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**Annual Report**  
**2002-03**

Australian Bureau of Statistics

Annual Report  
2002–03

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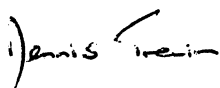
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Senator the Hon. Ian Campbell  
Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer

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 2003.

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 stylized flourish at the end.

Dennis Trewin  
Australian Statistician

1 September 2003



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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 web site <<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

The 2002–03 ABS Annual Report is located at:

<<http://www.abs.gov.au>>.

## **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.*

# **SECTION I**

## **SUMMARY OF OPERATIONS**

**Chapter 1 — Executive Summary**

**Chapter 2 — How the ABS Operates**

# 1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## INTRODUCTION

The year 2002–03 was a most successful one for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS). In fulfilling its obligations as Australia's national statistical office, the ABS has maintained an enviable reputation as one of the world's leading statistical organisations. The past year has seen a significant increase in the range of statistical information produced by the ABS, and a number of initiatives to improve the quality of the information released. The quality of statistical information produced by the ABS is extremely important. This was reiterated by the Prime Minister in a speech to the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth in July 2002 where he stated "One of the things you find in government is that no amount of goodwill is enough, no amount of good policy direction is enough, unless you have accurate information at your disposal."

Some of the key statistical and organisational issues and outcomes for the ABS during the year include:

- the progressive release of the suite of publications and products from the 2001 Census, including:
  - Social Atlases for each of the capital cities
  - CDATA 2001, which allows data users to analyse and map census data
  - CLIB2001, a product designed for libraries and available both on CD-ROM and on the Internet
  - a range of community profile data, available free of charge on the ABS web site
- the establishment of the Remote Access Data Laboratory, an online database query system that enables users to run statistical queries on ABS Confidentialised Unit Record Files via a secure web site link
- continued upgrades to the ABS web site including improved useability and an increased amount of data available free of charge
- significant progress in assisting Commonwealth and state agencies to make better use of their administrative data holdings as part of the development of the National Statistical Service
- a strong focus on state/territory data needs through the State Statistical Forum and close cooperative working arrangements with state/territory governments
- the establishment of an Ageing Statistics Unit and a Children and Youth Statistics Unit to provide statistical leadership and focus on these important population groups

- the development and expansion of information focusing on environmental issues including results from a survey of salinity on farms
- the implementation of the Business Statistics Innovation Program with the objective of improving the overall cost-effectiveness of the economic statistics program through organisational, technological and methodological changes
- successful negotiation with staff of a new Certified Agreement for the period 2003–2006
- publication of a range of satellite accounts covering Nonprofit Institutions, Tourism and Information and Communication Technology which provide detailed information on the economic impact of these sectors
- publishing of *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia — A Framework for Education and Training Statistics* (cat. no. 4213.0), which has been developed to assist relevant bodies and agencies to determine their information requirements and assist in data collection and analysis
- the release of *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0)
- the conduct of the 2002 Indigenous Social Survey, the first such survey since the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey
- hosting an international conference on developments for the next round of censuses
- significant contribution to the international statistical arena, and extensive technical assistance to a number of statistical agencies in the Asia-Pacific region.

These developments are expanded upon further below.

The above outcomes could not have been achieved without the hard work, professionalism and dedication of the staff of the ABS. I wish to record my sincere appreciation for their efforts during 2002–03.

The other important ingredient to the success of the ABS is the continuing cooperation of businesses, households and others who provide the data which form the basis of the statistics produced. The ABS makes a considerable effort in ensuring that we have the trust and confidence of our data providers, without which the provision of a quality statistical service would be jeopardised. I would once again like to convey my thanks to all businesses and households that have assisted us in our task by providing the data we need to deliver a quality statistical service to policy-makers, researchers, analysts and the community at large.

## STATISTICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN 2002–03

A major activity for the ABS in 2002–03 was the release and dissemination of the suite of products from the 2001 Census. A major highlight was the national launch in October 2002 of the 2001 Census Social Atlas series. The atlases provide a rich source of information on the social, economic and demographic characteristics of each capital city. The series was launched in Perth by the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer, Senator the Hon. Ian Campbell with the release of the Perth and Sydney Social Atlases. The launch was particularly successful and innovative with live images beamed from Perth to waiting media in Sydney. Other major products released during the year were the key electronic releases of CDATE 2001 and CLIB2001, while community profiles were provided free of charge on the ABS web site.

The release of the final 2001 Census data also resulted in the release of revised estimated resident populations for all states and territories for the period September quarter 1996 to June quarter 2001, and the rebasing of estimates for subsequent periods. The revisions to population estimates always attract interest due to the political and financial implications and a special article describing the processes involved in determining the estimated resident population appears in Chapter 4.

The ABS continued to expand its analytical capability in 2002–03 with a number of significant research projects completed during the year. Some of the more significant outcomes included estimates of the distribution of household wealth and the value of Australia's human capital, as well as a number of reviews of the predictive performance of various ABS leading indicators, such as job vacancies and business expectations. Other important work undertaken during the year included the updating and review of socioeconomic indexes for areas, due to be published in late 2003, and research into a range of issues affecting price indexes and measures of industry multifactor productivity.

During 2002–03 the ABS used the national accounts satellite account concept to highlight the contribution of a number of key sectors in the Australian economy. In November 2002 *Australian National Accounts: Non-Profit Institutions Satellite Account* (cat. no. 5256.0) was published for the first time. The publication is designed to provide a more comprehensive picture of the nonprofit sector than what is available in the national accounts. The ABS is the first national statistical office to publish such an account. In June 2003 the ABS published the 2001–02 edition *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (cat. no. 5249.0). In addition to these two publications a feature article was published in the December quarter 2002 *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (cat. no. 5206.0) detailing work on an Information and Communication Technology satellite account.

Other feature articles published in the quarterly national accounts publication (cat. no. 5206.0) included an assessment of the impact of the drought on agricultural production in the national accounts, accounting for the environment in the national accounts, and a quality assessment of the national accounts against the International Monetary Fund's Data Quality Assessment Framework.



*Dennis Trewin (left), with Senator the Hon. Ian Campbell (middle) and Western Australia Regional Director, Col Nagle, celebrating a successful launch of the Census Social Atlas series, in Perth.*



A number of feature articles were also published in *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (cat. no. 5422.0) including experimental statistics on Australia's exporters and importers and their characteristics, as well as an analysis of the export and import currencies used for merchandise trade. Also published in the September quarter 2002 *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (cat. no. 5302.0) was a feature article on the characteristics of foreign ownership of equity.

A feature article which presented living cost indexes for selected Australian household types was published in the December 2002 edition of *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0). This article provided indexes for the Australian household types — employees, aged pensioners, other government transfer recipients, and self-funded retirees.

A particular focus of the ABS in the past few years has been an expansion in the use of administrative by-product data. Among other things, the use of administrative data has had an influence in reducing the reporting load on businesses in the past few years. Increasing use of administrative data has also assisted the ABS in producing new and innovative statistics and publications by enriching the data sources available. The previously mentioned article on Australia's exporters and importers in the *International Merchandise Trade* publication is of particular significance given that the statistics are derived from administrative data sourced from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) and the Australian Customs Service. Another set of statistics based on administrative data is contained in the publication *Experimental Estimates, Regional Small Business Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 5675.0) released in 2002–03, which draws on ATO information to present small business estimates by industry division at statistical division, state and national level.

The ABS has developed an input data warehouse which incorporates a range of business taxation data in a confidential environment. It was established with a view to enhancing the possibility for confronting and analysing data and rationalising the reporting load on business. Other initiatives for reducing reporting load during 2002–03 included the transfer of a number of financial sector collections to the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority in place of collections previously run by the ABS and the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), and the cessation of the Business Expectations Survey. Reporting load on small businesses has also been reduced for a number of the annual industry collections such as mining and manufacturing through the use of business income tax data sourced from the ATO. During 2002–03 the ABS also undertook some focus studies with small–medium businesses to better understand the issues relating to provider load. One of the observations from that exercise was the need to give something back to business. In response the ABS provided a range of relevant census outputs to all small–medium businesses included in ABS collections.

The ABS has moved to incorporate the Australian Business Register, the whole of government register of businesses, as the principal source of update for the majority of businesses on the ABS Business Register. In addition, the Australian Business Number unit will be adopted as the principal statistical unit for the majority of businesses. These initiatives will lead to the opportunity for enhanced integration of data on business from diverse sources, and make it easier for businesses to complete ABS questionnaires.

During 2002–03 the ABS continued to expand the range of environmental information in response to ongoing demand. Two new publications were released: *Salinity on Australian Farms* (cat. no. 4615.0) and *Environment by Numbers: Selected Articles on Australia's Environment* (cat. no. 4617.0). *Salinity on Australian Farms* presents information from the land management and salinity survey, conducted in 2002, which collected information from farmers on the extent of land showing signs of salinity as well as the strategies used by farmers to manage and prevent salinity. The ABS will be conducting an annual survey of the agricultural sector to address mainly natural resource management issues with the first survey to be conducted in respect of 2002–03. The survey will address different issues each year, with water issues being the focus in this initial year. The ABS has also developed an energy survey which will gather information on energy supply and use by Australian businesses. Data will be available by fuel type for most industries at the state and national level in early 2004.

An experimental framework for measuring the Knowledge-based Economy and Society, *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0) was released in August 2002. The aim of the framework is to enable assessment, through the use of relevant statistics, of the degree to which Australia is a knowledge-based economy and society.

A range of service industry publications were published in 2002–03. These included *Accounting Practices, Australia* (cat. no. 8668.0), *Market Research Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8556.0), *Consultant Engineering Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8693.0) and *Legal Practices, Australia* (cat. no. 8667.0).

The ABS is actively planning for the use of Computer Assisted Interviewing (CAI) for its Monthly Population Survey (MPS). The use of CAI is expected to increase the quality of MPS data and provide opportunities for re-engineering the business processes to eventually reduce the cost of the survey and increase the flexibility and scope of the collection vehicle.

One of the objectives of the ABS is informed and increased use of statistics. The ABS achieves this through a variety of methods, however an important component is through collaborative work undertaken with other government agencies. The National Health Survey (NHS) was conducted last year in respect of 2001, through funding from, and close involvement of, the Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing. Results of the survey were released in October 2002. The NHS also included an Indigenous component which will provide detailed and comparable information about the health of Indigenous people.

Development work also began on the 2004–05 Indigenous Health Survey which will comprise a much larger sample than the 2001 Indigenous component of the NHS. Other collaborative work undertaken during 2002–03 led to the publication of *Occasional Paper: Hospital Statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 1999–2000* (cat. no. 4711.0). The publication was prepared jointly by the ABS and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

During 2002–03 the ABS reviewed its position in respect of the release of microdata (unidentified unit records) from its household survey program. The review reflected concerns regarding the increasing availability of external databases with detailed personal and household information. In undertaking the review the ABS was very much aware of the need to behave in a manner that will retain the confidence of the Australian public in terms of the protection of their confidentiality. A major outcome of that review was the release, in March 2003, of the Remote Access Data Laboratory where users can analyse confidentialised ABS unit record files via a secure web arrangement. The potential conflict between researchers' and analysts' needs for microdata and the confidentiality obligations is discussed in more detail in a special article in Chapter 3.

Two major social surveys were conducted by the ABS in 2002 — the General Social Survey (GSS) and the Indigenous Social Survey (ISS). The GSS focused on a wide array of social issues including different aspects of personal and family wellbeing. The ISS had significant content overlap with the GSS and also with the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey to allow comparisons of Indigenous circumstances both over time, and with other non-Indigenous Australians. The results of both surveys are expected to be released in the latter half of 2003.

In 2002–03 the ABS completed a National Crime and Safety Survey with the results subsequently published in June 2003. The data collected provides information on reported and unreported crimes and the profile of victims. It will be used for the formulation of policies and strategies tailored to the overall incidence of crime, rather than just the number of incidents reported to police. It will also be used for evaluation and strategy development of criminal justice programs. The ABS also hosted a conference on 'Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods', organised by the Institute of Criminology.

A major ABS initiative in 2002–03 was the establishment of a National Ageing Statistics Unit and a National Children and Youth Statistics Unit to focus statistical attention on these important population groups. Outputs from these units include feature articles in *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0) on changes in labour force participation rates across generations and also youth migration. A report on the characteristics of the ageing population based on 2001 Census data is currently being finalised and will be released early in 2003–04.

During 2002–03 the ABS put in place a number of initiatives to review, and where appropriate, revise estimates from the ABS surveys of household income and expenditure. The investigations were aimed at ensuring comparability over time and consistency with international standards. The investigations resulted in the release of revised household income statistics for the period 1994–95 to 1999–2000 in the June 2003 edition of *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0). Results of the 2000–01 Survey of Income and Housing Costs were subsequently released in July 2003.

A number of new education and labour publications were released during 2002–03. A major development was a new quarterly labour market publication *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (cat. no. 6105.0), released in April 2003, presenting a wide range of data and feature articles covering employment, unemployment, underutilised labour, earnings, industrial relations and job vacancies. Access to monthly detailed data from the labour force survey was improved in 2002–03 with a new set of electronic products released (accessible from the ABS web site). A new sample for the monthly labour force survey was also introduced progressively over the period November 2002 to June 2003. The new sample was based on updated information from the 2001 Population Census, and was designed to achieve the same level of accuracy for national, state and territory estimates as the previous design based on 1996 Census information. This resulted in much greater volatility in the estimates than normal, and investigations have commenced into how this can be reduced when the next sample is introduced following the 2006 Population Census.

Another new publication, released in December 2002, is *Education and Training Indicators, Australia* (cat. no. 4230.0). This publication provides summary statistics and commentary from a wide range of ABS and non-ABS sources. The ABS also released *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia — A Framework for Education and Training Statistics* (cat. no. 4213.0). The framework was a joint initiative of the ABS, the Department of Education, Science and Training, the Australian National Training Authority, and all state and territory education and training departments. The ABS also released *Employer Training Expenditure and Practices, Australia, 2001–02* (cat. no. 6362.0) during the year. The publication is based on the 2001–02 Training Expenditure and Practices Survey and is consistent with the concepts outlined in the framework above.

The classifications published in 2001 in *Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications* (cat. no. 4902.0) continue to be implemented and promoted by the ABS. The classifications are already being used in the results from the ABS' sports industries survey conducted in respect of 2000–01 and government funded collections for culture and recreation. In 2002–03 a collection of statistics on government funding for sport and recreation activities, facilities and services, was published in *Sport and Recreation Funding by Government, Australia* (cat. no. 4147.0) for the reference period 2000–01. The data in the publication are aligned, where possible, with the categories specified in Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications. A web site-based *Directory of Culture and Leisure Statistics — Website Version* (cat. no. 1143.0.55.001) was also released in 2002–03. The directory provides a reference for sources of culture and leisure data.

The ABS has made substantial progress on a number of draft Information Development Plans (IDPs) during 2002–03. IDPs assist in identifying issues and data gaps in particular areas assessed, and help provide strategies to address these issues and data deficiencies. Key features of IDPs are the close involvement of stakeholders in identifying the issues and the systematic review of all available, including non-ABS, datasets as potential solutions. Several draft IDPs for use in consultation with stakeholders are underway including agriculture, transport, tourism, rural and regional statistics, crime and justice, education and training, and ageing. Additionally the IDP for the Australian Capital Territory Department of Disability, Housing and Community Services was formally endorsed in May 2003, and as such is the first fully complete IDP prepared by the ABS.

One of the ABS' key objectives is to provide an expanded and improved National Statistical Service (NSS). It aims to achieve this by improving the coordination of the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics produced by other official bodies — a key function of the ABS under section 6(c) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. The ABS recognises that it has an important leadership role in assisting agencies to make better use of their administrative data, particularly in terms of quality assurance and dissemination. During 2002–03 the ABS continued to progress the concept of the NSS through collaboration and consultation with key Commonwealth and state/territory stakeholders. These included:

- the first meeting of the Commonwealth Statistical Forum, held to discuss cross cutting issues at the Commonwealth level, and attended by agencies with significant administrative data holdings
- bilateral discussions with various Commonwealth and state agency heads about the NSS and the respective roles
- broad consultation with other agency heads and discussion through other groups (such as the Statistical Clearing House user group, Australian Public Service (APS) Stats Network and outposted officers)
- the canvassing of the NSS within state statistical forums.

The ABS has already made a number of significant developments which will assist further implementation of the NSS objectives, including:

- detailed material to support NSS partners improve statistical practices
- training programs to improve statistical and data management skills
- an NSS web site
- a web site-based Directory of Statistical Sources.

The NSS will be officially launched by the ABS later this year.

In terms of state/territory data needs the ABS has made significant headway in 2002–03. The second meeting of the State Statistical Forum (SSF) which commenced in 2002 was held. Some of the key data requirements identified through the SSF were improvement in the quality of state accounts and population estimates, regional labour force information and state/territory input-output statistics. The ABS is working with state/territory users in addressing those issues. During the year the ABS was also closely involved with state/territory governments in a range of consultancies and the development of specialised new products such as regional small business statistics and the characteristics of 'baby boomers'.

The ABS held two meetings of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) in 2002–03. These meetings are important to the ABS as they help to identify major economic, social and environmental issues which are of policy significance in the coming three to five years. In addition ASAC assists by advising the ABS on work priorities.

#### BUSINESS STATISTICS INNOVATION PROGRAM

In 2002–03 the ABS embarked on a major re-engineering of its business statistics processes with the commencement of the Business Statistics Innovation Program (BSIP) on 1 July 2002. The BSIP has a three-year implementation time-frame.

The ABS regularly reviews the work that we do and how we do it so as to find better ways to deliver a high quality work program in an efficient and effective manner. The purpose of the BSIP is to re-engineer the ABS' business statistics processes through the use of innovative technologies and methodologies, with a view to improving the quality and relevance of our business statistics in a manner that is most efficient for both the ABS and its providers. Outcomes from BSIP will include:

- improved data quality
- improved provider relations, improved reporting mechanisms and reduced provider load
- increased capacity to respond to emerging statistical demands
- stronger statistical leadership to provide a better national statistical service
- significant operating efficiencies that will allow the expansion of the statistical service and sustain competitive pay and conditions for staff
- enhanced opportunities for staff.

It is still 'early days' in the life of BSIP, but as we approach the end of the first of the three years of implementation, ABS management is satisfied with progress to date. A great deal of planning has taken place, and a lot has already been achieved. One of the critical objectives of the BSIP implementation strategy is to maintain business continuity during transition and this has been achieved to date.





*Participants at the State Statistical Forum meeting in ABS House, February 2003.*

The three functionally specialised organisational groups (the Economic Statistics Data Centre (ESDC), Business Statistics Centres (BSCs) and National Statistics Centres (NSCs)), together with the new Economic Statistics Group branch structures, were established on 1 July 2002.

The role of the National Statistics Centres is to focus on issues to do with expanding and improving our national statistical service in the different fields of statistics. In particular, establishment of NSCs has increased our capacity to progress Information Development Plans and investigations into the use of administrative data.

There has been a smooth transfer of functions between offices and the transfer of data collection functions to the ESDC has so far proven successful.

Re-engineering initiatives are a major part of BSIP. With the first phase of BSIP implementation focusing on organisational change to adopt the functionally oriented model, the priorities for re-engineering at this stage are to ensure a smooth transition. There are two major re-engineering developments being undertaken under the BSIP banner, the input data warehouse and systems to support generalised regression estimation.

The BSIP has and will continue to impact on the staff in the ABS. The buy-in and commitment to BSIP shown by staff across Australia working on its implementation has been outstanding.

The BSIP is a major initiative and will be a key focus of the ABS for the next two years. The benefits from BSIP are already emerging in the form of Information Development Plans and the development of common systems and processes. BSIP will leave the ABS well positioned in regard to its business statistics program for the foreseeable future.

## DISSEMINATION SERVICES

The 2003 edition of *Year Book Australia* (cat. no. 1301.0) was launched on 24 January 2003, by Ian Kiernan, AO, founder of clean up campaigns Clean Up Australia Day and Clean Up the World. This Year Book had a strong environmental theme. Mr Kiernan commented that the Year Book provided a wealth of information on economic, social and environmental conditions in Australia which is essential to help understand the relationship between the three, and plan for a healthier environment.

A major dissemination initiative in 2002–03 was the release of the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) for dissemination of Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs). The RADL provides access to CURFs through a web-based interface allowing authorised users to submit analysis requests using a range of statistical analysis packages. This facility allows more information to be released than previously, with the data remaining securely within the ABS and all output reviewed to ensure that confidentiality is maintained.





*Australian Statistician, Dennis Trewin (left), and Ian Kiernan AO, founder of Clean Up Australia, launching the 2003 Year Book Australia.*

The web site remains the primary access point for users of ABS information. The ABS web site consists of approximately 195,000 web pages. During the year there were over 38 million hits at the ABS web site. This was a 40 per cent increase on the previous year and reflects, in part, the response of the public to the large amount of census data made available for free on the web site. In 2002–03 the ABS continued work on improving the web site and also conducted a useability study of the ABS web site. While the results of the study were positive, the ABS has, in response to the increasing role of the web, established a Web Useability Unit to further explore means for improving the useability, navigability and accessibility of the ABS web site.

AusStats, the subscriber service to ABS publications and time series data, continues to perform well with around 440 clients (including libraries and universities) and, ABS@, the ABS Key Client Intranet based facility, now has 10 clients. Most of the development work for AusStats & ABS@ during 2002–03 went into providing functionality to support the census data releases and enabling the ability to drill down through census data via a map interface within the ABS web site, AusStats and ABS@. The online e-commerce system continued to perform well.

During 2002–03 more detailed 2001 Census of Population and Housing data were released in CDATE 2001, the Social Atlas series and on the ABS web site. In total 60,000 census files were loaded to the web site. In October 2002 the Australian Statistician, Dennis Trewin, and Jan Fullerton, Director-General of the National Library of Australia, launched CLIB2001 at the National Library in Canberra. CLIB is a census product provided free of charge to libraries eligible through the Library Extension Program (LEP). LEP-eligible libraries include all public libraries, TAFE and university libraries, the Commonwealth and state parliamentary libraries and the national and state libraries. CLIB2001 includes the complete Census Community Profile Series and Classification Counts with a new intuitive user interface for ease of use.

A new Excel time series format was introduced with the Labour Force Survey, the first release in this new format. This new format takes advantage of the many Excel features, presents data in a time series format, provides an index to the series, includes series identifiers, and provides links to appropriate metadata. Work is now progressing to release more time series in this format.

We continued to raise the profile of ABS information in the public arena. In the Internet environment work focused on getting companies to link to the ABS web site and arranging data syndication through the business entry point. Increased access was also given to the media through complimentary AusStats access and to the general public through the electronic Library Extension Program (e-LEP). The ABS participated in the e-government week held at Parliament House in November.



*Australian Statistician, Dennis Trewin (right), with Jan Fullerton, Director-General of the National Library of Australia, and Paul Williams from the ABS, launching CLIB2001 at the National Library in Canberra.*

A number of market research exercises were undertaken in 2002–03 to improve ABS understanding of client needs and assess the quality of our services. These included our first online web survey to obtain a demographic and behavioural profile of web site visitors and to collect information about visitor expectations. This information will provide a benchmark for future studies and will focus efforts on areas where web site useability can be improved. A market analysis of our information consultancy client base was also undertaken with the information gained assisting in helping to improve our service to clients as well as better targeting and growing our client base. Work was also conducted during the year to assess the ongoing quality of the National Information and Referral Service.

Recently the ABS also undertook a key client stocktake which aimed to assess the relationship between the ABS and key Commonwealth agencies, to improve the corporate understanding of these relationships and to address corporately, issues of importance in enhancing them.

## HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES

The past year has seen considerable activity on the agreement making front in the ABS. With the *ABS Certified Agreement 2001–2003* expiring on 31 May 2003, a major task has been the development of a new agreement. The replacement agreement, *ABS Certified Agreement 2003–2006*, was developed in consultation with employees and their representatives, particularly the Community and Public Sector Union (CPSU), under section 170LK of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*. It was voted on and accepted by a majority of employees in June 2003 and certified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission on 30 June 2003. Likewise, the *Population Survey Interviewers Certified Agreement 2002–2003* expired on 30 June 2003 and consultation has been underway for a replacement agreement. It is expected that a formal offer will be put to interviewers in July 2003 with the outcome known in September 2003.

These consultations have taken place in a very constructive environment. Although there were many matters on which we did not initially agree, the negotiations took place in a way where all parties tried to reach a mutually agreeable solution. Agreement was reached on most issues and a better Certified Agreement resulted. I would like to thank all staff and their representatives, particularly the CPSU representatives, for the important roles they played.

Effective performance management remains a key strategy in ABS working conditions and arrangements. As a result of a review of the ABS Performance Management Scheme which was conducted during 2001–02, a number of initiatives have been pursued this year aimed at making the scheme more effective. One of the major initiatives has been a training program undertaken by all staff early in 2003 designed to improve understanding of the scheme.

The National Forum, which includes representatives from divisional and regional office consultative forums and the unions, instituted as part of the wider ABS Certified Agreement consultation framework, held its annual meeting with the Australian Statistician in March 2003. The National Forum considered a range of issues including the development of revised certified agreements, progress with the Business Statistics Innovation Program, and statistical training including the proposal to develop a National Statistical Institute within the ABS.

A number of strategic projects were pursued during the year with the view to better understanding the human resource drivers in the ABS and managing change processes. These included the development of a human resources change management framework — initially focused on the changes being introduced through the Business Statistics Innovation Program — but equally useful in any area undergoing significant change; analysis of attraction and retention factors; and early development of an employee proposition and enhanced branding for ABS recruitment activities.

