International Trade

The international trade component produces statistics on the value, composition, destination and source of Australia's merchandise exports and imports. These statistics are used in compiling balance of payments and national accounts statistics, and are used by government, industry and commercial analysts. The statistics are available on 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 available on the ABS website.

Achievements during the year included:

- continued participation with the Australian Customs Service in its Cargo Management Re-engineering project, which aims to speed cargo clearances and reduce costs to businesses. The ABS is particularly involved in the development of the Accredited Client Scheme, which will allow selected importers and exporters to report to Customs monthly, rather than for each transaction;
- publication of special articles in *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (Cat. no. 5422.0), including an examination of the growth in Australia's merchandise trade with the Republic of Korea from 1989 to 1999 (in September quarter 1999), and an examination of the growth in Australia's trade in crude petroleum from 1990 to 2000 (in March quarter 2000);
- release, in December 1999, of an Information Paper *International Merchandise Trade Statistics, Australia: Data Confidentiality* (Cat. no. 5487.0), which outlines the confidentiality policy, rules and procedures applied by the ABS in its international merchandise trade statistics. An article on data confidentiality was included in the December quarter 1999 issue of *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (Cat. no. 5422.0);
- considerable progress with a bilateral merchandise trade reconciliation study with Statistics Indonesia, in accordance with the Memorandum Of Understanding (MOU) between the two agencies; and
- completion of preparatory work to capture additional information that will become available from the Australian Customs Service as a result of the implementation of The New Tax System from 1 July 2000. A key objective is to investigate the feasibility of producing imports and exports data on a standard industry basis, using the Australian Business Number.

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:

- intensive work with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority to review and rationalise data collections from regulated financial institutions. Draft data requirements from banks and other depository institutions have been specified, with revised data collection arrangements to commence from July 2001;
- improved data quality on share market statistics in the financial accounts, with the assistance of the Australian Stock Exchange;
- redesign of the annual profit and loss survey for non-bank financial institutions, including incorporation of some data from alternative sources, improved form design, and reduction in provider load; and
- technical assistance to staff from agencies in Thailand on improvements in their financial accounts, and their statistical infrastructure in general.

Public Sector Accounts

The public sector accounts component provides Government Finance Statistics (GFS) of the Australian Commonwealth government, State and Territory governments, their public non-financial and financial corporations, local governments, and universities. In addition to a range of annual publications, quarterly statistics are compiled for inclusion in the national accounts, and detailed financial statistics about individual local government authorities are provided on request. The component provides advice on the statistics used as input to the forecasting work of the Public Sector Sub-committee of the Joint Economic Forecasting Group.

The major achievement during the year was the move from cash-based to accruals-based GFS reporting, with the first of the new data sets published in *Government Financial Estimates, Australia, 1999/2000* (Cat. no. 5501.0) released on 3 April 2000. Prior to this release, *Information Paper: Accruals-Based Government Finance Statistics 2000* (Cat. no. 5517.0) was released on 13 March 2000 to advise users of the impending changes, and explaining the new concepts and tabular presentations.

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, and exports and imports.

Achievements during the year included:

- significant progress towards the introduction of the 14th Series CPI in respect of the September quarter 2000, linked to the 13th Series CPI as at June quarter 2000. Details were provided in *Information Paper: Price Indexes and The New Tax System* (Cat. no. 6425.0) released on 3 May 2000. Key changes include the introduction of new weights based on the 1998–99 household expenditure survey; the introduction of a new utility-based commodity classification; and subject to further evaluation, the introduction of price measures for financial services;
- significant progress on the development of procedures to compile an experimental constant tax rate measure. In conjunction with the introduction of The New Tax System from 1 July 2000, there is considerable pressure on the ABS to develop an estimate of the proportion of the change in the published CPI attributable to tax rate changes. Details of the constant tax rate measure were also provided in *Information Paper: Price Indexes and The New Tax System* (Cat. no. 6425.0) released on 3 May 2000. The measure will only abstract from the direct or first round effects of tax changes on the prices of consumer goods and services;
- release of a new quarterly publication *Producer Price Indexes for Selected Service Industries* (Cat. no. 6423.0) on 18 April 2000, presenting quarterly price indexes up to March quarter 2000 for the output of most of the industry classes within the Transport and storage, and Property and business services divisions of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification. Indexes for additional service industries will be released in subsequent issues of the publication as they are established; and
- the CPI area was benchmarked against comparable measures produced by the United Kingdom Office for National Statistics, and some limited comparisons were made with measures produced by Statistics Canada. These comparisons highlighted differences between the agencies in the quality of the CPI and the unit costs in deriving the CPI. Follow up studies are being undertaken during 2000–2001.

Business Statistics

Investment and Profits Surveys

The investment and profits surveys produce indicators of current economic activity through the publication of quarterly estimates of company profits, inventories and sales and current and future economic activity in respect of new capital expenditure.

Achievements during the year included:

- integration of large businesses into a single, quarterly business survey, replacing the existing quarterly surveys of inventories and sales, company profits and, eventually, employment and earnings;

- continued system, methodological and procedural development to expand coverage of the single, quarterly business survey to all businesses from March quarter 2001, as a replacement for existing surveys;
- investigation into issues associated with the introduction of The New Tax System, particularly as they affected reporting of expectations of new capital expenditure reported from December quarter 1999 onwards; and
- evaluation of new sales data collected from the service industries. This data was collected through an expansion of the survey of inventories and sales from the March quarter 1999.

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 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 1997–98 in *Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia* (Cat. no. 8140.0). This publication also includes a section that shows data which has been supplemented with disaggregated income tax data;
- release of *Summaries of Industry Performance, 1992–93 to 1997–98* (Cat. no. 8140.0.40.002) in electronic format;
- electronic release of *Industry Concentration Statistics* (Cat. no. 8140.0.40.001), in respect of 1997–98;
- conduct of the ninth annual Economic Activity Survey, in respect of 1998–99. Preliminary estimates were released in *Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8142.0); and
- release of seasonally adjusted estimates of short term business expectations for *Australian Business Expectations* (Cat. no. 5250.0) in respect of June quarter 2000.

Small Business Statistics

The small business statistics component produces 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 the two yearly compendium *Small Business in Australia, 1999* (Cat. no. 1321.0);
- release of a Confidentialised Unit Record File covering data from the four years of the business longitudinal survey (Cat. no. 8141.0.30.001);
- completion of a third survey on the characteristics of small business operators, conducted as a supplementary topic to the November 1999 Labour Force Survey, with results expected to be released in August 2000;
- finalisation of a review of the ABS business size classification, including the definition of small business;
- completion of a number of research topics relating to small and medium business performance using data from the Business Longitudinal Survey; and
- presentation of research papers at the 2000 International Council for Small Business Conference.

Science and Technology

The science and technology component provides statistics on innovation, research and experimental development, and information technology. The latter include statistics on the demand for information technologies by businesses, government, households and farms, and on the supply of information technology and telecommunications goods and services.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Research and Experimental Development, Higher Education Organisations, Australia* (Cat. no. 8111.0);
- conduct of the second Year 2K survey, and publication of the results in *Year 2000 Problem, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8151.0) and *Year 2000 Problem, Australia* (Cat. no. 8152.0);
- publication of *Business Use of Information Technology 1997-98, Australia* (Cat. no. 8129.0);
- publication of *Government Use of Information Technology 1997-98, Australia* (Cat. no. 8119.0);
- first releases of information on farm use of information technology: *Use of Information Technology on Farms, Australia, Preliminary, 1998-99* (Cat. no. 8134.0) and the more detailed *Use of Information Technology on Farms, Australia: Data Report, 1997-98* (Cat. no. 8150.0.40.001);

- publication of *Household Use of Information Technology 1999, Australia* (Cat. no. 8146.0);
- publication of the quarterly *Use of the Internet by Householders, Australia* (Cat. no. 8147.0);
- publication of *Information Technology 1998–99, Australia, Preliminary* (Cat. no. 8143.0);
- development of the first of a new series of annual business use of information technology (including e-commerce) surveys;
- development of a new survey of Internet Service Providers, covering the types of services provided, and the number and type of subscribers. This survey will be first conducted in respect of the June quarter 2000; 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 standards for research and development statistics, defining electronic commerce, and measuring household and business use of information technology.

Agriculture

The agriculture component provides statistics on the structure, performance and production of the agriculture industry. Data collected and disseminated include detailed annual information on commodity production statistics, monthly information on livestock slaughterings, and quarterly information on poultry slaughterings and wool receivals by brokers and dealers. A large range of statistics on the structure, financial operations, performance and other characteristics of agriculture businesses is also collected annually. Every five years, the commodity production statistics are collected from a census rather than a sample. The next agricultural commodity collection on a census basis is planned for 2000–01.

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.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Agriculture, Australia* (Cat. no. 7113.0), a compendium publication on the structure of the Australian farming sector;
- completion of the Geocoding Survey of East and West Gippsland and arrangement for the Bureau of Rural Sciences to develop the land management practices and commodities digital datasets; and
- development of plans to broaden the focus to ‘rural’ statistics, encompassing economic, social and environmental issues.

Mining

The mining component conducts annual surveys of the mining, electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries to provide statistics on the structure, performance and production of these industries. The component also conducts quarterly collections of actual and expected mineral and petroleum exploration as well as supplementary collections of details of drilling methods in mineral exploration.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of the first edition of the *Directory of Mining Statistics* (Cat. no. 8416.0); and
- release of a theme page on mining on the ABS website.

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 the manufacturing industry. The latter set of statistics is obtained from an annual manufacturing industry survey.

Achievements during the year included:

- development of a strategy to reduce the reporting load on businesses by integrating administrative by-product data with survey data;
- implementation of new procedures to reduce provider load, particularly relating to requests for exemption from surveys. Reductions in provider load support the aims of the Business Surveys Charter; and
- the annual manufacturing industry survey was involved in a benchmarking exercise in which its cost structures were compared with those from similar collections in other overseas statistical agencies. The work will be ongoing in 2000–01.

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:

- an enhanced output strategy for building approvals resulting in the inclusion of more state data in the national monthly publication;

- development of a refined functional classification of buildings;
- implementation of the recommendations of the engineering construction survey methodological review, with improvements to data quality and a reduction in provider load; and
- significant progress made on the redevelopment of the building activity survey system which will improve quality and timeliness of estimates.

Transport

The transport component provides monthly statistics on new motor vehicle registrations and annual statistics of motor vehicle use, together with the associated motor vehicle censuses which provide data on the characteristics of the Australian vehicle population. Other activities include maintenance of the Transport page on the ABS website, compilation of occasional compendium publications, and data on the Australian motor vehicle fleet on CD-ROM.

Achievements during the year included:

- release of first results for the survey of motor vehicle use for 12 months ending 31 July 1998, using a new methodology;
- release of *TranStats99* (Cat. no. 9312.0.30.001), a CD-ROM product that combines motor vehicle census results with other related transport and demographic statistics;
- implementation of the transport theme page on the ABS website (incorporating the directory of transport statistics); and
- final development and commencement of the Freight Movements Survey 2000 using a new collection methodology for road freight.

Service Industries

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

Achievements during the year included:

- first publication of information for a range of allied health industries in respect of reference year 1997–98: *Dental Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8551.0); *Physiotherapy Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8552.0); *Optometry and Optical Dispensing Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8553.0); and *Chiropractic and Osteopathic Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8550.0);
- publication of information for a range of business services in respect of 1998–99: *Cleaning Services Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8672.0); *Real Estate Services Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8663.0); *Market Research Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8556.0); and *Security Services, Australia* (Cat. no. 8557.0);

- publication of *Casinos, Australia* (Cat. no. 8683.0), and *Accommodation Industry, Australia* (Cat. no. 8695.0);
- completion of surveys in respect of 1998–99 on: computer services; employment services; legal services industries; and the cafes and restaurants industry; and
- methodological research and user-consultation in relation to proposed surveys of the community services industry and the cultural industries to be conducted in respect of 1999–2000.

Retail Survey

The component also covers the retail survey which produces monthly retail turnover statistics. 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:

- improving the series by aligning coverage more closely with units that are still active according to the Australian Taxation Office's Group Employer Scheme;
- redevelopment of processing systems to ensure Year 2K compliance and to integrate improved methodologies; and
- publication of *Introduction of Concurrent Seasonal Adjustment into the Retail Trade Series* (Cat. no. 8514.0) and subsequent introduction of concurrent seasonal adjustment for the series to replace the forward factor methodology.

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:

- expansion of the scope of the Survey of Tourist Accommodation for the year 2000 to include significant caravan parks, visitor hostels and holiday flats and units. Results for the March quarter will be released in July 2000;
- publication of the *Directory of Tourism Statistics 2000* (Cat. no. 1130.0). The directory is also available on the ABS website and will be updated on a regular basis;
- development of a tourism theme page on the ABS website;

- strengthening of relationships with stakeholders and providers through active participation at industry conferences and seminars, convening quarterly tourism industry meetings, and participation at high level forums including regular meetings between ABS and the Department of Industry, Science and Resources to discuss broad tourism statistics issues;
- finalising development of the Australian Tourism Satellite Accounts due for release in October 2000; and
- working with the Cooperative Research Centres for Sustainable Tourism in promoting ABS products through their on-line bookshop.

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 for new collections and current data holdings.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of the fifth edition of *Environment Protection Expenditure, Australia* (Cat. no. 4603.0);
- publication of the fifth edition of *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (Cat. no. 4602.0);
- the first publication of *Environmental Expenditure, Local Government (Experimental Estimates), 1997-98* (Cat no. 4611.0). This followed the development of environmental accounting guidelines for local government, and completion of a survey designed to collect information from local government authorities on natural resource use and management, and environment protection expenditure;
- the release of *Water Account for Australia, 1993-94 to 1996-97* (Cat. no. 4610.0);
- further progress on Energy Accounts and exploratory work associated with Waste Accounts; and
- participation in the review of the United Nations environment accounting framework, System of Integrated Economic and Environment Accounts (SEEA). Australia is a major contributor to this work and hosted a meeting in November 1999 where draft chapters of the revised manual were discussed.

Statistical Consultancy

The statistical consultancy component helps the ABS and external users to meet their information needs through the provision of sample design, statistical methods, methodological reviews, tender evaluations, data analysis and statistical training services.

Achievements during the year included:

- provision of methodological advice on the preparation and evaluation of tenders, for the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, the Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs and the Department of Family and Community Services;
- assistance to the New Zealand Department of Justice for conducting a methodological review of Statistics New Zealand's National Crime Victims Survey and the Women's Safety Survey;
- development of small area estimates of disability for the Department of Family and Community Services;
- agreement with the Australian National Audit Office on a scheme for the provision of a high level of statistical and training support;
- provision of sample design advice on monitoring of new apprenticeship centres for the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs;
- assistance in weighting of the Award and Agreement Coverage Survey for the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business;
- analytical assistance to the Australian Broadcasting Authority, the Australian National Audit Office, the Australian National University, and the Department of National Resources and Environment; and
- provision of sample design advice to the ACT Department of Urban Services, the Australian National Audit Office, the Australian Valuation Office, the Department of Health and Aged Care Services and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs.

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 of these outputs.

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of an external review of the performance of the Statistical Clearing House over the first two years of operation;
- dissemination of agency reports to agency heads and survey liaison officers;
- continuous improvement of the survey clearance process, review criteria and information template through stakeholder consultations (Statistical Clearing House Operations Advisory Group and User Group);
- improved identification of non-ABS surveys through enhanced networks with non-ABS agencies;
- a continued large number of reviews completed annually. Of the completed reviews, 26% (30 reviews) 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 203 such surveys have been loaded to the Register, 139 during 1999–2000).

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 2000 issue contained longer time spans of data than the regular monthly issue, for example, it contained the last forty observations of quarterly national accounts data (complementing *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (Cat. no. 5206.0) that contains only the last nine observations).

Statistical Services and User Liaison

The statistical services and user liaison 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:

- conduct of various household surveys, including crime and safety (NSW); population mobility (Victoria); working hours of wage and salary earners (Queensland); balancing working and caring responsibilities (Tasmania);
- development of a regional statistical framework to support the measurement of social and economic wellbeing in Victoria;
- production of model based estimates of small area data from the National Health and Mental Health and Wellbeing Surveys for inclusion in a national social health atlas;
- conduct of a project with the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services to model the socioeconomic status of Tasmanians in relation to their health and wellbeing;
- conduct of a project with the ACT government to develop and produce the first “ACT State of the Territory Report: Improving our quality of life in Canberra” which included sets of wellbeing goals and performance indicators;
- production of key economic and social indicators for South Australian regional areas;
- development of a methodology, and calculation of, experimental state estimates of private new capital expenditure by ownership/control characteristics for the Western Australian Treasury;
- development of Regional Statistics pages for each State and Territory on the ABS website which provide sample data and describes the breadth of information available for regional Australia;
- conduct of a statistical review of 28 ethnic community profiles for the Victorian Department of Premier and Cabinet;
- the introduction of data management protocols across South Australian government agencies, to be followed by assistance with the implementation of the protocols in each agency; and
- conduct of a data quality audit for the Northern Territory Office of Courts Administration.

6 POPULATION AND SOCIAL STATISTICS OUTPUT

OBJECTIVES

The Population and Social Statistics Output contributes to the following objectives of the ABS Corporate Plan:

- an expanded and improved national statistical service;
- an ABS statistical service that is timely, relevant, responsive, and respected for its integrity and quality;
- informed and increased use of statistics;
- an active contributor to international statistical activities that are important to Australia or our region;
- an organisation that encourages learning, innovation, performance and excellence in all it does;
- the trust and cooperation of our providers; and
- strong recognition and support for the ABS amongst decision makers and the community.

DESCRIPTION

The Population and Social Statistics Output 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 on population and social issues.

At the broad level, the activities undertaken within the Population and Social Statistics Output include:

- collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of population, social and labour 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 for the collection of population, social and labour statistics.

The work program of the Population and Social Statistics Output 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 benefit of statistics to decision makers and researchers, the load on providers, the availability of skilled resources to undertake the work, and the costs associated with the activities.

Individual components within the Population and Social Statistics Output have close links with a wide range of government agencies providing data; users of statistical information; and with clients of the statistical coordination and consultancy services. The statistical activities of other agencies complement the activities of the Population and Social Statistics Output, resulting in a comprehensive national statistical service.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the Population and Social Statistics Output is enhanced by significant and wide ranging input from the corporate and statistical support areas. These inputs include methodological, technological, dissemination, human resource, and financial support. Chapter 7 contains information about the services provided by these support areas.

Appendix 1 lists the components of the Population and Social Statistics Output.

OUTPUTS

Population and Social Statistics Output disseminates its statistical information through a range of printed and electronic products and services. See Chapter 7 for further information.

REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the Population and Social Statistics Output during 1999–2000.

Appendix 21 presents an aggregated record of achievements of the Population and Social Statistics Output against identified performance indicators of quality, effectiveness and efficiency during 1999–2000.

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. The next Census of Population and Housing will be conducted on 7 August 2001.

In December 1999, the Government decided that people will be able to choose to have their name-identified 2001 Census information stored under secure conditions by National Archives of Australia. Information stored will be made publicly available after 99 years. An appropriate question for the census form giving people the choice of having their name-identified information kept or not, and accompanying explanatory material, have been developed in association with the Privacy Commissioner. Methods for capturing and storing the information are being developed in consultation with the National Archives of Australia.

Achievements during the year included:

- approval by Parliament of topics to be included in the 2001 Census, and the release of the information paper *2001 Census of Population and Housing, Nature and Content* (Cat. no. 2008.0);
- development of the 2001 Census public relations strategy and imagery. These incorporate the public education campaign on issues connected with retention of census name-identified information;
- completion of enumeration strategies for each State and Territory and for special population groups;
- development of infrastructure, and preparation of materials to support enumeration activities including procedures, training, recruitment and pay systems, field communications and transport of materials. Printing of the 2001 Census forms commenced on 1 June 2000;
- development and successful testing of the 2001 Census processing systems incorporating intelligent character recognition and imaging technology;
- completion of an external and internal review of the 1996 Census output program;
- commencement of user consultations on the 2001 Census output with the release of *2001 Census of Population and Housing, ABS Views on Census Output Strategy* (Cat. no. 2009.0) and an associated questionnaire; and
- development and testing of systems for production of the 2001 Census output.



Pictured during a visit to the ABS to study dissemination and evaluation of population census data is, at the left, Gereltuya Altanbuyag, Research Coordinator, National Statistical Office, Mongolia, with Dennis Trewin, Deputy Australian Statistician, Economic Statistics Group (appointed Australian Statistician on 5 July 2000).

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 the number of families and households. Statistics are also regularly produced on births, deaths, marriages, divorces, overseas arrivals and departures, and internal migration. Projections of the population, families and households, according to specified demographic assumptions, are published on a regular basis and produced for individual clients. In addition to reporting on these statistics, courses on understanding demographic data are conducted, and an email newsletter is sent to major clients.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Household and Family Projections, Australia 1996 to 2021* (Cat. no. 3236.0) for the first time. Included in the statistics are projections of children living in one parent families, and older people living alone;
- on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander issues, improvements in the coverage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in registered birth and death data (through cooperation with Registrars of Births, Deaths and Marriages and other relevant stakeholders), release of a working paper on Indigenous life tables for comment, and upgraded reporting on fertility in *Births, Australia* (Cat. no. 3301.0) and *Mortality in Deaths, Australia* (Cat. no. 3302.0);
- release of a population clock on the ABS website which shows the Australian population at the time of access;
- conduct of a small area population workshop involving State government planning departments, to ensure understanding of estimation procedures and to identify opportunities for improvements;
- commencement of the redevelopment of the major demographic processing system which will facilitate the timely processing of registered birth, death, marriage and divorce data; and
- continued development of the post-enumeration survey for the 2001 Census of Population and Housing.