The ABS continues to provide high quality staff learning and development opportunities across three streams, namely, statistical skills, information technology, and leadership and management. These are delivered through various means including online, formal programs (delivered both internally and externally) and well equipped resource centres. The focus in the latter part of 2002–03 was to deliver learning and development activities more effectively and efficiently by taking a more national approach to this function rather than continuing with the previous eight location based model.

## DEVELOPMENTS IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

The ABS Information Technology (IT) environment continued to provide a robust and cost-effective platform for ABS operations.

During 2002–03 a number of new initiatives were undertaken. Server and wide area network capacity was upgraded and new suppliers selected for desktop and notebook computers. A pilot study of the use of Virtual Private Networking (VPN) to provide an improved remote access service ('Virtually@ABS') to the ABS network commenced. The ABS joined the Fedlink network for secure inter-connection with other government agencies, and Defence Signals Directorate (DSD) certification of external connections was maintained. Organisation-wide roll-out of our new 'desktop' ('Desktop@ABS') which features improved software management, knowledge management facilities, and the Windows XP operating system, commenced and will be completed by the end of 2003.

The Business Statistics Innovation Program represents a substantial re-engineering of business survey processes, and during 2002–03 the development of the many systems required commenced. Good progress was made in the development of key components including the Input Data Warehouse which will support better integration and analysis of survey and administrative by-product data. Another major milestone in 2002–03 was the development of new systems to support the introduction of computer assisted interviewing for selected household surveys. As well, work has commenced on the design of systems for processing the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.



In September 2002 the ABS held a major event — ABSTech — to promote IT skills development and effective use of the ABS IT environment. ABSTech was the catalyst for the development of a 'broadcast centre' which supports on-demand delivery of video and presentations direct to the users' desktop.

## INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

The ABS continued its role as an important and active member of the international statistical community in 2002–03. It is regarded as one of the world's best international statistical citizens. The main activities of the ABS during the year, in terms of international involvement, were:

- contributing to the development of international statistical classifications, frameworks and standards in a variety of international forums
- contributing to the coordination, in the Asia-Pacific region, of the International Comparison Program (ICP) — which produces purchasing power parities to enable cross-country comparison of gross domestic product and other economic aggregates; the Australian Statistician was elected chairman of the Global Executive Board
- providing technical assistance to statistical agencies in developing countries in the Asia-Pacific region.

During the year the ABS also made contributions to the development of statistical standards through a number of international groups specialising in individual fields of statistics whose work is coordinated by the United Nations (UN) Statistical Commission. Furthermore, the Australian Statistician was invited to address several international meetings on key elements of a national statistical service.

The Australian Statistician continued as the President of the International Statistical Institute (ISI), the peak professional body for statisticians in all fields. The ABS contributed to ongoing preparations for the 2005 biennial session of the ISI to be held in Sydney following an invitation from the Australian government. The Deputy Australian Statistician (Ms Susan Linacre) is chairman of the scientific program committee for the 2003 session.

In 2002–03 the ABS hosted visits by heads of the national statistical offices of New Zealand, the United Kingdom and Tonga, while the Australian Statistician visited a number of other national statistical agencies. There were also other exchanges of visits with national statistical agencies to share knowledge on specific topics.

During the year the ABS hosted a conference on population censuses with senior representatives from Canada, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The conference provided valuable opportunities for discussion of major matters of common concern and new developments related to population censuses.

Australia, represented by the ABS, has been an active participant in the Committee on Statistics of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP). The Committee had its final session during the year and, following a change in the ESCAP structure, is being replaced by other arrangements. The final session was chaired by the Australian Statistician. The ABS has been active in influencing the new arrangements with the aim of ensuring that appropriate provision for regional statistical work will be maintained. The ABS is also helping to ensure that the new arrangements are put in place in an effective way.

The ABS continued to provide a valuable contribution to international statistical training through the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific. As a member of the Governing Board, the ABS contributed senior resource persons for a three-day management seminar for heads of national statistical offices in the Asia-Pacific region.

During 2002–03, the ABS continued its program of technical cooperation with the Indonesian statistical agency under a Memorandum of Understanding. A highlight was a two-week visit to the ABS office in Darwin by staff from seven eastern Indonesian provinces to study statistical operations. Other technical assistance was provided for a number of countries including China, Thailand, Philippines, Fiji, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa, Tonga, East Timor and Viet Nam.

Following concern in the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) about the need for improvements in statistics relating to its field of interest for Pacific island countries, the ABS hosted a one day workshop organised by the Australian National Commission for UNESCO. This was attended by representatives of UNESCO, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Australian Agency for International Development, Statistics New Zealand and the ABS. The workshop provided a useful inventory of activity to assist Pacific island countries in statistical development and of the roles of respective agencies active in the region.



*Delegates from the ABS, Statistics New Zealand, the Office for National Statistics (UK), Statistics Canada, United States Bureau of the Census, and the General Register Office for Scotland, at the Multi-nation Workshop on the Census at ABS House.*



## FINANCIAL POSITION

Within the context of the Portfolio Budget Statements, the ABS has two outputs: (i) Economic Statistics; and (ii) Population and Social Statistics. The table below provides, for 2002–03, a financial summary of ABS outputs and price of outputs against the budgeted figures, and also provides details for 2003–04. The full financial statements are provided in Chapter 8, while a detailed summary of outputs by program component is provided in Appendix 2. The ABS Budget is prepared under an accrual framework, consistent with the Commonwealth Government Budget requirements.

There was a small operating surplus after capital use charge, of \$7,000. This was less than the surplus presented in the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements, of \$2.9 million. A surplus was originally provided to generate cash for loan repayments. However the cash position of the agency was such that it was determined that this was not required.

**Table 1: FINANCIAL RESOURCES SUMMARY (\$'000)**

	Budget 2002–03(a)	Actual 2002–03	Variance	Budget 2003–04(b)
<b>Administered Expenses</b>				
Discretionary Grants(c)	—	—	—	—
<b>Total Administered Expenses</b>	—	—	—	—
<b>Price of Departmental Outputs</b>				
<b>Output group 1.1 — National Statistical Service</b>				
Output group 1.1.1 — Economic statistics	131 177	133 110	–1 933	126 595
Output group 1.1.2 — Population and social statistics	144 404	146 532	–2 128	139 361
<b>Total output</b>	<b>275 581</b>	<b>279 642</b>	<b>–4 061</b>	<b>265 956</b>
Revenue from Government appropriation	253 501	253 591	–90	250 441
Revenue from other sources	25 011	26 058	–1 047	18 604
<b>Total Price of Outputs</b>	<b>278 512</b>	<b>279 649</b>	<b>–1 137</b>	<b>269 045</b>
<b>Total for Outcome 1</b>	<b>278 512</b>	<b>279 649</b>	<b>–1 137</b>	<b>269 045</b>
Staff years (number)	3 050	2 985	—	2 825

(a) Budget 2002–03 — Full-year budget, including additional estimates. (b) Budget 2003–04 — Budget prior to additional estimates.

(c) The ABS does not administer any discretionary grants.

In terms of revenue raised from statistics, the ABS recorded more than a one-third improvement over 2001–02. The breakdown of revenue raised from various sources is shown below.

**Table 2: REVENUE RAISED FROM OTHER SOURCES (\$'000)**

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
<b>Revenue raised from statistics</b>			
Publications			
Subscriptions	1 239	1 110	922
Other	684	487	628
Other Standard Products	2 949	2 619	8 270
Information Consultancy	4 198	3 591	6 388
Statistical Consultancy	947	1 955	892
User Funded Surveys	4 438	3 737	3 441
Other Products and Services	4 361	4 587	4 066
<i>Total revenue raised from statistics</i>	<i>18 816</i>	<i>18 087</i>	<i>24 607</i>
Other revenue	2 021	1 448	1 451
<b>Total</b>	<b>20 837</b>	<b>19 535</b>	<b>26 058</b>

The table shows that the increase in revenue during 2002-03 can be attributed to the release of 2001 Census of Population and Housing data at the end of June 2002. Substantial increases were recorded against the Other Standard Products (notably, CDATE), Information Consultancy and Other Publications product groups. However, offsetting these gains were significant decreases in revenue from the Statistical Consultancy and Other Products and Services groups, together with smaller decreases in Publication Subscriptions and User Funded Surveys. Much of these decreases are consistent with the ABS policy of encouraging self-help facilities and intermediaries.

Dennis Trewin  
Australian Statistician

## 2 HOW THE ABS OPERATES

### INTRODUCTION

The 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.

### ROLE AND OPERATION OF THE ABS

#### Outcome and Objectives

##### *ABS Outcome*

The ABS Outcome, as set out in the Portfolio Budget Statements 2002–03, is as follows:

*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.*

This outcome is consistent with the ABS Mission as described in the ABS Corporate Plan.

##### *ABS Output*

Within the context of the Portfolio Budget Statements, the *Australian Bureau of Statistics — National Statistical Service*, produces and disseminates statistics in two key areas to meet the above outcome; viz:

*Output 1 — Economic Statistics*

*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.

##### *ABS Objectives*

To achieve the ABS Mission, the ABS will be pursuing the following objectives over the next three to five years in respect of both the Economic Statistics and the Population and Social Statistics Outputs:

- 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
- strong recognition and support for the ABS amongst decision makers and the community.

## Organisational Structure and Senior Management

The ABS is headed by the Australian Statistician — a statutory office. Appendix 3 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 Management 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. 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. The results are made 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 adheres to long established principles that results of statistical collections should be made available as soon as practicable and should be available to all users at the same time. Most Australians find out about official statistics through the media. Over 53,000 copies of ABS publications were provided at no cost to media organisations in 2002–03, and the principal results from ABS publications were highlighted daily in the print and electronic media and via the ABS web site. A large core set of statistics was made available through public, technical and tertiary libraries across Australia, and around 15,000 complimentary copies of ABS publications were provided to members of parliament. The 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 Regional 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 2003–04 to 2005–06
- Client Service Charter
- Business Surveys Charter.

These documents are available on the ABS web site or on request.

A wide range of additional information is available on the ABS web site including statistical data, news releases, and conceptual and technical information. More detailed information can be accessed by users through our subscription services including ABS@ and AusStats.

## AUTHORITY AND LEGISLATION

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 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. Information on notices of direction and prosecutions which follow from them is shown in Appendix 15. The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* requires the ABS to publish and disseminate compilations and analyses of statistical information and to maintain the secrecy of information collected under the Act.

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 13. Details of disclosures of unidentified information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination are shown in Appendix 14.

## ABS CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

ABS corporate governance arrangements ensure transparency in decision making, operation and accountability to stakeholders by promoting strong leadership, sound management and effective planning and review. The operations and performance of the ABS are subject to both internal and external scrutiny. The results of this scrutiny inform senior management discussion. The scope of internal management and review and external advisory and review bodies is described below.

### Internal Scrutiny

Internal scrutiny takes the form of:

- periodic reviews of statistical collections and service functions. In reviews of statistical collections, external users are widely consulted and, in some instances, external users assist the review team. Internal reviews cover both the effectiveness and efficiency of various ABS activities
- 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
- regular reports from all Assistant Statisticians and Regional Directors to the Executive Meetings as discussed below
- an internal audit program conducted by external service providers, covering different facets of ABS operations and overseen by the Audit Committee.

The ABS has a Fraud Control Plan which has been endorsed by the Attorney General's Department, and a fraud control policy which covers fraud prevention, detection, investigation and reporting procedures. The ABS has commissioned a Fraud Risk Assessment and Fraud Control Plan review which will commence in September 2003.

Annual fraud data was provided to the Attorney General's Department in 2002–03. This data complied with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines, and indicates that fraud is not a significant issue for the ABS.

During 2002–03 the ABS began developing a formal comprehensive risk management framework. The goals behind implementing a formal risk management framework into the ABS are: to provide an assurance that the organisation has identified its highest risk exposures and has taken steps to properly manage them; to ensure that the ABS' business planning processes include a focus on areas where risk management is needed; to establish a process across the ABS that will integrate the various risk control measures that are already in place; and to provide a framework/mechanism for monitoring and identifying shifts in the risk exposure and the emergence of 'new' risks. Further development of the risk management framework and, identification and implementation of the key treatments to manage risks, will continue through 2003–04.

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

- ABS Management Meetings

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 at least twice a year. Among other things, the Management Meeting agrees on the ABS forward work program which is presented to ASAC for comment and approval before finalisation.

- Executive Meetings

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 in respect of their area of functional responsibility. Their reports 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.

- Protective Security Management Committee

The ABS maintains a comprehensive security framework, overseen by a Protective Security Management Committee chaired by the Deputy Australian Statistician, Economic Statistics Group.



- Audit Committee

The ABS Audit Committee is chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician, and includes senior management representatives from the Corporate, Technology and Statistical areas of the ABS. An experienced external, independent member (Mr Len Early) has been appointed to the Audit Committee. The Committee sets a work program for reviews drawing on the outcomes of the enterprise risk assessments, recommendations from ABS managers and the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO). The work program is undertaken by external audit contractors and covers compliance and risk management issues. A broader review program, involving internal and external reviewers, looks at other issues of efficiency and effectiveness. During 2002–03 the Committee also commissioned a range of work with a view to developing an ABS risk management framework (see above). The Committee meets four times a year and reports to the Executive Meetings as appropriate.

Internal audits undertaken during 2002–03 included reviews of: Non-employee Security; E-sales; Secure Email Facility; Intellectual Property; Accounts Payable; State Office Operations; National Interviewer Pay Team; Risk Management in Project Management; Tendering and Contracting; Fixed Assets; Accounts Receivable; and Sensitive Data Holdings.

- Information Resources Management Committee

The Information Resources Management Committee is chaired by the Deputy Australian Statistician, Population Statistics Group and consists of the Deputy Australian Statistician, Economic Statistics Group, 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

The Human Resource Strategy Committee is chaired by the First Assistant Statistician, Corporate Services Division. The Committee involves all First Assistant Statisticians, a nominated Regional Director and the Assistant Statistician, Business Strategies Branch. This Committee provides the ABS with high level guidance on key human resource issues. Policy issues that are considered by this Committee include work force 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. Its activities have been strengthened during the course of the year.

## External Scrutiny

External scrutiny takes the form of:

- consideration by ASAC 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 ANAO, either of ABS operations specifically or as part of cross-agency audits. Audits conducted by the ANAO which involved the ABS included: Closing the Books (ANAO Audit Report No. 60); Capitalisation of Software (ANAO Audit Report No. 54); Absence Management in the Australian Public Service (ANAO Audit Report No. 52); Managing People for Business Outcomes, Year Two — Benchmarking Study (ANAO Audit Report No. 50); Annual Reporting on Ecologically Sustainable Development (ANAO Audit Report No. 41); Management of Commonwealth Guarantees, Warranties, Indemnities and Letters of Comfort (ANAO Audit Report No. 27); and Benchmarking the Internal Audit Function Follow-on Report (ANAO Audit Report No. 13)
- 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
  - 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, the National Education and Training Statistical Unit and the National Centre for Rural and Regional Statistics. The boards provide advice on statistical priorities and data standards and monitor and support the implementation of agreed collections. The forward work program for each statistical centre is agreed between the Australian Statistician and the board.

There were no adverse comments from the ANAO, the Ombudsman, the courts or the tribunals during 2002–03.

Information on Freedom of Information is provided in Appendix 11. Information on inquiries by Parliamentary Committees and reports by the Auditor General are provided in Appendix 12. Information on documents tabled in Parliament is provided in Appendix 13.

#### The Australian Statistics Advisory Council

As described above, ASAC was established by the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* to assist the ABS to fulfil its role. The Council is the key advisory body to the ABS and provides valuable input to the directions and priorities of the ABS work program and reports annually to parliament. ASAC meets twice a year.

The current Chairman of ASAC is Professor Sandra Harding who is Dean, Faculty of Business at the Queensland University of Technology. During 2002–03 Senator the Hon. Ian Campbell, Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasurer, made four new appointments to ASAC. These were Professor Fiona Stanley, Director, Telethon Institute for Child Health Research and current Australian of the Year; Mr Haydn Lowe, Partner, Blue Lagoon Pearls; and Mr Peter Jones and Mr Peter Horn, the state/territory government representatives for the Northern Territory and New South Wales, respectively.

More details regarding ASAC can be found in the ASAC Annual Report, located on the ABS web site.

#### 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, in order to maintain relevance 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 ABS maintains a three-year forward work program which is rolled forward on an annual basis. The program is based on the set of components described in Appendix 1. 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-a-vis other work for which a demand has been expressed by users
- the cost imposed on respondents to collections, in terms of time and effort
- 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
- 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 ASAC. The work program is finalised in the light of ASAC advice.

The culmination of the year's planning cycle is a comprehensive document, the ABS Forward Work Program, which describes for each ABS program, the outputs, clients and uses of the statistical information and the main medium term developments. The document is available for public scrutiny and comment. A copy can be located on the ABS web site.

## Security

The ABS would not be able to operate effectively without the trust and confidence of data providers. 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 access cards 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*

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

## 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.

A significant by-product of the Statistical Clearing House program is the Commonwealth Register of Surveys of Businesses (available on the Internet at <[www.sch.abs.gov.au](http://www.sch.abs.gov.au)>). The register lists the statistical collections subject to clearance and information about them provided to the Statistical Clearing House during the clearance process. The register 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 is also used to provide access to information on survey design standards and best practices.

More information on the operations of the Statistical Clearing House can be found in the Performance Information Chapter.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF ORGANISATIONAL MANAGEMENT/MONITORING

### Promotion of Australian Public Service (APS) Values in the ABS

The ABS has traditionally operated within strongly held principles relating to relevance, integrity, access for all, professionalism and trust of providers. These principles are fundamental to the ABS performing its role as an independent provider of statistical information for Australia and the strength of these principles has been confirmed by independent studies.

The importance of the APS Values, with which the ABS principles are entirely consistent, is reflected and integrated into the day to day management and operations of the ABS in a number of ways. For example: employees' obligations to uphold the APS Values and abide by the Code of Conduct are promoted in training courses from induction through to senior management development programs; actively applied through personnel management processes, supported by guidelines and procedures which themselves take account of the Values; and are reflected throughout ABS corporate material and readily accessible to employees through the ABS Intranet. Posters on the APS Values and Code of Conduct are displayed throughout the Office and APS Values bookmarks have been distributed to all staff and are given to all recruits.

The ABS was one of six agencies selected to participate in a study conducted by the Australian Public Service Commission in early 2003 to evaluate the extent to which agencies incorporate and uphold the APS Values, including evaluating the adequacy of systems and procedures in agencies for ensuring compliance with the Code of Conduct. The project team reported strong feedback from ABS staff that the ABS is an ethical organisation that upholds both the APS Values and the ABS principles. The project team also found that a number of systems and procedures in place in the ABS support elements of the Values and Code of Conduct, and that staff consulted as part of the study attested to the effectiveness of those systems and procedures.

#### ABS Service Charters

The ABS had two service charters during 2002–03.

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. The Charter also offers guidance to clients wishing to provide compliments or register complaints on any aspect of client relationship or services. Copies of the Charter are available on the ABS web site and through bookshops located in each ABS office.

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. The Charter also provides for businesses to ask for a review of the complaints handling process.

The Charter was developed in consultation with representatives of small business and is reviewed annually. Changes were made to the Charter in 2001 to clarify the procedures for obtaining information about ABS collections and for seeking exemptions from completing individual surveys. The Charter is provided to new respondents in collections involving businesses. It is available in English, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Greek and Arabic. The Charter is also available on the ABS web site.

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 is the subject of ongoing review, as are the Charters themselves.



## Social Justice and Equity

ABS support for the *Charter for 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 access 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 meets government needs for information to support social justice policies, by the identification of specific population groups of policy interest in censuses and surveys concerned with various aspects of social wellbeing. Such population groups include Indigenous Australians, immigrants, people with disabilities, unemployed people, older Australians, women and children. In 2002–03, the ABS continued to provide data on population, health and welfare, education, employment, unemployment, underemployment and other topics relating to labour force participation, earnings and income, housing and recorded crime and justice administration.

In 2002 the Indigenous Social Survey was conducted to collect information on the personal and social circumstances of Indigenous people. The 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers was developed over 2002–03, and went into the field in June 2003.

The five-yearly Census of Population and Housing enables analysis of many aspects of social wellbeing for a range of population groups and for small geographical areas. In 2002–03 a range of statistical information was released from the 2001 Census, including community profiles (summary information about the characteristics of the population in areas of Australia), a profile of the Indigenous population, and a profile of the working population.

In 2002–03, the ABS released a range of other statistical publications relevant to social justice and equity. Continuing its regular contribution to this area was *Australian Social Trends, 2003* (cat. no. 4102.0) the tenth edition of the annual publication drawing on the ABS and other official statistics to inform on social conditions and wellbeing in Australia. *Education and Training Indicators, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4230.0) was the first issue of a biennial series providing summary statistics and commentary at a national level on education and training providers, financial and human resources, participation, outputs and outcomes and the wider context within which education and training takes place. *National Health Survey: Summary of Results, 2001* (cat. no. 4364.0) made available a range of data on the health status of the population, their health-related actions including use of health services, and the prevalence of health risk factors — all of which could be analysed by socioeconomic status and for populations at risk. *National Health Survey: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Results, Australia, 2001* (cat. no. 4715.0) made available the results of the supplementary survey of the health of Indigenous Australians. Experimental estimates of the Indigenous population by state and territory for 30 June 2001 were released in *Australian Demographic Statistics, September quarter 2002* (cat. no. 3101.0) with estimates for each statistical local area released electronically in *Experimental Estimates of Indigenous Australians, Electronic Delivery, June 2001* (cat. no. 3238.0.55.001).



## Commonwealth Disability Strategy

In 1994 the Commonwealth government introduced the Commonwealth Disability Strategy (CDS) as a planning framework to assist Commonwealth agencies to meet their obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*. The CDS was significantly redesigned following a review conducted in 1999. A revised CDS was launched in October 2000 containing a Guide to the Performance Reporting Framework. This framework identifies five key roles that Commonwealth agencies may perform. These are Policy Advisor, Regulator, Purchaser, Provider and Employer.

In the context of the CDS the ABS performs two roles — it is a provider of statistical services and an employer. Reporting of the ABS' performance against these key roles, as required by the Performance Reporting Framework, is presented in Appendix 6. The ABS will continue to progress the implementation of the CDS in 2003–04.

In addition to its role as a provider and employer, the ABS has an important role in terms of providing information about disabilities to assist informed decision making by policy advisers. Information on the nature and extent of disability and associated needs for care and support, as well as the impact of the caring role on carers, is available in *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (cat. no. 4430.0). Another publication of relevance to the issue is *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Disability and Long Term Health Conditions, Australia, 1998* (cat. no. 4433.0). Additionally, information about people with disabilities in New South Wales is presented in *Disability, New South Wales* (cat. no. 4443.1). The ABS contributes to international discussions on the development of standards for the measurement of disability and has also recently commenced collection of data for the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. The ABS has commenced consultation with key users of census data for topics for the 2006 Census. One of the new topics under consideration is disability.

## Ecologically Sustainable Development

The *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* requires agencies to report on aspects of its performance as it relates to ecologically sustainable development. The ABS has two key roles in respect of this issue. The first of these is in relation to the ABS mission/outcome of providing statistics on the environment and environmental issues to enable informed decision making. The second role is in relation to ABS operations and its impact on the environment and the steps being taken by the ABS to minimise that impact.

The ABS response to the five components of section 516A(6) as required by the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* is described below.

*Section 516A(6)(a) How the activities of the organisation, and the administration of legislation by the organisation, accord with the principles of ecologically sustainable development.*

The ABS Charter is to provide a high quality statistical service to the government and the community, and this information is generally disseminated through publications. It operates primarily in an office based environment and is moving from paper to electronic products.

In most procurement activities the ABS has incorporated environmental clauses as part of the tender and evaluation process, consistent with Commonwealth procurement guidelines.

*Section 516A(6)(b) How the outcomes specified in a relevant 'Appropriations Act' contribute to ecologically sustainable development.*

The ABS receives appropriation for the purpose of informing the government on social, economic and environmental matters which are integrated into government policy.

The environment component of the ABS Economic Statistics program collects and publishes information about environment and energy statistics, including environment accounts. The component is involved in the coordination of data collection, research and analysis and implementing international environmental accounting frameworks.

During 2002–03 the ABS released a range of publications relevant to environmental issues. These include:

- *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (cat. no. 4602.0)
- *Environmental Expenditure, Local Government, Australia* (cat. no. 4611.0)
- *Salinity on Australian Farms* (cat. no. 4615.0)
- *Environment by Numbers: Selected Articles on Australia's Environment* (cat. no. 4617.0).

The ABS also developed a survey of energy production and use by businesses, and commenced development of a survey of water use by farmers.

*Section 516A(6)(c) Effect of the organisation's activities on the environment.*

The operation of the ABS contributes to a range of impacts on the environment through its use of electricity, petrol, water, paper and other materials consumed and through its generation of waste.

*Section 516A(6)(d) Measures being taken by the organisation to minimise the impact of its activities on the environment.*

The ABS is implementing measures to minimise the effect of its operations on the environment by:

- reducing paper consumption by increasing the number of publications available electronically
- reducing the number of hard copy publications printed by moving to a 'print on demand' operation
- reducing ABS' national energy usage over the last two financial years by approximately 20% (a significant contributor to this reduction was the relocation of ABS Central Office from Cameron Offices to ABS House)
- heavily weighting energy ratings when making purchasing decisions for whitegoods
- using 100% remanufactured and recycled cartridges for photocopiers, faxes and printers
- consuming green energy (10% of energy consumed in ABS House is 'green energy')
- leasing liquefied petroleum gas fuelled vehicles in both Central and NSW Offices
- actively recycling paper, bottles, cans and cartons with recycling bins readily accessible to all ABS staff
- providing facilities which encourage staff to use bicycles to travel to and from work
- taking other initiatives including replacement of fluorescent tubes in regional offices with more energy efficient tubes.