Labour Statistics

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

A senior officer is outposted to the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs (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.

Labour market information

Labour force statistics are collected in a monthly survey of households. These statistics provide timely estimates of employment and unemployment, together with basic demographic data, and 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 1999–2000 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, labour force status and other characteristics of migrants, labour mobility, locations of work, and transition from education to work.

The component also conducts a range of employer surveys which provide quarterly data on wage and salary earners, average weekly earnings, and job vacancies. 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, periodic data on employers' labour costs, and monthly statistics on industrial disputes.

Achievements during the year included:

- implementation of new population benchmarks for the labour force survey. These benchmarks are updated every five years using population counts from the latest census;
- the release of a new publication in February 2000, *Forms of Employment, Australia* (Cat. no. 6359.0). This is a new survey which examines some of the key factors relating to the nature of employment arrangements;
- conduct and development of the Survey of Employment Arrangements and Superannuation. This survey will provide information about the diversity of employment arrangements in Australia, and how superannuation coverage differs across the population. First results are expected to be published in March 2001;
- publication of three Occasional Papers containing in-depth analyses of selected data from the longitudinal survey of employment and unemployment patterns (Cat. no. 6293 series);
- completion of a questionnaire redesign for the labour force survey, and publication of an information paper *Labour Force Survey Questionnaire Redesign* (Cat. no. 6294.0);

- rebasing of the Wage Cost Index for the September quarter 1999, involving updated expenditure and sampling weights, and sample rotation; and
- implementation of recommendations of a review of job vacancies and overtime statistics, which led to the discontinuation of the overtime component of the collection and improvements to the job vacancies series.

Education and training information

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 education departments; for non-government schools, the data are collected by DETYA.

Statistics on educational attainment, participation in education, and transition from education to work are produced from regular household surveys and from the population census.

In recognition of the need to further develop education and training statistics, agreement was reached for the establishment of a National Education and Training Statistics Unit. To be jointly funded by the ABS, DETYA, the Australian National Training Authority, and all States and Territories, the main aim of this Unit will be to coordinate statistical development across the various education and training sectors to improve data quality and comparability.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Schools, Australia* (Cat. no. 4221.0);
- publication of *Transition from Education to Work* (Cat. no. 6227.0); and
- completion of a feasibility study into the collection of training related information from businesses.

Social Statistics

The social statistics component is responsible for social analysis and for providing information on health, welfare, housing, and household income and expenditure. It is also responsible for promoting standard statistical concepts, definitions and classifications in these areas. 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, persons with disabilities, aged persons and families). The component produces statistics on the income, expenditure and other characteristics of households, and on the economic and social aspects of 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:

- production of the seventh edition of *Australian Social Trends* (Cat. no. 4102.0);
- release of the first results of the *1998/99 Household Expenditure Survey* (Cat. no. 6530.0);
- publication of *Suicides, Australia, 1978–1998* (Cat. no. 3309.0);
- publication of *Older People, Australia: A Social Report* (Cat. no. 4109.0), the third in a series of social reports on special groups in the population;
- production of the statistical component of *Women In Australia, 1999* (released by the Office of the Status of Women) providing a comprehensive range of measures relating to the status of women in Australia;
- publication of *Child Care, Australia* (Cat. no. 4402.0) and *Australia's Children, 1998–99* (Cat. no. 4119.0.00.001);
- publication of *Income Distribution, Australia* (Cat. no. 6523.0) and *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (Cat. no. 4130.0);
- finalising the review of the household survey program, and circulation to users of plans for a revised program of household surveys. The new program includes a three yearly general social survey, a six yearly Indigenous social survey and a new multi-purpose household survey, to be run two years in three. An expanded program of special social surveys will include regular surveys in the areas of health, education and training, disability, ageing and carers, household expenditure, income and housing costs, crime and violence, retirement provision and superannuation, and time use;
- establishing a funding partnership with the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care to support more frequent national health surveys, and an expanded range of health data collected in ABS surveys, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health; and
- production of experimental estimates of the distribution of household wealth by linking household survey and national accounts data.

National Centres

*National Centre for Crime and Justice
Statistics*

The National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics is responsible for producing national statistics about the crime and justice system. It coordinates data collection activities within the ABS, and across other public agencies, relating to this field, and provides a statistical service which includes provision of statistical information, training of data providers, advice on statistical standards, and development of quality control procedures.

Achievements during the year included:

- release of results from the national survey *Crime and Safety, Australia, 1998* (Cat. no. 4509.0). The publication included more extensive data analysis than was previously publicised, and was followed by the release of a substantial set of supplementary tables;
- implementation of the *Australian Standard Offence Classification* (Cat. no. 1234.0) within the 1999 issue of the publication *Recorded Crime, Australia* (Cat. no. 4510.0);
- conduct of the fourth national Crime and Justice Statistics Convention in Perth in October 1999. This resulted in an increased awareness of related data accessibility, and quality issues among key data providers and users; and
- commencement of investigations aimed at further development of Emergency Management and Juvenile Justice statistics.

*National Centre for Culture and Recreation
Statistics*

The National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics has responsibility for the coordination of national statistical activity in the fields of culture and recreation. It is a centre of expertise and statistical leadership, providing an information and analytical service for culture and recreation data. It also advises external organisations on statistical standards, and collection and analysis methodologies.

Achievements during the year included:

- the release of publications relating to *Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues, Australia* (Cat. no. 4114.0), *Sports Attendance, Australia* (Cat. no. 4174.0), *Participation in Sport and Physical Activities, Australia* (Cat. no. 4177.0), *Cultural Funding, Australia* (Cat. no. 4183.0) and *Work in Selected Culture/Leisure Activities, Australia* (Cat. no. 6281.0);
- progressing the development of industry, product and occupation classifications of the culture and leisure sectors, as a basis for future data collection, dissemination and analysis;

- the development of a survey of children's participation in culture and leisure activities;
- the updating and validating of a national database and directory on the sport and recreation industry; and
- the development of a survey of book publishers as part of the Book Industry Assistance Plan.

National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres
Strait Islander Statistics

The National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics has responsibility for national leadership in the production and dissemination of statistics about Australia's Indigenous population. The Centre works closely with other areas of the ABS, and with a wide range of external agencies, to provide expertise on these statistics and advice on related statistical issues. It coordinates initiatives to improve the quality, use and availability of Indigenous data from a range of sources, and assists Indigenous organisations to improve their capacity to use statistics effectively.

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of strategic plans for Indigenous statistics and release of an Information Paper, *Directions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics*;
- publication of the Second Edition of *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (Cat. no. 4704.0);
- publication of two Occasional Papers, *Mortality of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians*, (Cat. no. 3315.0) and *Hospital Statistics—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1997–98* (Cat. no. 4711.0);
- further progress on improving the quality, availability and use of Indigenous administrative data on births, deaths, and hospitals, as part of a plan for improving Indigenous statistics from administrative collections;
- completion of a joint project with the Victorian Office of the ABS to produce an Internet resource, introducing students to Indigenous statistics. The product is known as WISE (Website Indigenous Statistics Education) and is now live on the ABS website; and
- the conduct of, and timely release of, results from the 1999 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey.

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:

- release of the *Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB), Australia* (Cat. no. 1353.0), incorporating new, easier to use software providing clients with access to a broad range of information about Australia's regions;
- release of the *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (Cat. no. 1216.0), 1999 edition, and associated digital boundary files;
- quarterly updates of the National Localities Index;
- development of a geographical information system to assist with the management of household surveys;
- development and population of a comprehensive, national, spatial data base to support the 2001 Census of Population and Housing; and
- development of an automated map production system to produce the 40,000 collection district maps required for the 2001 Census of Population and Housing.

7 CORPORATE AND STATISTICAL SUPPORT

OBJECTIVES

The corporate and statistical support areas promote the achievement of the ABS objectives, by: assisting effective corporate management and planning; providing specialist methodological, analytical and information technological advice and support; providing dissemination services; and administration of all resources.

DESCRIPTION

Detailed descriptions for corporate and statistical support areas are provided under the Review of Components section of Chapter 7. At the broad level, descriptions include:

- corporate strategy for the planning and implementation of the ABS annual work program, and management of ABS audit and review framework, and performance improvement;
- professional and specialist advice to internal and external clients on statistical standards, methodologies, survey design and analytical issues;
- personnel services: including salaries payment; employee relations; conditions of service; and the implementation of personnel policies designed to attract, develop and retain high quality staff on the basis of anticipated demand for ABS services;
- a secure and effective information technology environment to retain community confidence in the integrity of data provided to the ABS, and to identify options for using information technology to improve ABS performance;
- information products and services that promote and assist the use of official statistics;
- financial management and accounting services, including budgeting and monitoring resource usage;
- support for the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, and policy, legal and parliamentary advice and support;
- coordination of international relations with international organisations and national statistical agencies; and
- liaison with central coordinating agencies (Public Service and Merit Protection Commission, Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business, Department of Finance and Administration, and the Australian National Audit Office).

Appendix 1 lists the components of the corporate and statistical support areas.

OUTPUTS

The Economic Statistics Output and the Population and Social Output, described in Chapters 5 and 6, are provided with the assistance of the support areas, in particular by Dissemination Services. The ABS disseminates its statistical information through a variety of techniques, including:

- printed publications;
- electronic products and services, including a continually expanding range of publicly available information on the ABS website;
- the ABS@ service, which is replicated daily into the Intranets of key client organisations who have paid an annual fee for that service, enabling staff in that organisation to access ABS services;
- the AusStats service, which is accessed via the ABS website by individuals/organisations who have signed up as subscribers to that service. A number of subscription plans are available that suit different client requirements, including a contract to provide access to AusStats for students, lecturers and research staff at all participating Australian universities;
- a free of charge quick reference information service for basic statistical information, the National Information Service, which operates in response to all telephone calls, email, post and facsimile;
- the 'Dial-a-Statistic' and 'CPI Infoline' telephone recorded message services which provide information most frequently sought by the public;
- information consultancy services on a fee-for-service basis, for clients requiring more detailed and complex information; and
- sending information to various information intermediaries, including 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 users and decision makers. 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 516 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 ABS website and National Information Service referred to above are also designed to meet the ABS's 'public interest' obligations.

The following tables in this chapter cover ABS outputs in terms of the number of publication titles, ABS releases by subject matter and frequency, accesses to dissemination services, revenue raised from statistics, and time between end of reference period and release of data. These tables provide information relevant to the contribution of the ABS to well-informed decision-making processes in government and the broader community. There is a decline of publication titles. This reflects an increased use of other medium for dissemination rather than a decline in available statistics.

NUMBER OF PUBLICATION TITLES, 1994–95 to 1999–2000(a)

	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
1994–95	120	68	56	89	333
1995–96	103	49	48	104	304
1996–97	126	48	50	102	326
1997–98	116	59	33	141	349
1998–99	105	53	29	101	288
1999–2000					
National	56	40	15	64	175
New South Wales	5	3	1	3	12
Victoria	6	3	1	1	11
Queensland	5	3	1	1	10
Western Australia	4	3	1	1	9
South Australia	5	2	1	0	8
Tasmania	4	2	1	3	10
Northern Territory	4	2	0	0	6
Australian Capital Territory	4	1	1	0	6
Total	93	59	22	73	247

(a) Includes catalogued publications only.

**ABS RELEASES(a) CLASSIFIED BY SUBJECT MATTER AND FREQUENCY
1998-99 AND 1999-2000
(number)**

	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Economic and Finance Releases					
(National Accounts, Balance of Payments, International Investment and Trade, Public and Private Finance, etc.)					
1998-99	13	48	48	4	113
1999-2000	11	48	51	2	112
Industry Releases					
(Agriculture, Mining, Manufacturing, Construction, Distribution, Transport, Service Industries, Science and Technology, etc.)					
1998-99	34	76	142	32	284
1999-2000	25	79	130	22	256
Population and Migration Releases					
(Population Estimates, Projections, Census, Vital and Migration Statistics)					
1998-99	35	4	11	19	69
1999-2000	30	4	12	7	53
Labour Releases					
(Labour Force, Employment Conditions, Prices, Household Income and Expenditure)					
1998-99	13	79	48	13	153
1999-2000	12	80	48	15	155
Social Analysis Releases					
(Education, Health, Welfare, Law, Order, Public Safety)					
1998-99	15	9	..	35	59
1999-2000	11	8	..	21	40
Other General Releases					
1998-99	32	11	108	115	266
1999-2000	29	12	108	112	261
TOTAL					
1998-99	142	227	357	218	944
1999-2000	118	231	349	179	877

(a) Includes catalogued publications and other products.

ACCESSES TO SELECTED DISSEMINATION SERVICES

	<i>Type of access</i>	<i>1996-97</i>	<i>1997-98</i>	<i>1998-99</i>	<i>1999-2000</i>
Publications(a)	Subscribers	11 244	11 015	11 658	11 101
Internet Site	Accesses	1 759 986	4 274 154	8 931 056	14 884 419
International Trade	Subscribers	1 104	1 289	1 204	1 014
Telephone Inquiry Service	Calls completed	209 047	189 020	193 208	170 000
Internet Inquiry Service	Email	2 376	5 124	5 654	6 114
Dial-a-Statistic—0055/1900	Calls	45 560	42 004	32 081	23 300
CPI Infoline(b)	Calls	—	—	2 149	13 300
Library Extension Program	Libraries	529	528	515	516
Secondary Providers(c)	Number	41	65	57	57

(a) Where the number of subscribers is shown this refers to 30 June. (b) Service commenced on 1 October 1998. (c) Various organisations which are licensed to re-sell ABS data.

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

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Publications			
Subscriptions	2 031	1 805	1 746
Other	1 740	1 547	1 226
Other Standard Products(a)	8 921	2 982	2 553
Information Consultancy	6 488	5 500	4 394
Statistical Consultancy	1 023	944	1 208
User Funded Surveys	5 952	5 539	5 277
Other Products and Services	4 872	4 385	5 064
Total	31 027	22 702	21 468

(a) Increase in 1997-98 due primarily to release of the 1996 Census of Population and Housing electronic product, CDATA96.

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

	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Main economic indicator statistics			
Monthly	31	29	29
Quarterly	48	46	46
Other general releases			
Monthly	38	36	37
Quarterly	85	93	83
Annual	387	357	325

REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of corporate and statistical support components during 1999-2000.

Mathematical Statistics

Statistical Support

The statistical support sub-component undertakes sample design for ABS surveys to ensure that reliable statistics are provided efficiently and with minimum load on data providers. New surveys are designed, and continuing surveys are revised as necessary. In addition, statistical analyses and methodological investigations are undertaken to evaluate the efficiency of collection activities, the quality of statistics produced, and to assist users' understanding of ABS data.

Activities and achievements during the year included:

- enhancement of the existing method for incorporating income tax data in the Economic Activity Survey, to reduce the reporting load imposed on small businesses;

- development of a methodology for improving the quality of the ABS data and ensuring continuity of major economic series during the introduction of The New Tax System;
- improving efficiency of survey processes by identifying respondent units which have greatest influence over data quality, and directing resources towards these units during intensive follow up and editing processes;
- development of generalised estimation and imputation systems for business and household surveys, and supporting system redevelopment for a range of individual collection areas;
- development of survey design and estimation methods for new and redesigned household surveys, including the Community and Housing Needs Survey, National Health Survey, Australian Housing Survey, Household Expenditure Survey, Survey of Employment Arrangements and Superannuation, Child Care Survey and General Social Survey;
- development of a set of standard measures for monitoring the quality of household surveys;
- contributing to improving the timeliness of public use data files, by redesigning the process for confidentialising the unit record data;
- development of methods aimed at improving the quality and efficiency of the Monthly Labour Force Survey, including a review of the estimation method and an assessment of the statistical impact of introducing the redesigned questionnaire; and
- developing an understanding of the quality issues associated with the effective use of electronic data collection from businesses.

Forms Consultancy

This sub-component provides assistance to business surveys by developing and promoting best practices for the design of collection forms in either paper or electronic format.

Business Frames and Large Business

Business Register

The business register component is responsible for maintaining the ABS central register of employing businesses (Inteframe). Over 950,000 businesses are recorded on Inteframe, together with information about their characteristics and relationships. Maintenance involves applying around 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.

Large Business Unit

The large business unit sub-component profiles large businesses using personal visits and collection of structural details by forms, and then updates their structures on the ABS business register. It undertakes coordinated dispatch and collection of annual survey forms for a subset of these large businesses. For the largest businesses, it validates reported data across selected surveys.

Common Frame Unit

The common frame unit sub-component creates, validates and maintains a regular series of consistent populations of businesses from the ABS 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 and samples are taken, and assists survey areas to take account of those businesses in their collections.

Achievements during the year included:

- redevelopment of the new business register system (Inteframe), to accommodate the initial impacts of The New Tax System;
- development and implementation of a survey dispatch and collection system, to be used by a large number of economic surveys;
- significant increase in the number of large, economically very significant businesses profiled both personally and by mail, to ensure that their structures are correctly represented in ABS surveys; and
- continuing implementation and enhancement of the common frame strategy for a wide range of annual and sub-annual economic surveys conducted by the ABS.

Taxation Reform

The taxation reform project was established to manage the major transitional aspects that will result from the introduction of The New Tax System (TNTS), to plan and coordinate the conceptual and data collection implications, and to ensure the opportunities available to the ABS, through the reform of the taxation system, were maximised. The current tax reforms provide an excellent opportunity for the ABS to improve the quality and efficiency of its statistical operations through use of the Australian Business Register (ABR), the Australian Business Number and the Business Activity Statement (BAS) data, and to review and re-engineer the ABS economic statistics strategy to make the maximum use of data being compiled and reported for other purposes.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Information Paper: ABS Statistics and The New Tax System* (Cat. no. 1358.0) detailing the expected statistical impacts on a range of ABS series, and a program of seminars delivered in each capital city to users of ABS data discussing the statistical impacts of TNTS on ABS economic series;
- assistance to the Australian Taxation Office in the development of industry coding procedures, the development of quality maintenance processes for BAS data, and the development of specifications and maintenance programs for ABR Phase 2;
- assistance with development and management of transition work programs for each statistical subject matter area for work associated with initiatives resulting from taxation reform;
- investigation into availability of additional State and regional economic data dissections; and
- examination of the potential uses of BAS data for data substitution/supplementation and survey design and estimation purposes.

Analytical Services and Time Series
Analysis

Analytical Services

The analytical services sub-component applies analytical methods to enhance understanding of social and economic statistics. Its main roles include: constructing better measures of socio-economic concepts; devising better ways of detecting and displaying relationships between socio-economic variables; and developing new products with substantial analytical content. It also provides advice to 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 Econometric and Applied Statistics* (Cat. no. 1351.0), the *Treasury Model of the Australian Economy (TRYM)* (Cat. no. 1364.0.15.001) and an associated modellers' database (Cat. no. 1364.0.15.003).

Achievements during the year included:

- constructing output measures for non-market industries, including education, police, courts and corrections;
- developing techniques for assessing the productivity and efficiency of hospitals;
- constructing quality-adjusted measures of labour inputs;
- redeveloping the modellers' database to reflect new international standards and emerging economic issues;

- exploring methods for improving price indexes through analyses of supermarket scanner data;
- assessing the predictive power of business expectations and mining expectations data;
- constructing labour force projections;
- analysing patterns of wage inequality and unemployment; and
- modelling business performance using longitudinal survey data.

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 sub-component is also responsible for investigating and improving the methodology used in these tasks.

Achievements during the year included:

- introduction of the concurrent seasonal adjustment method to the retail trade series, to reduce their susceptibility to revision;
- enhancements to the time series analysis and adjustment software, known as SEASABS, to enable the ABS to improve the quality and efficiency of its analyses;
- investigating the methodology for reducing ‘ripples’ in ABS seasonally adjusted and trend series;
- release of research papers on time series analysis methodology to stimulate discussion in international forums;
- completion of joint ABS-university research into issues relating to designing business surveys for trend estimation;
- development of a collection of measures for understanding the quality and characteristics of ABS time series; and
- education of ABS staff on the time series analysis process for dealing with impacts due to major real world events (such as the implementation of The New Tax System and the Olympics), to ensure that the process is comprehensible to users.

Economic Standards

Standards and Units

The standards and units 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. They evaluate business survey questionnaires in the context of these standards. Over the last year the sub-component has developed and advised other parts of the ABS on the appropriate conceptual treatment of aspects of The New Tax System. The implementation of appropriate data management practices related to classifications and standards issues across economic collections is the responsibility of this sub-component.

Achievements during the year included:

- assistance to the Australian Taxation Office in the development of registration forms and instructions documentation for the Australian Business Register;
- development of draft simplified ABS economic units model for future use in economic data collections, to be used in the context of business structures on the Australian Business Register;
- development of a set of questions for large business profiling to assess the early impacts of tax reform;
- assistance to business surveys in implementing changes in collections to reflect implications of The New Tax System;
- the annual review of all core economic data item metadata, and evaluation of all ABS business survey questionnaires and their use of approved standards;
- review of the collection of labour costs data on business surveys;
- further development and implementation of the Forms Database, as part of the data management strategy of standardisation and management of collection forms and metadata; and
- 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 reports, 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:

- development of a framework and conceptual basis for a review of the structure of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification;
- release of *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) Coder—Version 2.1* (Cat. no. 1290.0);
- provision of training, supervision and documentation to Australian Taxation Office business registration teams, resulting in high level accuracy in industry coding for the Australian Business Register;
- input to strategic directions in international development of economic classifications through the UN Statistical Commission, the UN Expert Committee on Economic and Social Classifications and a UN Conference on Classifications for Asia/Pacific region countries, and completion of a glossary of classification terminology;
- development to draft stage of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Product Classification;
- development to exposure draft stage of alternative industry view of the food industry, and finalisation of the resources industry alternate view; and
- provided training for major external clients in industry classification and the use of ANZSIC.



Alan Mackay, Assistant Statistician, Integration Branch, at bottom left, with participants of a United Nations Statistics Division workshop on classifications. The workshop was hosted by the ABS in Canberra in September 1999.

Population Statistics Standards

The population statistics standards component promotes comparability, integration and quality of social, labour and demography statistics produced by the ABS and external sources. It does this by providing standards, classifications and data facilities for population statistics; reviewing and rationalising the use of existing classifications and variables; and providing guidelines and support on the use of corporate data and metadata facilities for population statistics. The standards include comprehensive documentation on definitions of concepts, questions, classifications, output categories, coding procedures and derivations. Standards are disseminated in a variety of ABS publications, manuals, and electronic products including the ABS website. Guidelines and training are provided for their use in a range of statistical and administrative settings.

Achievements during the year included:

- revision of the *Standard Australian Classification of Countries (SACC)* (Cat. no. 1269.0);
- finalisation of the structure and development of definitions for the Australian Standard Classification of Education;
- publication of *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity* (Cat. no. 1289.0) and development of the Australian Standard Classification of Cultural and Ethnic Groups, to be published in August 2000;
- development of the Australian Standard Classification of Drugs of Concern, to be published in July 2000; and
- development and testing of coding indexes to allow automatic coding of 2001 Census data on occupation, qualifications and industry of employment.

Population Surveys

The population surveys component develops, conducts and processes ABS 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 analyses 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 14);
- conduct of the quarterly Population Survey Monitor (a list of topics is shown at Appendix 15);
- completion of the 1998–99 Household Expenditure Survey;

- conduct of the 1999–2000 Survey of Income and Housing Costs;
- conduct of the 1999 Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey;
- conduct of the 1999 Australian Housing Survey;
- conduct of the 2000 Survey of Employment Arrangements and Superannuation;
- continuation of development of the 2001 National Health Survey;
- continuation of development of the Census 2001 Post Enumeration Survey;
- commencement of development of the 2001 Survey of Education and Training;
- commencement of development of the 2002 General Social Survey and the Indigenous General Social Survey; and
- completion of business process re-engineering and program effectiveness projects, and commencement of development of computer assisted interviewing, to improve the effectiveness, cost efficiency and methodology of ABS household surveys.

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 as AusStats (Cat. no. 1405.0.55.001) on the ABS website.

During 1999–2000, 247 publication titles were produced, which equated to 877 individual publication releases. Publications ranged in size from small releases containing key monthly or quarterly economic and social indicator series, to major thematic volumes (such as *Australian Social Trends* (Cat. no. 4102.0)), which bring together data on particular topics of interest from different sources.

The expanding electronic dissemination services includes the generally accessible ABS website, which provides ‘public good’ information free of charge, as well as subscriber access to publications and other charged data, including an extensive range of time series; the delivery of regular customised foreign trade statistics reports to subscribers; and the delivery of 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.

The ABS website (*www.abs.gov.au*) is one of the most accessed websites in Australia. Its content is continually expanding, resulting in steep growth in its use. The average number of documents accessed daily has risen from around nine million in July 1999 to around fifteen million in June 2000.

Publications and services are distributed by subscription, through ABS bookshops located in its 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 the AusStats service, which provides subscribers with direct Internet access to all ABS publications and a wide range of supporting datasets;
- following these improvements, the ABS website is now the recommended first point of contact for people who are Internet users, and who wish to know the range of statistical information available from the ABS;
- a sector wide agreement with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee to provide university students and staff with access to AusStats, the ABS web-based statistical service. This agreement will support teaching and academic research across the entire Australian university network infrastructure;
- further development of ABS's state-of-the-art publishing system to improve consistency in the application of publishing standards, and the efficiency of statistical product generation in both paper and electronic formats;
- delivery of publications by email as a standard alternative to the printed product. For year 2000 subscriptions, nearly 10% of delivery is by email;
- a new competitively tendered contract for the ABS printing and distribution services was put in place; and
- the implementation of a new subscription system to meet the needs of clients who need customised and regularly changing services.



Australian Statistician, Bill McLennan, and Executive Director, Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee, Stuart Hamilton, at the signing of the Deed of Agreement which established a program to provide improved access for academic research and teaching in Australian universities through the AusStats service.

Marketing and Public Affairs

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:

- presentation and promotion of major products and services including the new on-line subscription service, AusStats, and the Integrated Regional Database;
- continued release of complimentary journals *What Figures* and *Census Update*;
- development and implementation of a series of marketing and promotional campaigns to support specific publications and data services; and
- market and client research to support the development of proposed products and services from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing.

Media and Public Affairs

The aim of the media and public affairs sub-component is to ensure that there is good awareness of the ABS and its outputs by 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 181 media releases, organisation of media events and briefing of journalists to achieve prominent print, Internet, radio and television reporting of the ABS, its collections and publications. This included coordination of responses to around 3,300 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, including matters associated with the 2001 Census of Population and Housing;
- a large volume of positive media coverage about ABS collections;

- improved media training for ABS Central and Regional Office staff including the provision of a new telephone coaching service; 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 high 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 consultancies on a fee-for-service basis for clients with more detailed or complex information needs; and outpostings of staff to other government agencies for specialist statistical assignments.

Information Consultancy

The information consultancy sub-component provides information services to individual clients which usually involve interpretation of the client's 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

The client management sub-component focuses on developing and maintaining strong ongoing relationships with clients in Commonwealth and State governments, and selected sectors, including business, education, libraries and the media. It is also responsible for managing the ABS's relationship with secondary distributors of ABS information.

Achievements during the year included:

- consolidation of the telephone inquiry services previously provided in each State and Territory into a National Information Service, handling 170,000 calls per year through a single 1300 number. With this service, the majority of inquiries are answered immediately, and information is generally supplied free of charge. The service also handles all Internet email, fax and written inquiries;
- a high level of usage (23,300 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;
- continuing use of the CPI Infoline, providing current and historical consumer price index data (received 13,300 calls);
- provision of information consultancies to the value of \$4.4 million for a range of clients, and on a range of statistical topics;

- servicing of continuing strong third party interest for on-selling ABS information. There are currently 57 third parties providing secondary distribution services for the ABS, with 12 new arrangements being entered into during the year; and
- continuation of long-term outposts to several Commonwealth government agencies. A number of short-term outposts to State government agencies were also undertaken.

Library Services

The ABS Library Network provides access to a wide range of statistical and research material to meet the information needs of ABS staff and the public. The Network also manages the Library Extension Program (LEP), and provides support services to the tertiary education sector, including the distribution of Confidentialised Unit Record Files.

Through the Library Extension Program, the ABS aims to improve community awareness by providing free access to the main findings of ABS statistical collections. Additional support services include extensive training support and a dedicated area on the ABS website. A location directory listing all LEP libraries can also be found on the website.

Achievements during the year included:

- a sector wide agreement with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee to provide university students and staff with access to AusStats, the ABS web based service. This agreement will support teaching and academic research across the entire Australian university network infrastructure; and
- release of 205 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.

Information Technology Bureau

The Information Technology Bureau is responsible for the management and provision of Information Technology (IT) services used by the ABS, including controlled access to data processing, data storage, office systems and data distribution facilities for all authorised ABS staff.

Achievements during the year included:

- successful transition to the Year 2000;
- introduction of improved change management processes;
- support for new Internet-based electronic business services and ABS Extranet electronic products (ABS@);
- development of an internal service charter and service-level indicators for IT services;

- establishment of new infrastructure capability to support on-line multi-media learning;
- enhancement of the ABS knowledge management environment, including the successful rollout of Lotus Notes Release 5;
- support for a variety of competitive tenders; and
- completion of independent benchmarks for applications, distributed computing, mainframe, communications and network, database and help desk services.

Technology Application

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

Achievements during the year included:

- successful transition to the Year 2000;
- completion of the redevelopment of many business survey systems;
- extension of the new change management processes to cover the most significant applications;
- enhancement of the electronic dissemination facilities;
- development and deployment of new household labour collection estimation and processing systems;
- significantly improved the valuation of the applications portfolio;
- utilised the new project management framework in a wide range of projects;
- completed work preparing for the introduction of the GST; and
- development of a collection and frame maintenance system to support data capture relating to Australia's Indigenous population.

Data Management

The data management component aims to improve management of statistical data and metadata through the development, loading and use of a corporate information warehouse (the ABSDB). The ABSDB provides a central, corporate set of metadata and output data repositories, and associated systems to manage and utilise the ABS data assets. In addition, it provides facilities to store corporate history, knowledge and methodology relating to its data sources. It is an important component of the strategy for introducing a suite of standard facilities which will assist significant improvements in the consistency and quality of collection activities.

Substantial progress has been made towards the development of links between the ABSDB and the ABS publication system. These developments will improve 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.

An independent technical review of the ABSDB was conducted during the year. The review concluded that while the warehouse development parallels data warehousing initiatives by other organisations, the market is currently unable to deliver comparable functionality to that provided by the ABSDB.

Achievements during the year included:

- successful completion of Year 2000 testing of all ABSDB software;
- ongoing redevelopment, testing and release of new versions of selected warehouse facilities;
- consolidation of data and metadata loading so that the ABSDB supports dissemination of most ABS 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, particularly the Space Time Research suite of software; and
- development of a more complete stream of ABSDB training.

Technology Research

The technology research component plays a leading role in identifying options for using information technology to improve ABS performance, and assist the ABS to achieve 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;
- consolidation and further development of the corporate directory, which provides ready access for both staff and IT systems to information on structures, persons, roles, and responsibilities; 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.

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 70 economic and household collections. Other collections will move progressively to the SPEED environment over the next few years.

Achievements during the year included:

- the introduction of a set of corporate statistical processing facilities; and
- release of the latest version of SPEED, which increases useability for many clients and substantially improves the maintainability of the environment.

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 1999–2000 financial year, three people were promoted into the SES. These officers were Ken Tallis, Bronwyn Driscoll and Kerrie Duff all of whom were promoted to Assistant Statistician positions in Central Office. Graeme Hope was transferred into the position of First Assistant Statistician. Steve Matheson was transferred from an Assistant Statistician position in Central Office to a Regional Director position.

One Central Office SES officer, Susan Linacre, left the ABS to take up a temporary position in the Office of National Statistics, United Kingdom. One First Assistant Statistician, Graham Wauchop, retired during the year.

Human Resources

The human resources component provides comprehensive, timely and cost-effective personnel services to the ABS, to enable managers and staff to achieve the corporate objectives of the ABS. Its main functions are:

- personnel policy development, implementation and advice;
- workplace diversity, and occupational health and safety management;
- personnel services in relation to recruitment, pay, conditions, etc;
- human resource systems development and maintenance;
- organisation, learning and development activities; and
- workplace relations agreements and support.

Achievements during the year are summarised as follows:

Performance Management and Remuneration

A formal performance management scheme is operating at all levels in the ABS. From July 1999, all staff were subject to performance management arrangements which link directly to remuneration outcomes. The process of agreeing on work objectives and receiving feedback on performance, and review and identification of personal development priorities, are important elements of the ABS strategies to generate continuous performance improvement.

While pay increases have always been related to satisfactory performance, the new ABS remuneration system provides for differential pay outcomes based on the salary rating achieved for a particular period. The salary rating is primarily based on performance, but also takes into account factors such as job size and complexity, and current salary levels.

Two cycles of performance based remuneration have now been completed for the Senior Executive Service and Executive Level 2 employees. The most recent cycle was in January 2000 and involved 185 employees. The first cycle under new remuneration arrangements brought in as part of the ABS Certified Agreement and the Australian

Workplace Agreement strategies for APS1–Executive Level 1 staff, occurred in July 2000 covering about 2,700 staff.

Recruitment and Retention

The ABS had 3,115 full time equivalent staff in 1999–2000, a net increase of 130 over the previous year. The increase occurred as a result of a strategic decision to recruit staff with stronger skills to meet new priorities in the forward work program.

30 staff were recruited over a 15 month period into research and analysis positions. Graduate recruitment was increased from 116 in 1998–99 to 182 in 1999–2000, to assist the ABS to support the increase in research and analysis capability, and to inject additional capacity into key areas of statistical development.

33 graduates were employed in information technology areas, whilst 144 were employed in statistical and other support areas (69 in regional offices). 5 Cadets were also recruited.

The ABS staff turnover rate in 1999–2000 was just over 8%, compared with just over 11% in the previous year.

Workplace Relations

Agreement making under the *Workplace Relations Act 1996* continued to be the primary workplace relations focus in 1999–2000.

Consultation continued with employees, and their representatives, about the supporting guidelines underpinning the 1998 agency agreements, and on evaluation of the initiatives in these agreements.

Separate consultative forums were established for each Group and Division in Central Office, complementing office level arrangements already in place in Regional Offices. The forums comprise representatives of staff, management and employee representative organisations. The new arrangements devolved responsibility for consultation within Central Office, from the office level to more decentralised arrangements, to bring consultation closer to individual staff, and to include senior managers directly in the consultation process with their staff.

The ABS maintains a policy of allowing all their staff employed under the Public Service Act to be given a choice of being covered by a Certified Agreement (CA) or an Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA). Just over 500 ABS staff are covered by AWAs, and the remainder are covered by CAs.

In March 2000, draft second round agreements were released to employees and their representatives as part of the consultation process. The objective of these agreements will be to build on the gains made in the 1998 agreements by providing for:

- fair and equitable remuneration arrangements which recognise and reward individual and team performance and achievement;

- simple, flexible and fair conditions of employment which operate in a devolved setting; and
- a supportive work environment that values people, fosters open communication, upholds equity and procedural fairness in decision making, and facilitates a balance between work and family responsibilities.

Following extensive consultation, formal offers for the new agreements will be made early in 2000–2001.

Learning and Development

In 1999–2000, the ABS completed the first full year under a new external training provider strategy. After undertaking a thorough tendering process to establish a panel of training providers, information technology and leadership and management courses are provided by external contractors in Central Office and some Regional Offices. The providers were selected to join the panel based largely on their experience in corporate training, and the range of services which were relevant to ABS learning needs.

Statistical training continues to be provided by ABS subject matter experts.

The external provider training strategy has delivered a highly flexible and responsive training service. Learning needs are identified through consultation and cooperation with each ABS Division or Office. The members of the panel of providers then commences to establish the contractor which can best provide cost effective training solutions for the needs identified. Learning specifications are drafted by ABS staff and delivered to the selected training provider.

During the year:

- ABS staff undertook some 17,691 days of formal training;
- over 250 staff attended leadership and/or management courses, designed to support succession management, and the development of leadership and management expertise;
- the ABS Project Management Framework was introduced into the ABS environment;
- the Output Design and Dissemination learning stream was introduced to provide a focus for the development of analytical and technical skills. These skills will assist staff to produce high quality statistical outputs; and
- a substantial investment was made in the development of on-line learning. It is expected that three on-line modules will come into operation in the first half of 2000–2001.

Workplace Diversity

A review of the national 1998 Workplace Diversity Program, established the need for a simpler, more focused program, and led to the ABS Workplace Diversity Program, 1999–2002. The program supports the principles of fairness, equity and diversity, elimination of all forms of discrimination in the workforce, and promotes employment conditions such as home-based work, flextime, part-time employment and purchased annual leave.

The national workplace diversity program is supported by individual Office implementation plans, which not only contribute to the national program objectives, but also take account of local priorities and issues.

Achievements during the year included:

- recognition of the importance of diversity in the new Corporate Plan;
- workgroup presentations which raised awareness of the need to include diversity considerations in workgroup planning, and in individual or team performance agreements;
- a number of offices established workplace diversity groups, to assist and advise on the development and implementation of office action plans;
- distribution of the Workplace Diversity Program and brochure, and the APS Values and Code of Conduct, through all offices, and in all induction programs;
- workplace diversity articles placed on office newsletters, databases etc;
- cultural diversity awareness sessions and workshops;
- diversity issues covered in staff perception surveys, and cultural audits conducted in some offices;
- continuation of the ABS Indigenous Cadetship Program, with one cadet successfully completing his course of study, and four new cadets commencing the program this year;
- continued use of a mandatory selection criterion;
- continued access to appropriate programs for staff from non-English speaking backgrounds, to enhance English language skills;
- the provision of career and life planning workshops; and
- development and launch of work and life policy and kit.

The Equal Employment Opportunity profile of the ABS is shown in Appendix 3.4.

Human Resource Reviews and Other Developments

During the year, agency specific job classification standards were drafted. Consultation is being undertaken, and it is expected that the standards will come into formal operation during the first half of the 2000–2001 year.

A review of ABS job classification structures to consider possible broadbanding is proceeding.

Reviews were undertaken on part time work arrangements, and for reimbursement of expenses for employees transferred to a new location at public expense. No major changes to arrangements were required.

Remote Localities Assistance was reviewed for staff in the ABS Northern Territory Office. It is proposed that special allowances will not apply for staff commencing in that Office from the date of certification of the next ABS Certified Agreement.

The ABS also made significant improvements to the ABS human resource systems during 1999–2000. The introduction of self service on matters such as leave balances, pay advices, and changes to banking arrangements will ensure that corporate overheads are reduced, as fewer staff resources will be utilised in relatively minor personnel transactions.

Financial Resources

The financial resources component provides quality and timely financial, accommodation and facilities management services necessary for the effective and efficient delivery of a national statistical service.

Financial Management

The financial management sub-component is responsible for monitoring and reporting on: financial resources; budget processes (in conjunction with Corporate Planning); financial statements; financial systems management; and technical advice on accounting principles within the ABS.

Achievements during the year included:

- ongoing refinement of the ABS accrual budget in accordance with the Commonwealth financial reforms;
- monthly reporting to the Department of Finance and Administration on an accruals basis;
- successful implementation of financial system changes required for The New Tax System, and fringe benefit tax changes;
- management of the new banking arrangements;
- revaluation of fixed assets, including plant and equipment;

- further enhancements to the methodology for accounting for internally generated software; and
- development of an executive information system for delivery of internal financial information.

Facilities Management

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

Achievements during the year included:

- the management of the Year 2000 compliance of embedded systems in ABS occupied premises. All systems in ABS premises were rolled over successfully;
- a successful evacuation of all staff in Cameron Offices—the fruition of a complete review of policies and procedures in relation to building emergency situations;
- major restructuring of file management, archive and the mail distribution area in Central Office, as well as the centralisation of the file management system;
- significant progress on national accommodation strategies;
- reviewing all Facilities Management contracts for compliance with The New Tax System;
- successful relocation of the ACT office to new premises, fitted out in accordance with ABS National Accommodation Standards; and
- finalisation of Energy Audits for all ABS tenancies.

New Building Operations

The new building operations sub-component was created on 1 July 1999 in response to the ABS entering into an agreement for lease of new premises in Belconnen. The Commonwealth had previously called for detailed proposals for the sale and redevelopment of the Benjamin and Cameron Offices, with a new building being constructed for the ABS as part of the overall redevelopment package. The Minister for Finance and Administration announced on 22 December 1999 that a consortium led by Bovis Lend Lease had been successful in their bid for the redevelopment project.

The new building operations sub-component has responsibility for ensuring Bovis Lend Lease's compliance with the ABS briefs prepared for the new building, as well as monitoring the new building budget, fitout, relocation, and staff consultation and information.

Achievements during the year included:

- finalising a comprehensive array of briefing, specification and legal documentation;
- successfully concluding negotiations with the bidding parties (in association with the Department of Finance and Administration);
- conducting an extensive staff information and consultation program; and
- finalising the Fitout brief.

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;
- monitoring, and reporting on, the effectiveness and efficiency of the organisation, with a view to continuous improvement. Benchmarking of statistical activities and corporate functions is a key component of continuous improvement; 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:

- reports were prepared for the surveys benchmarked in the first round of the international Statistical Benchmarking project, and action plans are being drawn up to address issues requiring more in-depth information. Network participants (overseas countries and the ABS) met in the UK to evaluate the first round study, and all participants acknowledged the potential for benchmarking to improve performance. Participants supported the continued operation of the network and indicated that they would be likely to participate in future studies;
- measurement of 1999–2000 outcome and output performance, using an integrated set of performance indicators;

- significant improvement in the efficiency of audit performance has been achieved through careful management of the audit contract. Review of the effectiveness of each audit has also been introduced; and
- an external consultant has been engaged to review the 1996 ABS fraud risk assessment, and to assist in developing a new fraud control plan.

Secretariat

The secretariat sub-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.

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 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*, a person who fails to comply with a notice of direction without reasonable excuse is guilty of an offence).