*Section 516A(6)(e) Mechanisms, if any, for reviewing and increasing the effectiveness of these measures.*

The ABS has developed an Environmental Management System, to be implemented in 2003, providing a framework for measuring the effectiveness of actions taken to minimise adverse environmental impacts, and for considering and addressing environmental impacts within the context of continual improvement.

## **SECTION II**

### **SPECIAL ARTICLES**

**Chapter 3 — Access to ABS Microdata:  
Issues and Developments**

**Chapter 4 — Population Estimates:  
Importance, Complexity  
and Controversy**

**Special Articles in Earlier Annual Reports**

### 3 ACCESS TO ABS MICRODATA: ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS

#### INTRODUCTION

The release of microdata in the form of Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) has become an integral component of the ABS output strategy, and is a key element in achieving the ABS mission of assisting and encouraging informed decision making, research and discussion. CURFs are a very important means of providing researchers and policy analysts with the opportunity to undertake secondary analysis of ABS datasets. In 2002–03 the Statistician approved 170 CURF releases for statistical purposes.

While the release of CURFs is critical to the ABS mission, there are legal obligations imposed on the ABS in relation to the release of CURFs. As well as these, it is also important to recognise that privacy is an important community issue and the guarantee of the protection of the confidentiality of information is absolutely critical to the operations of the ABS. It is the basis on which the ABS achieves such high response rates and retains the confidence of the Australian public.

This article draws heavily on papers presented to recent meetings of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council. It details some background to the release of CURFs by the ABS, discusses issues associated with their release, and provides a summary of recent developments in providing access to microdata.

#### LEGISLATION

A report (No. 192) by the Joint Parliamentary Committee on Public Accounts issued in 1981 entitled 'The Collection and Dissemination of Statistics — a Discussion Paper' recommended that the statistics legislation be amended 'to allow for maximum utilisation of the data available'. One of the responses to that report was a Ministerial Determination made in February 1983 under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, which amongst other powers gave the Statistician discretionary authority to release information in the form of unidentifiable individual statistical records (clause 7).

A copy of clause 7 of the Statistics Determination is provided at Attachment A. However, the key elements of the Determination are as follows:

- release of information in the form of individual statistical records requires the approval in writing of the Statistician
- all identifying information such as name and address has been removed
- the information is disclosed in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of the particular person or organisation to which it relates

- no attempt will be made to identify particular persons or organisations
- the information will be used only for statistical purposes
- the information will not be disclosed to any other person or organisation
- the Statistician has been given a relevant undertaking.

The Determination also provides for the Statistician to impose any other condition in the undertaking that in the opinion of the Statistician is reasonably necessary. In that regard the existing undertaking prohibits matching of the file to any other file.

The main feature of the legislation is that 'the information is disclosed in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of the particular person or organisation to which it relates', which is consistent with the ABS obligation under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* to maintain the confidentiality of the information provided to it.

A breach of an undertaking referred to in clause 7 is an indictable offence, subject to a penalty of up to a \$5,000 fine and/or two years gaol.

## ABS PROCESSES

Given the sensitivities associated, the release of CURFs are tightly controlled. A Microdata Review Panel (MDRP), has been established within the ABS with the responsibility of assessing all proposals for the release of microdata prior to any submission being made to the Statistician. In undertaking the assessment the MDRP must satisfy itself that release of the CURF will meet the ABS' legislative obligation not to release information in a manner that is likely to enable the identification of a particular person or organisation. Specifically, the MDRP assesses the likelihood of identification of a particular person or organisation through spontaneous recognition (an unusual record that is known to represent an individual or organisation) or through matching with other data sources.

If the MDRP is of the view that there is a risk of identification either through spontaneous recognition or through matching, then the ABS uses a number of methods to reduce the likelihood of identification. These include:

- reducing the amount of classificatory detail, e.g. reduced geographical information
- not releasing values as collected, but showing them as classes
- randomly perturbing the value by some small number
- swapping information between records
- dropping individual records from the file
- substituting imputed for collected information.

## MATCHING RISK

The ABS is aware that the increasing sophistication in data management and information technology makes the challenge of maintaining the confidentiality of microdata more difficult. The potential to match records on CURFs with other datasets through their household demographic information, although expressly prohibited by the undertaking required by the Statistician, creates matching risks that need to be considered and addressed.

Recognising the increasing risks of disclosure arising from the existence of other datasets that might potentially be matched with a CURF, the ABS recently sought legal advice as to the extent the data presented in the CURF must be proof against a deliberate attempt to identify individuals, and the extent to which the ABS could rely on other aspects of the manner of release, such as the undertakings provided by users that they will not attempt to identify users or match the CURF against other databases.

The advice received is that the ABS is not required to consider remote possibilities or require 'absolute proof' against a determined attempt to identify individuals when considering the 'manner' of release. Additionally, the ABS is entitled to make a reasonable assumption that users will comply with the conditions of an undertaking in assessing whether disclosure is likely to enable the identification of an individual or organisation. At the same time the obligation remains on the ABS to remain alert to circumstances that might increase the risk of identification. If identification is 'likely' to happen, the ABS cannot disclose the information, or must change the manner of disclosure to remove the likelihood of identification occurring.

## RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN MICRODATA RELEASE

In light of the potential risks associated with matching and the legal advice the ABS has received, the ABS has been reviewing its strategy for microdata release.

There are three main strands to the strategy:

- i) maximise the availability of microdata to researchers and policy analysts, consistent with the legal obligations and our obligations to the community in terms of maintaining the confidentiality of information
- ii) strengthening the legislation applying to the release of microdata
- iii) the development of alternate modes of access to microdata.

The first of these is a reaffirmation of ABS commitment to ensuring, and where possible expanding, the continued availability of microdata to researchers and analysts. In so doing the ABS is cognisant of its legal obligations and more importantly the need to behave in a manner that will retain the confidence of the Australian public in terms of the protection of confidentiality.

In relation to the second element, the ABS is currently progressing amendments to the Determination, so as to require undertakings from each individual in an organisation accessing a CURF as well as an undertaking from the organisation as required by existing legislation. The intent is to highlight to individuals their personal obligations, and potential penalties for failure to adhere to the undertaking, as well as to ensure high level organisational commitment to the undertaking.

In respect of the third element, the ABS has now developed and has in place three distinct modes of access to ABS microdata. These are:

- CD-ROM — this is the current mode of release and where possible the ABS intends to continue to release microdata on CD-ROM in a manner similar to present release arrangements
- Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) — is a new development where users will be able to access ABS microdata from their desktop via secure web arrangements. The first version of the RADL was released in April
- ABS Site Data Laboratories — where users will need to come on to an ABS site to access microdata in a controlled environment.

In the not too distant future, it may be possible to create off-site data laboratories on the premises of selected clients. The data would still be held in our databases, but accessible from the remote site where it would be managed by an ABS staff member.

## PROTECTION STRATEGIES

The strategy to ensure that microdata is released in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of a particular person or organisation is applied at three points:

- the data itself is protected by providing less detail and perturbing a small number of values
- the method of access controls the amount and nature of information which can be viewed or retained, which in turn determines the amount of information potentially coming into contact with external databases
- the actions of the user are limited to those specified by the undertaking and accompanying documents.

The combination of these is different for the different methods of access, but, for all methods the combination provides the required level of protection. In all cases the undertaking prohibits the user from attempting to identify individuals or organisations from matching to unit data and from passing on the unit data to people who have not signed the ABS undertaking, and restricts use to statistical purposes. The undertaking is supported by improved educational material to facilitate users awareness and understanding of their responsibilities.



For a CURF released on CD-ROM, the level of detail and the amount of perturbation is set to achieve protection against the same identification risks as previous releases on CD-ROM, namely matching to lists of persons and spontaneous recognition. The content of CURFs on CD-ROM will be influenced by timing constraints, the content of previous releases and the external environment. The ABS is also moving towards having greater consistency in the detail provided for standard variables, both across releases and over time. As a result new releases of some CURFs on CD-ROM may have a lower level of detail compared to earlier releases. The method of access provides no additional protection and the undertaking is relied on to protect against matching using household structure.

For a CURF accessed through the RADL, the level of detail and the amount of perturbation is set to protect against spontaneous recognition. The RADL keeps the full file within the ABS computing environment, automatically limits the number of unit records which can be viewed, and limits the volume of other output that can be obtained without clearance from the ABS that it does not reveal unit data. Keeping all but a small part on the CURF within the ABS is the key protection against large scale matching to lists. All jobs and their outputs are retained and a proportion are audited. Users are required to observe some limitations on their code, but only to the extent necessary to allow the automatic procedures to work. Users are required to keep secure any output which reveals unit data.

The level of detail for data accessed through the ABS Site Data Laboratory (ABSDL) is similar to that for data released through the RADL, but the ABSDL would be used where there was a greater risk of disclosure; for example where some user potentially had very detailed knowledge of the data.

The advantages and disadvantages for the user are different for the different methods of access. The CD-ROM allows access in the user's own environment, but to data with the least amount of detail. The RADL allows access via the users own computer, with minor limitations on code and limitations on the size of outputs which can be obtained without ABS clearance. The data in the RADL can be more detailed than on CD-ROM. Access through the ABSDL is on ABS premises, and output must be manually cleared and cannot reveal unit records.

## SANCTIONS

An integral component of the protection strategies detailed above is compliance by users with the undertaking they sign. As part of the revised strategy, there will be regular audits to ensure that users, both individuals and organisations, are complying with the obligations of the undertakings. The Statistician will address any breaches of those undertakings by withdrawing the CURF service from the offending party, both individuals and organisations, and, in the case of serious offences, legal options may be pursued.

## FUTURE DIRECTIONS

The ABS recognises that there is a need for all three modes of delivery (i.e. CD-ROM, RADL and ABSDL) for the foreseeable future and the ABS will continue to provide all three, however, the content of the files may vary due to the circumstances noted above.

An area that the ABS has commenced exploring is the development and availability of linked datasets. These are a special case of microdata that involve data matching techniques to bring together unit records to form a set of composite records. The composite record may be based on a hard match using identifiers or a statistical match using a combination of variables (e.g. geography, age, sex and/or household characteristics). To the extent that they provide much richer datasets they are of great interest to researchers and analysts.

Linked datasets may comprise:

- i) matching ABS datasets
- ii) matching an ABS and non-ABS dataset
- iii) matching non-ABS datasets.

In (i) and (ii), the ABS must be the custodian and access has to be through the dissemination streams discussed in this article. It is not necessary for the ABS to be custodian for (iii) but there are advantages in that the ABS has legislation which could underpin the arrangements for accessing these datasets and protect their confidentiality. Furthermore, our reputation is such that there is strong public confidence that we will be a trusted custodian. Regardless, the ABS will not undertake initiatives in this area without prior consultation with The Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner.

Both RADL and ABSDL provide a means of increasing access to linked datasets in that while there are no limitations on what unit record or summary information a user can view within RADL or ABSDL, all information going in or out is effectively cleared by the ABS.

## CONCLUSION

There is increasing demand for access to microdata to support a range of research and secondary data analysis. The objective of the ABS over the past 12 months has been to put in place the framework to facilitate and extend the availability of microdata to researchers and policy analysts. At the same time it is critical for the ABS to continue to meet its obligations to the Australian community in terms of ensuring the confidentiality of information supplied.

The development of the RADL and the strengthening of the legislation and administrative procedures have been the key to achieving that outcome. The RADL has the potential to provide a framework for significantly extending the range of microdata released in the future. At the same time there will be greater scrutiny of users to ensure that they are fulfilling their obligations, particularly as they relate to the legal undertaking they sign.

## **STATISTICS DETERMINATION — CLAUSE 7**

## **Attachment A**

- '(1) Information in the form of individual statistical records may, with the approval in writing of the Statistician, be disclosed where:
- (a) all identifying information such as name and address has been removed;
  - (b) the information is disclosed in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of the particular person or organisation to which it relates; and
  - (c) the Statistician has been given a relevant undertaking for the purposes of this clause.
- (2) A reference in paragraph (1) (c) to a relevant undertaking shall be read as a reference to an undertaking in writing by:
- (a) in the case of information to be disclosed to a person, being an individual — that person;
  - (b) in the case of information to be disclosed to an official body — the responsible Minister in relation to, or a responsible officer of, that official body; or
  - (c) in the case of information to be disclosed to an organisation other than an official body — a responsible officer of that organisation;
- that use of the information will be subject to the following terms and conditions:
- (d) no attempt will be made to identify particular persons or organisations; and
  - (e) the information will be used only for statistical purposes; and
  - (f) the information will not be disclosed to any other person or organisation; and
  - (g) if the Statistician considers it necessary in a particular case — either or both of the following:
    - (i) that the information, and all copies (if any) of the information, will be returned to the Statistician as soon as the statistical purposes for which it was disclosed have been achieved;
    - (ii) that access by officers to information, documents or premises will be given as may be necessary for the purpose of conducting a compliance audit concerning observance of the terms and conditions under which the information is disclosed; and
  - (h) any other condition that, in the opinion of the Statistician, is reasonably necessary in a particular case.'

## 4 POPULATION ESTIMATES: IMPORTANCE, COMPLEXITY AND CONTROVERSY

### INTRODUCTION

One of the core functions of any national statistical agency is to provide regular estimates of the population, and the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is no exception. Indeed it is legislated for under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* which requires the Statistician to conduct a census every five years and to compile 'statistics of the number of people of each state as on the last day of March, June, September and December in each year'.

Population estimates are essential inputs to many aspects of decision making by the government, business and the community. At the Commonwealth level two key uses of the population estimates are the determination of the number of members for each state and territory in the House of Representatives and grants to the states and territories.

The critical importance of the population statistics can be illustrated by some of the media reports in response to the release of the preliminary September 2002 population estimates in February 2003. These estimates were used by the Australian Electoral Commissioner for determining the number of House of Representatives seats for each state and territory.

*'The Territory may lose one of its two seats in Federal Parliament tomorrow because it is just 267 people short of the required quota'*

Northern Territory News, page 3, 19 February 2003

*'The Northern Territory's shrinking population has cost it one of its two seats in the Federal Parliament's lower house... South Australia will also lose a House of Representatives seat, while Queensland will gain one'*

The Sydney Morning Herald, page 3, 21 February 2003

The loss of Northern Territory's second seat in the House of Representatives has resulted in some public questioning of the accuracy of the ABS estimates.

This article provides background to the process and data sources for compiling the estimates of population for the states and territories and explains the limitations of those estimates in terms of potential sources of error. The article also explains the legislative background to the compilation of the population estimates particularly as they relate to the determination of electoral representation and grants distribution.

## LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

### Electoral representation

The *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* requires the Electoral Commissioner to ascertain the numbers of the people of the Commonwealth and of the several states and territories in accordance with the latest statistics of the Commonwealth in the 13th month after the first sitting day of a new House of Representatives. Section 47 of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act* also places obligations on the Australian Statistician to provide statistical information to the Electoral Commissioner on request:

*'47. The Australian Statistician shall, on request by the Electoral Commissioner, supply the Electoral Commissioner with all such statistical information as he or she requires for the purposes of this Division.'*

These provisions are pursuant to section 24 of The Constitution which requires that the number of members chosen in the several states in the House of Representatives 'shall be in proportion to the respective numbers of their people'.

### Grant distributions

The 31 December population estimates for each state and territory are required by the Commonwealth Treasury under *A New Tax System (Commonwealth–State Financial Arrangements) Act 1999* for the purposes of determining the distribution to the states and territories of revenue from the goods and services tax using relativities prepared by the Commonwealth Grants Commission. These data are also used to distribute financial assistance grants to the states and territories for local government purposes under the *Local Government (Financial Assistance) Act 1995*.

## ESTIMATED RESIDENT POPULATION

### The conceptual base

The fundamental concept of measuring Australia's population is the Estimated Resident Population or ERP. The ERP is the official measure of the population of Australia and is based on the concept of residence for a period of 12 months or more within Australia, regardless of nationality or citizenship, with the exception of foreign diplomatic personnel and their families. It excludes people who are overseas for more than 12 months and overseas visitors who are in Australia for less than 12 months.

The ERP concept was developed in the late 1970s reflecting the increasing mobility of the population, both internationally and within Australia. Prior to the introduction of the ERP, all overseas arrivals and departures were included in the estimation process regardless of duration of stay. However increasing volumes of international passenger movements (Australian residents as well as overseas visitors) introduced increasing volatility in post census estimates of the Australian population. Furthermore, with increased travel within Australia, the use of Census of Population and Housing counts on a place of enumeration basis meant

that states and territories such as Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia were advantaged while Victoria, South Australia and Tasmania were disadvantaged due to the fact that the census is traditionally conducted in winter. For electoral representation purposes it was important that population estimates changed to a place of usual residence basis.

## Methodology

In Australia, estimates of the population of each state and territory are calculated as at the last day of March, June, September and December. These estimates are compiled using:

- data collected in the most recent Census of Population and Housing
- birth and death statistics from state and territory registrars
- overseas arrivals and departure data from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs
- Medicare data on changes of address from the Health Insurance Commission which are used as the basis for modelling interstate migration
- changes in state and territory defence force levels not accounted for in Medicare changes of address.

The five-yearly Census of Population and Housing provides the benchmark for population estimates. The results of the census are adjusted to take account of:

- persons away from home on census night
- the need to exclude overseas visitors
- underenumeration of the population in the census
- residents temporarily overseas on census night.

As the census is conducted in August the estimates are then backdated to 30 June using births, deaths, and net migration.

For subsequent periods the estimates are incremented from the census benchmark using estimates of natural increase (the excess of births over deaths), net overseas migration and net interstate migration in the intervening period.

Every five years new benchmark estimates are available from the census and it provides an opportunity to compare the estimates based on the previous census with the estimates from the most recent census. The difference in these two estimates is known as Intercensal Error. Table 1 illustrates the level and relative impact of the intercensal error for the last four intercensal periods. For 1996–2001, the intercensal error for Australia was minimal (0.05%), although the error varied from state to state with the Australian Capital Territory having the highest absolute percentage error (1.36%) and the Northern Territory the lowest (0.11%). The intercensal error provides the basis for revising the estimates for the period between the previous and current censuses.

**Table 1: INTERCENSAL ERROR**

	1981–1986	1986–1991	1991–1996	1996–2001
Persons ('000)				
New South Wales	11.9	2.4	–15.8	–27.0
Victoria	3.9	7.0	–20.9	35.6
Queensland	–32.0	11.1	15.9	5.8
South Australia	–9.4	10.4	4.5	–9.6
Western Australia	–18.4	29.9	–3.3	11.5
Tasmania	0.4	–6.3	–1.1	–1.8
Northern Territory	–6.3	–6.7	–5.2	–0.2
Australian Capital Territory	5.5	4.2	–1.2	–4.3
<b>Australia</b>	<b>–44.4</b>	<b>51.9</b>	<b>–27.5</b>	<b>10.6</b>
Per cent of population at 30 June of end year				
New South Wales	0.22	0.04	–0.25	–0.41
Victoria	0.09	0.16	–0.46	0.74
Queensland	–1.22	0.34	0.48	0.16
South Australia	–0.68	0.72	0.31	–0.63
Western Australia	–1.26	1.83	–0.19	0.60
Tasmania	0.09	–1.35	–0.23	–0.39
Northern Territory	–4.08	–4.05	–2.86	–0.11
Australian Capital Territory	2.12	1.45	–0.39	–1.36
<b>Australia</b>	<b>–0.28</b>	<b>0.30</b>	<b>–0.15</b>	<b>0.05</b>

## DATA SOURCES AND LIMITATIONS

Like all statistical measures, the data sources used to compile ERP are subject to measurement error. Whilst the ABS population estimates are based on the best available data, understanding the limitations is important when using them for decision making.

## The Population Census

The Population Census aims to count all people in Australia on census night. The planning and development for the census is a major exercise and commences some seven years before census night. The ABS recruits and trains census collectors who know the local area so as to minimise any errors that may occur during delivery and collection of forms. Procedures are in place to provide mail back envelopes when collectors are unable to make contact with residents in dwellings. Special enumeration strategies are developed and implemented for Indigenous Australians, the homeless, and persons in transit on overnight trains, buses, planes and shipping. Significant planning and processes are implemented to ensure a high quality Indigenous enumeration including recruitment of local community collectors, recognition and respect for cultural characteristics and multistage quality assurance processes.

A comprehensive media and advertising campaign is implemented to raise awareness of the census and keep the community informed during the enumeration cycle. A telephone census inquiry service, census booklet, web site and interpreter service are provided to help answer householders' questions. Information packs are also provided to federal and state parliamentarians, local councils, community groups and schools.

In spite of these efforts, experience has shown that a small percentage of the population are missed and an even smaller percentage of the population are counted more than once. A household based Post Enumeration Survey (PES) conducted 3 weeks after the census is the main source for assessing the level and characteristics of people undercounted and overcounted. The PES does not include dwellings in very sparsely populated areas due to the high cost of enumeration. The PES also does not include Indigenous communities, as the close involvement of the Indigenous community organisations in the census enumeration process make it impractical to effectively conduct an independent PES for these communities. Alternative methodologies are used for estimating the extent of undercount for these population groups. The level of net undercount in each state and territory is then used to add to the census counts on a usual residence basis. Results of the 2001 Census PES are presented in table 2. Overall the net undercount for Australia was 1.8%, with the Northern Territory having the highest (4.0%) net undercount and the Australian Capital Territory the lowest (1.0%).



Table 2: NET UNDERCOUNT 2001 CENSUS

	Per cent
New South Wales	2.0
Victoria	1.4
Queensland	1.9
South Australia	1.6
Western Australia	2.0
Tasmania	1.6
Northern Territory	4.0
Australian Capital Territory	1.0
<b>Australia</b>	<b>1.8</b>

As the PES is a sample of dwellings, estimates derived from the survey are subject to error. For 2001, the net undercount rate for Australia of 1.8% has a standard error of 0.1 percentage points. This means that there are 19 chances in 20 (95%) that the net undercount rate is in the range of 1.6% to 2.0%.

Natural increase

Birth and death statistics are provided by state and territory registrars. For preliminary estimates, births and deaths on a date of registration are used as a substitute for date of occurrence basis.

Australia is regarded as having a sound civil registration process. Although most births and deaths are registered promptly, there is an interval between the date of occurrence of a birth or death and the date of registration. There is a detectable delay in a small proportion of registrations, more so for births than deaths. Accordingly, estimates of natural increase for each financial year are revised 15 months after the end of the year. The revisions take account of subsequently reported registrations, converted to a date of occurrence basis and an adjustment applied for anticipated further late registrations based on historical trends.

Overseas Migration

Net overseas migration is measured using passenger cards completed by passengers crossing Australia's borders. Data on permanent and long-term arrivals and departures are used for population estimation purposes, together with an adjustment factor to take account of passengers' change in travel intentions.

Because of the significant impact of overseas migration on population growth for Australia and in particular states and cities, the data available from the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs incoming and outgoing passenger cards are critical to the accurate measurement of the Australian population.

Overseas migration estimates can be affected by changes between intended and actual duration of stay of travellers to or from Australia. As a duration of stay or absence of 12 months or more determines inclusion or removal from the population, it will not be until over 12 months after the initial crossing of the Australian border that confirmation is obtained that the person was indeed a permanent or long-term arrival or departure. Any resultant change in category of overseas movement is known as category jumping. In recent years with increased numbers of overseas students and temporary business entrants to Australia, the volume of long-term arrivals to Australia has increased substantially. However, many of these people depart Australia for short absences, which presents difficulties in determining their residential status. In 2003, the ABS is seeking to better understand and develop a new method of measuring the extent of category jumping and its impact on overseas migration statistics.

### Interstate Migration

Australia does not have a comprehensive and timely source of statistics on interstate migration. Some European countries have population registers which permit regular updates of the population based on the place of residence. Unlike these population registers, Australia's lists of residents such as electoral roles, tax and rate payers and drivers license registers do not cover the complete population and are not always updated in a timely manner.

In the absence of such data for Australia, interstate migration estimates are compiled using a model constructed from the internal migration results of the most recent census, changes of address as advised to Medicare/Health Insurance Commission each quarter and changes in the level of Defence Forces in each state and territory. The model is calibrated on each subsequent census ensuring that it is relevant and of acceptable accuracy. Estimates of intercensal interstate migration are evaluated and revised with the availability of the results from the next census. The intercensal interstate migration model for the next intercensal period is then recalculated using the new census results. It does include some specific adjustments to take account of the special characteristics of some states and territories (e.g. Northern Territory which has a proportionally higher itinerant population than other jurisdictions).

Due to the lack of hard data, interstate migration is the most challenging component of population change to measure. The ABS periodically reviews alternative sources of data to estimate interstate migration. Although Medicare address changes are not without their limitations as a data source, no other alternative data source has been found to be superior for quarterly population estimates.

## COMPOSITIONAL CHANGE

Data in Attachment A shows the composition of population change for each state/territory from 1997–2002.

Queensland has the largest population increases in percentage terms over the period with the natural increase, net overseas migration and net interstate migration all being contributing factors. Tasmania, on the other hand, has had population decline over the period. Although natural increase and net overseas migration contribute positively to Tasmania's population change, it is the net interstate migration which impacts heavily resulting in the population decrease.

The large positive net interstate migration figures for Queensland are predominantly as a result of people shifting to the warmer climate from Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia in particular. This is mirrored by the negative net interstate migration figures which these states have for the most part.

We know that many overseas migrants settle in Sydney and Melbourne. This is confirmed by figures in Attachment A which show higher net overseas migration rates for New South Wales and Victoria than most other states/territories. The Northern Territory recorded the largest natural increase contribution to population change of all states/territories from 1997–2002, while South Australia had the lowest.