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	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000
Notices of direction issued					
Population Census	—	946	—	—	—
Household surveys	—	1	—	1	—
Business censuses and surveys	9	20	21	13	6
Total	9	967	21	14	6
Prosecution actions approved(a)					
Population Census	—	48	—	—	—
Household surveys	—	—	—	—	—
Business censuses and surveys	—	3	2	2	—
Total	—	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 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 12. Details of disclosures of unidentifiable information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination are shown in Appendix 13.

Achievements during the year included:

- amendment of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, and the *Archives Act 1983*, to provide for the Government's decision that name-identified Census information collected by the ABS in the 2001 Census, from households which provide explicit consent on their Census form, be transferred to the National Archives of Australia where it will be preserved for future genealogical and other research, after a closed access period of 99 years; and
- amendments to the Census Regulations in force under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* to reflect changes in the topics to be collected in the 2001 Census.

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; coordinating programs for overseas visitors to the ABS; and making international travel arrangements for official visits of ABS staff.

Significant ABS achievements and outcomes in international relations during the year are described in Chapter 2.

8 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

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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 2000. The financial statements comprise:

- Statement by the Australian Statistician and Principal Accounting Officer;
- Agency Operating Statement, Balance Sheet, Statement of Cashflows, Schedule of Commitments and Schedule of Contingencies;
- Statements of Administered Revenues and Expenses, Assets and Liabilities and Cashflows, and Schedules of Administered Commitments and Contingencies; and
- Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements.

The Australian Statistician and 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 in Australia 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.

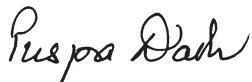
The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Audit Opinion

In my opinion,

- (i) the financial statements have been prepared in accordance with Schedule 2 of the Finance Minister's Orders;
- (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 2000 and the results of its operations and its cash flows for the year then ended; and
 - the Commonwealth assets and liabilities as at 30 June 2000 and the revenue, expenses and cash flows of the Commonwealth for the year then ended, which have been administered by the Bureau.

Australian National Audit Office



Puspa Dash
Senior Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra
14 August 2000

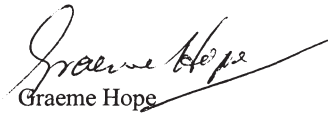
**STATEMENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN
AND
PRINCIPAL ACCOUNTING OFFICER**

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*.



Tim Skinner
Acting Australian Statistician

14 August 2000



Graeme Hope
First Assistant Statistician
Corporate Services Division

14 August 2000

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
AGENCY OPERATING STATEMENT
For period ended 30 June 2000**

	Notes	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
Operating revenues			
Revenues from government	4a	241,936	204,433
Sales of goods and services	4b	21,468	22,702
Interest	2k	789	-
Net gains from sale of assets		-	43
Reversal of previous asset write-down		-	26
Other operating revenue	2f	831	375
Total operating revenues		265,024	227,579
Operating expenses			
Employees	5a	168,184	155,600
Suppliers	5b	58,999	49,115
Depreciation and amortisation	5c	21,955	20,054
Net loss from sale of assets		30	-
Write-down of assets	5d	2,946	-
Interest	5e	507	578
Other operating expenses		2,904	2,528
Total operating expenses		255,525	227,875
Operating surplus (deficit) before extraordinary items		9,499	(296)
Net surplus (deficit) after extraordinary items		9,499	(296)
Net surplus (deficit) attributable to the commonwealth			
Accumulated surpluses or deficits at beginning of reporting period		39,055	15,739
Adjustment to accumulated surplus	2i	(4,125)	23,612
Capital provided for or paid	2w	(7,657)	-
Accumulated surpluses or (deficit) at end of reporting period		36,772	39,055

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

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS			
STATEMENT OF ADMINISTERED REVENUES AND EXPENSES			
for the period ended 30 June 2000			
	Notes	1999/00	1998/99
		\$'000	\$'000
Operating revenues non-taxation			
Other sources of non-taxation revenue		<u>1,014</u>	<u>1,447</u>
Total operating revenue		<u>1,014</u>	<u>1,447</u>
Net contribution to budget outcome		<u>1,014</u>	<u>1,447</u>
TRANSFERS			
Transfer to Official Commonwealth Public Account		<u>-</u>	<u>(1,447)</u>
Total transfers		<u>-</u>	<u>(1,447)</u>
Net surplus or deficit		<u>1,014</u>	<u>-</u>

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

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
 AGENCY BALANCE SHEET
 as at 30 June 2000

	Notes	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
ASSETS			
Financial assets			
Cash	2k	4,719	221
Investments	2k	18,000	-
Receivables	6a	2,180	12,645
Accrued revenues	6b	693	227
Total financial assets		25,592	13,093
Non-financial assets			
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	7a,b,c	38,153	38,429
Inventories	7e	2,896	4,218
Intangibles	7c,d	73,124	64,513
Other	7f	4,606	6,707
Total non-financial assets		118,779	113,867
Total assets		144,371	126,960
LIABILITIES			
Debt			
Leases	8a	8,368	10,015
Other	8b	1,114	1,000
Total debt		9,482	11,015
Provisions and payables			
Capital use	2w	3,978	-
Employees	2i, 9a	63,750	53,409
Suppliers	9b	5,934	1,414
Unearned revenue	9c	1,608	2,489
Other	9d	180	201
Total provisions and payables		75,450	57,513
Total liabilities		84,932	68,528
EQUITY			
Capital	10	11,250	11,250
Asset Revaluation Reserve	10	11,417	8,127
Accumulated surpluses or deficits	10	36,772	39,055
Total equity		59,439	58,432
Total Liabilities and Equity		144,371	126,960
Current liabilities		39,891	28,225
Non-current liabilities		45,041	40,303
Current assets		33,094	24,018
Non-current assets		111,277	102,942

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

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS STATEMENT OF ADMINISTERED ASSETS AND LIABILITIES as at 30 June 2000		
	1999/00	1998/99
	\$'000	\$'000
ASSETS		
Receivables	1,014	-
	<u>1,014</u>	<u>-</u>
LIABILITIES		
	-	-
EQUITY		
Accumulated Results	1,014	-
	<u>1,014</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Current Liabilities	-	-
Non-Current Liabilities	-	-
Current Assets	1,014	-
Non-Current Assets	-	-

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

Australian Bureau of Statistics

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

AGENCY CASH FLOWS

for period ended 30 June 2000

	Notes	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Appropriations for outputs		241,819	211,831
Sales of goods and services		23,231	23,757
Interest		577	-
Total cash received		<u>265,627</u>	<u>235,588</u>
Cash used			
Employees		(162,298)	(154,005)
Suppliers		(60,836)	(56,602)
Interest		(507)	(578)
Total cash used		<u>(223,641)</u>	<u>(211,185)</u>
Net cash from operating activities	11	<u>41,986</u>	<u>24,403</u>
INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Cash received			
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		234	246
Other		11,250	-
Total cash received		<u>11,484</u>	<u>246</u>
Cash used			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(10,245)	(10,003)
Capitalisation of internally generated software		(17,049)	(14,909)
Total cash used		<u>(27,294)</u>	<u>(24,912)</u>
Net cash from investing activities		<u>(15,810)</u>	<u>(24,666)</u>
FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Cash used			
Capital use paid		(3,678)	-
Total cash used		<u>(3,678)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net cash from financing activities		<u>(3,678)</u>	<u>-</u>
Net increase in cash held		22,498	(263)
Cash at beginning of reporting period		221	484
Cash at the end of the reporting period		<u>22,719</u>	<u>221</u>

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

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS			
ADMINISTERED CASH FLOWS			
for the period ended 30 June 2000			
	Notes	1999/00	1998/99
		\$'000	\$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Cash Received			
Other cash received		-	1,447
Total cash received		<u>-</u>	<u>1,447</u>
Cash Used			
Cash to Official Commonwealth Public Account		-	(1,447)
Total cash used		<u>-</u>	<u>(1,447)</u>
Net cash from operating activities		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Net increase (decrease) in cash held		-	-
Cash at beginning of reporting period		-	-
Cash at the end of reporting period		<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

Australian Bureau of Statistics

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS
as at 30 June 2000

	Notes	Agency		Administered	
		1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
By type					
Capital commitments					
Infrastructure, plant and equipment		1,879	133	-	-
Total capital commitments		1,879	133	-	-
Other commitments					
Operating leases ¹		263,440	67,741	-	-
Other commitments		20,027	3,271	-	-
Total other commitments		283,467	71,012	-	-
Commitments Receivable		(2,835)	-	-	-
Net Commitments		282,511	71,145	-	-
BY MATURITY					
All net commitments					
One year or less		34,575	17,759	-	-
From one to five years		71,488	40,384	-	-
Over five years		173,613	13,002	-	-
Net commitments		279,676	71,145	-	-
Operating lease commitments					
One year or less		15,504	14,355	-	-
From one to five years ²		71,488	40,384	-	-
Over five years		173,613	13,002	-	-
Operating lease commitments		260,605	67,741	-	-

NB: All 1999-00 commitments are GST inclusive where relevant.
The comparatives have not been adjusted to reflect the GST.

- 1 Operating leases included are effectively non-cancellable and comprise:
 - leases for office accommodation; and
 - agreements for the provision of motor vehicles.
 (1998/99 figures do not include commitments for vehicle operating leases.)
- 2 Rent for new Central Office building becomes payable in 2002.

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 2000

	Note	Agency		Administered	
		1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
Contingent losses					
Claims for damages/costs		-	27	-	-
Total contingent losses		-	27	-	-
Contingent gains					
Claims for damages/costs ¹		8	-	-	-
Net contingencies		<u>8</u>	<u>27</u>	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>

1. The agency is expected to succeed against the defendants.

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

Australian Bureau of Statistics

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

NOTES TO AND FORMING PART OF THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

for the year ended 30 June 2000

Note 1 – Objectives of the Australian Bureau of Statistics

The mission and outcome 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 is structured to produce the aforementioned outcome through two outputs – Population Statistics and Economic Statistics. Support Services consist of overheads which have been allocated to the Population and Economic Statistical areas in these Financial Statements.

Further information on ABS outcomes and outputs can be found in this Annual Report.

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) Agency and administered items

Agency assets, liabilities, revenues and expenses are those items that are controlled by the Agency and are used by the Agency to produce its outputs.

Administered items are those items which are controlled by the Government and managed or overseen by the Agency on behalf of the Government. In the ABS, administered items are minimal.

(d) Reporting by outcomes

A comparison of Budget and Actual figures by outcome specified in the Appropriations Acts relevant to the Agency, is presented in Note 15. The net cost to Budget outcomes shown includes intra-government costs that are eliminated in calculating the actual outcomes for the Government overall.

(e) Revenues from government

Revenues from Government are revenues relating to the core operating activities of the Agency. Policies for accounting for revenue from government follow. Amounts and other details are given in Note 13 “Agency Appropriations”.

From 1 July 1999, the Commonwealth Budget has been prepared under an accruals framework.

Appropriations to ABS for its departmental outputs are recognised as revenue to the extent that have been received into the Agency's bank account or are entitled to be received by the Agency at year end.

Appropriations to ABS for departmental capital items are recognised directly in equity, to the extent that the appropriations have been received into the Agency's bank account or are entitled to be received by the Agency at year end.

The appropriations for departmental capital items for 1999-2000 include, as carryovers, the reappropriation to the Agency of the certain unspent amounts from 1998-99. The amounts were recognised directly in equity in the financial statements for 1998-99.

The ABS has not, to date, required or received administered appropriations.

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.

Contributions of assets at no cost of acquisition or for nominal considerations are recognised at their fair value when the asset qualifies for recognition, unless received from another government agency as a consequence of a restructuring of administrative arrangements.

(f) Revenue from other sources

Sales of goods and services includes revenue from the sale of publications and other products and the provision of statistical services. Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable for the financial assets. Revenue from sale of goods is recognised upon delivery of goods to customers. Revenue from the rendering of a service is recognised by reference to the stage of completion of contracts or other agreements to provide 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.

(g) Administered Revenue

The ABS lease premises for the purpose of processing Census forms. In non Census years the premises has been sublet and the net revenue from the sublease is returned to the Commonwealth.

(h) Unearned revenue

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

(i) 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 2000 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 2000. 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. Related on-costs have also been included in the liability.

The employee entitlement provision includes superannuation on-costs payable to those employees who take their annual and long service leave prior to resignation or retirement. No superannuation is payable by the Agency when leave is cashed out on resignation or retirement. 1999-2000 is the first year that this accounting policy has been adopted by the ABS. The portion of liability relating to prior years has been accounted for as an adjustment to accumulated surpluses.

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 amounting to \$17,785,445 (1998-99: \$17,728,262) in relation to these schemes have been expensed in these financial statements. No liability is shown for superannuation in the Agency Balance Sheet as the employer contributions extinguish fully the accruing liability which is assumed by the Commonwealth.

Employer Superannuation Productivity Benefit contributions totalled \$3,956,419 (1998-99: \$3,647,181).

(j) Leases

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

The fitout component of the Operating Leases are 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.

(k) Cash and investments

Cash includes cash at bank, cash on hand and investments (short-term deposits with the Reserve Bank of Australia). Under the new devolved banking arrangements, Agencies are expected to manage their own cash requirements and invest surplus cash with the Reserve Bank. The Agency's appropriation has been reduced by the expected return on investments during the year.

(l) Receivables

A provision is made for any doubtful debts based on a review of all outstanding accounts as at year end (refer Note 6a). Bad debts are written off during the year in which they are identified.

(m) Financial instruments

Accounting policies for financial instruments are stated in Note 20.

(n) Accrued revenue

The ABS accrues revenue at the time that the goods are provided and/or the services are performed (refer Note 6b).

(o) Depreciable assets

Asset recognition threshold

Non-current assets having a limited useful life (depreciable assets) are stated at cost, except as indicated in Note 7. Assets originally costing \$2,000 or more are capitalised in the year of acquisition. Component items purchased separately but which are configured into larger items such as office work stations and personal computer workstations and associated software are considered to be depreciable assets if the aggregate cost is \$2,000 or more.

Revaluation of Property, Plant and Equipment

Schedule 2 requires that property, plant and equipment be progressively revalued in accordance with the 'deprival' method of valuation in successive three year cycles.

ABS has implemented its progressive revaluations as follows:

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

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

The application of the deprival method by ABS values assets at their depreciated replacement cost. Any assets that would not be replaced or are surplus to requirements are valued at net realisable value. All valuations are independent.

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 costing methodology capitalises 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 data capture systems in place were further refined in 1999-2000 to collect data in line with the requirements of *Schedule 2*.

Recoverable amount test

Schedule 2 requires the application of the recoverable amount test to departmental non-current assets. The carrying amount of the non-current assets have been reviewed to determine whether they are in excess of their recoverable amounts. In assessing the recoverable amounts the relevant cashflows have not been discounted to their present value.

(p) 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.

(q) 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's depreciable assets.

The estimated useful lives of the major asset classes are as follows:

	<u>1999/00</u> <u>Life in Years</u>	<u>1998/99</u> <u>Life in Years</u>
Computer hardware	3 to 5	3 to 5
Computer software – proprietary	5	5
Computer software – internally generated	2 to 19	2 to 19
Furniture & fittings	10	10
Plant	10	10
Office equipment	5	5

The actual useful lives are revised at revaluation and may differ from those indicated above based on current information.

The ABS has long term commitments to surveys and data collection programs. These are supported by software packages that are required to be maintained for the same time period as the data collection and analysis programs to ensure consistency in approach and of data treatment. The maximum useful life of some relevant packages is currently 19 years.

The aggregate amount of depreciation allocated for each class of asset during the reporting period is disclosed in Note 5c.

(r) Capital work in progress

Capital work in progress represents two main asset types, software assets under development and office refurbishments. Work in progress is disclosed in the Infrastructure, plant and equipment and Intangibles balances.

Software assets 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.

(s) Inventories

Inventories comprise significant items held for resale and are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value. The method of supply will be changing to supply on demand and subsequent rationalisation of holdings have been provided for. Provisions have also been made 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.

(t) Other non-financial assets

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

(u) Insurance

The Commonwealth's 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. These arrangements replace the previous policy of non-insurance and require the systematic identification, quantification, reporting and management of risk across the ABS.

(v) Taxation

The ABS' activities are exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax and Goods and Services Tax (GST).

(w) Capital use charge

A capital usage charge of 12% is imposed by the Commonwealth on the net departmental assets of the agency. The charge is adjusted to take account of asset gifts and revaluation increments during the financial year.

(x) Rounding

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

- (i) act of grace payments and waivers;
- (ii) agency appropriations;
- (iii) remuneration of executives; and
- (iv) remuneration of auditors.

(y) Comparative figures

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

Comparatives are not presented in Notes dealing with the Reporting on Outcomes, due to 1999-2000 being the first year of the implementation of accrual budgeting.

(z) Foreign currency

Transactions denominated in a foreign currency are converted at the exchange rate at the date of the transaction. Foreign currency receivables and payables are translated at the exchange rates current as at balance date.

Note 3 – Events Occurring After Balance Date

There have been no events occurring subsequent to balance date that would affect the Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2000, for the Australian Bureau of Statistics.

Note 4 – Operating Revenues

	1999-00	1998-99
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 4a – Revenues from Government</u>		
Appropriations for outputs	241,845	203,687
Resources received free of charge	91	746
Total	241,936	204,433
<u>Note 4b – Sales of Goods and Services</u>		
Goods	5,525	6,334
Services	15,943	16,368
Total	21,468	22,702

Note 5 – Operating Expenses

	<u>1999/00</u> \$'000	<u>1998/99</u> \$'000
<u>Note 5a – Employee expenses</u>		
Remuneration (for services provided)	149,557	136,682
Superannuation	22,415	21,376
Interviewers' wages and superannuation	8,196	7,411
Separation and redundancy	1,706	2,849
Total remuneration	<u>181,874</u>	<u>168,318</u>
Other employee expenses	2,805	2,211
Total	<u>184,679</u>	<u>170,529</u>
Less: Amounts capitalised in respect of internally generated software	(16,494)	(14,929)
Total	<u>168,185</u>	<u>155,600</u>
<u>Note 5b – Suppliers expenses</u>		
Supplies of goods and services	44,546	35,975
Rental expense	14,453	13,140
Total	<u>58,999</u>	<u>49,115</u>

The 1999/00 expense excludes \$0.6 million (1998/99: \$0.7 million) capitalised in respect of internally generated software.

Note 5c – Depreciation and amortisation

Depreciation of infrastructure, plant and equipment	10,965	11,201
Amortisation of leased assets, intangibles and prepayments	10,990	8,853
Total	<u>21,955</u>	<u>20,054</u>

The aggregate amount of depreciation or amortisation expensed during the reporting period for each class of depreciable asset are as follows:

Plant and equipment, furniture and fittings	5,053	5,167
Computer hardware	7,071	7,545
Intangibles	9,788	7,300
Total	<u>21,912</u>	<u>20,012</u>

Note 5d – Write down of assets

Financial assets		
Receivables	12	-
Non-financial assets		
Inventory – write off	2,894	-
Software – write off	40	-
Total	<u>2,946</u>	<u>-</u>

Note 5e – Interest

Leases	507	578
Total	<u>507</u>	<u>578</u>

Note 6 – Financial Assets

	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
<u>Note 6a – Receivables</u>		
Goods and services	1,867	1,419
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	(30)	(30)
	<u>1,837</u>	<u>1,389</u>
Sundry receivables	343	6
Appropriation – carryover	-	11,250
Total Receivables	<u>2,180</u>	<u>12,645</u>
Receivables (gross) which are overdue are aged as follows:		
Not Overdue	1,566	708
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	259	334
30 to 60 days	21	51
60 to 90 days	9	326
More than 90 days	12	-
	<u>1,867</u>	<u>1,419</u>
No other receivables are overdue		
<u>Note 6b – Accrued revenues</u>		
Goods and Services	481	227
Interest	212	-
	<u>693</u>	<u>227</u>

Note 7 – Non-Financial Assets

	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
<u>Note 7a – Plant and equipment, furniture and fittings (excluding computer hardware)</u>		
At cost	2,986	13,973
Accumulated depreciation	(1,151)	(5,583)
	<u>1,835</u>	<u>8,390</u>
At 1997-99 valuation	2,978	17,599
Accumulated depreciation	(2,270)	(9,430)
	<u>708</u>	<u>8,169</u>
At 1999-02 valuation	28,650	-
Accumulated depreciation	(15,561)	-
	<u>13,089</u>	<u>-</u>
Under lease – at cost	822	14,321
Accumulated amortisation	(344)	(6,833)
	<u>478</u>	<u>7,488</u>
Under lease – at 1999-02 valuation	16,470	-
Accumulated amortisation	(9,366)	-
	<u>7,104</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Plant and Equipment , Furniture and Fittings (Excluding Computer Hardware)	<u>23,214</u>	<u>24,047</u>

Note 7b – Computer hardware

Received free of charge – at 1997-99 valuation	123	128
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(57)</u>	<u>(26)</u>
	<u>66</u>	<u>102</u>
At cost	7,560	561
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(1,020)</u>	<u>(561)</u>
	<u>6,540</u>	<u>-</u>
At 1997-99 valuation	34,437	42,595
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(26,393)</u>	<u>(28,315)</u>
	<u>8,044</u>	<u>14,280</u>
At 1999-02 valuation	983	-
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(694)</u>	<u>-</u>
	<u>289</u>	<u>-</u>
Under lease	200	200
Accumulated depreciation	<u>(200)</u>	<u>(200)</u>
	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total Computer Hardware	<u>14,939</u>	<u>14,382</u>
Total Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment	<u>38,153</u>	<u>38,429</u>

The 1999-2000 revaluations were in accordance with the revaluation policy stated in Note 2 and were completed by an independent valuer, Bryan Hurrell (F.A.P.I.). Revaluation increments were as follows:

- Plant \$395,142,
- Office equipment \$758,858,
- Furniture & fittings \$1,826,879,
- Hardware \$309,549.

Note 7c - Analysis of Property, Plant, Equipment and Intangibles

Table A - Movement summary 1999-00 for all assets irrespective of valuation basis

Item	Plant & Equipment, Furniture & Fittings	Computer Hardware	Computer Software - Total Intangibles	TOTAL
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Gross value as at 1 July 1999	45,893	43,484	109,035	198,412
Additions				
* Acquisition of replacement assets	1,235	7,488	18,399	27,122
Revaluations: write-ups/(write-downs)	4,897	422	-	5,319
Assets transferred in/(out)	71	10	-	81
Disposals	(190)	(8,101)	-	(8,291)
Gross Value as at 30 June 2000	51,906	43,303	127,434	222,643
Accumulated Depreciation/Amortisation as at 1 July 1999	21,846	29,102	44,522	95,470
Depreciation/amortisation charge for assets held 1 July 1999	4,828	6,051	6,894	17,773
Depreciation/amortisation charges for additions	225	1,021	2,894	4,140
Revaluations	1,917	112	-	2,029
Disposals	(124)	(7,922)	-	(8,046)
Accumulated Depreciation/Amortisation as at 30 June 2000	28,692	28,364	54,310	111,366
Net book value as at 30 June 2000	23,214	14,939	73,124	111,277
Net book value as at 1 July 1999	24,047	14,382	64,513	102,942

TABLE B - Summary of balances for all assets at valuation as at 30 June 2000

Item	Plant & Equipment, Furniture & Fittings	Computer Hardware	Computer Software - Total Intangibles	TOTAL
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 30 June 2000				
Gross Value	48,098	35,543	27,921	111,562
Accumulated Depreciation/amortisation	27,197	27,144	25,271	79,612
Net Book Value	20,901	8,399	2,650	31,950
As at 30 June 1999				
Gross Value	17,599	42,723	27,921	88,243
Accumulated Depreciation/amortisation	9,430	28,341	23,617	61,388
Net Book Value	8,169	14,382	4,304	26,855

TABLE C - Summary of balances for assets held under lease as at 30 June 2000 irrespective of valuation basis

Item	Plant & Equipment, Furniture & Fittings	Computer Hardware	Computer Software - Total Intangibles	TOTAL
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 30 June 2000				
Gross Value	17,292	200	-	17,492
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	9,710	200	-	9,910
Net Book Value	7,582	-	-	7,582
As at 30 June 1999				
Gross Value	14,321	200	-	14,521
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	6,833	200	-	7,033
Net Book Value	7,488	-	-	7,488

TABLE D - Summary of balances for assets held under lease as at 30 June 2000 at valuation

Item	Plant & Equipment, Furniture & Fittings	Computer Hardware	Computer Software - Total Intangibles	TOTAL
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
As at 30 June 2000				
Gross Value	16,470	-	-	16,470
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	9,366	-	-	9,366
Net Book Value	7,104	-	-	7,104
As at 30 June 1999				
Gross Value	-	-	-	-
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	-	-	-	-
Net Book Value	-	-	-	-

	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
<u>Note 7d – Intangibles</u>		
Computer software – internally developed – in progress	11,525	23,709
Computer software – at cost	87,988	57,405
Accumulated amortisation	(29,039)	(20,905)
	<u>58,949</u>	<u>36,500</u>
Computer software – internally developed - at 1996 valuation	27,921	27,921
Accumulated amortisation	(25,271)	(23,617)
	<u>2,650</u>	<u>4,304</u>
Total Intangibles	<u>73,124</u>	<u>64,513</u>
<u>Note 7e – Inventories</u>		
All Departmental inventories are current assets		
Inventories held for sale	5,062	5,165
Less: Provision for obsolescence	(1,930)	(421)
Less: Provision for community service obligations	(236)	(526)
Total Inventories	<u>2,896</u>	<u>4,218</u>
<u>Note 7f – Other</u>		
Prepayments	4,606	6,707
	<u>4,606</u>	<u>6,707</u>

Note 8 – Debt

	1999/00	1998/99
	\$'000	\$'000
Note 8a – Leases		
<u>(i) Lease fitout incentive commitments</u>		
Not later than one year	2,154	2,154
Later than one year and not later than five years	7,210	8,611
Later than five years	262	1,015
Minimum lease payments	9,626	11,780
Deduct: future interest charges	(1,258)	(1,765)
Total Lease Fitout Incentive Liability	8,368	10,015
 Lease fitout incentive liability is represented by:		
Current	1,727	1,647
Non-Current	6,641	8,368
	8,368	10,015
 <u>(ii) Lease fitout incentive movement</u>		
Balance at 1 July	10,015	11,512
Repaid during the year	(1,647)	(1,497)
Total Lease Fitout Incentive Liability	8,368	10,015
 Note 8b – Other debt		
Lease rental incentives	1,114	1,000
 Total Debt	9,482	11,015

Note 9 – Provisions and Payables

	1999/00	1998/99
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 9a – Employees</u>		
Salaries and wages	4,478	2,853
Long Service Leave	40,562	34,283
Recreation Leave	17,969	15,826
Superannuation	649	447
Separation and redundancies	92	-
Aggregate employee entitlement liability	<u>63,750</u>	<u>53,409</u>
 <u>Note 9b – Suppliers</u>		
Trade creditors	3,340	1,254
Sundry creditors – other	2,594	160
	<u>5,934</u>	<u>1,414</u>
 <u>Note 9c – Unearned revenue</u>		
Receipts in advance	1,608	2,489
	<u>1,608</u>	<u>2,489</u>
 <u>Note 9d – Other</u>		
Provision for surplus lease space	180	201
	<u>180</u>	<u>201</u>

Note 10 - Equity

Item	Capital		Accumulated results		Asset revaluation reserve		TOTAL EQUITY	
	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000	1999/00 \$'000	1998/99 \$'000
Balance 1 July 1999	11,250	-	39,055	15,739	8,127	-	58,432	15,739
Operating Result	-	-	9,499	(296)	-	-	9,499	(296)
Equity Appropriation	-	11,250	-	-	-	-	-	11,250
Change in Accounting Policy	-	-	(4,125)	23,612	-	-	(4,125)	23,612
Capital Use Charge	-	-	(7,657)	-	-	-	(7,657)	-
Net revaluation increases	-	-	-	-	3,290	8,127	3,290	8,127
Balance 30 June 2000	11,250	11,250	36,772	39,055	11,417	8,127	59,439	58,432

Note 11 – Cash Flow Reconciliation

	1999/00	1998/99
	\$'000	\$'000
Reconciliation of operating surplus to net cash provided by operating activities:		
Net surplus (deficit)	9,499	(296)
Depreciation/Amortisation	21,955	20,054
Capitalised depreciation	-	(383)
Profit /(loss) on sale of non-current items	30	(43)
Write down of non current assets	40	-
Reversal of previous asset write-downs	-	(26)
Resources received free of charge	-	(144)
Adjustment prior years asset balances	-	(114)
Decrease (increase) in receivables	(785)	1,425
Decrease (increase) in appropriation receivable	-	8,144
Decrease (increase) in inventories	1,322	(92)
Decrease (increase) in prepayments	2,101	(541)
Decrease (increase) in other assets	(466)	148
Increase (decrease) in lease debt	(1,647)	(1,497)
Increase (decrease) in employee liabilities	6,205	(509)
Increase (decrease) in suppliers liabilities	4,520	214
Increase (decrease) in other liabilities	(788)	(1,937)
Net cash provided by operating activities	41,986	24,403

Note 12 – Remote Contingencies

There have been no remote contingencies identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the financial year 1999/2000.

Note 13 - Appropriations

Annual appropriations for Departmental items (price of outputs)

	1999/00
	\$
Balance available at 1 July	
Add: Appropriation Acts No 1 & 3 credits:	
Section 6 - Act 1 - basic appropriations (budget)	243,716,000
Section 6 - Act 3 - basic appropriations	(1,697,000)
Add: FMA Act	
s30 appropriations	-
s31 appropriations	23,028,217
Total appropriations available for the year	<u>265,047,217</u>
Appropriation not drawn	(200,000)
Expenditures during the year	<u>(254,613,466)</u>
Balance of appropriations for outputs at 30 June	<u><u>10,233,751</u></u>

Annual Appropriations for Departmental non-revenue items

	Equity Injections		Loans		Carryovers	
	1999/00	\$	1999/00	\$	1999/00	\$
Balance available at 1 July	-		-		-	
Add: Appropriation Act No 2 (Budget)	-		-		-	
Add: Advance to the Finance Minister	-		-		-	
Add: FMA Act s30 appropriations	-		-		-	
Add: Appropriation Act No 4	-		-		11,250,000	
Total appropriations available for the year	-		-		<u>11,250,000</u>	
Expenditure debited during the year	-		-		-	
Balance of appropriations for capital at 30 June 2000	-		-		<u><u>11,250,000</u></u>	

Note 14 - Receipts and Expenditures of the Trust Funds

Note 14a - 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 SRC Act 1988.

	1999/00	1999/00	1999/00	1998/99	1998/99	1998/99
	Cash	Investments	Total	Cash	Investments	Total
	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$	\$
Opening Balance as at 1 July	30,000	-	30,000	-	30,000	30,000
Receipts:						
from operations	475,663	-	475,663	405,056	-	405,056
from realisation of investments	-	-	-	30,000	(30,000)	-
Expenditure:						
for operations	(475,663)	-	(475,663)	(405,056)	-	(405,056)
for purchase of investments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Balance as at 30 June	30,000	-	30,000	30,000	-	30,000

Note 14b - 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.

	1999/00 Cash \$	1999/00 Investments \$	1999/00 Total \$	1998/99 Cash \$	1998/99 Investments \$	1998/99 Total \$
Opening Balance as at 1 July	10,379	-	10,379	1,956	10,000	11,956
Receipts:						
from operations	517	-	517	-	-	-
from realisation of investments	-	-	-	10,000	(10,000)	-
Expenditure:						
for operations	-	-	-	(1,577)	-	(1,577)
for purchase of investments	-	-	-	-	-	-
Closing Balance as at 30 June	10,896	-	10,896	10,379	-	10,379

Note 15 - Reporting of Outcomes

Reporting by outcomes

	Outcome 1 1999/2000		Total	
	Budget \$'000	Actual \$'000	Budget \$'000	Actual \$'000
Net Subsidies, benefits and grants expenses	-	-	-	-
Other administered expenses	-	-	-	-
Total net administered expenses	-	-	-	-
Add Net cost of entity outputs	235,007	232,437	235,007	232,437
Outcome before abnormal/extraordinary items	235,007	232,437	235,007	232,437
Abnormal/extraordinary items	-	-	-	-
Net Cost to Budget Outcome	235,007	232,437	235,007	232,437
Total assets deployed as at 30/6/00			124,924	144,371
Net assets deployed as at 30/6/00			58,432	59,439

Major Agency Revenues and Expenses by outcome

	Outcome 1 Actual \$'000
Major expenses	
Employees	168,184
Suppliers	58,999
Depreciation	21,955
Major sources of revenues	
Revenue from government	241,936
Sale of goods and services	21,468

Note 16 – Executive Remuneration

	1999/00	1998/99
The number of Executives who received or were due to receive total remuneration of \$100,000 or more:		
	Number	Number
\$100 000 to \$110 000	-	1
\$110 001 to \$120 000	4	1
\$120 001 to \$130 000	10	13
\$130 001 to \$140 000	11	5
\$140 001 to \$150 000	1	7
\$150 001 to \$160 000	5	3
\$160 001 to \$170 000	3	1
\$170 001 to \$180 000	-	2
\$250 001 to \$260 000	-	1
\$280 001 to \$290 000	1	-
\$570 001 to \$580 000	1	-
 The aggregate amount of total remuneration of Executives shown above	 \$ 5,532,946	 \$ 4,957,561
 The aggregate amount of separation and redundancy payments during the year to Executives shown above	 \$ 572,790	 \$ Nil

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.

Note 17 – Services provided by the Auditor-General

Financial statement audit services are provided free of charge to the ABS. The fair value of audit services provided was:

	1999/00	1998/99
	\$	\$
Australian National Audit Office	<u>90,000</u>	<u>80,000</u>

No other services were provided.

Note 18 – Act of Grace Payments and Waivers and Defective Administration Scheme

Note 18a – Act of grace payments

There were no Act of Grace payments made in accordance with section 33 of the FMA Act 1997 during the financial year 1999/00. (1998/99: Nil)

Note 18b – Waivers

There were no waivers of the rights to payments to the Commonwealth made under section 34(1) of the FMA Act 1997 during the financial year 1999/00. (1998/99: Nil)

Note 19 – Average Staffing Levels

Average staffing levels for the ABS in 1999/00, measured on a full time equivalent basis, were 3,115. (1998/99: 2,985)

Note 20 – 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	2k	Deposits are recognised at their nominal amounts. Interest is credited to revenue as it accrues.	Monies in the Agency's bank accounts are swept into the Official Public Account nightly and interest is earned on the daily balance at rates based on money market call rates. Rates have averaged 4.3% for the year (1998-99: 4.7%). Interest is paid quarterly.
Investments	2k	Investments are recognised at their nominal amounts. Interest is credited to revenue as it accrues.	The Bureau invests funds with the Reserve Bank of Australia at call. Rates have averaged 5.98% for the year. Interest is paid on maturity.
Receivables	6a	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.	Receivables are with entities internal and external to the Commonwealth. Credit terms are net 30 days (1998/99: 30 days).
Accrued revenue	6b	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.	

Financial Instrument	Notes	Accounting Policies and Methods	Nature of Underlying Instrument
Lease incentive liabilities	8a	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% (1998/99: 6%).
Surplus lease space	9d	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 arises under the ABS' non cancellable operating leases for office accommodation.
Trade creditors	9b	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) 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 Balance Sheet.

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

Note 20 - Financial Instruments

Note 20b - Interest Rate Risk: Agency

Financial Instrument	Notes	Floating Interest Rate		Fixed Interest Rate						Non-Interest Bearing		Total		Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate		
		99/00 \$'000	98/99 \$'000	1 to 2 years		2 to 5 years		> 5 years		99/00 \$'000	98/99 \$'000	99/00 \$'000	98/99 \$'000	99/00 %	98/99 %	
				99/00 \$'000	98/99 \$'000	99/00 \$'000	98/99 \$'000	99/00 \$'000	98/99 \$'000							
Financial Assets																
Cash at Bank	2k	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Investments	2k	18,000	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Receivables for goods and services	6a	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,180	1,395	-	-	4,719	221	4.3
Total Financial Assets (recognised)		18,000	4,719	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,180	1,616	6,899	1,616	144,371	126,960	n/a
Financial Liabilities																
Lease liabilities	8	1,727	1,647	1,812	1,727	4,590	5,705	239	936	1,114	1,000	9,482	11,015	6.0	6.0	
Trade creditors	9b	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,934	1,414	5,934	1,414	n/a	n/a	n/a
Surplus lease space	9c	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	180	201	180	201	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total Financial Liabilities (recognised)		1,727	1,647	1,812	1,727	4,590	5,705	239	936	7,228	2,615	15,596	12,630	84,932	68,528	n/a

Note 20 - Financial Instruments

Note 20c - Net Fair Value of Financial Assets and Liabilities

	1999/00		1998/99	
	Total Carrying Amount	Aggregate net fair value	Total carrying amount	Aggregate net fair value
Note	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Departmental Financial Assets				
Cash at Bank	4,719	4,719	221	221
Investments	18,000	18,000	-	-
Receivables for Goods and Services	1,837	1,837	1,389	1,389
Total Financial Assets	24,556	24,556	1,610	1,610
Financial Liabilities (recognised)				
Lease Incentives Liabilities	9,482	9,482	11,015	11,015
Trade Creditors	5,934	5,934	1,414	1,414
Surplus Lease Space	180	180	201	201
Total Financial Liabilities (recognised)	15,596	15,596	12,630	12,630

Financial Assets

The net fair value of cash and non-interest bearing monetary financial assets approximate their carrying amounts.

Financial Liabilities

The net fair value of the lease incentives and surplus lease space are based on discounted cash flows using current interest rates for liabilities with similar risk profiles. (Where the liability is on a floating rate of interest, the method returns the principal amount).

The net fair value for trade creditors and grant liabilities are short-term in nature, and are approximated by their carrying amounts.

APPENDIXES

PROGRAM STRUCTURE

Appendix 1

ABS PROGRAM STRUCTURE, 1999–2000

	<i>Program components</i>
Economic Statistics Output(a)	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 Statistical Consultancy Statistical Coordination Australian Economic Indicators Statistical Services and User Liaison
Population and Social Statistics Output(a)	Census Demography Labour Statistics Social Statistics National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics Geography

For footnote see end of table.

...continued

ABS PROGRAM STRUCTURE, 1999–2000—continued

	<i>Program components</i>
Corporate and Statistical Support	Mathematical Statistics Business Frames and Large Business Taxation Reform Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis Economic Standards Population Statistics Standards Population Surveys Dissemination Marketing and Public Affairs Client Services Library Services Information Technology Bureau Technology Application Data Management Technology Research SPEED Executive Human Resources Management Financial Resources Corporate Planning and Secretariat International Relations Economic Statistics Group Support Population Statistics Group Support Methodology Division Business Office Information Services Division Business Office Technology Services Division Support Corporate Services Division Support

(a) The outputs of the ABS are generated using inputs from both statistical and support components. The statistical components contributing to each output are listed under the relevant Output heading. The support components contribute to both the Economic Statistics and Population and Social Statistics Outputs.

TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT Appendix 2

TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES(a)

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program components</i>
AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN <i>Bill McLennan(b)</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>	Business Statistics Small Business Statistics Science and Technology Construction Transport Services Industries Tourism
Production Statistics Branch <i>Robin Slater</i>	Economy Wide Statistics Agriculture Mining Manufacturing SPEED
Integration Branch <i>Alan Mackay</i>	Business Frames and Large Business Economic Standards Taxation Reform
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

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

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program components</i>
Census, Demography and Geography Branch <i>John Struik</i>	Census Demography Geography
OTHER DIVISIONS	
Methodology Division <i>Ken Tallis</i>	Methodology Division Business Office Statistical Coordination
Analytical Services Branch <i>Godfrey Lubulwa</i>	Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis
Statistical Services Branch <i>Geoff Lee</i>	Mathematical Statistics Statistical Consultancy Australian Economic Indicators
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 Affairs
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>Graeme Hope</i>	Corporate Services Division Support
Policy Secretariat Branch <i>Bronwyn Driscoll</i>	Corporate Planning and Secretariat International Relations
Human Resources Branch <i>Denis Farrell</i>	Human Resources Management
Financial Resources Branch <i>Kerrie Duff</i>	Financial Resources

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

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

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program components</i>
REGIONAL OFFICES(c)	
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>Steve Matheson</i>	
Northern Territory	
<i>Robyn Elliott</i>	
Australian Capital Territory	
<i>Dalma Jacobs</i>	

(a) Structure as at 30 June 2000, including officers on temporary placements. (b) The Australian Statistician, Bill McLennan, retired 30 June 2000. Dennis Trewin was appointed Australian Statistician 5 July 2000. (c) Includes the Statistical Services and User Liaison component.