## CONCLUSION

The compiling of ERP's is a difficult and complex process reliant on data derived from a number of different sources. While sound statistical and objective processes are used to assemble the ERPs, and we believe they are the best estimates given available source data, ultimately the ABS ERPs are estimates and reflect any errors in the source data. The ERPs are also subject to revision, as updated data become available.

## Attachment A

## POPULATION CHANGE RATES

<i>Year Ended 30 June</i>	<i>Natural increase (%)</i>	<i>Net overseas migration (%)</i>	<i>Net interstate migration (%)</i>	<i><b>Total (%)</b></i>
<b>New South Wales</b>				
1997	0.69	0.60	-0.17	<b>1.16</b>
1998	0.63	0.51	-0.20	<b>0.99</b>
1999	0.64	0.65	-0.21	<b>1.14</b>
2000	0.64	0.68	-0.22	<b>1.17</b>
2001	0.61	0.90	-0.25	<b>1.37</b>
2002	0.57	0.78	-0.36	<b>0.99</b>
<b>Victoria</b>				
1997	0.63	0.46	-0.14	<b>0.81</b>
1998	0.60	0.42	-0.01	<b>0.88</b>
1999	0.58	0.53	0.05	<b>1.05</b>
2000	0.59	0.58	0.11	<b>1.17</b>
2001	0.56	0.75	0.11	<b>1.34</b>
2002	0.57	0.71	0.13	<b>1.41</b>
<b>Queensland</b>				
1997	0.77	0.38	0.59	<b>1.68</b>
1998	0.73	0.37	0.51	<b>1.56</b>
1999	0.71	0.40	0.48	<b>1.56</b>
2000	0.70	0.50	0.53	<b>1.72</b>
2001	0.71	0.59	0.56	<b>1.89</b>
2002	0.67	0.69	0.80	<b>2.16</b>
<b>South Australia</b>				
1997	0.47	0.21	-0.23	<b>0.48</b>
1998	0.45	0.21	-0.13	<b>0.55</b>
1999	0.45	0.18	-0.11	<b>0.55</b>
2000	0.42	0.26	-0.24	<b>0.48</b>
2001	0.37	0.18	-0.16	<b>0.44</b>
2002	0.39	0.30	-0.12	<b>0.56</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

**POPULATION CHANGE RATES — continued**

Year Ended 30 June	Natural increase (%)	Net overseas migration (%)	Net interstate migration (%)	Total (%)
<b>Western Australia</b>				
1997	0.80	0.70	0.26	<b>1.68</b>
1998	0.76	0.67	0.18	<b>1.54</b>
1999	0.80	0.73	0.02	<b>1.48</b>
2000	0.75	0.76	-0.12	<b>1.34</b>
2001	0.75	0.87	-0.17	<b>1.42</b>
2002	0.69	0.91	-0.22	<b>1.38</b>
<b>Tasmania</b>				
1997	0.52	0.05	-0.70	<b>-0.18</b>
1998	0.44	0.01	-0.77	<b>-0.35</b>
1999	0.56	0.04	-0.70	<b>-0.11</b>
2000	0.44	0.09	-0.56	—
2001	0.43	0.02	-0.45	<b>0.08</b>
2002	0.45	0.10	-0.36	<b>0.20</b>
<b>Northern Territory</b>				
1997	1.50	0.30	0.96	<b>2.79</b>
1998	1.51	0.30	-0.25	<b>1.59</b>
1999	1.45	0.53	-0.50	<b>1.50</b>
2000	1.41	0.49	-0.47	<b>1.47</b>
2001	1.46	0.45	-0.81	<b>1.13</b>
2002	1.46	0.07	-1.41	<b>0.12</b>
<b>Australian Capital Territory</b>				
1997	0.99	-0.02	-0.80	<b>0.26</b>
1998	0.92	-0.08	-0.64	<b>0.27</b>
1999	0.95	-0.07	-0.16	<b>0.79</b>
2000	0.89	-0.03	-0.03	<b>0.92</b>
2001	0.85	0.23	0.13	<b>1.30</b>
2002	0.83	0.26	-0.31	<b>0.78</b>
<b>Australia(a)</b>				
1997	0.69	0.48	..	<b>1.13</b>
1998	0.65	0.43	..	<b>1.05</b>
1999	0.65	0.52	..	<b>1.15</b>
2000	0.64	0.57	..	<b>1.20</b>
2001	0.62	0.71	..	<b>1.36</b>
2002	0.60	0.69	..	<b>1.29</b>

(a) includes Other Territories.

Source: Australian Demographic Statistics, September quarter 2002 (cat. no. 3101.0).

## SPECIAL ARTICLES IN EARLIER ANNUAL REPORTS

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, pp. 7–11, supplemented by Appendix 5)

*The ABS Program of Industry Collections* (1984–85, pp. 8–13, supplemented by Appendix 5)

*Dissemination of Statistics by the ABS* (1985–86, pp. 9–14)

*ABS Corporate Plan* (1986–87, Chapter 2)

*Health Statistics and the Report of the Better Health Commission* (1986–87, Chapter 3)

*The Role of a National Statistical Office* (1986–87, Appendix 10)

*Statistics and Privacy* (1987–88, Chapter 3)

*Media Liaison for ABS Health Survey* (1987–88, Appendix 12)

*A Quart out of a Pint Pot* (1988–89, Chapter 2). This article examines how the ABS increased significantly the range, timeliness and quality of its statistical products and services over the preceding 13 years, with a static level of resources.

*Household Expenditure Surveys in Australia: A Chronology* (1988–89, Appendix 15)

*Complaints to the Australian Press Council* (1988–89, Appendix 16)

*The ABS in the Marketplace* (1989–90, Chapter 2)

*The 1991 Census of Population and Housing* (1990–91, Chapter 2, Population Census)

*Security of ABS Data Holdings* (1992–93, Chapter 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)

*The 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)

*Retirement of Mr Bill McLennan CBE, AM, Australian Statistician, 1995–2000* (1999–2000, Chapter 2)

*Servicing Regional Data Requirements* (1999–2000, Chapter 3)

*Statistical Benchmarking as a Means of Improving Performance* (1999–2000, Chapter 4)

*Research and Analysis in the ABS* (2000–01, Chapter 3)

*The 2001 Census of Population and Housing* (2000–01, Chapter 4)

*Measuring Australia's Progress* (2001–02, Chapter 3)

*The International Comparison Program* (2001–02, Chapter 4)

## **SECTION III**

# **PERFORMANCE INFORMATION**

### **Chapter 5 — Performance Information**



## 5 PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

This Chapter outlines the performance of the ABS in 2002–03, in terms of its outcomes and outputs as specified in the 2002–03 Portfolio Budget Statements as presented to Parliament in May 2002.

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### 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: Relevance of ABS output

*Performance Measure 1.1: Statistical output which meets the needs of key users of economic and social data in terms of:*

- *support to decision making*
- *demonstrated by a high level of use.*

*Performance Measure 1.2: Openness of planning process*

#### 2: Integrity in statistical operations

*Performance Measure 2.1: An objective statistical service through:*

- *release of reliable/accurate statistics*
- *open statistical process*
- *trust and cooperation of providers.*

#### 3: Appropriate use of statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies

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

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

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

*Performance Measure 4.1: Statistical Clearing House activity*

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

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

**OUTPUT MEASURES**

**5: Increase the quantity of output**

*Performance Measure 5.1: Increase the range of statistics disseminated*

*Performance Measure 5.2: Innovative outputs*

**6: Improve the quality of outputs**

*Performance Measure 6.1: Achieve or exceed timeliness, statistical reliability, response rates and accuracy objectives through:*

- *timeliness*
- *statistical reliability*
- *response rates*
- *accuracy.*

*Performance Measure 6.2: Conduct ongoing research and reviews of quality, and implement their recommendations:*

- *outline ABS statistical reviews*
- *innovative practices — improvements to existing collections as a result of research and development.*

**7: Achievement of cost effective outputs**

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

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

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

*Performance Measure 7.4: Minimise provider load*

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## OUTCOME MEASURES

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### 1: Relevance of ABS output

The ABS directs its efforts to the best interests of the Australian community. To aid this, it ensures that data needed for policy and research purposes are available when required. Good statistical planning, which requires a keen understanding of the current and future needs of users, is essential.

The ABS also recognises that, in order to be relevant to informed decision making, debate, and discussions, its statistics must be timely and relatable to other data. To support this, they are placed in an appropriate statistical framework. The ABS also provides analyses and explanations to help the interpretation of its statistics.

#### **Performance Measure 1.1: Statistical output which meets the needs of key users of economic and social data in terms of:**

- *support to decision making*
- *demonstrated by a high level of use.*

Support to decision making

The ABS provides official statistics across a wide range of economic and social matters, for government, business and the Australian community.

Collections undertaken by the ABS include:

- the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing
- monthly and quarterly surveys providing key economic indicators
- collections from industry and households that provide users with information on specific economic and social issues.

In addition, as part of the national statistical service, the ABS cooperates with other Commonwealth, state and territory agencies to release statistics required by key users which are collected as a by-product of administrative systems.

Apart from the extensive range of existing publications and data which provide support to decision makers on a range of ongoing policy issues, the ABS continues to monitor and anticipate users' needs in terms of new surveys, statistics, and research. The ABS is assisted in this regard by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) identifying major social, economic, and environmental issues of policy significance over the coming three to five years. This priority list is used as one check on the ABS priorities as identified in the forward work program.

Ensuring ABS outputs provide support to decision making is also achieved by extensive consultation with state/territory governments. Each year a meeting of state/territory government representatives known as the State Statistical Forum is held at the ABS. The objective of the forum is similar to ASAC in that it identifies major policy issues over the coming three to five years. The SSF has a narrower focus with the emphasis particularly on the issues which directly affect the state/territory governments.

The ABS maintains a close relationship with what are termed 'Lifeline' and other key Commonwealth clients. These Lifeline and other key Commonwealth clients have a major influence on the ABS' work program. Some of these clients are also sponsors of user funded surveys which allows the ABS to meet their more narrow or priority needs and to expand the ABS statistical program.

Given the importance of Lifeline and other key Commonwealth clients significant contact is maintained at a variety of levels, in particular at the Senior Executive Service levels. The regular contact provides:

- an atmosphere of understanding and cooperation between the agencies and the ABS
- good statistical intelligence on client's work programs, issues and data needs to help determine ABS work programs and/or develop tailored solutions (e.g. user funded surveys)
- statistics produced from the administrative systems of client agencies which are of high quality, consistent and timely
- progress on implementation of National Statistical Service (NSS) objectives.

A number of key decisions were agreed in 2002–03 as a result of the processes outlined above. These are listed under Performance Measure 1.2.

Some of the key areas where the ABS is responding to current and emerging issues and conducting research or new surveys include:

- state accounts — in response to calls from state/territory governments for better quality state accounts, the ABS is devoting more resources to the analysis of state data, and improving methods and source data
- ageing statistics — the ABS created a National Ageing Statistics Unit in recognition of the increasing policy focus and discussion at Commonwealth and state/territory levels, and in response to the need for a statistical evidence base to support government policy development related to these specific population groups

- rural and regional statistics — the ABS is developing an Information Development Plan (IDP) in response to calls from state/territory governments for greater information at the regional level. Once established, the IDP will provide an important guide to statistical development work, including collection activity, use of administrative databanks, and data modelling and analysis for rural and regional statistics
- energy and greenhouse gas emissions — measures have been developed as a result of increasing demand from government and the community. The ABS dispatched an Energy Use Survey for businesses which will provide state/territory level data on energy supply and use, by fuel type
- Indigenous statistics — the ABS conducted an Indigenous Social Survey in 2002 after calls for more information on Indigenous statistics to assist with policy development. The survey collects a wide range of socioeconomic information including education, labour force participation, demographic and housing details
- Crime and Justice — an IDP has been undertaken to clearly understand the policy drivers within the sector, data requirements, data availability and to prioritise data gaps.

An important component of the ABS output strategy has been to support secondary analysis of ABS data through access to Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs). During 2002–03 a new dissemination stream — Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) — was implemented. RADL allows users to access ABS microdata via a secure web arrangement at a more detailed level than that which may be released on CD-ROM versions of CURFs. Extra protection is provided with RADL as with this arrangement the full file is kept within the ABS computing environment. More information on these and other strategies for supporting secondary analysis can be found in Chapter 3 — Access to ABS Microdata.

In 2002–03 the ABS released 170 CURFs, while in its first two months of operation put in place arrangements for 13 organisations to access CURFs via RADL. The number of registered users within the 13 organisations approved to access RADL totalled 57 at 30 June 2003. The majority of analysis has been focused on the 2001 National Health Survey CURF.

Chapters 6 and 7 contain detailed information about the many components of the ABS statistical work program and improvements to the coverage of official statistics.

Demonstrated by a high level of use

The ABS delivers results from all statistical collections, as soon as practicable after the reference period, and makes them available to all users at the same time.

The ABS provides statistics and related information to users via many mechanisms, including:

- printed publications, available for purchase at ABS bookshops or by request from the ABS national subscription service
- free access to all published statistics via national, state, university and many public libraries across the nation as part of the ABS Library Extension Program (LEP). Users can also access complete Census Community Profile Series and Classification Counts through the facility known as CLIB2001. CLIB is a census product provided free of charge to LEP-eligible libraries
- free provision of ABS publications to media organisations recognising that the media is the means by which many Australians find out about official statistics
- a free national telephone inquiry service for brief information requests
- free access via the ABS web site to key statistics, summary publications, explanatory and conceptual material on ABS statistics, and a growing number of information directories
- ABS@ and AusStats subscription services to provide users with ready access to ABS publications and to a range of multi-dimensional datasets in electronic format.

Access to ABS statistical information increased significantly during 2002–03. This is particularly evident in the use of the ABS web site and the web site-based AusStats subscription service. The large increase (40%) in the access to statistics via the ABS web site stems from the ABS' policy of expanding the range of data available on the web site free of charge and the large range of data from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing, such as basic community profiles becoming available. The AusStats service has also expanded with the media and LEP member libraries granted access to the service.

LEP is a partnership between the ABS and libraries which assists in the provision of ABS information to the community by providing LEP member libraries with free access to published ABS statistics. A recent initiative of the ABS is the provision of free online access to ABS publications on the ABS web site to LEP member libraries. This initiative, known as e-LEP, is an example of ABS' innovative service provision.

Subscribers to ABS@ have increased to ten with the addition of the Australian Capital Territory and Queensland governments. The service, replicated daily into the Intranets of key client organisations which have paid an annual fee for that service, enables staff in those organisations to access ABS information. The information presented reflects the move from traditional paper-based publications to electronically disseminated information, justifying the resources allocated to further developing and improving this medium in the future.

In the past two years there has been a significant drop in the number of publication subscribers. The main reasons are that many subscribers have been converted to e-LEP and AusStats while others access the data via the ABS web site. Additionally, the ABS subscription service no longer services ad hoc clients or subscribers to irregular publications.

**Table 1: ACCESSES TO SELECTED DISSEMINATION SERVICES**

	Type of Access	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Internet Site	Accesses	14 884 419	20 946 456	27 659 711	38 712 367
AusStats(a)	Downloads	26 795	225 585	355 810	655 782
ABS@(b)	Subscribers	2	7	8	10
Internet Inquiry Service	Email	6 114	7 625	15 636	20 036
National Information & Referral Service	Calls completed	170 000	120 165	119 020	100 197
Publications(c)	Subscribers	11 101	11 045	9 654	6 257
Dial-a-Statistic—1900	Calls	23 300	15 465	8 452	7 853
CPI Infoline	Calls	13 300	9 182	7 333	8 363
Library Extension Program	Libraries	516	516	515	515
Secondary Providers(d)	Number	57	69	65	107

(a) Service commenced in April 2000. (b) Relates to total number of organisations using the service (including some state and territory governments). (c) Where the number of subscribers is shown this refers to 30 June. (d) Various organisations which are licensed to re-sell ABS data. Of these, 38 are secondary distributors who include ABS data on their non-charging web sites.

The following table shows ABS printed and electronic publication releases by subject matter and frequency for 2001–02 and 2002–03. The fall in the number of printed publication releases more than offset the rise in electronic releases, leading to an overall decrease in publication releases. Of the 776 publication releases in 2002–03, 218 were only released in electronic version.

Despite the overall drop in publication titles in 2002–03 there was a rise in the population and migration releases due to the reporting of the Census of Population and Housing statistics.

**Table 2: ABS RELEASES(a) CLASSIFIED BY SUBJECT MATTER AND FREQUENCY, 2001-02 AND 2002-03 (number)**

<i>Subject Matter/Year</i>	<i>Annual</i>	<i>Quarterly</i>	<i>Monthly</i>	<i>Other</i>	<i>Total</i>
Economic and Finance Releases					
2001-02	13	54	60	8	<b>135</b>
2002-03	17	42	61	3	<b>123</b>
Industry Releases					
2001-02	27	123	80	29	<b>259</b>
2002-03	12	121	69	22	<b>224</b>
Population and Migration Releases					
2001-02	21	5	14	27	<b>67</b>
2002-03	43	4	18	93	<b>158</b>
Labour Releases					
2001-02	5	45	60	13	<b>123</b>
2002-03	9	8	57	12	<b>116</b>
Social Analysis Releases					
2001-02	12	4	0	12	<b>28</b>
2002-03	12	4	0	28	<b>44</b>
Other General Releases					
2001-02	36	19	79	116	<b>250</b>
2002-03	30	24	42	15	<b>111</b>
<b>Total</b>					
<b>2001-02</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>293</b>	<b>205</b>	<b>862</b>
<b>2002-03</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>247</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>776</b>

(a) Includes catalogued publications and other products, but excludes reprints and corrigenda.

The ABS provides free access to much of its data, including Main Features, Year Book Australia, Australian Social Trends and Statistical Concepts Library, through the ABS web site. Free access is also provided through public libraries, media releases, media enquiries, and via the distribution of ABS reports to media offices and to members of parliament.

Table 3 below shows the level of media reporting (by medium) over recent years. Since 2001-02 there has been a significant increase in reporting on radio, television and the Internet and in newspapers and magazines. This increase in activity is predominantly attributed to the conduct of, and subsequent launch of results for, the 2001 Census of Population and Housing.



**Table 3: MEDIA REPORTING, BY PLACEMENT**

<i>Year</i>	<i>Radio, television and Internet news placements</i>	<i>Newspaper and magazine placements</i>	<i>News releases issued</i>
1999–2000	4 600	6 900	144
2000–01	4 800	9 300	383
2001–02	7 088	11 138	156
2002–03	6 774	13 580	168

The ABS maintains a Client Service Charter which describes the relationship between the ABS and users of its products and services. The Charter also provides information on client procedures in the event of a complaint. The ABS received two formal complaints during 2002–03, each in relation to the ABS charging policy. The complaints were both resolved in an amicable manner.

A number of exercises were conducted by the ABS in 2002–03 to assess the quality of service and to improve the ABS' understanding of user needs. These included:

- an online web site survey to collect demographic and behavioural information on, and expectations of, visitors to the ABS web site
- an analysis of ABS' Information Consultancy client base to assist in improving the service to clients
- a key client stocktake which assessed whether the ABS was meeting the needs of key Commonwealth agencies and ways in which these relationships could be enhanced
- an assessment of the quality of service of the National Information Referral Service, from the perspective of users.

### **Performance Measure 1.2: Openness of planning process**

ABS planning processes and decisions are open, relevant and independent. The ABS manages this by maintaining a rolling three-year forward work program, published on the ABS web site, which develops and allocates resources to program outputs. The external dialogue which forms such an important element of the ABS planning process is also critical to ensuring the relevance of ABS statistical output. In establishing its forward work program, the ABS is advised by the following user groups:

- ASAC
- State Statistical Forum
- state government advisory groups
- various other formal user groups comprising, as relevant, Commonwealth and state government agencies, academics, business organisations, unions, community groups.

These include:

- Economic Statistics User Group
- Education and Training Statistics User Group
- Methodology Advisory Committee
- National Crime Statistics Advisory Group
- National Criminal Courts Statistics Advisory Group
- Environmental Statistics Advisory Group
- Rural and Regional Statistics Advisory Group
- National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data.

Extensive consultation is also undertaken with key users in the development of specific collections once a decision has been made to include the collection in the forward work program. The information obtained through these forums is supplemented with information gathered from bilateral discussions with key clients, conferences and seminars, outposted statistical officers, and day-to-day contact with clients in the course of disseminating and advising on the use of data.

Some of the key decisions in 2002–03 arising from the planning process include:

- the establishment of a National Centre for Environment Statistics which will develop and coordinate statistics in this field of study
- the development of content and methodology for the National Health Survey 2004–05
- expanding science and innovation statistical capability, including the development of a survey of innovation by Australian businesses
- the conduct of a survey to collect business energy supply and consumption by industry and fuel type. The survey was developed in close consultation with major users, including relevant Commonwealth and state government departments and agencies, and the major industry representative bodies
- a continued commitment to the development of a National Statistical Service.

## 2: Integrity in statistical operations

ABS data, analysis, and interpretations are always objective, and the ABS always publishes its statistics. The ABS decides what to publish, and then does so in ways which explain and inform, without advocating a particular position.

The ABS statistical system is open. The ABS sets and publishes, in advance, the dates for the release of all its statistics. Pre-embargo access to statistics is strictly controlled under publicly known arrangements. The methodologies and approaches followed are based on sound statistical principles and practices, disseminated widely, and open to scrutiny.

### **Performance Measure 2.1: An objective statistical service through:**

- *release of reliable/accurate statistics*
- *open statistical process*
- *trust and cooperation of providers.*

#### Release of reliable/accurate statistics

Key measures for demonstrating reliable/accurate statistics include high response rates, low sample errors and the timeliness of ABS statistics. Performance Measure 6.1 demonstrates that the ABS has maintained high response rates in its major economic and social surveys and provided statistics which are subject to low sample errors. In addition, the timeliness of ABS quarterly main economic indicators has improved marginally in 2002–03.

A key element of this performance indicator is the availability of information to enable users to make their own assessment of quality. Information on these aspects of reliability and accuracy, as well as extensive information on the statistical methods used in collections, are routinely provided in concepts, sources and methods publications, the Explanatory Notes in publications, and are also available at the Statistical Clearing House web site <[www.sch.abs.gov.au](http://www.sch.abs.gov.au)>.

#### Open statistical process

The Australian Statistician determines which statistics are to be collected, after full discussion with users, clients and the ASAC.

The ABS continues to maintain close contact with its users through a variety of mechanisms, including:

- user groups
- bilateral discussions with key clients
- standing committees
- outposted statistical officers
- conferences and seminars
- day-to-day contact in the course of disseminating data.

The ABS Forward Work Program for 2003–04 to 2005–06, published in hard copy and also available on the ABS web site, demonstrates the open statistical process by describing ABS outputs, clients and uses of statistical information, as well as the proposed main medium-term developments over the next three years.

We are open about the methods we use. The ABS regularly publishes 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 in ensuring that the public are informed about the statistical process. Many of these publications are listed in this Annual Report, including new and updated versions. Details of major revisions to published data are described in the Explanatory Notes of the relevant publication.

Ongoing research work is often published in professional papers and/or presented to conferences in Australia and abroad. These papers and conferences provide the ABS with valuable peer review and suggestions in the development of new statistical products. A full list of papers presented in 2002–03 is provided at Appendix 16. Some of the topics presented at conferences included:

- *Scanner data in consumer price index research and compilation* — presented to the International Association of Official Statistics — Official Statistics and the New Economy
- *Quality adjustment in service industry producer price indexes and Producer price index for computer services* — presented to the Voorburg Group Meeting on Service Statistics
- *Standards and resources for statistics on economic disadvantage and income inequality in Australia* — presented to the Expert Group on Poverty Statistics (Rio Group)
- *Deriving industry multifactor productivity from the Input-Output system* — presented to the International Conference on Input-Output Techniques.

The ABS continues to advertise all scheduled release dates for publications up to 12 months in advance. Daily press and media releases inform users of publications being released each day. This information is also available on the ABS web site. Release of all publications is subject to a strict embargo policy that ensures impartiality, an essential element of integrity.

In addition the ABS has contributed its own policies on collection and dissemination of statistics to the United Nations web site on Good Practices in Official Statistics.

Trust and cooperation of providers

The *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (C&S Act) obliges ABS staff to maintain the secrecy and security of all data provided to the ABS under the C&S Act, and held by the ABS. Staff sign an undertaking of fidelity and secrecy under the terms of the Act to ensure that they are fully aware of the requirements on them. There have been no known cases of an ABS officer breaching the undertaking of fidelity and secrecy.

The ABS has an enviable reputation for the preservation of the secrecy of reported information, whether it is provided in response to an ABS survey or as administrative data, and for the protection of its statistical data holdings from unauthorised release. The ABS also audits the use of confidentialised unit record files (released under the provisions of clause 7 of the Ministerial Determination) to ensure that the requirements relating to the management and use of the files (which are agreed to by users in a legally binding undertaking), are complied with.

The efficiency of ABS operations and the quality of the data collected are enhanced through maintaining the trust and cooperation of the providers of data. Integral to that process has been the development of the Business Surveys Charter, careful form design, and close liaison with business and other representative groups. The ABS is conscious however that the needs of users for information must be balanced against the load placed on businesses in providing that information. With this in mind, the ABS has actively and successfully worked to reduce the reporting load on businesses during 2002–03 through a range of methods including the increasing use of administrative data, the cessation of existing collections, and by transferring a number of financial sector collections from the ABS and the Reserve Bank of Australia to a single collection conducted by the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority. This builds on initiatives undertaken in earlier years. In addition, a range of relevant census outputs have been provided to all small–medium businesses included in ABS collections as a means of maintaining the goodwill between the ABS and its providers and to thank them for their contribution. More information on provider load is detailed in table 15 under Performance Measure 7.4.

Each year over 100,000 businesses are selected in ABS economic surveys. In 2002–03 a total of 427 businesses wrote to the ABS complaining about respondent load issues. This was down from the 550 complaints received by the ABS in the previous year. Every complaint is responded to in writing by the ABS and, as provided for in the ABS Business Surveys Charter, if the complainant is not happy with the response they can take the matter to the ABS Complaints Review Officer. During 2002–03 no complainants asked the Complaints Review Officer to review their initial complaint.

Table 4: COMPLAINTS FROM DATA PROVIDERS

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Number of complaints	665	748	550	427

### 3: Appropriate use of statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies

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

An important ABS activity is 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.

Activities and achievements during 2002–03 included:

- release of *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia — A Framework for Education and Training Statistics* (cat. no. 4213.0). The framework has been developed to assist relevant agencies to determine their information requirements, and assist in data collection and analysis. It is a joint initiative of the ABS, the Department of Education, Science and Training, the Australian National Training Authority, and all state and territory education and training departments
- release of an experimental framework for presentation of knowledge-based economy/society indicators in *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0)
- contribution to work on harmonising government finance statistics standards and Australian accounting standards
- development of the 2002–03 Agricultural Survey which incorporated recommendations from a review — Framework for Agricultural Statistics in Australia — undertaken by Mr Fred Vogel of the United States of America National Agricultural Statistical Service
- development of a framework for construction statistics
- following stakeholder consultation, the development of a framework to measure social capital
- preparation of a framework for the collection and presentation of information on sexual assault, for release as an ABS Information Paper
- release of an updated *Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia (SESCA), 2002* (cat. no. 1218.0). The update was necessary to incorporate the revised model used to create economic statistical units

- the provision to the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) of a significantly updated computer-assisted-coder for use in the coding of businesses on the Australian Business Register according to their industrial activity
- ongoing support to the ATO in prioritising maintenance activities, through involvement in the Policy Advisory Committee and the ABS/ATO Business Frames and Classifications Working Group
- consultations with key Commonwealth and state government bodies, along with other stakeholders, resulting in significant progress on the development of the *Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), 2006* (cat. no. 1292.0) (the replacement for the existing classification — ANZSIC 1993).

ABS' Methodology Division provides specialist services to meet new and ongoing demands in statistics. The Division has four key roles in ensuring the adoption of professional statistical principles/methods:

- establishing standards and advising statistical areas on appropriate statistical methods and being our 'conscience' on the quality of statistical outputs
- developing of new statistical products through the confrontation, analysis and synthesis of ABS and non-ABS data
- participating in reviews of existing statistical collections and methods
- keeping abreast of professional (methodological) developments through presentation of professional papers and attendance at relevant conferences.

Supporting the work of the Methodology Division has been the formation of a Methodology Advisory Committee (MAC) consisting of professional statisticians external to the ABS, which meets twice-yearly and provides a forum for peer review of statistical developments in the ABS. Some of the issues considered by MAC in 2002–03 include:

- reducing the volatility of labour force seasonal adjustment estimates
- strategies for synthetic estimation in ABS business surveys
- undercoverage in ABS income surveys.

Other subject specific advisory boards are also often consulted about methodology issues related to their main focus.

**Performance Measure 3.2: Contribute to the development of key international 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. Some of the involvement that the ABS has had during 2002–03 included contributions to:

- the coordination of the International Comparison Program particularly in the Asia-Pacific region
- the United Nations Statistical Commission work on the harmonisation of development indicators
- the development, through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), of statistical standards in relation to research and development statistics, biotechnology statistics, electronic commerce and measuring household and business use of information technology
- the Technical Sub-Group to the United Nations (UN) Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications on the conceptual development of the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC 2007) and the Central Product Classification (CPC 2007)
- international working parties addressing important national accounting framework issues, such as the treatment of software, non financial assets and finance and insurance services
- the work of the International Monetary Fund's Balance of Payments Statistics Committee
- the international Producer Price Index and Consumer Price Index manuals
- discussions on the development of standards for the measurement of disability.

In addition to contributing to the development of new international standards and frameworks, the ABS has also implemented, or is in the process of implementing, some of these including:

- the adoption of updated OECD equivalence scales for income distribution statistics
- the development of a paper proposing the development of a business entries and exits series, drawing on the Eurostat/OECD standards.



The ABS also provides assistance to statistical agencies in developing nations in implementing the latest international standards. Assistance in 2002–03 included:

- continuation of a program of technical cooperation with the Indonesian statistical agency, a highlight being a two-week visit to the ABS office in Darwin by staff from seven eastern Indonesian provinces to study statistical operations
- commencement of a second phase (30 months) of assistance to Thailand to strengthen its macro-economic statistics
- completion of a 12-month activity to assist the Philippines in improving its national accounts
- commencement of a three-year program of assistance to Vanuatu to strengthen its National Statistics Office
- a six-month program to assist East Timor with its consumer price index
- provision of resource persons for several workshops to assist developing countries in various priority fields of statistics
- other technical assistance to a number of countries, including China, Fiji, South Korea, Malaysia, Singapore, South Africa, Tonga and Viet Nam.

ABS officers held prominent positions in a number of international groups during 2002–03. These included:

- the Australian Statistician as President of the International Statistical Institute
- the Deputy Australian Statistician, Population Statistics Group, as Chair of the Program Coordinating Committee for the 54th Session of the International Statistical Institute
- the First Assistant Statistician, Information Management Division, as Vice President of the International Association for Official Statistics
- the Australian Statistician as Chairperson of the Committee on Statistics of the UN Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- the Australian Statistician as Chairman of the International Comparison Program Executive Board.

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

##### Performance Measure 4.1: Statistical Clearing House activity

The primary objective of the Statistical Clearing House (SCH) is to reduce the reporting burden placed on business providers by Commonwealth agencies (including the ABS). The SCH pays particular attention to eliminating duplication in business surveys, and ensures that surveys conducted follow good statistical methodologies and practices. In view of its statistical expertise and statutory coordination role, the ABS was empowered to administer the clearance process.

The number of survey reviews at various stages of completion on 30 June 2003, for the 2002–03 financial year, is presented in the table below. Of the 169 completed reviews, all but six have resulted in approval to proceed. However, SCH intervention has resulted in 89 instances of improved survey design and/or reduced provider load.

**Table 5: STATISTICAL CLEARING HOUSE — STATUS OF REVIEW FOR STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS, 2002–03**

	<i>Completed</i>	<i>In Progress</i>	<i>In scope — not to be reviewed(a)</i>
ABS	52	1	—
Other	117	11	20
<b>Total</b>	<b>169</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>20</b>

(a) Surveys which impose minimal respondent burden and for which a review would be unlikely to result in a decrease to respondent load, may be considered unnecessary to review, subject to SCH workload.

For 2002–03, the annualised load imposed on providers by non-ABS surveys reviewed by the SCH has been estimated at 37,335 hours, which represents less than 10% of the total load imposed by the ABS. Annualised load for non-ABS surveys has increased since 1999, largely as a result of the increased number of non-ABS surveys which the ABS has reviewed in this time. This is confirmed in table 6 below which shows that there has been an approximate 50% increase in non-ABS surveys reviewed in 2002–03 alone.

**Table 6: STATISTICAL CLEARING HOUSE — COMPLETED REVIEWS OF STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS, 1999–2003**

	<i>1999–2000</i>	<i>2000–01</i>	<i>2001–02</i>	<i>2002–03</i>
ABS	36	40	38	52
Other	81	70	77	117
<b>Total</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>115</b>	<b>169</b>

The SCH's Commonwealth Register of Surveys of Businesses (available on the Internet at <[www.sch.abs.gov.au](http://www.sch.abs.gov.au)>) provides access to information on collections that have already been conducted, including survey design standards and best practices for organisations developing surveys. Metadata relating to 717 surveys is currently disseminated on the SCH web site.

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

Under section 6(c) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, a key function for the ABS is to improve coordination of the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics produced by other official bodies.

In accordance with the Act, the ABS continues to develop the concept of the National Statistical Service (NSS) by broadening the concept of ABS statistical responsibilities to include not only statistics collected by the ABS, but also data produced or 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.

In pursuing the development of the NSS some of the main activities/achievements in 2002–03 included:

- the development of detailed material to assist NSS partners in improving practices
- the development of seminars and training courses to improve skills in survey design and data analysis
- the development of a NSS web site
- the release on the ABS web site of the Directory of Statistical Sources, containing summary information on ABS collections
- broad consultation with other agency heads and discussion through other groups about NSS roles and responsibilities
- the first meeting of the Commonwealth Statistical Forum to discuss cross cutting NSS issues at the Commonwealth level.

In addition, the ABS continues to develop the NSS Best Practice Guidelines which will:

- assist government organisations, at Commonwealth, state/territory and local levels, to exercise their responsibilities with respect to producing and publishing important statistical information that results (or could result) from their own activities
- promote principles and 'best practice' to guide the achievement of high standards in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics.

The guidelines will also describe how the ABS can help organisations in these tasks.

One of the ways the ABS achieves its objective of providing leadership is by developing Information Development Plans (IDPs). The intention of the IDP is to identify in close consultation with key users, the issues to be addressed in a particular field of statistics, the available data (both ABS and non-ABS), the additional data needed and who has carriage for provision of the data. IDPs assist the ABS in improving the quality, coverage and use of statistics examined. Several IDPs are currently underway addressing statistical topics such as education and training, agriculture, tourism, transport, crime and justice and ageing.

Another of the ways the ABS achieves its objective of providing leadership is by outposting statistical officers to state/territory and Commonwealth government departments and agencies with a view to facilitating the access to, and the understanding of, statistics, and strengthening statistical coordination across these bodies. A total of 36 ABS officers were outposted to Commonwealth and state government agencies during 2002–03. The majority of these outpostings were long-term, however most state/territory agencies with outposted officers usually receive ABS statistical and technical assistance in the form of short-term secondments.

**Table 7: GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS WITH ABS OUTPOSTED OFFICERS, 2002–03**

	<i>Long-term</i>	<i>Short-term</i>
Commonwealth	10	1
State	10	12
<b>Total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>13</b>

Examples of new partnerships with Commonwealth, state and local government agencies to identify and utilise a greater range of administrative data currently under way are:

- development and publication of *Experimental Estimates, Regional Small Business Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 5675.0) using ATO data
- assessment of the availability and quality of state and Commonwealth datasets to underpin the New South Wales Families First Outcomes Evaluation Framework
- assessment of the quality of the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority dataset and data management practices for curriculum assessment in Victoria
- review and quality assessment of the Western Australia Department of Justice fines enforcement, court proceedings and recorded crime data
- assessment of the availability and quality of Indigenous identification in key Northern Territory law and justice and education datasets.

Some of the key achievements in assisting Commonwealth and state/territory government agencies through statistical consultation, statistical analysis, modelling of existing ABS or client data, and statistical training or seminars for clients and users, during the year included:

- development of a new strategy for improved dissemination of regional and small area data through the ABS web site. This followed a review of dissemination of this data by the Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre (RRSNC)
- development of a rural and regional IDP. The IDP will assist in identifying data gaps in the rural and regional statistics work program
- completion of an IDP on disability, housing and community services for the Australian Capital Territory
- in partnership with the Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS), the ABS produced a number of regional profiles relevant to the regions nominated under the DOTARS' sustainable regions program
- development of a postcode to local government area population concordance from 1981–2001 for the Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics to assist with a major regional income analysis project
- development of training programs to advance the skills of statistical staff working for official bodies in the areas of data management and managing statistical consultants, as well as conducting training programs on best practice in collecting and using statistical information

- provision of methodological advice to the Australian Valuation Office in regards to the valuation of the holdings of the National Library of Australia and the Australian National Audit Office, including assistance with the review of the Centrelink Aged Pension Survey
- development and release on the Victorian Government ABS@ version of a Victorian framework for indicators of regional wellbeing
- development and assessment of methodologies to estimate Indigenous resident populations for small areas in Western Australia
- innovation scorecard report which will provide innovation indicators that enable national and international comparison of South Australia's innovation performance
- statistical advice and assistance on the development of population issues and policies for Tasmania
- development of a Domestic Water Use Survey for New South Wales.

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

As part of its commitment to provide an expanded and improved national statistical service, the ABS plays a significant role in identifying, storing and disseminating statistics from other official bodies, particularly those derived from administrative systems.

The ABS continued its analytical research on Australian Taxation Office individual income tax return data in 2002–03. One of the outputs of this process has been the publication *Experimental Estimates, Regional Wage and Salary Earner Statistics, Australia, 1995–96 to 1998–99* (cat. no. 5673.0). The data has been extended to 2001 on ABS electronic services.

The *Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB), Australia* (cat. no. 1353.0), provides clients with access to a broad range of information about Australia's regions. The Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB) contains over 15,000 data items of which over 1,900 are sourced from 34 non-ABS statistical series provided by 13 different state and Commonwealth government agencies. Each yearly release includes updates to the economic, social and demographic data. Two of the latest additions are statistics on land use and salinity risk from the National Land and Water Resources Audit.

In 2002–03 the New South Wales, Queensland, South Australian and Northern Territory ABS Regional Offices published updates of *Regional Statistics* (cat. nos 1362.1–8 series). The publication brings together data from a large range of sources for areas of the state/territory.

The ABS has established a number of National Centres covering specific areas of statistical activity. The Centres coordinate data collection activities within the ABS and across other public agencies, and provide a statistical service which includes provision of statistical information, training of data providers, advice on statistical standards and development of quality control procedures.

National Centres have been established for:

- rural and regional statistics
- education and training statistics
- crime and justice statistics
- culture and recreation statistics
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics.

A detailed list of achievements and activities of the national centres are provided in section IV, ABS Outputs. However, some of the key achievements of the Centres during 2002–03 included:

- the release of a framework for education and training statistics
- the development of IDPs for education and training statistics and rural and regional statistics
- the publication of nationally comparable offence and sentencing information relating to the criminal jurisdiction of the Higher Courts across Australia in *Criminal Courts, Australia* (cat. no. 4513.0)
- the development of a strategy for improved dissemination of regional and small area statistics.

In 2002 the ABS created two new National Statistical Units, on Ageing and on Children and Youth. The creation of these units was in recognition of the increasing policy focus and discussion at Commonwealth and state/territory levels, and in response to the need for a statistical evidence base to support government policy development related to these specific population groups.

Much of the work program of both units will be focused, initially, on the presentation and analysis of existing data, from the ageing or children/youth perspective, but there are plans to also use administrative data as a source for future analyses. The Children and Youth National Statistical Unit in particular, plays a supportive role for the Australian Research Alliance on Children and Youth by providing information on this important population group.

In recent years, the ABS has also produced a range of statistical directories to provide users with information on sources of statistics (both from the public and private sectors) for particular topics. Some of the directories include:

- agriculture and rural statistics
- electricity, gas, water and sewerage statistics
- superannuation related statistics

- education and training statistics
- census statistics
- culture and leisure statistics
- energy statistics
- mining statistics.

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## OUTPUT MEASURES

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### 5: Increase the quantity of output

#### **Performance Measure 5.1: Increase the range of statistics disseminated**

The ABS continues to increase the range of statistics disseminated by releasing a range of new publications, expanding the data released in existing publications and, in particular increasing the range of electronic releases.

During 2002–03 a range of new statistics were released in a number of new publications or products, of which the notable ones are:

- *Experimental Estimates of Indigenous Australians, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3238.0.55.001), contains estimates of the resident Indigenous and non-Indigenous population by Statistical Local Area as at 30 June 2001 based on the 2001 Census of Population and Housing.
- *Government Financial Estimates, Australia, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5501.0.55.001). Government Finance Statistics (GFS) are compiled for the general government and the consolidated non-financial public sector for each jurisdiction in accordance with international statistical standards. It contains operating statements featuring the GFS Net Operating Balance and GFS Net Lending/Borrowing measures, balance sheets showing the GFS Net Worth and cash flow statements with supplementary data on the Surplus/Deficit measure. As part of a series of progressive electronic releases by jurisdiction, these reports present budget estimates for each state/territory, excluding the Northern Territory, and for Australia as a whole.
- *Population, Australian States and Territories — Electronic Publication* (cat. no. 3239.0.55.001), which contains estimates of the total resident population for states, territories and Australia required annually for the purposes of *A New Tax System (Commonwealth–State Financial Arrangements) Act 1999* and irregularly for the purposes of the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918*.



- *Regional Statistics, Australian Capital Territory* (cat. no. 1362.8.55.001), which contains a range of statistical information for statistical subdivisions (town-centre districts) and statistical local areas (suburbs) of Canberra and Queanbeyan.
- *Stocks of Grain held by Bulk Handling Companies and Grain Traders, Australia* (cat. no. 7122.0.55.001), which provides final results of the Stocks of Grain on Hand Survey at the Australia level. It includes information relating to the quantity of wheat, barley, oats and sorghum held in storage facilities operated by bulk handling companies and major grain traders.
- *Vineyard Estimates, Australia, Preliminary* (cat. no. 1329.0.55.001), which contains preliminary estimates for major items only from the vineyards collection.
- *Principal Agricultural Commodities, Australia, Preliminary — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 7111.0.55.003), provides preliminary estimates of principal agricultural commodities and livestock numbers for the season.
- *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (cat. no. 6105.0) is the flagship release for all ABS labour statistics. It draws together data from a range of sources, mostly ABS household and business surveys, to provide an overall picture of the labour market. It includes a range of feature articles, both analytical and technical, which will assist users in understanding and interpreting the data and will also promote the range of data available from the ABS labour statistics program.
- *Australian Capital Territory Statistical Indicators* (cat. no. 1367.8), provides a measure of the Australian Capital Territory's (ACT) economy and population. It contains tables, graphs and commentary to give readers an indication of the economic and demographic situation of the ACT, as well as the trends and movements leading to the current figures.
- *Book Retailers, Australia* (cat. no. 1371.0), which provides details from a survey of businesses involved in the retail sale of books. The publication presents financial and employment data for businesses whose predominant activity is selling books. In addition, data is provided on the volume and sales of books by these businesses and other book sellers such as department stores and supermarkets.
- *Sport and Recreation Funding by Government, Australia* (cat. no. 4147.0), contains estimates of funding for sport and recreation activities by the three levels of government in Australia.
- *Employment in Sport and Recreation, Australia* (cat. no. 4148.0), contains details from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing on the number of people employed in sport, gambling and recreation industries by type of occupation. Comparisons with the 1996 Census are also shown.

- *National Health Survey: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Results, Australia* (cat. no. 4715.0), presents selected data from the 2001 National Health Survey about the health of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Topics include measures of health status, health actions taken and lifestyle factors which may influence health.
- *Employer Training Expenditure and Practices, Australia* (cat. no. 6362.0), contains information on employer provided training in Australia. Statistics on the direct costs incurred by, and proportion of, organisations providing structured training to employees are presented by industry, state and employer size for both the private and public sectors. Methods and types of training, details of training providers used, reasons for training, change in the level of training and factors affecting training are also included.
- *Domestic Water Use, New South Wales* (cat. no. 4616.1), which contains data on water-using appliances and water using behaviour of domestic consumers in New South Wales.
- *Managing Paid Employment and Unpaid Caring Responsibilities, Queensland* (cat. no. 4903.3), which investigates the labour force experience of those who currently have or have had caring responsibilities. The focus is on the use of leave and flexible work arrangements.

## **Performance Measure 5.2: Innovative outputs**

In addition to the new statistics released in the publications listed in Performance Measure 5.1, the ABS has conducted research which has led to the release of innovative new estimates, classifications and publications. Also released were a number of information papers informing users about conceptual issues, new methodologies and pending changes to current ABS collections.

Some of the innovative outputs released by the ABS in 2002–03 included:

- *Information Paper: Drug-induced Deaths — A Guide to ABS Causes of Death Data* (cat. no. 4809.0.55.001), which provides a guide to data on deaths resulting from drug use. It is designed to assist researchers and analysts in utilising Causes of Death data produced by the ABS. Issues discussed include ABS terminology and classifications used to code drug deaths.
- *Directory of Culture and Leisure Statistics — Website Version* (cat. no. 1143.0.55.001), is a web-based product which provides a reference to sources of culture and leisure data. Directory entries provide information about the scope, frequency, history and extent of data available from each collection, and the major publications that use data from the collection.
- *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0), which presents a descriptive framework for measuring the knowledge-based economy and society through the use of relevant statistics. The framework consists of five broad dimensions, each populated by a number of characteristics and statistical indicators. The aim of the paper is to stimulate discussion and provoke feedback on the proposed framework.

- *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Digital Boundaries (Intercensal), Australia on CD-ROM* (cat. no. 1259.0.30.001), provides digital boundaries for the Australian Standard Geographical Classification intercensal editions. Boundaries are available for Statistical Local Areas (SLAs) and higher level spatial units.
- *Australian Standard Geographical Classification: Statistical Local Area Maps* (cat. no. 2920.0.30.001), provides maps, each showing a single SLA as current at the time of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing. These full colour maps show, in addition to the SLA, collection districts, roads, rivers and other significant features.
- *Australian National Accounts: Non-Profit Institutions Satellite Account* (cat. no. 5256.0), presents estimates of the direct contribution of the nonprofit institutions sector to the Australian economy within the context of a satellite account linked to the Australian System of National Accounts. It shows the contribution of nonprofit institutions to major economic aggregates, such as Gross Domestic Product. In addition, data on employment in nonprofit institutions and the contribution of volunteer labour, in terms of full-time equivalent employment valued at market rates of pay is presented.
- *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia — A Framework for Education and Training Statistics* (cat. no. 4213.0), proposes a framework for statistics on learning. The framework has been developed with input and guidance from the National Education and Training Statistics Unit Management Board, and is the product of extensive consultation with relevant stakeholders. It has been developed to assist relevant bodies and agencies to determine their information requirements, and assist in data collection and analysis.
- *Education and Training Indicators, Australia* (cat. no. 4230.0), provides a suite of approximately 40 indicators covering the spectrum of education and training in Australia. The indicators are based on national level data and are aligned to the recently developed framework for education and training statistics 'Measuring Learning in Australia — A Framework for Education and Training statistics'. A wide range of both ABS and non-ABS statistics are used in the indicators, covering schools, higher education, vocational education and training, and training activities.
- *Directory of Mining Statistics — Electronic Publication* (cat. no. 1144.0), which contains comprehensive information on sources of mining statistics in the public and private sectors. For each identified collection, the directory provides information on the method of collection, data details, geographic coverage, frequency of data availability and other information to help the reader identify the type of statistics available and how to access them.
- *Mortality Atlas, Australia* (cat. no. 3318.0), which provides a useful reference for users in interpreting causes of death in Australia. This publication presents standardised death rates for Statistical Divisions and Statistical Subdivisions in Australia for the period 1997 to 2000. Underlying and multiple causes of death are presented for the top 10 and other topical causes of death. Data presented uses the International Classification of Diseases Tenth Revision and the Australian Standard Geographical Classification.

- *Information Paper: Suicides, Australia* (cat. no. 3309.0.55.001), is an electronic publication which provides an update on summary statistics regarding suicides registered in Australia in 2002. Data are presented separately by age and sex, by method of suicide and by state or territory of usual residence. Numbers of deaths and standardised death rates for the years 1992 to 2002 are shown for comparison.
- *Remote Access Data Laboratory* (cat. no. 1406.0.55.001). The Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) is an online database query system that enables users to run statistical queries on ABS CURF files via a secure web site link. The service has been developed in order to allow access to ABS microdata at a level of detail beyond what can be provided on CD-ROM. Unit record files accessed through the RADL remain within the ABS computing environment, but return statistical output to users through the submission of queries via certain statistical analysis packages.
- *Information Paper: Use of the Kessler Psychological Distress Scale in ABS Health Surveys* (cat. no. 4817.0.55.001). The Kessler Psychological Distress Scale — 10 (K10) is a scale of non-specific psychological distress. This publication provides information on the use of the K10 in ABS health surveys. Some alternative scoring methods are outlined and some snapshot and time series comparisons are made between the ABS and Australian state surveys.
- *National Health Survey: Users' Guide — Electronic Publication, 2001* (cat. no. 4363.0.55.001), contains information details about the 2001 National Health Survey (NHS), including the supplementary survey of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Information provided includes the survey objectives, methods and design; survey content; data quality and interpretation; and information about the availability of results.
- *Occasional Paper: Measuring Dietary Habits in the 2001 National Health Survey, Australia* (cat. no. 4814.0.55.001). Results from the short dietary questions in the 1995 National Nutrition Survey and the 2001 NHS are examined with discussion of the impact of the methodological and contextual changes. Issues of data quality and interpretation are also discussed.
- *Occasional Paper: Vaccination Coverage in Australian Children — ABS Statistics and the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR)* (cat. no. 4813.0.55.001) provides an insight into ABS estimates of compliance to national vaccination schedules, dating back to 1989–90. Statistics from ABS surveys and the ACIR are compared and key differences in methods are made clear. There is also analysis of the trend over time for vaccination coverage of Australian children using ABS data from 1989–90, 1995 and 2001, including comparisons with ACIR estimates where relevant.
- *Occasional Paper: Long-term Health Conditions — A Guide To Time Series Comparability From The National Health Survey, Australia* (cat. no. 4816.0.55.001). Long-term health conditions have been identified as a key area of interest among clients undertaking time-series analysis. This publication provides users with a resource to assist in making NHS inter-survey comparability for long-term conditions across the 1989–90, 1995 and 2001 surveys.

- *Census for Schools* (cat. no. 2047.0.30.001), which contains data from the 2001 Census down to collection district levels, together with software.