STAFFING OVERVIEW

Appendix 3

3.1 NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENT(a) STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY PROGRAM COMPONENTS(b) AND LOCATION (staff years)

Program components	1997-98	1998-99											1999-2000
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
National Accounts	65	63	57	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	57
International Accounts	67	52	53	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	53
International Trade	33	31	28	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	28
Financial Accounts	26	26	17	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26
Public Sector Accounts	61	57	24	7	8	4	4	4	3	2	—	—	56
Prices	102	107	65	25	9	5	5	4	3	2	—	—	117
Business Statistics	50	50	6	47	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	53
Economy Wide Statistics	36	36	37	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	37
Small Business Statistics	11	11	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Science and Technology	16	15	19	—	9	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	31
Agriculture	66	50	9	—	—	1	—	—	41	—	—	—	50
Mining	11	11	1	—	—	—	—	7	—	3	—	—	11
Manufacturing	77	62	3	54	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	58
Construction	77	56	2	—	—	—	—	48	—	—	—	—	50
Transport	40	37	5	—	—	43	—	—	—	—	—	—	47
Service Industries	85	92	43	19	38	4	15	—	—	—	—	—	120
Tourism	18	13	2	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	15
Environment	12	10	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14
Statistical Consultancy	8	10	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Statistical Coordination	6	6	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
Australian Economics Indicators	4	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Statistical Services and User Liaison	62	70	—	12	12	9	3	9	14	4	6	—	70
Census	148	67	77	4	4	2	3	1	2	1	1	—	94
Demography	47	47	23	4	—	10	3	5	2	1	—	—	46
Labour Statistics	181	158	64	—	3	—	96	—	—	—	—	—	163
Social Statistics	100	94	82	2	—	25	2	—	—	—	—	—	111
National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics, and ATGIS	53	54	—	2	19	1	3	13	—	13	—	—	51
Geography	16	24	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	30

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

3.1 NUMBER OF FULL TIME EQUIVALENT(a) STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY PROGRAM COMPONENTS(b) AND LOCATION (staff years)—continued

Program components	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000										
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
Mathematical Statistics	63	64	42	4	4	2	4	4	3	—	—	—	64
Business Frames and Large Business	106	84	8	6	40	1	1	—	10	—	—	—	66
Taxation Reform	40	47	19	13	17	3	2	1	—	—	—	—	55
Analytical Services and Time Series Analyses	21	22	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26
Economic Standards	17	16	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19
Population Statistics Standards	18	21	25	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	25
Population Surveys	219	204	64	27	22	24	18	22	8	7	—	—	192
Dissemination	78	68	39	2	23	—	—	2	3	—	—	—	68
Marketing and Public Affairs	51	43	21	6	2	—	7	3	—	—	—	—	38
Client Services	129	133	29	29	25	25	12	9	5	4	3	—	141
Library Services	27	24	15	2	2	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	23
Information Technology Bureau	187	192	165	10	8	10	11	7	8	3	—	—	220
Technology Application	214	213	152	10	6	12	14	11	16	—	—	—	220
Data Management	15	13	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Technology Research	7	7	5	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7
SPEED	5	6	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Executive	46	45	1	8	7	5	5	6	5	5	2	—	46
Human Resources Management	152	138	87	13	9	14	6	7	4	2	—	—	143
Financial Resources	106	109	61	8	15	6	7	7	5	4	—	—	112
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	13	14	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	14
International Relations	4	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Economic Statistics Group Support	46	48	13	8	12	3	11	4	1	2	—	—	52
Population Statistics Group Support	54	47	17	6	—	3	—	7	2	2	—	—	36
Methodology Division Business Office	4	5	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Information Services Division Business Office	14	11	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
Technology Services Division Support	7	7	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Corporate Services Division Support	19	15	9	—	—	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	12
Total operative staff	3 139	2 911	1 567	335	295	231	234	182	134	54	13	—	3 045
Paid inoperative staff(c)	74	74	37	10	5	5	4	4	3	1	—	—	70
Total Staff	3 213	2 985	1 604	345	300	236	238	186	137	55	13	—	3 115

(a) Comprises full time staff and part time staff at their full time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. (b) Figures for 1997-98 and 1998-99 have been revised to reflect changes to the program structure for 1999-2000. This ensures comparability across all years.

(c) Includes staff on periods of leave for longer than 12 weeks, for example, staff on long service leave, extended sick leave etc.

Note: Any differences between totals and sums of components are due to rounding.

3.2 NUMBER OF ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY LOCATION, GENDER AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE (headcount)(a)

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic.	QLD	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
MALES											
1998											
Total staff	881	192	167	112	123	117	89	20	4	—	1 705
1999											
Total staff	888	187	152	116	116	114	93	19	4	—	1 689
2000											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Australian Statistician	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Senior Executive Service	24	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	—	—	30
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	105	4	7	5	6	5	4	—	—	—	136
Executive Officer Level 1	191	20	18	12	12	12	10	3	1	—	279
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	270	33	33	22	21	20	18	3	—	—	420
APS Level 5	117	34	37	32	30	18	19	4	—	—	291
APS Level 4	134	53	36	19	24	30	17	4	1	—	318
APS Level 3	43	42	28	19	21	15	11	3	—	—	182
APS Level 2	20	6	5	9	10	7	3	—	—	—	60
APS Graduate	13	3	—	3	—	2	1	—	—	—	22
APS Level 1	3	3	—	1	5	—	1	1	—	—	14
APS Cadet	5	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	7
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	926	200	165	123	130	110	85	19	2	—	1 760
Unpaid inoperative staff	26	2	2	1	—	1	—	—	—	—	32
Total staff	952	202	167	124	130	111	85	19	2	—	1 792

For footnote see end of table.

...continued

3.2 ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY LOCATION, GENDER AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 2000 (headcount)(a)—continued

<i>Year and classification</i>	<i>CO</i>	<i>NSW</i>	<i>Vic.</i>	<i>QLD</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>SA</i>	<i>Tas.</i>	<i>NT</i>	<i>ACT</i>	<i>DPC</i>	<i>Total</i>
FEMALES											
1998											
Total staff	734	142	136	110	121	100	52	38	10	—	1 443
1999											
Total staff	787	128	137	119	118	83	58	34	9	—	1 473
2000											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Senior Executive Service	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	32	2	1	—	1	1	—	3	1	—	41
Executive Officer Level 1	141	5	10	5	6	6	2	3	—	—	178
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	186	13	32	17	12	6	4	7	2	—	279
APS Level 5	149	23	40	14	23	15	10	5	1	—	280
APS Level 4	126	38	29	25	25	20	8	9	6	—	286
APS Level 3	86	39	25	34	30	14	10	7	2	—	247
APS Level 2	44	8	9	38	22	12	6	—	—	—	139
APS Graduate	24	2	—	4	6	2	2	—	—	—	40
APS Level 1	4	2	2	1	11	1	—	—	—	—	21
APS Cadet	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	800	132	148	138	136	77	42	34	12	—	1 519
Unpaid inoperative staff	39	11	3	6	4	5	2	3	—	—	73
Total staff	839	143	151	144	140	82	44	37	12	—	1 592

For footnote see end of table.

...continued

3.2 ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY LOCATION, GENDER AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE 2000 (headcount)(a)—continued

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic.	QLD	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
	TOTAL										
1998											
Total staff	1 614	334	303	222	244	217	141	58	14	—	3 147
1999											
Total staff	1 675	315	289	235	234	197	151	53	13	—	3 162
2000											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Australian Statistician	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Senior Executive Service	29	1	1	1	1	1	1	—	—	—	35
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	137	6	8	5	7	6	4	3	1	—	177
Executive Officer Level 1	332	25	28	17	18	18	12	6	1	—	457
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	456	46	65	39	33	26	22	10	2	—	699
APS Level 5	266	57	77	46	53	33	29	9	1	—	571
APS Level 4	260	91	65	44	49	50	25	13	7	—	604
APS Level 3	129	81	53	53	51	29	21	10	2	—	429
APS Level 2	64	14	14	47	32	19	9	—	—	—	199
APS Graduate	37	5	—	7	6	4	3	—	—	—	62
APS Level 1	7	5	2	2	16	1	1	1	—	—	35
APS Cadet	8	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	10
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 726	332	313	261	266	187	127	53	14	—	3 279
Unpaid inoperative staff	65	13	5	7	4	6	2	3	—	—	105
Total staff	1 791	345	318	268	270	193	129	56	14	—	3 384

(a) Being paid at the classification shown at 30 June each year. 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.

3.3 NUMBER OF ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, GENDER AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE (headcount)(a)

Year and classification	Ongoing			Non-Ongoing			Gender		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
FULL TIME EMPLOYEES									
1998									
Total staff	1 637	1 176	2 813	37	74	111	1 674	1 250	2 924
1999									
Total staff	1 604	1 147	2 751	45	111	156	1 649	1 258	2 907
2000									
Operative and paid inoperative staff									
Australian Statistician	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Senior Executive Service	30	5	35	—	—	—	30	5	35
Executive Officer									
Executive Officer Level 2	135	35	170	—	1	1	135	36	171
Executive Officer Level 1	271	151	422	3	—	3	274	151	425
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	406	237	643	3	1	4	409	238	647
APS Level 5	286	238	524	1	3	4	287	241	528
APS Level 4	301	245	546	7	8	15	308	253	561
APS Level 3	147	177	324	19	24	43	166	201	367
APS Level 2	30	40	70	24	60	84	54	100	154
APS Graduate	22	40	62	—	—	—	22	40	62
APS Level 1	3	6	9	7	5	12	10	11	21
APS Cadet	7	3	10	—	—	—	7	3	10
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 639	1 177	2 816	64	102	166	1 703	1 279	2 982
Unpaid inoperative staff	32	56	88	—	—	—	32	56	88
Total staff	1 671	1 233	2 904	64	102	166	1 735	1 335	3 070

For footnote see end of table.

...continued

3.3 NUMBER OF ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, GENDER AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE (headcount)(a)—continued

Year and classification	Ongoing			Non-Ongoing			Gender		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
PART TIME EMPLOYEES									
1998									
Total staff	30	180	210	2	11	13	32	191	223
1999									
Total staff	32	191	223	8	24	32	40	215	255
2000									
Operative and paid inoperative staff									
Executive Officer									
Executive Officer Level 2	1	4	5	—	1	1	1	5	6
Executive Officer Level 1	5	27	32	—	—	—	5	27	32
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	11	41	52	—	—	—	11	41	52
APS Level 5	4	39	43	—	—	—	4	39	43
APS Level 4	10	31	41	—	2	2	10	33	43
APS Level 3	5	40	45	11	6	17	16	46	62
APS Level 2	3	22	25	3	17	20	6	39	45
APS Level 1	—	1	1	4	9	13	4	10	14
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	39	205	244	18	35	53	57	240	297
Unpaid inoperative staff	—	17	17	—	—	—	—	17	17
Total staff	39	222	261	18	35	53	57	257	314

For footnote see end of table.

...continued

3.3 NUMBER OF ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, GENDER AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE (headcount)(a)—continued

Year and classification	Ongoing			Non-Ongoing			Gender		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
TOTAL									
1998									
Total staff	1 667	1 356	3 023	39	85	124	1 706	1 441	3 147
1999									
Total staff	1 636	1 338	2 974	53	135	188	1 689	1 473	3 162
2000									
Operative and paid inoperative staff									
Australian Statistician	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Senior Executive Service	30	5	35	—	—	—	30	5	35
Executive Officer									
Executive Officer Level 2	136	39	175	—	2	2	136	41	177
Executive Officer Level 1	276	178	454	3	—	3	279	178	457
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	417	278	695	3	1	4	420	279	699
APS Level 5	290	277	567	1	3	4	291	280	571
APS Level 4	311	276	587	7	10	17	318	286	604
APS Level 3	152	217	369	30	30	60	182	247	429
APS Level 2	33	62	95	27	77	104	60	139	199
APS Graduate	22	40	62	—	—	—	22	40	62
APS Level 1	3	7	10	11	14	25	14	21	35
APS Cadet	7	3	10	—	—	—	7	3	10
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 678	1 382	3 060	82	137	219	1 760	1 519	3 279
Unpaid inoperative staff	32	73	105	—	—	—	32	73	105
Total staff	1 710	1 455	3 165	82	137	219	1 792	1 592	3 384

(a) Being paid at the classification shown at 30 June each year. 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.

3.4 REPRESENTATION OF EEO GROUPS: ONGOING ABS STAFF AT 30 JUNE 2000(a)

Level	Number of staff and percentage of total staff							EEO Coverage
	Total Ongoing Staff	Women	NESB1	NESB2	ATSI	PWD		
Australian Public Service Level 1 and equivalent classifications	20	10	—	—	7	2	20	
%	—	50.0	—	—	35.0	10.0	100.0	
Australian Public Service Level 2 and equivalent classifications	166	109	15	10	1	12	149	
%	—	65.6	9.0	6.0	0.6	7.2	89.8	
Australian Public Service Level 3 and equivalent classifications	382	228	47	37	3	20	346	
%	—	59.7	12.3	9.7	0.8	5.2	90.6	
Australian Public Service Level 4	601	286	89	53	5	22	551	
%	—	47.6	14.8	8.8	0.8	3.7	91.7	
Australian Public Service Level 5	589	297	65	49	1	18	522	
%	—	50.4	11.0	8.3	0.2	3.0	88.6	
Australian Public Service Level 6	720	296	69	52	7	30	656	
%	—	41.1	9.6	7.2	1.0	4.2	91.1	
Executive Level 1	466	183	33	21	2	18	423	
%	—	39.3	7.1	4.5	0.4	3.9	90.8	
Executive Level 2	182	41	14	6	—	6	167	
%	—	22.5	7.7	3.3	—	3.3	91.8	
Senior Executive Service	40	6	3	1	—	4	35	
%	—	15.0	7.5	2.5	—	10.0	87.5	
Total	3 166	1 456	335	229	26	132	2 869	
<i>% of total staff</i>	—	46.0	10.6	7.2	0.8	4.2	90.6	

(a) Inoperative staff are included in each category.

Note: EEO groups are not mutually exclusive and any individual officer may be included in more than one group. Percentages are based on total staff. Salary groupings are based on maximum salary for a classification. 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—Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

PWD—People with disabilities.

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

<i>Purpose</i>	1997-98	1998-99	1999-2000
Interviewer enumerated statistical collections (mainly household surveys)	248	201	217
Census of population and housing (including preparations for census)	—	—	19
Total	248	201	236

3.6 ABS INTAKE AND SEPARATIONS OF ONGOING STAFF 1999-2000(a) (number)

<i>Method of intake and type of separation</i>	SES	Non SES	Total
Intake			
Appointment—National Graduate Recruitment Campaign	—	182	182
Appointment—Other	—	207	207
Promotion or transfer from outside the ABS	1	66	67
Total Intake	1	455	456
Separations			
Promotion or transfer to outside the ABS	—	65	65
Resignation	—	139	139
Death	—	3	3
Dismissal	—	1	1
Retirement—Invalidity	—	4	4
Retirement—Age 55-59 years(b)	2	11	13
Retirement—Age 60 years and over	—	6	6
Retirement—Other(c)	2	38	40
Total Separations	4	267	271

(a) Excludes non-ongoing inward and outward movements. (b) SES figure includes the Australian Statistician, who retired 30 June 2000. (c) Includes staff retired under Section 76R and Section 76W of the Public Service Act 1922 and Section 29 and Section 30 of the Public Service Act 1999.

3.7 NUMBER OF ABS SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE STAFF BY SALARY LEVEL, GENDER AND LOCATION AT 30 JUNE

<i>Year and location</i>	<i>Salary Band</i>			<i>Gender</i>		<i>Total</i>
	1	2	3	Male	Female	
1998 Total	27	6	2	30	5	35
1999 Total	25	6	2	29	4	33
2000						
Australian Capital Territory	20	5	2	22	5	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	26	5	2	28	5	33

3.8 ABS STAFF TRAINING(a) (number)

	1998-99	1999-2000
Total ABS operative staff(b)	2 911	3 045
Staff attendances at training	15 272	17 673
Attendance days	15 363	17 691
Trainer days	1 726	1 495

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

INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACY (PARTICIPATIVE WORK PRACTICES)

Appendix 4

Consistent with the Australian Public Service Value of establishing 'workplace relations that value communication, consultation, cooperation and input from employees on matters that affect their workplace', it is ABS policy to ensure that conditions and opportunities exist for the involvement of staff in the management of ABS activities.

This policy is embodied in the new ABS Corporate Plan, and is implemented through industrial agreements. These agreements contain a commitment 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. Line managers are required to assist staff to understand corporate directions, and how these directions translate to the work of teams and individuals.

Consultative forums in each Group/Division in Central Office, and each Office in the regions, provide formal avenues for consultation with employees at the 'grass roots' level. These forums comprise management representatives, elected staff representatives (structured to achieve balanced representation across functional and/or classification groups) and union representatives. Consultation also occurs at the national level when necessary.

There has been extensive consultation with employees, and their representatives, on the preparation of policy guidelines to support the implementation and operation of new procedures contained in the current ABS industrial agreements. The ABS will maintain this approach in the proposed new agreements.

For positions involving staff management, the ABS continues to have a mandatory selection criterion which requires all candidates to demonstrate they have an understanding of, and a commitment to, participative work practices.

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

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

Appendix 5

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

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

During 1999–2000, 39 staff were selected and trained as Health and Safety Representatives under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*.

There was 1 notification under Section 76, and 5 notifications under Sections 28, 29 and 30 of the Act.

Accidents

There were 316 reported accidents and incidents in 1999–2000 (compared with 277 in 1998–99). The reported accidents fall into the following broad categories:

REPORTED ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS

	1998–99	1999–2000
Motor vehicle/journey related accidents	67	56
Accidents as a result of sporting injuries	17	13
Back injuries	14	24
Occupational Overuse syndrome	44	29
Stress	1	1
Other work-based incidents and accidents	134	193
Total	277	316

Injury types are categorised according to the major injury type or cause. The 'other' category includes sprains and strains, trips and slips, and injury types not specifically diagnosed by a medical practitioner.

In 1999–2000, there were 62 accidents causing lost time (resulting in 199 lost working days). This compares to 68 accidents and 236 lost working days in 1998–99.

Compensation Claims

During 1999–2000, 116 compensation claims (compared with 115 in 1998–99) were submitted, 50 (58 in 1998–99) of which required implementation of a Return to Work Plan. There were 40 (44 in 1998–99) compensation case closures for the period. Under the Fitness for Duty Guidelines, 145 cases required case management in 1999–2000 and 86 cases were closed.

Staff Counselling

The ABS continued to provide all staff, and their immediate families, with access to a staff counselling service, using a combination of external and internal staff counsellors.

Comcare Premiums

As a result of active injury prevention, early intervention, active case management and rehabilitation during 1999–2000, the Comcare premium for 2000–01 has been set at 0.98% of total salary (including GST).

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

	1994–95	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01
ABS	1.08	1.61	1.84	1.47	1.00	0.92	(a)0.98
Agency Pool Average	1.40	1.75	1.60	1.20	1.00	1.03	0.98

(a) Includes GST.

Achievements

Major achievements during 1999–2000 included:

- commissioning a review which analysed the current status of injury prevention and management, as well as workers' compensation within the ABS. The review identified a range of strategies to assist in ongoing improvements in OH&S;
- developing training opportunities for managers and supervisors on their responsibilities under the OH&S legislation and future OH&S initiatives, and conducting a workshop for managers and supervisors who deal with staff that have performance/medical issues impacting on the workgroup;
- holding a National OH&S Conference in Adelaide during May 2000 which focused on strategic issues and strengthening national networks;
- continuing the focus on safety and workplace assessments in all offices, individual assessment and training in the correct adjustment to workstations and the use of ergonomic furniture;
- further consolidating return to work procedures which focus on individual case needs to achieve an early, safe and durable return to work after accidents, illness or injuries;
- continuing a program in Central Office of outsourced and in-house rehabilitation case managers working together, which has achieved positive rehabilitation outcomes;

- initiating a number of operational projects to look at a range of health and safety issues, including reports to management and health and safety representatives, and several other technological based OH&S issues, including the testing, training and implementation of the new voice activated software, Naturally Speaking Version IV Professional, which will be installed in July 2000; and
- commencing a strategic review of Comcare data to identify trends and potential high cost claims.

CONSULTANCY SERVICES

Appendix 6

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 1999–2000

The purposes for which consultants were engaged by the ABS in 1999-2000 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 was the need for specialised skills and to allow efficiency and flexibility in operations by making additional personnel available.

Consultants under engagement in 1999–2000

The total number of consultants engaged in 1999–2000 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:

6.1 CONSULTANTS UNDER ENGAGEMENT BY ABS, 1999–2000: SUMMARY

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Consultancies</i>	<i>Amount Paid in 1999–2000</i>
	<i>no.</i>	<i>\$</i>
Accounting	3	365 537
Audit	2	292 151
General Support Services	6	209 776
Human Resource Management	11	431 943
Information Technology	20	1 512 618
Legal	2	117 414
Marketing/PR	4	115 312
Statistical Support	13	285 968
Total	61	3 330 719

Consultants engaged in 1999–2000 are listed in the following table. The project for which each was engaged and the amount paid in 1999–2000 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 1999–2000</i>	<i>Justification and whether advertised</i>
	\$	
Accounting		
Acumen Alliance		
Provision of accountancy services	169 838	(a,c) (1)
Organisational review of financial resources	17 100	(a,c,d) (1)
GST review	18 210	(a,c,d) (1)
Apex Consulting Services Pty Ltd		
Accrual budgeting—conceptual framework	27 600	(a,c) (1)
Ernst & Young		
Specialist accounting advice	14 549	(a,c) (1)
GST implementation	118 240	(a) (1)
Audit		
Acumen Alliance		
IT auditing	107 914	(a,c) (2)
Ernst & Young		
Compliance and efficiency auditing	184 237	(a,c) (2)
General Support Services		
ASGARD		
Oral history of the ABS	26 625	(a,c) (1)
Gutteridge Haskins & Davey Pty Ltd		
Specialist services for ABS new building proposal	18 230	(a) (1)
Housley Consulting (ACT) Pty Ltd		
2001 Census field communication strategy	54 720	(a) (2)
Rawlinson's Management Pty Ltd		
Project consultant for ABS new building	75 000	(a) (2)
Travel Search		
ABS travel tender process	16 571	(a) (1)
WT Partnership		
Provision of cost planning services for the ABS new building	18 630	(a) (1)

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT—continued

	Amount paid in 1999–2000	Justification and whether advertised
	\$	
Human Resource Management		
David Caple and Associates Pty Ltd Occupational health and safety adviser	27 301	(a,c) (1)
De Simone Consulting Pty Ltd ABS IT service level agreement and service charter	52 000	(a,c) (2)
Delphi Consulting Australia Pty Ltd Knowledge management audit	41 132	(a,d) (1)
Deakin Australia Instructional design workshop	34 495	(a,c) (2)
EP Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Solutions Pty Ltd Advisory services in relation to OH&S issues	74 414	(a,c) (1)
Mercer Cullen Egan Dell (William M. Mercer Pty Ltd) Work level standard review	10 710	(a,c) (1)
Merit Protection and Review Agency Joint selection committee staff selection exercise	22 680	(a) (1)
Onkaparinga Consultancy Services Provision of training services for the 2001 Census	75 000	(a,b,c) (3)
ORIMA Research Pty Ltd ABS NSW staff perception survey 2000	21 286	(a,d) (1)
Sigma Management Science Pty Ltd Provide assistance with ABS project management	48 925	(a,c) (1)
The Power of Ten Review of human resource sectors of ABS	24 000	(a,c,d) (1)
Information Technology		
Cipher Software Metrics Pty Ltd Production of high-level functional view of ABS applications	10 000	(a,d) (1)
Com Tech Integration Services Pty Ltd Staging and deployment of software/systems	27 600	(a,b) (1)
Windows 2000 consulting services	20 000	(a,b,c,d) (2)
Computer Associations Pty Ltd Scoping study for migration of ABS business register	15 925	(a,c) (1)
Credenza Pty Ltd ABS@ and SDS Development	47 485	(a,c) (2)
Datfor Communications Pty Ltd Voice communication services	31 909	(a,c) (2)
IBM Global Services Australia Pty Ltd Review of ABS IT system	74 870	(a,d) (1)
Icon Recruitment Pty Ltd Systems design and Centura programming	88 261	(a,c) (2)
Interim Technology Solutions Pty Ltd Systems design and programming services	262 592	(a,c) (2)
Lotus Professional Services Lotus learning space prototype	34 563	(b) (1)
Management & IT Consulting Research & development of a management information system	27 475	(a,c) (1)
Manpower Services (Aust) Pty Ltd Lotus notes development	200 038	(a,c) (2)

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT—continued

	Amount paid in 1999–2000	Justification and whether advertised
	\$	
Information Technology — (continued)		
Manpower Technical		
Provision of high level analysis and programming	124 175	(a,c) (2)
Mastech Asia Pacific		
SAS programming services	99 272	(a,c) (2)
Patacat Computing Pty Ltd		
Lotus notes programming	61 636	(a,c) (2)
PAXUS People		
Operator for lotus notes	93 150	(a,b,c) (2)
Richards, Wayne		
Development of dissemination management and publications system	114 750	(a) (1)
Tactics Consulting Pty Ltd		
Strategic analysis & design for online 'one-stop' solution	38 780	(a,c) (2)
The Hiser Group		
User centres design and usability activities	29 825	(a,c) (1)
True North Consulting Pty Ltd		
Retail survey IT redevelopment project	55 533	(b,c) (2)
Wizard Information Services Pty Ltd		
Implementation of the user centres design suite	54 779	(a,c) (1)
Legal		
Clayton Utz		
Expert legal advice	98 042	(a) (1)
Corrs Chambers Westgarth		
Legal services for ABS print related services	19 372	(a,c) (2)
Marketing/PR		
Lowline Holdings Pty Ltd		
Photographic and event presentation services	24 920	(a) (1)
Pattugalan, Theresa		
Graphic design services to ABS	16 014	(a) (1)
The Laughing Partners Pty Ltd		
Production of news file/promotional footage for 2001 Census	34 878	(a,c) (2)
Worthington Di Marzio		
2001 Census communications concept and logo research	39 500	(d) (2)
Statistical Support		
AME Consulting Pty Ltd		
Valuation of Australian subsoil assets	17 000	(a,b) (1)
Chambers, Dr Ray		
Discussions on multi-level modelling for household surveys	10 200	(a) (1)
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu		
ESG benchmarking of survey costs	13 924	(a,c) (1)
Efford, Don		
Public finance concepts, sources and methods publication	18 425	(a) (1)
ESRI Australia		
Review of cartigraphic rulebases	11 600	(a,d) (1)
Kate Sullivan and Associates		
ABS standard of questions on Indigenous status	82 317	(a,c,d) (3)
For footnotes see end of table.		...continued

PURPOSE, CONSULTANT AND PROJECT—continued

	Amount paid in 1999–2000	Justification and whether advertised
	\$	
Statistical Support — (continued)		
Kutjara Consultants		
Collecting data from Indigenous people in remote areas	10 000	(a,d) (2)
Market Attitude Research		
Market testing of form design for 2001 Census	46 286	(a,c) (1)
Rider Hunt Canberra Pty Ltd		
Building price index development project	15 000	(a,c) (1)
Simpson Norris International		
Develop standard for community services Indigenous population data	19 374	(a,d) (2)
Taylor McConaghty Consulting		
Culture mapping	16 342	(a,d) (2)
University of Wollongong		
Research on estimation and inference for household surveys	10 000	(a) (1)
Von Reibnitz, Fred		
Editorial assistance	15 500	(a,d) (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 \$10,000 in 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.

ADVERTISING AND MARKET RESEARCH

Appendix 7

AMOUNTS PAID BY, OR ON BEHALF OF, THE ABS

<i>Name of organisation paid</i>	<i>Amount</i>
	<i>\$</i>
Advertising	
BRW Media	3 750
Executive Media	1 895
HH & M Media	180
Millbank Publications	800
National Business Magazines Pty Ltd	5 500
Publishing Services	1 080
Shopfront/Chevron	3 250
The Walkley Magazine	1 115
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>17 570</i>
Market Research and Polling Organisations	
Sutherland Smith, Ringham	10 000
Wallis Consulting	9 072
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>19 072</i>
Direct Mail Organisations	
Canberra Mailing	33 205
The List Bank	4 500
<i>Sub Total</i>	<i>37 705</i>
Total	74 347

Following a competitive tendering process, the ABS signed a contract in August 1999 with Pirie Printers Holdings (PPH) Pty Ltd for the provision, from late September 1999, of printing and distribution services for the next 3 years. The contract is delivering ongoing cost and quality improvements to ABS' publishing and distribution functions. While the total value of the contract each year is dependent upon the volume of work, it is estimated at about \$2.1m per year. At 30 June 2000, based on services provided since the contract commenced, savings to the ABS were estimated to be about \$250,000. These savings will be used to enhance electronic dissemination of ABS products.

Purchasing

ABS procurement activities represent an important part of our strategic focus, and where possible, purchases of significant items are either purchased through the Commonwealth's Endorsed Supplier Arrangements or through a competitive process to ensure value for money is realised. The ABS actively applies the Commonwealth's core purchasing policies and principles, and through this approach ensures participation of Australian and New Zealand enterprises and small/medium businesses.

Assets management

The ABS's operations are supported by a large asset base of internally generated software. Long term strategic planning and judicious management has ensured that these assets have supported the organisation well in achieving its outcomes. The ABS views its IT assets as another major resource for its business operations, and pursues a policy of ongoing management to ensure maximum value is received from these assets. Depreciation management forms an integral part of our Financial Management program. In accordance with government requirements, the ABS revalues all physical fixed assets such as property, plant and equipment on a three year cycle. Assets that have become obsolete, or excess to requirements, are disposed of.

The ABS considers its asset management program to be effective.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

Appendix 10

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 in the possession of the ABS

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, Media and Public Affairs, Client Services and Library Services components, described in detail in Chapter 7. The ABS has a wide range of statistical publications available for sale through its bookshops.

Other documents in the possession of the ABS are:

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

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 Australian Government Solicitor's Office.

The following table provides details of FOI activities during the years 1995–96 to 1999–2000 inclusive. Two requests were made to the ABS under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* during 1999–2000.

FOI ACTIVITIES, 1995–96 to 1999–2000 (number)

	1995–96	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000
Requests received for:					
Statistical information	1	1	—	—	—
Personal papers	—	1	—	—	—
Administrative documents	2	—	—	—	2
Total	3	2	0	0	2
Decisions made:					
Access granted in full	1	2	—	—	1
Access granted in part	—	—	—	—	1
Request transferred to another agency	—	—	—	—	—
Request withdrawn	1	—	—	—	—
Access refused	—	—	—	—	—
Documents not in existence	1	—	—	—	—
Total	3	2	0	0	2
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 02 6252 5557.

General Information

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

Central Office, Canberra

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: PO Box 10
Belconnen ACT 2616
Counter: Unit 5, Cameron Offices
Chandler Street
Belconnen

South Australia

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: GPO Box 2272
Adelaide SA 5001
Counter: 7th Floor East
Commonwealth Centre
55 Currie Street
Adelaide

New South Wales

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: GPO Box 796
Sydney NSW 1041
Counter: 5th Floor, St Andrew's House
Sydney Square
Sydney

Tasmania

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: GPO Box 66A
Hobart Tas 7001
Counter: Ground Floor
200 Collins Street
Hobart

Victoria

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: GPO Box 2796Y
Melbourne Vic 3001
Counter: Level 5,
Commercial Union Tower
485 La Trobe Street
Melbourne

Australian Capital Territory

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: PO Box 10
Belconnen ACT 2616
Counter: 5th Floor, QBE Insurance
Building
33–35 Ainslie Avenue
Canberra City

Queensland

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: GPO Box 9817
Brisbane Qld 4001
Counter: 18th Floor
313 Adelaide Street
Brisbane

Northern Territory

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: GPO Box 3796
Darwin NT 0801
Counter: 5th Floor, AANT Building
81 Smith Street
Darwin

Western Australia

Telephone: 1300 135070
Facsimile: 1300 135211
Mail: GPO Box K881
Perth WA 6001
Counter: Level 16, Exchange Plaza
2 The Esplanade
Perth

INQUIRIES BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES AND REPORTS BY AUDITOR GENERAL

Appendix 11

Listed below are inquiries by Parliamentary Committees which involved the ABS during 1999–2000, including a summary of significant comments and recommendations relating to the ABS and a summary of action taken by the ABS.

Parliamentary Committees

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Economics, Finance and Public Administration: Inquiry into the international financial market effects on government policy.

The ABS provided a submission to the Inquiry in July 1999. The Committee's report has yet to be finalised.

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs: Inquiry into the treatment of census forms.

The Government's response to the Committee's report entitled *Saving our census and preserving our history* was tabled in April 2000. The report recommended that name-identified information contained in future census forms be retained, but that these records be closed for a period of 99 years and access be granted in the 100th year.

The Government agreed that name-identified information from the 2001 Census would be retained, but only for those households who explicitly consent to their information being kept. The retention of census records from subsequent censuses will be addressed after the impact of this decision for the 2001 Census has been assessed. The necessary legislative changes to achieve this have been passed by both Houses of Parliament.

The Government did not support a recommendation by the Committee that during the closed access period, the Census records be accessed by the ABS for the purpose of certain epidemiological research.

Reports by Auditor General

There were no adverse reports or comments made by the Auditor General during 1999–2000.

DOCUMENTS TABLED IN PARLIAMENT

Appendix 12

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 1999–2000.

TABLING—PROPOSALS FOR COLLECTION OF INFORMATION FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES 1999–2000

<i>Date tabled(a)</i>	<i>Statistical collection(b)</i>
23 August 1999	Quarterly economic activity survey
23 August 1999	Population survey monitor 1999–2000
20 September 1999	New topics in the monthly population survey: Home security precautions (NSW); Population mobility (Vic.); Working hours of wage and salary earners (Qld); Crime and safety (WA); Balancing work and caring responsibilities (Tas.); Use of public transport and emergency services (ACT).
12 October 1999	Topic to be included as a supplement to the monthly population survey: 1999 Characteristics of small business survey
12 October 1999	Environment and natural resources survey
15 February 2000	2000–01 Freight movements survey
15 February 2000	Survey of employment arrangements and superannuation
15 February 2000	Survey of employee earnings and hours
5 April 2000	Topics to be included as supplement to the monthly population survey: home computers and children's participation in culture/leisure activities
5 April 2000	Internet activity survey
11 April 2000	Business technology survey
9 May 2000	Topic to be included as a supplement to the monthly population survey: work-related injuries
29 May 2000	Topic to be included as a supplement to the monthly population survey: locations of work
19 June 2000	1999–2000 Service industries surveys

(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*, details of the following disclosures of lists of names, addresses and other information to be provided to the specified Department or Authority, were tabled in both Houses of Parliament in 1999–2000.

TABLING—DISCLOSURE OF LISTS OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES, 1999–2000

<i>Date tabled(a)</i>	<i>Information released</i>
9 August 1999	Lists of names and addresses of businesses for the Department of Employment, Workplace Relations and Small Business
12 April 2000	Lists of agricultural establishments to the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics

(a) If the proposal was tabled on different dates in the two Houses of Parliament, the earlier of the two dates is shown.

DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION

Appendix 13

The Statistics Determination (Statutory Rules 1983 No. 19) made by the Minister under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, enables the Statistician to disclose certain classes of information. Disclosures of unidentifiable information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination are shown in the following table.

STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS—DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION, 1999–2000

<i>Survey title</i>	<i>Survey date</i>
Aspects of literacy survey	1996
Australian housing survey	1994
Australians' employment and unemployment patterns survey	1994–97
Business growth and performance survey	1994–95, 1995–96, 1996–97 (combined)
Business growth and performance survey	1994–95, 1995–96, 1996–97, 1997–98 (combined)
Census 1% sample file	1981
Census 1% sample file	1986
Census 1% sample file	1991
Census 1% sample file	1996
Child care survey	1993
Child care survey	1996
Disability, ageing and carers survey	1993
Disability, ageing and carers survey	1998
Education and training survey	1989
Education and training survey	1997
Families in Australia survey	1992
Household expenditure survey	1975–76
Household expenditure survey	1984
Household expenditure survey	1988–89
Household expenditure survey	1993–94
Income and housing costs survey	1994–95
Income and housing costs survey	1995–96
Income and housing costs survey	1996–97
Income and housing costs survey	1997–98
Income and housing costs and amenities survey	1989–90
Income and housing costs and amenities survey	1990 (additional items)
Labour mobility survey	1984
Labour mobility survey	1991
Labour mobility survey	1994
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey	1994
National health survey	1989–90
National health survey	1995
National health survey	1995 (Indigenous persons)
National nutrition survey	1995

...continued

**STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS—DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIABLE INFORMATION,
1999–2000—continued**

<i>Survey title</i>	<i>Survey date</i>
National survey of mental health and wellbeing of adults	1997
Population survey monitor	May 1998–February 1999 (combined)
Population survey monitor	November 1998–February 1999 (combined)
Population survey monitor	February 1999
Population survey monitor	May 1999
Population survey monitor	August 1999
Rental investors survey	1997
Rental tenants survey	1994
Retrenchment and redundancy survey	1997
Time use survey	1992
Time use survey	1997
Training and education survey	1993
Women's safety survey	1996

SUPPLEMENTARY TOPICS SURVEYED DURING 1999–2000

	<i>Survey topics</i>
National Surveys	Job Search Experience of Unemployed Persons Multiple Job Holding (core items) Weekly Earnings of Employees Employment Benefits (core and non-core items) Trade Union Membership Persons Not in the Labour Force Underemployment Participation in Education Characteristics of Migrants Characteristics of Small Business Owners Labour Mobility Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Identification Waste Management, Transport and Motor Vehicle Usage Home Computers Children's Participation in Culture/Leisure Activities Transition from Education to Work Locations of Work
State/Territory Surveys	NSW—Security precautions taken by households Vic—The mobile population—Reasons for moving to and around Victoria Qld—Working hours of wage and salary earners WA—Crime and safety Tas—Balancing work and caring responsibilities ACT—Public transport patterns and emergency services

TOPICS SURVEYED DURING 1999–2000

	<i>Survey topics</i>
August 1999	Consumer expectations Environment Physical activity Emergency services Household appliances and energy Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Housing Organ donation Work in Culture/Leisure Activities Occupational Health and Safety Immunisation
November 1999	Consumer expectations Physical activity Emergency services Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Organ donation Occupational Health and Safety Immunisation
February 2000	Physical activity Emergency services Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Occupational Health and Safety Voluntary work Donations
May 2000	Physical activity Emergency services Satisfaction with police services Household use of information technology Occupational Health and Safety Voluntary work Donations

PROFESSIONAL PAPERS BY ABS OFFICERS

Appendix 16

Officers of the ABS prepared the following professional papers which were presented or published between 1 July 1999 and 30 June 2000.

- Sarah Coleman *Producing environmental protection expenditures—an application of SERIEE in Australia.* Presented to the Joint ECE/Eurostat Work Session on Methodological Issues of Environment Statistics in Jerusalem, Israel, 11–14 October 1999.
- Steve Crabb and Paul Sutcliffe *Use of business income tax data to extend the information available from the ABS Economy Wide Economic Activity Survey.* Presented to the Second International Conference on Establishment Surveys (ICES), Buffalo, N.Y., 17–21 June 2000.
- Dick Crockett *Communicating with external customers—ABS.* Presented to the United States Bureau of the Census' Roundtable on Marketing and Data Dissemination, Washington, 4–5 April 2000.
- Derick Cullen *New and changed demand for financial statistics from the perspective of a statistical agency.* Presented to the Regional and Technical Assistance Workshop 5869: Strengthening and Collection of Financial and Monetary Statistics Inception Workshop, Manila, 4–6 April 2000.
- Derick Cullen *Revision of national financial accounts of Australia.* Presented to the OECD Working Party on Financial Statistics, Paris, 14 October 1999.
- Derick Cullen *Uses of financial accounts in Australia.* Presented to the OECD Working Party on Financial Statistics, Paris, 14 October 1999.
- Rob Edwards *Some critical problems in economic statistics: a progress report.* Presented to the International Statistical Institute, 52nd Session, Helsinki, 10–18 August 1999.
- Peter Foley, Don Bartley and Alan Mackay *A common mechanism for the exchange of classifications for development purposes: the use of XML.* Presented to the Meeting of the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications, New York, 15–17 November 1999.
- Christina Jackson *Concepts, sources and methods for Australia's water account.* Presented to the Subregional Training Workshop on Environmental Statistics, Bangkok, 8–19 May 2000.
- Christina Jackson *Development of mineral accounts in Australia.* Presented to the Subregional Training Workshop on Environmental Statistics, Bangkok, 8–19 May 2000.

- Christina Jackson *Energy and emission accounts.* Presented to the Subregional Training Workshop on Environmental Statistics, Bangkok, 8–19 May 2000.
- Ross Johnson and Neil Mclean *Using the ABS in the Classroom.* Presented to the 17th Biennial Conference of the Australian Association of Mathematical Teachers Inc., Adelaide, 11–15 January 1999.
- Sue Lee *An investigation to assess the feasibility of producing service population estimates for selected LGAs.* Presented to the Australian and New Zealand Population Workshop, Perth, 10–12 November 1999.
- Alan Mackay *Reviewing and redeveloping the international standard industrial classification.* Presented to the Meeting of the Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications, New York, 15–17 November 1999.
- Eddie Maitland *Recent Australian Bureau of Statistics initiatives in the development of reliable measures of the freight task in Australia.* Presented to the 23rd Australasian Transport Research Forum, Perth, 29 September–1 October 1999.
- Marion McEwin *The global statistical system: roles and realities in measuring human development.* Presented to the Symposium of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia, Canberra, 8 November 1999.
- David McGeachie *Defining E-Commerce.* Presented to the International Statistical Institute Cutting Edge Conference on the Measurement of Electronic Commerce, Singapore, 6–8 December 1999.
- Richard McKenzie *A framework for priority contact of non respondents.* Presented to the Second International Conference on Establishment Surveys (ICES), Buffalo, N.Y., 17–21 June 2000.
- Horst Peemoeller *Improved estimates in survey processing—a metadata approach.* Presented to the SAS User Group Asia Pacific Meeting SUGA '99, Sydney, 20–22 September 1999.
- Tim Power *Electronic commerce statistics collected by the ABS and methodological issues encountered.* Presented to the International Statistical Institute Cutting Edge Conference on the Measurement of Electronic Commerce, Singapore, 6–8 December 1999.
- Sheridan Roberts and Tim Power *Challenges and lessons learnt in measuring Internet commerce.* Presented to the OECD Working Party on Indicators for the Information Society, Paris, 26–28 April 2000.

- Sheridan Roberts *Developing a common methodology for ICT usage in households.* Presented to the OECD Working Party on Indicators for the Information Society, Paris, 26–28 April 2000.
- Sheridan Roberts *Government use of ICT surveys in Australia.* Presented to the OECD Working Party on Indicators for the Information Society, Paris, 26–28 April 2000.
- Geoff Robertson,
Fiona Grandy and
Marion McEwin *Use of social accounting techniques to estimate the distribution of household wealth.* Presented to the Siena Group Meeting, Maastricht, The Netherlands, 23–26 May 2000.
- Kate Ross *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.* Presented to the ‘Our Women, Our Future : Aboriginal Women and Torres Strait Islander Women in the New Millenium’, National Workshop, Gold Coast, 10–12 November 1999.
- Judy Schneider *Application of the newly developed budget standards in Australia.* Presented to the Third Meeting of the Rio Group (UN Expert Group on Poverty Statistics) at Lisbon, Portugal, 22–24 November 1999.
- Dennis Scoble *An approximate answer to the right question—that may be all that you need: a case study.* Presented to the Market Research Society of Australia, Western Australian Branch Annual Conference, Perth, 29 July 1999.
- Tim Skinner *Gender statistics: the Australian experience.* Presented to the ESCAP Working Group of Statistical Experts, Bangkok, Thailand, 23–26 November 1999.
- Tim Skinner *National progress indicators.* Presented to the ESCAP Working Group of Statistical Experts, Bangkok, Thailand, 23–26 November 1999.
- Carol Soloff *The 1998 Australian Bureau of Statistics National Crime and Safety Survey.* Presented to the Australian Institute of Criminology and Victims Referral and Assistance Service Conference ‘Restoration for Victims of Crime: Contemporary Challenges’, Melbourne, 9–10 September 1999.
- Carol Soloff *The 1998 Australian Bureau of Statistics National Crime and Safety Survey.* Presented to the Australian Crime Prevention Council’s 19th Biennial & World Conference ‘Preventing Crime: Myths and Realities: Community Safety, Crime Prevention Models, Strategies and Alliances’, Melbourne, 17–20 October 1999.
- Paul Sutcliffe and
Geoff Lee *Strategies at the Australian Bureau of Statistics for using imperfect registers effectively.* Presented to the Second International Conference on Establishment Surveys (ICES), Buffalo, New York, 17–21 June 2000.