6: Improve the quality of outputs

**Performance Measure 6.1: Achieve or exceed timeliness, statistical reliability, response rates and accuracy objectives through:**

- *timeliness*
- *statistical reliability*
- *response rates*
- *accuracy.*

Timeliness

The timeliness of ongoing series is measured by the gap between the reference period and the date of publication of results. The ABS continues to adhere to preannounced release dates and make improvements, where possible, to the timeliness achieved. Table 8 presents information on timeliness for ABS monthly and quarterly publications for Main Economic Indicator (MEI) statistics, and other general releases.

The average number of days elapsed between the end of the reference period and the release of data has improved for both MEI publications and other releases in 2002–03. The timeliness of all categories of releases, except monthly MEI publications, increased last year due to the consolidation of several publications to provide a more comprehensive and coherent picture of business economic activity. The publications that were discontinued had a very short lead time, and their exclusion led to an apparent increase in the average time between the end of the reference period and the release of data.

**Table 8: TIME BETWEEN END OF REFERENCE PERIOD AND RELEASE OF DATA**  
(average number of elapsed days)

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Main economic indicator statistics				
Monthly	29	29	29	28
Quarterly	46	45	51	49
Other general releases				
Monthly	37	33	34	33
Quarterly	83	75	78	74

## Statistical reliability

One measurable component of reliability is revisions to data. Revisions are generally measured by their size and frequency over time. The ABS aims to minimise revisions as much as possible through effective sample and methodological design. It is also ABS policy to inform users of any significant revisions and where appropriate to revise past time series and advise users accordingly.

A new sample for labour force statistics, based on updated geographic information from the 2001 Census, was implemented progressively from November 2002 to June 2003. Although results were subject to some initial volatility, common sample estimates were produced to assist analysts during the changeover period. Labour force estimates have since settled down.

The table below describes the revisions to quarterly Gross Domestic Product (GDP) over the past several years. In particular, it shows the difference between the first estimate of GDP, and that estimate one year later in terms of the mean revision and the mean absolute revision, expressed as percentage points. The figures show that revisions to quarterly GDP in recent years remain relatively small (mean absolute revision) and largely offsetting (mean revision).

**Table 9: REVISIONS TO GROSS DOMESTIC PRODUCT, PERCENTAGE CHANGE(a)**

Year	<i>Difference between first estimate and estimate one year later</i>	
	<i>Mean absolute revision % points</i>	<i>Mean revision % points</i>
1997–98	0.6	–0.2
1998–99	0.2	0.1
1999–2000	0.1	—
2000–01	0.2	—
2001–02(b)	0.2	—

(a) Seasonally adjusted chain volume measure. (b) Figures based on three quarters of GDP data.

Table 10 shows the revisions to the quarterly current account deficit averaged over the financial year for 1997–98 to 2001–02. Similar to the GDP table, the mean revision shows the percentage difference between the first estimate of the current account deficit, and that estimate one year later, averaged over the four quarters for the year. The mean absolute revision shows the average absolute values of the mean revision. The revisions to the current account deficit are expressed in percentage terms however, rather than percentage points as is the case with the revisions to GDP.

The figures show that revisions to the quarterly current account deficit are typically around 4–5% which is not considered significant. Comparisons between the mean revision and the mean absolute revision indicate that there has been in recent years a degree of offsetting revisions to the current account deficit figures.

**Table 10: REVISIONS TO CURRENT ACCOUNT DEFICIT, LEVEL ESTIMATES(a)**

Year	Difference between first estimate and estimate one year later	
	Mean absolute revision %	Mean revision %
1997–98	7.6	–7.6
1998–99	4.0	–0.2
1999–2000	5.4	0.3
2000–01	4.3	–1.2
2001–02(b)	3.3	–3.0

(a) Original data. (b) Figures based on three quarters of data.

Response rates

The ABS has consistently had very high response rates. Past international benchmarking studies have shown these response rates compare favourably with other international statistical organisations.

Since response rates vary little over time, especially for sub-annual surveys, it is more appropriate to report against target response rates rather than changes in the rates from year to year. Table 11 shows that response rates for selected economic collections either achieve or exceed the target response rates set by the ABS. Response rates for both the Australian Industry survey and the Manufacturing survey conducted in 2002–03 are not yet final. However, past experience has shown that these figures will rise when the surveys are finalised.

It is important to note that in regard to the business surveys, follow up procedures tend to focus on the more significant businesses, that is, those with typically high sales or employment relative to the rest of the industry. For example, the response rate for businesses in the manufacturing survey might be 88%, but the businesses that have responded may comprise 96% of the total employment in the industry.



**Table 11: ABS RESPONSE RATES FOR SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS**

Survey	Target response rate (%)	2001–02 actual response rate (%) (a)	2002–03 actual response rate (%) (a)
<i>Labour Force, Australia</i> (cat. no. 6202.0)	97	97	97
<i>Wage Cost Index, Australia</i> (cat. no. 6345.0)	98	99	99
<i>Retail Trade, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8501.0)	95	96	96
<i>Australian Industry</i> (cat. no. 8155.0)(b)(c)	85	85	(d)86
<i>Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5625.0)	80	87	89
<i>Business Indicators, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5676.0)	80	84	88
<i>Building Activity, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8752.0)	95	95	95
<i>Manufacturing Industry, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8221.0)(b)	85	89	(d)88

(a) Average response rates over the year for the periods available. (b) Annual surveys. The response rates refer to surveys conducted in the year listed, but for which the reference period is one year prior. (c) The response rate for this survey is based on the Economic Activity Survey direct collection as the tax component does not have response rate. The publication is expected to be released in December 2003. (d) Response rates were not finalised as at the end of June 2003.

The response rates for selected social surveys are listed in table 12 below. The social surveys listed generally have high response rates, apart from the latest National Crime and Safety Survey which has a relatively low, although acceptable, response rate.

**Table 12: ABS RESPONSE RATES FOR SELECTED SOCIAL SURVEYS**

Survey	Target response rate (%)	Previous survey actual response rate (%) (b)	2002–03 actual response rate (%) (a)
<i>General Social Survey, Australia</i> (cat. no. 4159.0)(c)	85	—	91
<i>Indigenous Social Survey</i> (cat. no. 4714.0)(a)(c)	85	—	81
<i>Child Care, Australia</i> (cat. no. 4402.0)	95	95	96
<i>Crime and Safety, Australia</i> (cat. no. 4509.0)	80	82	76

(a) Indigenous Social Survey — component of enumerated households in non-sparse areas. (b) The Child care Survey was previously conducted in 1999, while the National Crime and Safety Survey was previously conducted in 1997–98. The General Social Survey and Indigenous Social Survey were first conducted in 2002–03. (c) The *General Social Survey, Australia* (cat. no. 4159.0) publication is expected to be released in September 2003, while the *Indigenous Social Survey* (cat. no. 4714.0) publication is expected to be released in December 2003.



### Accuracy

While all ABS outputs maintain high levels of accuracy in all tables, graphs and text, two types of error are possible in estimate based sample surveys: sampling error and non-sampling error. Sampling error occurs because a sample rather than the entire population is surveyed. One measure of the likely difference resulting from not including all units in the population in the survey is given by the standard error. It is ABS policy that standard errors are included in survey publications, along with the descriptions of other types of errors to which outputs may be subject. Non-sampling error arises from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data and can occur in any statistical collection. The ABS ensures non-sampling error is minimised by careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient data processing and editing procedures.

The following example illustrates the use of the standard error in quantifying sampling error for unemployed persons in the labour force survey. The published original level estimate for unemployed persons in Australia in June 2003 was 620,000. The calculated standard error for this estimate was 9,300. The standard error is then used to interpret the level estimate. For example:

- there are approximately two chances in three that the real number of unemployed persons falls within the range of 610,700 to 629,300 (i.e. 620,000 plus or minus 9,300)
- there are approximately 19 chances in 20 that the real number of unemployed persons falls within the range of 601,400 to 638,600 (i.e. 620,000 plus or minus 18,600).

The magnitude of standard errors varies between collections due to factors such as the sample size and the value of the estimate in question. Therefore, it is impossible to compare standard errors between different surveys, or even between variables within the same survey. The relative standard error, obtained by expressing the standard error as a percentage of the estimate to which it refers, is a much more useful measure in that it provides an immediate indication of the percentage errors likely to have occurred due to sampling, and thus avoids the need to refer also to the size of the estimate. The relative standard error is also a good indicator for comparing the accuracy of estimates between surveys.

The tables below only present a summary view of the accuracy for key aggregates from a number of major ABS publications, as expressed by their relative standard errors. The low relative standard errors in both tables highlight the accuracy of ABS' statistical collections. More details are available from the publications, or the concepts, sources and methods publications associated with the collections themselves.

**Table 13: RANGE OF RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS FOR SELECTED ECONOMIC INDICATORS(a)**

Survey	Key aggregate	2001–02 relative standard error (%)	2002–03 relative standard error (%)
<i>Labour Force, Australia</i> (cat. no. 6202.0)	Unemployed persons in Australia	1.5	1.5
<i>Retail Trade, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8501.0)	Total retail turnover in Australia	1.0	0.9
<i>Australian Industry</i> (cat. no. 8155.0)(b)(c)	Total income (all industries)	1.0	0.8
<i>Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5625.0)	Actual new capital expenditure, Australia	1.7	1.7
<i>Business Indicators, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5676.0)	Company gross operating profit	1.0	1.1
<i>Building Activity, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8752.0)	Value of work done	0.6	0.8
<i>Manufacturing Industry, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8221.0)(b)	Sales and services income	0.3	0.6

(a) Where the date for the survey is not specified the relative standard error is an average over the year, or refers to an annual survey.

(b) The relative standard errors refer to surveys conducted in the year listed, but for which the reference period is one year prior. (c) The publication is expected to be released in December 2003.

**Table 14: RANGE OF RELATIVE STANDARD ERRORS FOR SELECTED SOCIAL SURVEYS**

Survey	Key Aggregate	Previous survey relative standard error (%) (a)	2002–03 relative standard error (%)
<i>General Social Survey, Australia</i> (cat. no. 4159.0)(b)	Employment	—	1.1
<i>Child Care, Australia</i> (cat. no. 4402.0)	Number of children aged 0–11 who used formal and/or informal care	0.9	1.3
<i>Crime and Safety, Australia</i> (cat. no. 4509.0)	Number of households that have been a victim of a break-in in the last 12 months	3.1	3.3

(a) The Child Care survey was previously conducted in 1999, while the National Crime and Safety survey was previously conducted in 1997–98. The General Social survey was first conducted in 2002–03. (b) This publication is expected to be released in September 2003.

Note: At the time of publishing the relative standard errors for the Indigenous Social survey component were not available.

**Performance Measure 6.2: Conduct ongoing research and reviews of quality, and implement their recommendations:**

- *Outline ABS statistical reviews*
- *Innovative practices — improvements to existing collections as a result of research and development*

Outline of ABS statistical reviews

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.

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.

A number of reviews of statistical collections and programs commenced, or were completed, in 2002–03, including:

- household income
- producer price indexes
- international investment position
- intercensal discrepancy
- experimental composite leading indicator
- survey of motor vehicle use.

The household income review found that the quality of data reported had been impacted on by a deterioration in the coverage of benefit recipients in the sample estimates and by an increasing complexity of the government benefits scheme itself. As a result changes were made to the way income distribution data are presented and revisions to earlier periods data were published in the June 2003 *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0). A redeveloped Household Income and Expenditure survey will collect some new information on assets and liabilities to both improve the quality of income distribution statistics and provide for analysis of the household distribution of wealth.

The review of the preliminary 1996–2001 intercensal discrepancy led to the implementation of revisions to final estimated resident populations for 30 June 2001.

The outcome of a review of the Producer Price Index 'stage of production' indexes was an updated index structure consistent with the 1996–97 input-output tables and an improvement in the coverage of prices within the indexes. During 2002 a program of quality review also commenced for a number of service industry producer price indexes resulting in a number of improvements for the indexes.

The ABS completed a review of the experimental composite leading indicators of the Australian business cycle in 2002–03 and, as a result have decided to terminate the publication of the indicators from September 2003. The review suggested that while the composite leading indicators performed adequately in the early 1990s, they have lost their ability to provide consistent early signals for turning points of the reference business cycles.

Outcomes and recommendations from reviews are often not implemented in the year that the review was conducted. Two of the improvements to the statistical collections in 2002–03 stemming from quality reviews conducted in recent years were:

- the centralisation of statistics in the local government statistics unit and the redesign of the quarterly local government finance collection, both of which led to improvements in the quality of estimates
- the development of an agricultural survey incorporating recommendations from the review of ABS' agriculture statistics.

Innovative practices — improvements to existing collections as a result of research and development

Apart from the ongoing reviews of ABS statistical collections, research and development in subject matter areas continues to result in innovative practices for the collection and compilation of data. The results of innovative practices is twofold. Firstly, it will lead to more reliable and accurate statistics. And secondly, it may lead to reduced provider load.

The way in which the ABS processes its business statistics was significantly changed as a result of the implementation of the Business Statistics Innovation Program (BSIP) from July 2002. With the use of innovative technologies and methodologies the ABS set about improving the quality and relevance of its business statistics while at the same time increasing the efficiency of processes which benefit both the ABS and its providers. Other benefits of BSIP include the potential to respond to emerging statistical demand as a result of increased capacity and, the ability to provide a better national statistical service through strong statistical leadership.

The ABS planned and conducted two major field tests of computer assisted interviewing (CAI) for the monthly population survey during 2002–03. The tests were designed to fully test field and office systems, procedures, training, hardware and occupational health and safety. These tests proved successful against set objectives and approval (subject to successful final system test) was given to phase in CAI for the monthly population survey between October 2003 and May 2004. CAI is expected to deliver substantial improvements in data quality, survey efficiency and management arrangements.

Following a review conducted in 2001–02 to identify a range of statistical collections which could benefit from the incorporation of taxation data, the ABS implemented strategies for a number of surveys (such as mining and manufacturing), taking advantage of tax and other administrative data to supplement or replace existing data. The use of administrative data has not only reduced collection costs and minimised the reporting load on businesses, it has allowed the scope of some surveys to increase to cover non-employed businesses. Previously, a number of surveys were limited to employing businesses only.

## **7: Achievement of cost effective outputs**

### **Performance Measure 7.1: Conduct efficiency reviews and audits, and implement their recommendations**

Efficiency reviews and audits may be initiated by senior management and by the ABS Audit Committee so as to assess whether resources are being used effectively and efficiently to achieve the ABS' objectives.

Major reviews addressing efficiency issues were completed during 2002–03 in the following areas:

- Population Census automatic and computer assisted industry coding
- information consultancy services
- provider management practices
- Household Expenditure Survey
- National Criminal Courts Statistics Unit
- National Education and Training Statistics Unit
- management information system requirements for ABS household surveys.

These reviews resulted in:

- improvements to the efficiency of collections and processes due to methodological improvements
- improvements to collections through more efficient use of staffing resources
- improvements to operations as a result of centralising functions in a single office
- assessments of performance against the original business case for particular functions.

A number of other efficiency reviews are in progress for a range of statistical collections and corporate service functions. These reviews aim to achieve efficiency gains via improvements to collection strategies, methodologies, use of information technology, use of contractors, and/or substituting/complementing existing data with administrative data sources.

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

Benchmarking is a key part of the ABS strategy to assess the value for money of its statistical and non-statistical outputs, to understand and learn from best practice and to improve performance. The ABS views the process of benchmarking as an ongoing exercise, enabling the organisation to achieve continuous improvement across a variety of its outputs.

Benchmarking currently being undertaken at the ABS includes comparisons between ABS statistical collections; comparisons between the operations of other international statistical agencies and the ABS; and comparisons of corporate service functions between other Australian government agencies and the ABS. These are outlined below.

*Comparisons between ABS statistical collections*

During 2002–03 internal benchmarking was conducted for all areas in the Economic Statistics Group (ESG). The benchmarking exercise was conducted in respect of 2001–02 and concentrated solely on the financial framework due to the organisational changes stemming from the BSIP. The aim of this exercise was to identify areas of efficiency through cost savings and modifications in the cost structure for each area in the economic statistics group in order to provide the efficiencies necessary to meet ongoing resource constraints.

As part of the financial framework reporting, areas indicated how salary and technology application costs were split across the BSIP organisational structure. Future internal benchmarking of collections in the Economic Statistics Group will be assisted by the requirement for all collections to report basic financial and performance information on an annual basis.

*Comparisons between the operations of a number of international statistical agencies and the ABS*

The ABS continues to benchmark its functions and services against a range of international agencies. The ABS has found that the most effective mechanism for benchmarking functions and services arises from bilateral discussions with particular agencies. Detailed comparisons of particular statistical or non-statistical work programs often result from such discussions, and following more detailed comparisons, the ABS reviews practices and methods as necessary with the aim to achieving the best outcomes and outputs possible from its resource allocation. Bilateral discussions with Statistics Canada and Statistics Sweden are planned during 2003–04.

International benchmarking activities undertaken in 2002–03 included comparisons of the monthly retail survey; corporate governance; and data and metadata available on the web site.

*Comparisons of corporate services functions between other Australian government departments*

The ABS continues to conduct benchmarking studies with other Australian government departments.

In 2002–03, the ABS has been involved in two benchmarking activities conducted by the Australian National Audit Office (ANAO). These were:

- Benchmarking the Internal Audit Function Follow-on Report (ANAO Audit Report No. 13)
- Managing People for Business Outcomes, Year Two — Benchmarking Study (ANAO Audit Report No. 50).

The ABS has provided input into these studies in the form of survey participation and by providing comments on drafts. The studies have been finalised and reports have been issued by the ANAO.

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

The ABS has outsourced a number of key functions including:

- printing and distribution services
- a range of training courses related to information technology
- leadership and management training
- internal audit
- staff counselling services
- legal advice
- building maintenance
- the supply and distribution of stationery.

The ABS will continue to investigate additional outsourcing opportunities as they arise.

**Performance Measure 7.4: Minimise provider load**

In order to fulfil its mission of providing information to support discussion, debate and decision making, the ABS is required and empowered to collect information from businesses. At the same time the ABS is conscious that the needs of users for information must be balanced against the load placed on businesses in providing that information.

The following table shows the provider load (measured in thousands of hours taken to complete statistical forms) imposed on businesses by the ABS for 1995–96 and from 1999–2000 to 2002–03. These figures have been adjusted to ‘smooth’ the series to account for large irregular surveys and censuses (e.g. the Agricultural census).

**Table 15: PROVIDER LOAD IMPOSED ON BUSINESSES BY THE ABS**  
(hours '000)

	1995–96	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Small businesses(a)	343	202	194	178	179
Other businesses	336	228	223	257	246
<b>Total all businesses</b>	<b>679</b>	<b>430</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>435</b>	<b>425</b>

(a) Defined as businesses with less than 20 employees or a derived estimate of employees of less than 20.

The ABS continues to focus on reducing provider load on businesses. This is consistent with government policy, the ABS Corporate Plan and the recommendations of the Commonwealth Government’s 1996 Small Business Deregulation Task Force. The task force found that the ABS only accounted for about 1% of total business compliance costs. However since 1995–96 total ABS provider load on businesses decreased by around 40%, and for small businesses the fall has been almost 50%.

Two of the major initiatives which led to a continued reduction in provider load during 2002–03 were:

- arrangements with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA) to take over the collection of a range of information from the financial sector previously collected by the ABS, the Reserve Bank of Australia and the Australian Taxation Office. The consolidation of reporting to APRA achieves a reduction in the provider load since similar information was previously sent to each of the organisations individually
- the use of business income tax data to assist in the production of estimates for the mining and manufacturing industries. The use of business income tax data reduces the load on small businesses in particular, while increasing the scope of the collections to cover non-employing businesses as well as employing businesses.

Although the ABS focuses on reducing provider load on businesses, it is also taking steps to reduce respondent burden on households and individuals. One significant initiative in this respect has been the move to a biennial Survey of Income and Housing Costs. The survey, previously conducted annually, will have a sample size of 11,000 households, an increase of 4,000 households. Despite the increase in households surveyed the total respondent burden over a two year period will decrease substantially.



## **SECTION IV**

### **ABS OUTPUTS**

**Chapter 6 — Economic Statistics Output**

**Chapter 7 — Population and Social  
Statistics Output**

## 6 ECONOMIC STATISTICS OUTPUT

### DESCRIPTION

The Economic Statistics program responds 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 program 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
- development, maintenance and promotion of statistical standards, classifications and frameworks for the collection of economic statistics.

The work schedule of the Economic Statistics program is determined after extensive consultation with governments, businesses and community groups, and with the advice of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council. In determining the work program, account is taken of the needs of users, the 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 program 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 program, resulting in a comprehensive national statistical service.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the Economic Statistics program is enhanced by significant and wide ranging input from the ABS corporate and statistical support areas. These inputs include methodological, technological, dissemination, human resource and financial support.

Appendix 1 lists the components of the Economic Statistics program.

## OUTPUTS

The Economic Statistics program disseminates its statistical information through a range of printed and electronic products and services.

During 2002–03 the Economic Statistics program produced over 170 publication titles directly related to economic statistics, which equated to over 450 individual printed and electronic publication releases. A range of concepts, sources and methods publications, information papers, and statistical directories were also produced.

The output measures in Chapter 5 present an aggregated record of achievements of the Economic Statistics program against identified performance indicators of quality, effectiveness and efficiency during 2002–03.

## REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this Chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the Economic Statistics program during 2002–03.

### 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, 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:

- publication for the first time of *Australian National Accounts: Non-Profit Institutions Satellite Account* (cat. no. 5256.0)
- publication of the 2001–02 edition of *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (cat. no. 5249.0)
- publication of feature articles in *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (cat. no. 5206.0) titled 'Accounting for the Environment in the National Accounts'; 'Impact of the Drought on Australian Production in 2002–03'; 'An Information and Communication Satellite Account'; and, 'A Quality Assessment of the National Accounts Information System'

- participation in a number of international working parties which have been formed to consider various matters of current importance in a national accounting context. These include task forces on the treatment of software; non-financial assets and financial and insurance services. A number of papers were also prepared and presented in a variety of forums both domestically and internationally
- provision of technical assistance to the statistical agencies of Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Fiji and the Philippines in relation to the compilation of national accounts statistics, and the conduct of a review of the United Kingdom Office for National Statistics' implementation of chain volume estimation of its national accounts.

## International Accounts

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

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of a feature article 'Foreign Ownership of Equity' in the September quarter *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (cat. no. 5302.0)
- publication of the feature articles 'Foreign Ownership Characteristics of Businesses Undertaking Research and Experimental Development Activity in Australia' and, 'Foreign Ownership Characteristics of Information Technology Businesses 2000–01' in *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0)
- hosting the annual meeting of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics. The Committee advises the IMF on methodological and compilation issues in relation to balance of payments and international investment position statistics, and fosters greater coordination of data collection among countries
- hosting visits by senior staff from the Statistics Department of Tonga and the Fiji Islands Bureau of Statistics to further technical cooperation between the organisations
- contributing to the Pacific Regional Workshop on the General Data Dissemination System organised by the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre
- contribution of Australian statistics to the IMF's Coordinated Portfolio Investment Survey, with respect to December 2001
- development of a new survey of foreign affiliates trade
- revision of the International Investment Position to correct gaps and overlaps identified as a result of a review of the recording of the activities of fund managers during the recent period of high growth in their activity.

## International Trade

The international trade component produces statistics on the value, composition, destination and source of Australia's international trade in goods and services. These statistics are available on a range of output media and can be tailored to meet the needs of individual clients. A theme page for international trade on the ABS web site provides users with an extensive set of reference material.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of feature articles in *International Merchandise Trade, Australia* (cat. no. 5422.0), including experimental statistics on Australia's exporters and importers (two articles), the effect of Customs changes on export statistics, trade through Australia's ports, and the export and import currencies used for merchandise trade
- publication of a number of articles on the ABS web site including calendar and financial year estimates of trade in services by partner country and state
- incorporation of overseas arrivals and departures data into the compilation of the estimates for exports and imports of travel services, following the unavailability of the source data for a substantial period
- continued participation in the Customs Cargo Management Re-engineering project, in particular the Accredited Client Program, to ensure that the accuracy and timeliness of the core set of merchandise trade statistics are maintained and that implementation of new Customs business processes and information technology systems does not impact adversely on these series.

## 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 the markets for various categories of financial instruments. Information on inter-sectoral financial transactions is also provided. Extensive reference material relating to financial statistics is available from the finance theme page on the ABS web site.

The component also produces statistics on the lending activity of financial institutions such as banks, building societies, finance companies, credit unions, unit trusts and superannuation funds. A significant stream of work for the year was the continued cooperation with the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority (APRA), the Reserve Bank of Australia (RBA), and data providers for rationalised and harmonised data collection from the financial sector.

Achievements during the year included:

- commencement of data collection for lending activity for all registered and regulated institutions, and for other financial reports from registered institutions
- commencement of data collection by APRA from registered institutions not otherwise regulated (such as money market corporations and finance companies) in place of RBA and ABS collections
- continued cooperation with APRA on the collection and production of superannuation statistics, in conjunction with the Australian Taxation Office
- the conduct of, and publication of results from, a third survey of venture capital, with the support of the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts.

#### Public Sector Accounts

The public sector accounts component provides government finance statistics for 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 Subcommittee of the Joint Economic Forecasting Group.

Achievements during the year included:

- contribution to work on harmonising government finance statistics standards and Australian accounting standards
- redesign of the quarterly local government finance collection, with the objective of improving the quality of the estimates
- finalisation of the Australian System of Government Finance Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods manual, which will be released in July 2003.