- Siu-Ming Tam *The (attitudinal) question is: to filter or not to filter.* Presented to the International Statistical Institute, 52nd Session, Helsinki, 10–18 August 1999.
- Dennis Trewin *Increasing women's participation in statistics—does it matter?* Presented to the International Statistical Institute, 52nd Session, Helsinki, 10–18 August 1999.
- Barbara Vernon *Producing national estimates of environmental protection expenditure: the application of PAC and SERIEE in Australia.* Presented to the Subregional Training Workshop on Environmental Statistics, Bangkok, 8–19 May 2000.
- Barbara Vernon and Kate Maguire *Local government: a major player in environmental protection.* Published in Australian Local Government Handbook, 2000.
- Andrew Webster *Policy implications: the analysis of time use patterns in Australia.* Presented to the ESCAP Time Use Seminar, Ahmedabad, India, 7–10 December 1999.
- Fred Wensing and Eden Brinkley *Five year's experience with CAI and Blaise.* Presented to the International Blaise Users Conference 2000, Cork, Ireland, 10–12 May 2000.
- Leonie Wing *Statistics across Australia—today and tomorrow: the ABS experience and options.* Presented to the Public Libraries National Conference, Perth, Western Australia, 14–17 November 1999.

SPECIAL ARTICLES IN EARLIER ANNUAL REPORTS Appendix 17

Special articles have been included in most ABS annual reports to present information and views on important longer-term or broad issues affecting the national 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).

Review of the ABS Household Survey Program (1998–99; chapter 2).

ABS Experience in Workplace Relations (1998–99; chapter 3).

ESTIMATES OF COST BY OUTPUT AND COMPONENT

Appendix 18

ESTIMATES OF COST BY OUTPUT AND COMPONENT, 1999–2000 (\$'000)

<i>Program components</i>	<i>Direct Costs</i>	<i>Allocated Costs</i>	<i>Full Costs</i>	
	(A)	(B)	(A+B=C)	%(b)
Economic Statistics Output				
National Accounts	4 389	5 130	9 519	4.3
International Accounts	4 090	4 169	8 259	3.7
International Trade	2 122	3 326	5 448	2.5
Financial Accounts	1 957	2 008	3 965	1.8
Public Sector Accounts	3 801	3 321	7 122	3.2
Prices	7 626	7 840	15 466	7.0
Business Statistics	2 831	3 828	6 659	3.0
Economy Wide Statistics	2 731	4 477	7 208	3.2
Small Business Statistics(a)	468	605	1 073	0.5
Science and Technology(a)	1 985	2 715	4 700	2.1
Agriculture	3 035	5 150	8 185	3.7
Mining	543	1 028	1 571	0.7
Manufacturing	2 992	4 023	7 015	3.2
Construction	2 760	3 077	5 837	2.6
Transport	2 642	3 087	5 729	2.6
Service Industries	7 078	10 860	17 938	8.1
Tourism	882	856	1 738	0.8
Environment	1 007	1 262	2 269	1.0
Statistical Consultancy	707	1 094	1 801	0.8
Statistical Coordination	465	530	995	0.4
Australian Economic Indicators	267	748	1 015	0.4
Statistical Services and User Liaison	4 400	4 109	8 509	3.8
<i>Total Economic Statistics Output</i>	<i>58 778</i>	<i>73 243</i>	<i>132 021</i>	<i>59.4</i>
Population and Social Statistics Output				
Census	14 163	19 203	33 366	n/a
Demography	2 844	4 141	6 985	3.2
Labour Statistics	10 747	32 900	43 647	19.6
Social Statistics	6 960	17 602	24 562	11.1
National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics	4 388	5 137	9 525	4.3
Geography	2 604	2 815	5 419	2.4
<i>Total Population and Social Statistics Output</i>	<i>41 706</i>	<i>81 798</i>	<i>123 504</i>	<i>40.6</i>
<i>Total ABS Outputs excluding Census(b)</i>	<i>86 321</i>	<i>135 838</i>	<i>222 159</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Total ABS Outputs</i>	<i>100 484</i>	<i>155 041</i>	<i>255 525</i>	<i>—</i>

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

ESTIMATES OF COST BY OUTPUT AND COMPONENT, 1999–2000 (\$'000) — *continued*

<i>Program components</i>	<i>Direct Costs</i>	<i>Allocated Costs</i>	<i>Full Costs</i>	
	(A)	(B)	(A+B=C)	%(b)
Corporate and Statistical Support				
Mathematical Statistics	4 303	-4 303	-	-
Business Frames and Large Business(a)	9 746	-9 746	-	-
Taxation Reform	808	-808	-	-
Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis	2 099	-2 099	-	-
Economic Standards	1 342	-1 342	-	-
Population Statistics Standards	1 668	-1 668	-	-
Population Surveys	24 609	-24 609	-	-
Dissemination(a)	13 402	-13 402	-	-
Marketing and Public Affairs	3 560	-3 560	-	-
Client Services(a)	1 793	-1 793	-	-
Library Services	1 831	-1 831	-	-
Information Technology Bureau(c)	301	-301	-	-
Technology Application(c)	873	-873	-	-
Data Management(a)	3 947	-3 947	-	-
Technology Research	1 242	-1 242	-	-
SPEED(a)	1 539	-1 539	-	-
Executive	5 586	-5 586	-	-
Human Resources Management(d)	15 923	-15 923	-	-
Financial Resources(d)	45 078	-45 078	-	-
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	1 587	-1 587	-	-
International Relations	826	-826	-	-
Economic Statistics Group Support	4 627	-4 627	-	-
Population Statistics Group Support	3 268	-3 268	-	-
Methodology Division Business Office	900	-900	-	-
Information Services Division Business Office	1 553	-1 553	-	-
Technology Services Division Support	936	-936	-	-
Corporate Services Division Support	1 694	-1 694	-	-
<i>Total Statistical Support</i>	<i>155 041</i>	<i>-155 041</i>	-	-
Program total	255 525	0	255 525	

(a) The program structure is slightly different from last year. Some areas of Client Services are now classified under Dissemination; part of Small Business Statistics is now classified under Science and Technology; Business Frames and Large Business includes Business Methods and Business Register which were shown separately last year; SPEED and Data Management have additional components this year. (b) The cost of the Population Census component varies so widely over the five 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. (c) The majority of costs of this component were directly charged to other components and are not included here. (d) Includes corporately managed expenses.

COMPLIANCE INDEX

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RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PROGRAM AND OUTCOME STRUCTURE

Appendix 20

The following table maps the old ABS program structure (under the former program management and budgeting framework) against the current outcome/output structure, adopted in 1999–2000 for accrual budgeting and reporting purposes.

<p style="text-align: center;">1998—99 Program Management and Budgeting Framework</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">1999—2000 Outcomes and Outputs Framework</p>
<p>Program—Australian Bureau of Statistics To assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community by providing a high quality, user oriented and dynamic statistical service.</p> <p>Sub-programs Sub-program 1—Statistical Operations Sub-program 2—Corporate Services</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>Outputs Output 1—Economic Statistics Output 2—Population and Social Statistics</p>

This Appendix outlines the performance of the ABS in 1999–2000, in terms of its outcomes and outputs.

ABS 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.

OUTCOME MEASURES

1: Integrity in statistical operations

Performance Indicator 1.1: An objective statistical service

- release of reliable/accurate statistics
- open statistical process
- adherence to the secrecy provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act*

It is vitally important that governments and the community perceive the ABS to have integrity in its statistical operations. The ABS engenders trust in its integrity in a number of ways. The statistics legislation ensures the independent, apolitical nature of the ABS statistical operation. All ABS statistical data, analyses and interpretations are made as accurate as possible, by following rigorous statistical frameworks, standards and methodologies. The ABS is open about its statistical processes, including among other things, the adoption of predetermined release dates and times, the publication of statistical and analytical methodologies, and the protection of the secrecy of collected data.

The following comments address particular aspects of the integrity of ABS statistical operations:

Reliable and accurate statistics

The ABS has released reliable and accurate statistics that assist informed policy decision-making.

Open statistical process

The Australian Statistician determines which statistics are to be collected, after full discussion with users, clients and ASAC. The ABS Forward Work Program has been published, describing for each ABS program the resources, outputs, clients and uses of the statistical information, and the main medium term developments.

The ABS has published information about new statistical standards, frameworks, concepts, sources and methodologies in a range of information papers and other publications in hard copy, or electronically. Their publication is one element of ensuring that the public are informed about the statistical process. The specific publications are listed in this Annual Report.

The ABS advertised all scheduled release dates for publications up to twelve months in advance. Daily press and media releases inform users of publications being released each day. This information is also available on the website. Major releases, such as the main economic indicators, are scheduled and coordinated carefully to ensure that key users are able to interpret them in a timely manner. Release of all publications is subject to a strict embargo policy that ensures impartiality, an essential element of integrity.

Adherence to the secrecy provisions of the Census and Statistics Act

Pages 14–15 provide detailed commentary on the secrecy obligations of ABS staff under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. There have been no breaches of ABS fidelity and secrecy undertakings. The ABS audits the use of confidentialised unit record files to ensure that the respondent's privacy, and the secrecy of their information, are fully protected.

2: Relevance of ABS output

Performance Indicator 2.1: Statistical output which meets the needs of key users of economic and social data in terms of:

- coverage
- delivery method
- demonstrated by a high level of use

The ABS must produce relevant statistics, so that the right data are available at the right moment, for decision makers, and to inform community debate. The relevance of ABS statistical outputs is determined by questioning whether data fits the intended or actual use by key users. Users needs for statistical data are determined through their involvement in the ABS planning processes. The coverage of official statistics, and how best to disseminate these statistics to ensure they are accessible to governments and the community, are identified in the planning processes.

The following comments address particular issues relating to the relevance of ABS statistical output:

Coverage

The ABS provides official statistics across a wide range of economic and social matters, for government, business and the Australian community. Page 3 notes that collections undertaken by the ABS include the five yearly Census of Population and Housing, monthly and quarterly surveys providing key economic indicators, and less frequent collections from industry and households that provide users with information on specific economic and social issues. The ABS also works in cooperation with other Commonwealth, State and Territory agencies, to release statistics collected as a by-product of administrative systems.

Chapters 5 and 6 contain detailed information about the many components of the ABS work program, and improvements to the coverage of official statistics.

Delivery method

The ABS delivers results from all statistical collections, as soon as practicable after the reference period, and makes them available to all users. ABS publications are provided at no cost to media organisations, and the principal results from ABS publications are highlighted daily in the print and electronic media, and on the ABS website. A core set of statistics is available through public, technical and tertiary libraries across Australia. Complimentary copies of ABS publications are provided to Parliamentarians. The ABS@ and AusStats subscription services provide users with ready access to ABS publications, and to a range of multidimensional data sets in electronic format.

Pages 96–101 discuss achievements during the year in dissemination of statistics.

High level of use

Use of ABS statistical information continued to increase in 1999–2000. As an example, the ABS website is one of the most accessed websites in Australia. Increasing usage can be attributed to both the expanded content on the website, and increasing user demand for electronic access to information. Theme and State pages provide users with easy access to statistical resources related to subjects such as education services, environment and families. The new website-based AusStats service provides subscribers with easy access to ABS publications, time series tables and Census community profiles. An agreement with the Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee (AVCC) delivers AusStats access to Australian universities for academic and teaching purposes via that service. These strategies allow for a high level of use of ABS statistical information.

Pages 84–85 provide detailed information on the use of ABS statistical information.

Performance Indicator 2.2: Effectiveness of planning process

Pages 9–10 present a comprehensive discussion of the features of the ABS planning process. It explains the close consultation with stakeholders about their statistical needs, and how these discussions form one input to preparation of a detailed annual forward work program. The external dialogue which forms such an important element of the ABS planning process is critical to ensuring the relevance of ABS statistical output.

3: Appropriate use of statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies

Performance Indicator 3.1: Lead the development of national statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies, and their implementation within the broader Australian statistical system

The ABS leads the development and implementation of national statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies, which are applied, as appropriate, to all ABS statistical collections, including business and household surveys. A number of publications outlining statistical standards were issued during the course of the year.

The ABS is active in encouraging other Commonwealth and State Government agencies to adopt these standards, frameworks and methodologies in their statistical activities. For example, page 21 discusses features of the successful trial of administrative data protocols undertaken by the ABS South Australian Regional Office with SA State Government agencies. These protocols: set out obligations and responsibilities with respect to the statistical data that administering agencies hold; provide an impetus for greater access to such data; and allow for greater exploitation of the data for statistical purposes.

Page 46 identifies ABS leadership in developing partnerships with State Government agencies to apply such standards to better exploit administrative data for statistical purposes.

Performance Indicator 3.2: Contribute to the development of key international statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies, and implement them as appropriate

The ABS is an active member of the international statistical community, contributing significantly to the development of key international statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies, and their implementation, where appropriate, in Australia.

Pages 27–30 provide a comprehensive analysis and review of the Bureau's contributions to various international fora in this field.

4: Improve coordination of the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics produced by other official bodies

Performance Indicator 4.1: Statistical Clearing House (SCH) activity

The primary objective of the Statistical Clearing House is to reduce the reporting burden placed on business providers by Commonwealth agencies. The SCH pays particular attention to eliminating duplication in business surveys, and ensures that surveys conducted follow good statistical methodologies and practices.

Pages 10–11 discuss the review processes undertaken by the Statistical Clearing House during the course of the year, and comments on the status of its other operations.

Performance Indicator 4.2: Assisting other official bodies with integration of administrative and statistical data, including outposting ABS officers and providing training on statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies

The ABS continues to broaden the concept of ABS statistical responsibilities to include not only statistics collected by the ABS, but also data produced or (potentially) available from other government and non-government agencies. The ABS provides leadership to Commonwealth and State agencies in making better use of their administrative data so that it can provide another source of quality data for statistical purposes. The ABS encourages agencies to adopt a holistic approach to improving the quality of statistics available to users through the application of similar methodologies to administrative and statistical data.

The ABS outposts statistical officers to State and Federal Government departments and agencies to facilitate access to, and understanding of, statistics, and to strengthen statistical coordination across these bodies. Eight Commonwealth agencies were assisted by outposted statistical officers during 1999–2000. ABS regional offices provide outposted officers, usually in the form of short term secondments, to give statistical and technical assistance in particular projects undertaken by State and Territory Governments.

Pages 41–43 discuss the issue of providing assistance to official bodies in integrating administrative and other data to provide enhanced regional data.

Page 71 outlines key achievements in assisting State and Territory Government agencies through statistical consultation, statistical analysis, modelling of existing ABS or client data, and statistical training or seminars for clients and users.

Pages 76, and 78–81 outline ABS initiatives in integrating administrative and other data in Demography, Social Statistics, and in ABS National Centres for Indigenous, crime and recreation statistics.

Performance Indicator 4.3: Identifying, storing, and disseminating statistics from other official bodies

The ABS plays a significant role in identifying, storing and disseminating statistics from other official bodies.

Page 21 notes the ABS is developing a Regional Administrative Data Set (RADS) to manage and disseminate a range of administrative data from Commonwealth agencies, enabling the ABS to develop a set of statistical indicators which will provide a more finely textured view of social and economic conditions and population characteristics at small area levels.

Pages 80–81 outline the functions and achievements in the identification, storage and dissemination of statistics by the ABS National Centres for Crime and Justice Statistics, Culture and Recreation Statistics, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics. Pages 44–45 discuss similar functions carried out through the Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB).

OUTPUT MEASURES

5: Increase the quantity of output, including improving client access to ABS and other statistical information by improving dissemination methods

Performance Indicator 5.1: Increase the range of statistics disseminated

The Information Products section of Chapter 2 presents details of important new ABS publications, expansions in the data released in existing publications, and electronic releases during 1999–2000 (pages 16–19). The Statistical Developments section of Chapter 2 reviews key ABS initiatives and developments that will increase the range of statistics available to inform users (pages 20–25). For example, new statistics were released for finance, information technology, and environment and energy.

Pages 39–47 outline key initiatives in servicing regional data requirements, as well as describing some of the wide range of information available from the ABS on regional issues.

Performance Indicator 5.2: Develop new products and services

Chapter 2, Information Products (page 19) notes that the ABS developed several new electronic products and services during 1999–2000 including: a range of statistical directories for mining, tourism and transport; the expanded Statistical Concepts Library on the website; the *TranStats99* CD-ROM product; and providing, through the AVCC, the AusStats service to Australian universities for academic and teaching purposes. The ABS centralised its Telephone Inquiry Service to improve the provision of rapid, free access to statistics for callers.

Pages 44–45 discuss the ongoing development of regional profiles and the Regional Statistics page on the ABS website.

Performance Indicator 5.3: Ensure public accessibility through libraries, media, etc.

The ABS provides free access to much of its data through the ABS website, public libraries, media releases, media enquiries, and the distribution of ABS reports to media offices and to Members of Parliament. Pages 84–86, 96–99 and 101 provide further information on the distribution and accessibility of ABS information.

Performance Indicator 5.4: Enhance delivery options using new technology to improve accessibility

ABS promotes the use of new technology to enhance delivery options and to improve accessibility to ABS statistics. Page 3 identifies the introduction of the ABS@ and AusStats services, and page 26 notes the redevelopment of the Integrated Regional Data Base as major new technologies to improve accessibility. Other strategies discussed include enhancements to the ABS website, and email subscriptions to ABS publications.

Pages 96–97, 100–101, and 104 provide more detail on enhanced delivery options adopted by the ABS to improve user accessibility to statistical information.

6: Improve the quality of outputs

Performance Indicator 6.1: Achieve or exceed timeliness, statistical reliability, response rate and accuracy objectives

Timeliness

The timeliness of ongoing series is measured by the gap between the reference period and the date of publication of results. For ad hoc surveys, it is measured by the length of time between receiving a serious request for development of a survey, and the publication of the results.

Page 87 presents information on timeliness for ABS monthly, quarterly and annual publications for main economic indicator statistics, and other general releases. It indicates that the ABS has improved the timeliness of its publications from the standards achieved in 1997–98.

Statistical reliability

One measurable component of reliability is revisability. Revisability is defined as the stability of an estimate, and is measured by the size and frequency of the revision of the estimate over time. The ABS aims to minimise revisions as much as possible through effective sample and methodological design. Information on the level of revisions for particular series is available on request.

Response rates

All ABS outputs achieve or better the response rates specified by the output areas. The response rates for individual surveys are released in the relevant publications.

Accuracy

All ABS outputs maintain high levels of accuracy in all tables, graphs and text. It is ABS policy that all relative standard errors are included in survey publications, and that there is a description of other types of errors that outputs may be subject to.

Performance Indicator 6.2: Conduct quality reviews, and implement their recommendations

The ABS reviews its statistical collections regularly to ensure that its statistics are of good quality. Some reviews cover all aspects of a particular collection, from user requirements, through to data collection, processing, analysis and dissemination. Other reviews focus on particular elements of collections, such as the methodology.

1999–2000 statistical reviews included: data collections from regulated financial institutions (page 60); ABS business size classification (page 63); engineering construction methodology (page 66); the 1996 Census output program (page 74); job vacancies and overtime statistics (page 78); and the household survey program (page 79). Recommendations from these reviews have been implemented where appropriate.

7: Achievement of cost effective outputs

Performance Indicator 7.1: Conduct efficiency reviews and audits, and implement their recommendations

Pages 6–8 discuss the role of the ABS Audit Committee, the nature of internal and external scrutiny of ABS operations, and presents information on the compliance and performance audits undertaken, or commenced, during the year.

Performance Indicator 7.2: Test operating efficiencies of statistical activities by benchmarking internally and externally

Pages 48–54 present a comprehensive analysis of benchmarking of ABS statistical activities with overseas organisations, Commonwealth agencies, and within the ABS itself.

Performance Indicator 7.3: Market test a number of non-statistical activities to identify possible outsourcing opportunities

Page 181 outlines the results of the recent competitive tendering process which resulted in the outsourcing of the ABS printing and distribution services. ABS is currently benchmarking several corporate service functions with a view to market testing and outsourcing as appropriate (page 53).

Performance Indicator 7.4: Continual reductions in the aggregate load placed on all businesses.

Pages 11–12 present comprehensive information about the ongoing reductions in the provider load imposed on business. The 1999–2000 provider load is estimated at 415,000 hours, and represents a decrease of 4.2% on the 1998–99 load. While the overall reduction is cyclical, depending on the collections undertaken in a particular year, the overall trend in provider load shows a significant reduction, with an estimated 38% reduction since 1995–96.

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