## Prices

The prices component is responsible for compiling the Consumer Price Index (CPI), a range of Producer Price Indexes (PPI) and International Trade Price Indexes (ITPI), and the Wage Cost Index (WCI).

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; outputs of selected service industries; the supply of commodities to the Australian economy in a 'stage of production' framework; and exports and imports. The WCI measures the change in wage and salary costs in the Australian labour market, in isolation of changes in the quality and quantity of work performed.

Achievements during the year included:

- a feature article released in *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0) which presented an update to the living cost indexes for four household subgroups — employees, age pensioners, other government transfer recipients, and self-funded retirees
- a review of the Producer Price Index (PPI) 'stage of production' indexes with the outcome being the release, in the December quarter 2002 issue of *Producer Price Indexes, Australia* (cat. no. 6427.0), of an updated index structure consistent with the 1996–97 input-output tables as well as improved coverage of prices within the indexes
- expansion of the range of PPIs in the construction and services industries
- successful conduct of the first collection of data, in respect of June quarter 2002, on paid leave and superannuation for use in constructing the non-wage cost index
- technical assistance provided to Thailand to develop price indexes for exports and imports, new houses and selected service industries
- technical assistance to East Timor to update and improve the East Timor CPI
- continued significant contributions made to the international PPI and CPI manuals, both of which are expected to be published in the second half of 2003
- assistance provided to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank in designing and conducting the 2004 International Comparison Program.

## Business Indicators

The business indicators component produces a range of sub-annual indicators of current economic activity. These indicators include monthly estimates of turnover by retail and selected service industries and economy wide quarterly estimates of company profits, sales, inventories, wages and new capital expenditure. The capital expenditure series include both actual and expected expenditure. The program also produces quarterly estimates of mineral and petroleum exploration expenditure. The data from the business indicators program are essential inputs into the compilation of quarterly and annual national accounts and input-output tables.

Achievements during the year included:

- implementation of new statistical infrastructure and the release of the Retail Business Survey, Quarterly Business Indicators Survey and Survey of New Capital Expenditure on a new basis from September quarter 2002 while maintaining the integrity of the time series
- releasing an article in the December 2002 publication *Retail Trade, Australia* (cat. no. 8501.0) on the contribution to the monthly retail series of net proceeds received from licensed gambling activities
- replacing data directly collected from building societies and credit unions via the Quarterly Business Indicators Survey with data from the Australian Prudential Regulation Authority.

## 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 the Australian economy. The outputs from this activity provide key inputs into the compilation of Australia's national accounts.

Achievements during the year included:

- release of results from the 2000–01 Economic Activity Survey in *Business Operations and Industry Performance, Australia* (cat. no. 8140.0)
- the conduct of a review of the methodology for incorporating business income tax data with ABS collected data, with the objective of producing financial performance statistics at the 4 digit (class) level of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification.



## Business Demography

The business demography component produces data about the size, structure and performance of businesses to assist policy makers, researchers and the community to understand the behaviour of businesses in the economy.

Achievements during the year included:

- release of *Small Business in Australia, 2001* (cat. no. 1321.0) which includes summary data on the number and employment of small businesses in Australia
- development of requirements for the June 2003 Survey of Characteristics of Small Business Owners, as a supplementary survey to the June 2003 Monthly Population Survey. The results will be published in *Characteristics of Small Business, Australia, 2003* (cat. no. 8127.0) which is due for release early in 2004
- completion of data consultancies for clients, including the Productivity Commission and Austrade, on small and medium sized business performance using data from the Business Longitudinal Survey and Characteristics of Small Business Survey.

## Science and Technology

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

Achievements during the year included:

- release of statistics on research and development activity undertaken by business, government and nonprofit and higher education institutions: *Research and Experimental Development, Businesses, Australia, 2000–01* (cat. no. 8104.0); *Research and Experimental Development, Government and Private Non-Profit Organisations, Australia, 2000–01* (cat. no. 8109.0); and *Research and Experimental Development, All Sector Summary, Australia, 2000–01* (cat. no. 8112.0)
- release of statistics on production and use of information and communication technology: *Information Technology, Australia, 2000–01* (cat. no. 8126.0); *Business Use of Information Technology, 2001–02* (cat. no. 8129.0); and *Internet Activity, Australia, March 2002 and September 2002* (cat. no. 8153.0)
- release of information on highly qualified individuals and those in professional or specialist manager positions, based on 2001 Census of Population and Housing data: *Human Resources by Selected Qualifications and Occupations, Australia* (cat. no. 8149.0)
- in consultation with key users, development of a survey of innovation by Australian business

- revision of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Product classification to better reflect current ICT sector output
- release in August 2002 of an experimental framework for presentation of knowledge based economy/society indicators: *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0) and commencement of the allocation of statistical indicators to the framework
- significant statistical input to a multi-agency project (involving the ABS, the Productivity Commission, National Office for the Information Economy, and Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources) to develop Australia's contribution to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) multi-country project on the impact of information and telecommunication technology on business performance, using survey and taxation data
- contributions to the development, by the OECD, of statistical standards for science and technology indicators particularly in relation to standards for research and development statistics, biotechnology statistics, 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 monthly information on livestock slaughtering, quarterly information on poultry slaughtering and wool receivals by brokers and dealers and detailed annual information on the operations of farm businesses including commodity production and other characteristics such as land management practices. Every five years a census of farm businesses is undertaken to provide a comprehensive picture of the sector and to provide detailed regional and commodity data.

A range of derived statistics, including estimates of the value of agricultural commodities produced, is also provided by the agriculture component.

Achievements during the year included:

- the conduct of a major review of the agricultural statistics program by Fred Vogel from the United States National Agricultural Statistical Service — Framework for Agricultural Statistics in Australia
- development of the 2002–03 Agricultural Survey incorporating the recommendations of the above review
- a move to electronic delivery, via the ABS web site, of the monthly livestock release from January 2003
- in consultation with key stakeholders, development of a draft Information Development Plan for the agricultural statistics program, and a national agricultural statistics system
- release of 2000–01 agricultural census data in December 2002.

## Mining

The mining component conducts annual surveys of the mining, electricity, gas, water and sewerage industries to provide statistics on the structure, financial operations, performance, and other characteristics of these industries. The component also conducts quarterly collections of actual and expected mineral and petroleum exploration expenditure.

Achievements during the year included:

- implementation of a collection strategy to use data from The New Tax System. The changes include increased scope of the collection which now covers non-employing as well as employing businesses, and the use of business income tax data to reduce the load on small businesses
- completion of a survey on land access expenditure in mineral exploration for 2001–02. The results of this survey were published in *Mineral and Petroleum Exploration, Australia* (cat. no. 8412.0).

## 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 from an annual survey, extensive statistics on the structure, financial operations, performance, and other characteristics of the manufacturing industry.

Achievements during the year included:

- further development of a collection strategy to optimise the benefits resulting from the introduction of The New Tax System. The changes include increased scope of the collection which now covers non-employing as well as employing businesses, and the use of business income tax data to reduce the load on small businesses
- the conduct of the five-yearly manufacturing census, in respect of 2001–02, to enable more comprehensive estimates to be produced
- further development of the approach to collect materials used data via a case studies approach
- the introduction of a manufacturing statistics theme page on the ABS web site.

## 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:

- development and implementation of strategies to collect information for the 2002–03 reference period on the construction industry and for owner builders
- development of a framework for construction statistics
- the publication, in *Building Approvals, Australia* (cat. no. 8731.0), of a number of research and feature articles that explored issues related to building statistics, such as 'Building Activity in Sydney and Melbourne', 'Inner City Developments', and 'Work Done on Housing Jobs each Quarter'.

## Transport

The transport component provides monthly analytical statistics on sales of new motor vehicles, annual statistics of motor vehicle use, together with the associated motor vehicle censuses which provide data on the characteristics of the Australian vehicle population and a periodic collection of freight movements for road, rail, sea and air modes. Other activities include maintenance of the transport theme page and transport newsletter updates on the ABS web site, irregular production of a directory of transport statistics, occasional compendium publications, and the development and promotion of statistical frameworks and classifications.

Achievements during the year included:

- a review of the methodology associated with the Survey of Motor Vehicle Use resulting in the release of revised 2000 data along with 2001 data
- production of a draft Information Development Plan which identifies key transport issues, the data sources available to address those issues and suggested strategies to address data gaps and deficiencies.

## Service Industries

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

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of the 2000–01 round of publications: *Accommodation Industry, Australia* (cat. no. 8695.0); *Sports Industries, Australia* (cat. no. 8686.0); and *Gambling Industries, Australia* (cat. no. 8684.0)
- the release of 2001–02 publications: *Private Medical Practitioners, Australia* (cat. no. 8689.0); *Accounting Practices, Australia* (cat. no. 8668.0); *Legal Practices, Australia* (cat. no. 8667.0); *Market Research Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8556.0); and *Consultant Engineering Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8693.0)
- methodological research into surveys of businesses involved in film and video production, music and theatre production, performing arts festivals, television services, real estate services, hire services (both industrial and household), and waste management services
- user consultations undertaken in relation to proposed surveys of real estate, film and video production, television services, hire, music and theatre production and waste disposal services industries, to be conducted in respect of 2002–03. User consultations have also commenced in relation to the planned 2003–04 surveys of cafes and restaurants, funeral directors, accommodation and museums
- presentation of an international paper on Statistics of Services for the United Nations Statistical Commission, in March 2003.

## 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 regular articles on a range of tourism topics, and maintenance of the tourism statistics theme page on the ABS web site.

Achievements during the year included:

- a complete restructure of the tourism statistics theme page on the ABS web site to provide improved access to a range of statistical information
- release of feature articles in *Tourism Indicators, Australia* (cat. no. 8634.0), including profiles of tourism regions and an article on the impact of the September 2001 terrorist attacks on tourism
- an update of the Tourism Satellite Account
- production of a draft Information Development Plan which identifies key tourism issues, the data sources available to address those issues and suggested strategies to address data gaps and deficiencies.

## 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 environmental accounting frameworks for new collections and current data holdings.

Achievements during the year included:

- the release of the following publications: *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (cat. no. 4602.0) and *Environmental Expenditure, Local Government, Australia* (cat. no. 4611.0)
- the release of first results from the Land Management and Salinity Survey in *Salinity on Australian Farms* (cat. no. 4615.0)
- the release of a collection of articles, including some by a range of prominent and expert authors, on the environment and environmental issues in *Environment by Numbers: Selected Articles on Australia's Environment* (cat. no. 4617.0)
- development of a survey of energy production and use by businesses
- commencing the development of a survey of water use by farmers.

## 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, data analysis and statistical training services.

Achievements during the year included:

- development of new training programs to advance the skills of statistical staff working for official bodies in the areas of data management and managing statistical consultants
- conducting training programs on best practice in collecting and using statistical information
- provision of methodological advice to the Australian National Audit Office, including continued assistance with the review of the Centrelink Aged Pension Survey
- assistance to the Australian Taxation Office on a number of sample design and estimation projects
- provision of advice on sampling methodology for the Australian Valuation Office in regards to the valuation of the National Library of Australia holdings

- assistance to the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs in regard to weighting and standard errors for the Longitudinal Survey of Immigrants to Australia
- provision of methodological advice to the Department of Family and Community Services in regard to their General Customer Survey.

#### Statistical Coordination

The Statistical Clearing House (SCH) is responsible for the review and approval of all surveys conducted by, or on behalf of, the Commonwealth government involving 50 or more businesses. The SCH 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 follow 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 160 reviews, of which 55% have resulted in an improvement to the survey or a reduction in respondent load
- the conduct of successful seminars on statistical methods to improve statistical practices in the Commonwealth government
- the development of new marketing material to publicise the SCH to government agencies
- the development of enhanced networks with other agencies to enable identification of surveys which are in scope of the SCH review.

#### 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 review of the economy, and reports on an experimental composite leading indicator of the Australian business cycle.

Achievements during the year included:

- development of infrastructure for sourcing publication data from the ABS Information Warehouse
- completion of a review of the experimental composite leading indicators of the Australian business cycle. As a result, the ABS will terminate the publication of these indicators from September 2003 onwards.



## State and Territory Statistical Services (STSS)

This component provides a flexible and responsive service to meet priority statistical needs of state and territory governments and other important state and territory based clients, in addition to those met by ongoing statistical outputs of the ABS. The STSS project supports the ABS objective of an expanded and improved National Statistical Service within each state and territory. The work is undertaken by ABS 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. ABS staff 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 in line with national statistical service objectives. 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.

Achievements during the year (and the regional offices involved) included:

- development and release of statistical products including: publication and electronic data tables on experimental estimates of regional small business statistics, Australia (Queensland); statistical indicators publications (Western Australia, Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory); regional profiles (New South Wales, Western Australia, South Australia and the Northern Territory); publications on the characteristics of 'baby boomers' (Western Australia and South Australia); a web-based range of current and historical statistical information (Tasmania); and a framework of indicators of regional wellbeing (Victoria)
- reviews and assessments of state and territory agency data holdings including: assessment of the availability and quality of state and Commonwealth datasets to underpin the families first outcomes evaluation framework (New South Wales); assessments of quality and data management practices for curriculum assessment (Victoria); fines enforcement, court proceedings and recorded crime (Western Australia); various agency needs analyses (South Australia); employment injuries information system and data outputs (Tasmania); the availability and quality of Indigenous identification in key law and justice and education datasets (Northern Territory); and disability, housing and community services (Australian Capital Territory)



- assistance to state and territory governments with regard to strategic statistical projects including: the Domestic Water Use Survey (New South Wales); report on measuring education participation and attainment (Victoria); suite of web pages on the ABS web site containing a range of analytical articles on social, economic and environmental aspects (Queensland); data validation and analysis of outputs from a survey of Aboriginal child health, and development and assessment of methodologies to estimate Indigenous resident populations for small areas (Western Australia); innovation scorecard report and Indigenous profile report (South Australia); preparation of a profile on older people, and statistical advice and assistance on the development of population issues and policies (Tasmania); the development of primary health care resident populations for health zones (Northern Territory); and a multi-cultural profile (Australian Capital Territory)
- continuing engagement with state and territory governments about their strategic statistical requirements and their contribution to further development of the National Statistical Service including: continuing development and refinement of state and regional benchmarks (Victoria and Tasmania); and completion of a disability, housing and community services Information Development Plan (Australian Capital Territory).

#### Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre

The Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre (RRSNC) is responsible for providing leadership for, and coordination and integration of, regional statistics in the ABS. The National Centre is the focus for user liaison on regional statistical needs, including those relevant to key government policy issues.

Achievements during the year included:

- the development of a rural and regional Information Development Plan (IDP). The IDP will be considered by the RRSNC Advisory Group prior to seeking wider user consultation
- a review of the dissemination of regional and small area statistics and the development of a strategy for improved dissemination of these data through the ABS web site
- release of *Experimental Estimates, Regional Wage and Salary Earner Statistics, Australia, 1995–96 to 1998–99* (cat. no. 5673.0) in July 2002. These data have been updated to 2001 on ABS electronic services
- the production, in partnership with the Department of Transport and Regional Services, of a number of regional profiles
- construction, for the Bureau of Transport and Regional Economics, of a postcode to local government area population concordance for 1981–2001 to assist with a major regional income analysis project.

## 7 POPULATION AND SOCIAL STATISTICS OUTPUT

### DESCRIPTION

ABS population and social statistics are concerned with describing Australia's population, its size and distribution, and the social wellbeing of the population. Underlying the notion of social wellbeing is a range of fundamental human needs and aspirations, each of which can be linked to an area of social concern. These have been encapsulated as they have evolved over the years by the United Nations, the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, and others. Not surprisingly, governments have implicitly identified with this range of needs and aspirations and they have become the focus of social policy and program and service delivery, and are reflected in many of the structures of government.

The ABS framework for social statistics, as published in *Measuring Wellbeing: Frameworks for Australian Social Statistics* (cat. no. 4160.0), is built around a number of areas of social concern: health, family and community, housing and neighbourhood, education and training, work, income, crime and justice, culture-leisure and population. The population statistics framework also includes a second dimension which focuses on population groups which are of particular interest to the community and to governments, for reasons such as their special need or disadvantage. This dimension of the framework includes: older people, children, youth, families with children, long-term unemployed, lone parents, people with disabilities, carers, recipients of various government benefits, low income earners, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and people whose language background is other than English.

The Population and Social Statistics program operates in response to the statistical needs of governments and the wider community, taking into account the public and private costs associated with collecting, processing and disseminating statistical information on population and social issues.

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

- collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of population, social, and labour statistics
- coordination of the statistical activities of other agencies (through participation in national and state statistical committees, through ABS outposted officers, and statistical consultancy services)
- provision of professional statistical support
- development, maintenance and promotion of statistical standards, classifications and frameworks for the collection of population, social and labour statistics.

The work schedule of the Population and Social Statistics program is determined after extensive consultation with governments, businesses and community groups, and with the advice of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council. In determining the work program, account is taken of the needs of users, the 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 program 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 program, resulting in a comprehensive national statistical service.

The effectiveness and efficiency of the Population and Social Statistics program 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.

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

## OUTPUTS

The Population and Social Statistics program disseminates its statistical information through a range of printed and electronic products and services.

During 2002–03 the Population and Social Statistics program produced approximately 160 publication titles directly related to population and social statistics, which equated to over 240 individual printed and electronic publication releases. A range of concepts, sources and methods publications, information papers and statistical directories were also produced.

Output measures in Chapter 5 present an aggregated record of achievements of the Population and Social Statistics program against identified performance indicators of quality, effectiveness and efficiency during 2002–03.

## REVIEW OF COMPONENTS

The remainder of this Chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the Population and Social Statistics program during 2002–03.

## 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, policy and research activities of government, business and other users.

The first release of 2001 Census data took place on 10 June 2002. Since that time a wide range of 2001 Census products have been released. These include:

- the wide range of community profile data, available free of charge on the ABS web site
- a range of publications, including a social atlas for each capital city
- CDATA 2001, and a CD-ROM product, which allows data users to analyse and map census data alongside their own data
- CLIB2001, a product designed for libraries and available both on CD-ROM and on the Internet
- the conduct of a conference involving statistical agencies from several countries to examine the possible developments for the next census round
- the conduct of a pilot test of the Internet as a basis for collecting census data in 2006
- commencement of consultation with key users on census data topics for the 2006 Census. New topics under consideration include disability and unpaid work.

## Demography

The demography component produces estimates of the population by age, sex, country of birth, Indigenous status, registered marital status and geographical distribution, and estimates of families and households. Projections of the population, families and households, according to specified demographic assumptions, are published on a regular basis and produced for individual clients. Statistics are also regularly produced on births, deaths, marriages, divorces, overseas arrivals and departures, and internal migration.

Achievements during the year included:

- working closely with the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs to recover the delay in the processing of passenger cards from August 2000 onwards. Outstanding final statistics based on passenger cards for August 2000 to June 2001 were released in quarterly issues of *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia* (cat. no. 3401.0)
- the release of *Migration, Australia* (cat. no. 3412.0) covering two financial years 2000–01 and 2001–02
- review of the high level of the preliminary 1996–2001 intercensal discrepancy and implementation of consequential revisions to final estimated resident populations for 30 June 2001
- compilation of final state, territory and national estimated resident populations from September quarter 1996 to June quarter 2001 based on the results of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing, outstanding net overseas migration statistics, and revised components of population growth, released in *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0)
- the introduction of a new electronic release *Population, Australian States and Territories — Electronic Publication* (cat. no. 3239.0.55.001) to meet timeliness requirements for specific population estimates required under the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* and *A New Tax System (Commonwealth-State Financial Relations) Act 1999*
- the release of a comprehensive analysis of population growth, internal migration and distribution between 1996 and 2001 in *Census of Population and Housing: Population Growth and Distribution, Australia* (cat. no. 2035.0).

#### Labour and Education Statistics

The labour and education statistics component provides information on the composition and characteristics of the labour force; operations of the labour market; earnings, labour costs and other conditions of employment; and educational attainment and participation.

A senior officer is outposted to the Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST) and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR), 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, enabling 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 2002–03 included labour force experience; employee earnings; employee benefits; trade union membership; underemployment; job search experience; and persons not in the labour force.

The component also produces: monthly statistics on industrial disputes; quarterly data on average weekly earnings, job vacancies, and public sector employment and earnings; biennial data on the distribution and composition of employee earnings, hours, and methods of setting pay; and periodic data on employers' labour costs.

Achievements during the year included:

- a review of the National Education and Training Statistics Unit, which was conducted during March and April 2003. The main outcome of the review was a recommendation for continued user funding of the Unit for a further three years
- development and production of a new quarterly publication *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (cat. no. 6105.0). The publication includes tables and feature articles covering a wide range of labour market issues
- introduction of a new sample to the labour force survey, based on updated geographic information from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing
- development and production of a new set of electronic products for the monthly release of detailed data from the labour force survey, *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001).

#### National Centre for Education and Training Statistics

Statistics on schools, school students and staff are compiled by the ABS from collections conducted in cooperation with the Ministerial Council on Education, Employment, Training and Youth Affairs. For government schools, the data are collected initially by state and territory education departments, and for non-government schools, the data are initially collected by DEST. Statistics on educational attainment, participation in education and training, and transition from education to work, are produced from regular household surveys and from the Population Census.

The Centre also has a major role in statistical leadership and coordination across all sectors of education and training, and is represented on each sector's peak statistical committee.

Achievements during the year included:

- release of *Education and Training Indicators, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4230.0), a new biennial publication presenting summary statistics and commentary using national level data from a wide range of ABS and non-ABS sources

- release of *Information Paper: Measuring Learning in Australia — A Framework for Education and Training Statistics* (cat. no. 4213.0). The framework was a joint initiative of the ABS, DEST, the Australian National Training Authority, and all state and territory education and training departments
- release of results from the 2001–02 Training Expenditure and Practices Survey in *Employer Training Expenditure and Practices, Australia, 2001–02* (cat. no. 6362.0)
- development of an Information Development Plan to improve the quality, coverage and use of education and training statistics, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders.

### Social Conditions Statistics

The social conditions statistics component provides information about the social wellbeing of Australia's population, within a framework of areas of social concern and population groups at risk of disadvantage. This includes statistics relating to the housing, economic and general social wellbeing of the population as well as for subgroups such as Indigenous Australians, women, children, youth, older people, social security beneficiaries, people living in rural and regional areas, and people whose first language is not English.

The component produces statistics from a range of social surveys in the areas of housing, income, superannuation and household expenditure. Reports are also produced, drawing widely on ABS and other data, to address a range of contemporary social issues and to monitor changes in Australian social conditions over time.

Achievements during the year included:

- release of the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) where users can analyse confidentialised ABS survey unit record files (microdata) via a secure web arrangement. The security that RADL offers, by holding the microdata within the ABS environment, will allow researchers to analyse more detailed microdata than could be provided through the more traditional microdata releases on CD-ROM
- a series of seminars for external clients to look more closely at the analyses and issues in *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0)
- publication of revised household income statistics, from 1994–95 to 1999–2000, in a feature article in the June 2003 issue of *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0). The revisions followed ABS investigations into aspects of the quality of the statistics, as well as adoption of certain international statistical standards not previously applied by the ABS in this field of statistics
- completion of analysis of issues surrounding comparability of historic ABS surveys of household income and expenditure. This work was undertaken as part of an Australian Research Council funded project with the Social Policy Research Centre of the University of New South Wales



- completion of the development of the 2003–04 Household Income and Expenditure survey (HIES). The redeveloped survey, which is six-yearly, will collect some new information on assets and liabilities to both improve the quality of the income information collected in the survey and provide for analysis of the household distribution of wealth
- conduct, in respect of 2002–03, of the biennial Survey of Income and Housing Costs
- participation as a member of the Rio Group of experts, which was established by the UN Statistical Commission in 1996, to harness the experience and concerns of different groups and organisations in the world that are working on the measurement, interpretation and use of poverty statistics, to progress development of a compendium of better practice in this field of statistics.

*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:

- conduct of the field collection phase of the 2002 Indigenous Social Survey (ISS), the first such survey since the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS). The ISS surveyed Indigenous Australians 15 years and older, including those living in discrete Indigenous communities in remote areas of Australia. The ISS has significant content overlap with the 2002 general social survey, to allow comparisons between the personal and social circumstances of Indigenous and other Australians and the 1994 NATSIS so that comparisons in the circumstances of Indigenous Australians can be analysed over time
- publication of *National Health Survey: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Results, Australia* (cat. no. 4715.0) which presents summary Indigenous results from the 2001 survey, with concurrent electronic release of the published results, associated user guide, and progressive electronic release of more detailed cross-tabulations of the results.
- the development of the 2004–05 Indigenous Health Survey, with a much larger sample than in 2001



- publication of the CD-ROM product *Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification Maps and Census Profiles* (cat. no. 4706.0.30.001) presenting for the first time in one product a visual representation, through multiple maps in adobe acrobat format, of the geographic levels of the Australian Indigenous geographic classification (comprising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) Regions, Indigenous areas and Indigenous locations), together with Census Indigenous data profiles for each ATSIC region and Indigenous area
- publication of the *Occasional Paper: Hospital Statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (cat. no. 4711.0), which was prepared jointly by the ABS and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare.

#### Health and Community Statistics

This component is responsible for social analysis related to health and community subject fields, and for providing information on health, family and the community. It is also responsible for developing and 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 health (including causes of death, health status and risk factors, use of health services by the population, and statistics about private health establishments), family and community welfare and wellbeing (including statistics about disability, ageing and carers, voluntary work, child care and time use) and population groups such as persons with a disability, aged persons, families, women and children.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of results from the 2001 National Health Survey (NHS) including a comprehensive printed publication, *National Health Survey: Summary of Results* (cat. no. 4364.0); detailed additional tables; a Confidentialised Unit Record File (microdata) available both through the Remote Access Data Laboratory and on CD-ROM; and a survey user guide, *2001 National Health Survey: Users' Guide — Electronic Publication* (cat. no. 4363.0.55.001), available through the ABS web site
- extensive consultation with the Department of Health and Ageing, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and other major users of health survey data, and commencement of testing as part of the development of content and methodology for the NHS 2004–05

- a major contribution to improving dissemination and understanding of national health surveys and health statistics through the release of five web-based Information Papers on *Suicides, Australia* (cat. no. 3309.0.55.001); *Use of Kessler Psychological Distress Scale in ABS Health Surveys, Australia* (cat. no. 4817.0.55.001); *Measuring Dietary Habits in the 2001 National Health Survey, Australia* (cat. no. 4814.0.55.001); *Long-term Health Conditions — A Guide to Time Series Comparability From The National Health Survey, Australia* (cat. no. 4816.0.55.001); *Vaccination Coverage in Australian Children — ABS Statistics and the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR)* (cat. no. 4813.0.55.001)
- assistance to state and territory governments in the development of core modules of health surveys
- release of *Mortality Atlas, Australia, 1997–2000* (cat. no. 3318.0), which is a compilation and analysis in map format of the geographical distribution of causes of death registered between 1997 and 2000
- development of, and wide user community and expert consultation on, a framework to measure social capital. Presentation of Australian social capital developments at international forums involved in the development of collaborative approaches to the measurement of social capital
- successful development and commencement of data collection for the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
- contribution to international discussions on the development of standards for the measurement of disability
- continuing consultancy work for the Office of the Status of Women providing data for their information warehouse Window on Women
- release of data from the child care survey in *Child Care, Australia, June 2002*, (cat. no. 4402.0).

#### National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics

The National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics is responsible for informing decision making in the area of crime and justice through the production of national statistics about the crime and justice sector, including reported and unreported crime, criminal court processes and resulting imprisonment in correctional institutions or alternative arrangements. 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:

- commencement of the development of an Information Development Plan for the crime and justice sector, which identifies key crime and justice issues, the data sources available to address those issues and suggested strategies to address data gaps and deficiencies
- agreement on a framework for an offender based series for recorded crime statistics and continuing development of a collection
- the release of the 2002 National Crime and Safety Survey results
- the release of offence and sentencing information for the Higher Criminal Courts
- the addition of experimental data for Magistrates Criminal Courts
- the preparation of an Information Framework for Sexual Assault, for release as an ABS Information Paper
- organisation and convening, in partnership with the Australian Institute of Criminology, of a major conference on Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods.

#### 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 provides expertise within the ABS regarding the collection and analysis of data related to culture and recreation, as well as informing external users about culture and recreation statistics, relevant classifications and standards and appropriate data analysis.

Achievements during the year included:

- implementation in ABS output, and promotion of, the *Australian Culture and Leisure Classifications* (cat. no. 4902.0)
- the release of the *Directory of Culture and Leisure Statistics — Website Version* (cat. no. 1143.0.55.001) containing information about a wide range of ABS data sources of relevance to culture, recreation and leisure
- the release of a collection of statistics on *Sport and Recreation Funding by Government, Australia* (cat. no. 4147.0)
- the publication of data from the first book retailers survey in *Book Retailers, Australia, 2000–01* (cat. no. 1371.0)
- the release of two publications providing information from the 2001 Census about employment in culture and recreation — *Employment in Culture, Australia* (cat. no. 6273.0) and *Employment in Sport and Recreation, Australia* (cat. no. 4148.0).

*National Ageing Statistics Unit*

The National Ageing Statistics Unit was established in July 2002 in response to the need for a statistical evidence base to support government policy development related to ageing and aged persons. The unit will improve the understanding of ageing trends and current issues through the production of analytical reports, as well as undertaking a leadership role in the development of statistics on ageing, and related concepts and definitions.

Achievements during the year included:

- the development of a report on characteristics of the ageing population based on 2001 Census data
- the release of an article on changes in labour force participation across generations in *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0)
- commencement of the development of an Information Development Plan (IDP) for ageing statistics. The IDP will identify key ageing issues, data sources and suggested strategies to address data gaps and deficiencies
- the development of a newsletter and web site theme page on ageing issues
- presentations to the House of Representatives Standing Committee on Ageing and other ageing policy forums.

*National Children and Youth Statistics Unit*

The recently established National Children and Youth Statistics Unit provides statistical leadership and coordination in the children and youth field. There is a critical emerging need for an effective evidence base to support policy development on children and youth issues. Recent initiatives such as the establishment of the Australian Research Alliance on Children and Youth and the National Agenda on Early Childhood, as well as the Department of Family and Community Services commissioned Longitudinal Survey of Australian Children, will improve the information and research on these important population groups.

Achievements during the year included:

- establishment of a statistical advisory group on children and youth to identify key requirements for information in the children and youth field
- collaborative work with the Telethon Institute for Child Health Research on outputs related to the Western Australia Aboriginal Child Health Survey
- progress on the development of a youth report based on 2001 Census data
- release of an article on youth migration, in *Australian Social Trends*.

## Geography

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

Achievements during the year included:

- finalising of arrangements with the Public Sector Mapping Agencies for the production of the Geocoded National Address File for use in coding mesh blocks for the 2006 Census
- release of *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (cat. no. 1216.0), 2002 edition, incorporating Queensland Aboriginal and Island council areas
- release of *Statistical Geography: Volume 3 — Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) Urban Centres/Localities* (cat. no. 2909.0)
- release of digital boundary files for the ASGC 2002 edition and ASGC 2001 edition Urban Centres and Localities
- release of a suite of geographical concordances, *Postal Area to Statistical Local Area Concordance, Australia* (cat. no. 1253.0) based on the 2001 Census geography
- release of the *National Localities Index, Australia* (cat. no. 1252.0.55.001) on the ABS web site. This is the ABS statistical local area coding tool
- release of ASGC Remoteness Classification — Purpose and Use (Census Paper 03/01).

## **SECTION V**

# **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

### **Chapter 8 — Financial Statements**

## **FINANCIAL STATEMENTS**

### **CONTENTS**

1. Audit Report
2. Chief Executive Statement
3. Statement of Financial Performance
4. Statement of Financial Position
5. Statement of Cash Flows
6. Schedule of Commitments
7. Schedule of Contingencies
8. Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements



## **INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT**

### **To the Treasurer**

#### **Scope**

I have audited the financial statements of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 2003. The financial statements comprise:

- Statement by the Australian Statistician;
- Statements of Financial Performance, Financial Position and Cash Flows;
- Schedules of Contingencies and Commitments;
- Schedule of Administered Items; and
- Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements.

The Australian Statistician is 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 Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia and statutory requirements so as to present a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Australian Bureau of Statistic's financial position, its financial performance and its cash flows.

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



### **Audit Opinion**

In my opinion the financial statements:

- (i) have been prepared in accordance with Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*; and
- (ii) give a true and fair view, in accordance with applicable Accounting Standards and other mandatory professional reporting requirements in Australia and the Finance Minister's Orders, of the financial position of the Australian Bureau of Statistics as at 30 June 2003, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office



Mashelle Parrett  
Executive Director


Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra  
1 August 2003

**STATEMENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN AND CHIEF FINANCE OFFICER**

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In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2003 give a true and fair view of the matters required by the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*.

Signed.....

Dennis Trewin  
Australian Statistician

1-8-03

Signed.....

Michael Burton  
Chief Finance Officer

1-8-03

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS  
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

*for the year ended 30 June 2003*

	Notes	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>Revenues from ordinary activities</b>			
Revenues from Government	3A	253,591	355,010
Sales of goods and services	3B	24,607	18,087
Interest	3C	378	793
Revenue from sale of assets	3D	150	213
Other		923	442
<b>Revenues from ordinary activities</b>		<b>279,649</b>	<b>374,545</b>
<b>Expenses from ordinary activities (excluding borrowing costs expense)</b>			
Employees	4A	180,200	242,477
Suppliers	4B	57,362	83,519
Depreciation and amortisation	4C	26,893	27,234
Write-down of assets	4D	1,106	4,871
Value of assets sold	3D	372	968
Other		6,029	4,204
<b>Expenses from ordinary activities (excluding borrowing costs expense)</b>		<b>271,962</b>	<b>363,273</b>
<b>Borrowing costs expense</b>	5	<b>980</b>	<b>689</b>
<b>Net surplus</b>	11	<b>6,707</b>	<b>10,583</b>
Net credit to asset revaluation reserve	-	-	68
Decrease in retained surpluses on application of accounting standard AASB 1028 <i>Employee Benefits</i>	11	(1,062)	-
Decrease in accumulated results on initial application of fair value under accounting standard AASB 1041 <i>Revaluation of Non-current Assets</i>	11	(1,276)	-
<b>Total revenues, expenses and valuation adjustments attributable to the Commonwealth Government and recognised directly in equity</b>		<b>(2,338)</b>	<b>10,651</b>
<b>Total changes in equity other than those resulting from transactions with owners as owners</b>		<b>4,369</b>	<b>10,651</b>

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

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS**  
**STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

*as at 30 June 2003*

	Notes	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>ASSETS</b>			
<b>Financial assets</b>			
Cash	6A	12,771	23,036
Receivables	6B	5,575	6,688
Accrued Revenue	6C	266	148
<b>Total financial assets</b>		<b>18,612</b>	<b>29,872</b>
<b>Non-financial assets</b>			
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	7A,C,D,E	41,193	53,294
Inventories	7F	58	48
Intangibles	7B,C,D,E	76,797	74,425
Other	7G	8,834	6,855
<b>Total non-financial assets</b>		<b>126,882</b>	<b>134,622</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<b>145,494</b>	<b>164,494</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
<b>Interest bearing liabilities</b>			
Loans	8A	11,150	12,201
Leases	8B	2,938	4,835
Other	8C	383	735
<b>Total interest bearing liabilities</b>		<b>14,471</b>	<b>17,771</b>
<b>Provisions</b>			
Employees	9A	63,923	68,001
Surplus Lease Space	9B	24	368
<b>Total provisions</b>		<b>63,947</b>	<b>68,369</b>
<b>Payables</b>			
Suppliers	10A	7,059	11,726
Unearned Revenue	10B	3,597	5,717
Other	10C	275	3
<b>Total payables</b>		<b>10,931</b>	<b>17,446</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES</b>		<b>89,349</b>	<b>103,586</b>
<b>NET ASSETS</b>		<b>56,145</b>	<b>60,908</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>			
Contributed equity	11	11,250	11,250
Reserves	11	7,519	8,685
Accumulated surpluses	11	37,376	40,973
<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	11	<b>56,145</b>	<b>60,908</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		<b>27,504</b>	<b>36,775</b>
<b>Non-current assets</b>		<b>117,990</b>	<b>127,719</b>
<b>Current liabilities</b>		<b>43,782</b>	<b>53,709</b>
<b>Non-current liabilities</b>		<b>45,567</b>	<b>49,877</b>

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

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS  
STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS**

*For the year ended 30 June 2003*

	Notes	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>OPERATING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Goods and services		26,758	22,613
Appropriations		253,501	354,920
Interest		432	739
GST received from ATO		5,726	8,268
GST Receipts from Customers		2,340	0
Employee Transfer Benefits		527	0
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>289,284</b>	<b>386,540</b>
<b>Cash used</b>			
Employees		(185,708)	(237,522)
Suppliers		(69,784)	(91,764)
Borrowing costs		(980)	(689)
GST Payments to Suppliers		(6,554)	0
GST paid to ATO		(2,074)	0
Return to Official Public Account (excess cash balance)		(1,300)	0
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>(266,400)</b>	<b>(329,975)</b>
<b>Net cash from / (used by) operating activities</b>	12	<b>22,884</b>	<b>56,565</b>
<b>INVESTING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment		337	643
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>337</b>	<b>643</b>
<b>Cash used</b>			
Purchase of property, plant and equipment		(6,470)	(28,075)
Purchase of intangibles		(15,749)	(11,096)
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>(22,219)</b>	<b>(39,171)</b>
<b>Net cash (used by) investing activities</b>		<b>(21,882)</b>	<b>(38,528)</b>
<b>FINANCING ACTIVITIES</b>			
<b>Cash received</b>			
Appropriations – contributed equity		-	13,200
<b>Total cash received</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>13,200</b>
<b>Cash used</b>			
Repayment of debt		(1,051)	(999)
Repayment of Lease Liability		(2,250)	(2,158)
Capital use charge paid		(6,700)	(6,774)
Return interest to Official Public Account		(1,266)	0
<b>Total cash used</b>		<b>(11,267)</b>	<b>(9,931)</b>
<b>Net cash (used by) financing activities</b>		<b>(11,267)</b>	<b>3,269</b>
<b>Net increase / (decrease) in cash held</b>		<b>(10,265)</b>	<b>21,306</b>
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period		23,036	1,730
<b>Cash at the end of the reporting period</b>	6A	<b>12,771</b>	<b>23,036</b>

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

**Australian Bureau of Statistics  
Schedule of Commitments**

*as at 30 June 2003*

	2003	2002
<b>BY TYPE</b>	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>
Capital commitments		
Infrastructure, plant and equipment <sup>1</sup>	<u>445</u>	<u>4,416</u>
<b>Total capital commitments</b>	<b>445</b>	<b>4,416</b>
Other Commitments		
Operating leases <sup>2</sup>	<u>263,428</u>	<u>247,062</u>
Other Commitments	<u>7,567</u>	<u>23,508</u>
<b>Total other commitments</b>	<b>270,995</b>	<b>270,570</b>
<b>Commitments receivable</b>	<b>(22,640)</b>	<b>(410)</b>
<b>Net commitments</b>	<b><u>248,800</u></b>	<b><u>274,576</u></b>

**BY MATURITY**

<b>Capital commitments</b>		
One year or less	405	4,416
From one to five years	-	-
Over five years	-	-
<b>Operating lease commitments</b>		
One year or less	21,819	20,422
From one to five years	81,632	72,813
Over five years	<u>138,070</u>	<u>153,827</u>
<b>Other commitments</b>		
One year or less	6,874	23,098
From one to five years	-	-
Over five years	-	-
<b>Net commitments by maturity</b>	<b><u>248,800</u></b>	<b><u>274,576</u></b>

NB: Commitments are GST inclusive where relevant.

<sup>1</sup> Plant and equipment commitments are primarily contracts for purchases of furniture and fittings for new building.

<sup>2</sup> Operating leases included are effectively non-cancellable and comprise:

<i>Nature of lease</i>	<i>General description of leasing arrangement</i>
Leases for office accommodation	Lease payments are subject to annual increase in accordance with upwards movements in the Consumer Price Index. The initial periods of office accommodation leases are still current and each may be renewed for up to five years at the ABS's option, following a once-off adjustment of rentals to current market levels.
Agreements for the provision of motor vehicles to senior executive officers	No contingent rentals exist. There are no renewal or purchase options available to the Agency.

The above statement should be read in conjunction with the accompanying notes

**Australian Bureau of Statistics**  
**Schedule of Contingencies**  
*as at 30 June 2003*

	2003	2002
	\$'000	\$'000
<b>Contingent losses</b>		
Claims for damages/costs <sup>1</sup>	6,341	
Claims for damages/costs <sup>2</sup>	30	33
<b>Net contingences</b>	<b>6,371</b>	<b>33</b>

1. The ABS has a number of leases, which have "make good" clauses in them. These clauses constitute a liability as they require the ABS to remove fit out and the like that have been installed as part of our tenancy. The previous experience of the ABS however, where leases have been terminated, is that we have not been required to undertake the work. On this basis we consider that it is unlikely that we will be required to meet these obligations in the future. Because of this presumption the amounts have not been included on the Balance Sheet for the ABS.

New leases are being negotiated without a make good provision.

The current cost is used as a proxy for net present value assuming that inflating the current estimates to get to costs up to 14 years out and then discounting will produce approximately the same result.

2. Possible legal claim relating to a termination of employment.

Details of each class of contingent liabilities and assets, including those not included above because they cannot be quantified or considered remote, are disclosed in 13

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

**Australian Bureau of Statistics**  
**Notes to and forming part of the financial statements**  
*for the year ended 30 June 2003*

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**Note**

- 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
- 2 Events Occurring after Reporting Date
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## **Note 1: Summary of Significant Accounting Policies**

### **(a) Objectives of the Australian Bureau of Statistics**

The mission and outcome of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (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 its Economic statistics and Population and Social statistics groups. Indirect costs for Support Services have been allocated to the Economic and Population and Social statistical areas in these Financial Statements.

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

Administered items are those items that are controlled by the Government and managed or overseen by the ABS on behalf of the Government. In the ABS, administered items are no longer held.

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

### **(b) 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

- Finance Minister's Orders (being the "*Financial Management and Accountability (Financial Statements for reporting periods ending on or after 30 June 2003) Orders*");
- Australian Accounting Standards and Accounting Interpretations issued by the Australian Accounting Standards Board; and
- Consensus Views of the Urgent Issues Group.

The statements have also been prepared having regard to the Explanatory Notes to Schedule 1, and Finance Briefs issued by the Department of Finance and Administration.

The Statements of Financial Performance and Financial Position have been prepared on an accrual basis and are in accordance with historical cost convention, except for certain assets that, 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.

Assets and liabilities are recognised in the Statement of Financial Position when and only when it is probable that future economic benefits will flow and the amounts of the assets or liabilities can be reliably measured. Assets and liabilities arising under agreements equally proportionately unperformed are however not recognised unless required by an Accounting Standard.

Liabilities and assets, which are unrecognised, are reported in the Schedule of Commitments and the Schedule of Contingencies (other than remote contingencies, which are reported at Note 13 Contingent Liabilities and Assets).

Revenues and expenses are recognised in the Statement of Financial Performance when and only when the flow or consumption or loss of economic benefits has occurred and can be reliably measured.

The continued existence of the ABS in its present form, and with its present programs, is dependent on Government policy and on continuing appropriations by Parliament for the ABS's administration and programs.

### **(c) Changes in Accounting Policy**

The accounting policies used in the preparation of these financial statements are consistent with those used in 2001-02, except in respect of:

- Revaluation on a Fair Value Basis: Note 1 (o)
- Employee Entitlement calculations: Note 1 (g)
- Equity injections: Note 1 (f)
- Output appropriations: Note 1 (d)

### **(d) Revenue**

#### *Revenues from Government*

Revenues from Government are revenues relating to the core operating activities of the ABS. Amounts and other details are given in Note 3A "Revenue from Government".

Appropriations to the ABS for its departmental outputs are recognised as revenue to the extent that they have been received into the ABS's bank account or are entitled to be received by the ABS at year-end. There were no capital appropriations in the 2002/03 financial year.

Appropriations to the ABS for departmental capital items are recognised directly in equity, to the extent that the appropriations have been received into the ABS's bank account or are entitled to be received by the ABS at year end. There were no capital appropriations in the 2002/03 financial year.

The ABS has not, in 2002-2003, required or received administered appropriations.

#### *Resources Received Free of Charge*

Resources received free of charge are recognised as revenue when and only when a fair value can be reliably measured and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated (Note 3A). 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.

*Revenue from other sources*

Sales of goods and services include revenue from the sale of publications and other products and the provision of statistical services. 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.

Interest revenue is recognised on a proportional basis taking into account the interest rates applicable for the financial assets.

Revenue from sale of non-current assets is recognised when control of the asset has passed to the buyer.

*Other Revenue*

Other revenues include 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.

**(e) Unearned Revenue**

Unearned revenue includes revenue from subscriptions to statistical publications through various points including the internet, provision of statistical consultancies and revenue from other agencies for statistical surveys. It is recognised on a proportional basis as the service is provided (Note 10B).

**(f) Transactions by the Government as Owner**

*Equity Injections*

From 1 July 2002, the FMOs require that amounts of appropriations designated as 'equity injections' (less any savings offered up in Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements) are recognised directly in contributed equity as at 1 July or later date of effect of the appropriation.

This is a change of accounting policy from 2001-02 to the extent any part of an equity injection that was dependant on specific future events occurring was not recognised until the appropriation was drawn down.

The change in policy has no financial effect in 2002-03 because the full amounts of the equity injections in 2001-02 were recognised in that year.

*Capital Use Charge*

A Capital Use Charge of 11% (2002: 11%) is imposed by the Government on the departmental net assets of the ABS at year end. The net assets figure is adjusted to take account of asset gifts and revaluation decrements during the financial year. The charge is accounted for as a dividend to Government.

In accordance with the recommendations of a review of Budget Estimates and Framework, the Government has decided that the charge will not operate after 30 June 2003.

### **(g) Employee Entitlements**

Liabilities for services rendered by employees are recognised at the reporting date to the extent that they have not been settled.

#### *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 2003 and is recognised at the nominal amount.

The nominal amount of leave, being both annual and long service leave, has been calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability. This is a change in accounting policy from last year required by initial application of a new Accounting Standard AASB 1028 from 1 July 2002.

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 2003. In determining the present value of the liability, the ABS has taken into account work undertaken by an actuary as at 31 May 2003, which included assessments of attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation. 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 ABS when leave is cashed out on resignation or retirement.

#### *Separation and Redundancy*

Provision was made in 2001-02 for separation and redundancy payments where the ABS had formally identified positions as excess to requirements and a reliable estimate of the amount of the payments could be determined.

#### *Superannuation*

Staff of the ABS contribute to the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme or the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme. The liability for their superannuation benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Commonwealth and is settled by the Commonwealth in due course. No liability is shown for superannuation in the Statement of Financial Position of the ABS as the employer contributions to the



commonwealth at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to extinguish fully the accruing liability that is assumed by the Commonwealth.

#### **(h) Leases**

A distinction is made between finance leases which effectively transfer from the lessor to the lessee substantially all of the risks and benefits incidental to ownership of leased non-current assets and operating leases under which the lessor effectively retains substantially all such risks and benefits.

Where a non-current asset is acquired by means of a finance lease, the asset is capitalised at the present value of minimum lease payments at the inception of the lease and a liability recognised for the same amount. Leased assets are amortised over the period of the lease. Lease payments are allocated between the principal component and the interest expense.

Operating lease payments are expensed on a basis, which is representative of the pattern of benefits derived from the leased assets. 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.

Lease incentives taking the form of 'free' leasehold improvements and rent holidays are recognised as liabilities. These liabilities are reduced by allocating lease payments between rental expense, and reduction of the liability.

#### **(i) Borrowing Costs**

All borrowing costs are expensed as incurred except to the extent that they are directly attributable to qualifying assets, in which case they are capitalised. The amount capitalised in a reporting period does not exceed the amounts of costs incurred in that period.

The ABS has one qualifying asset for which funds were borrowed specifically in 2000-01.

#### **(j) Cash**

Cash means notes and coins held, and any deposits held at call with a bank or financial institution.

#### **(k) Receivables**

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

#### **(l) Financial Instruments**

Accounting policies for financial instruments are stated in Note 18.

**(m) Accrued Revenue**

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

**(n) Acquisition of Assets**

Assets are recorded at cost on acquisition except as stated below. The cost of acquisition includes the fair value of assets transferred in exchange and liabilities undertaken.

Assets acquired at no cost, or for nominal consideration, are initially recognised as assets and revenues at their fair value at the date of acquisition, unless acquired as a consequence of restructuring administrative arrangements. In the latter case, assets are initially recognised as contributions by owners at the amounts at which they were recognised in the transferor agency's accounts immediately prior to the restructuring.

**(o) Property (Infrastructure, Furniture and Fittings, Leasehold Improvements), Plant and Equipment***Asset Recognition Threshold*

Non-current assets that have a limited useful life (depreciable assets) are stated at cost, except as indicated in Note 7. Assets originally costing \$2,000 or more (\$1,000 for IT assets and purchased software, and all Internally Generated Software assets) are capitalised in the year of acquisition. Component items purchased separately but which are configured into larger items such as office work stations and personal computer workstations and associated software are considered to be depreciable assets if the aggregate cost is \$2,000 or more.

*Revaluations**Basis*

Revaluations undertaken up to 30 June 2002 were done on a deprival basis. Revaluations done since that date have been done on the fair value basis. This change in accounting policy is required by Australian Accounting Standard AASB 1041 *Revaluation of Non-Current Assets*.

Fair and deprival values for each class of asset are determined as shown below:

<i>Asset Class</i>	<i>Fair Value Measured at:</i>	<i>Deprival Value measured at:</i>
Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment	Market selling Price	Depreciated replacement cost

The financial effect for 2002-03 of this change in policy relates to those assets to be recognised at fair value at 30 June 2003. The financial effect of the change is given by the difference between the carrying amounts at 30 June 2002 and their fair values as at 1 July 2002. The financial effect by class is as follows:

<i>Asset Class</i>	<i>Adjustment</i>	<i>Contra Account</i>
Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment	\$1,275,627.94 DR	Accumulated results

Total financial effect was to decrease the carrying amount of IP&E by \$1,549,386.02, decrease revaluation reserves by \$273,758.08 and decrease accumulated results by \$1,275,627.94.

Accounting Standard AAS6 *Accounting Policies* requires, where practicable, presentation of the information that would have been disclosed in 2001-02 had the new accounting policy always been applied. It is impracticable to present this information.

### *Frequency*

ABS has implemented its progressive revaluations as follows:

- (i) in 2002/03 all furniture and fittings, office equipment, plant, leasehold incentives and leasehold improvements were revalued using the fair value basis;
- (ii) in 2001/02 all computer hardware assets were revalued using the deprival basis;
- (iii) in 2000/01 furniture and fittings, and leasehold improvements held at the Data Processing Centre had their lives adjusted to be fully depreciated by the disposal date of December 2002;

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.

Assets still held on the basis of the deprival method by the ABS are recorded at their depreciated replacement cost.

### *Conduct*

All valuations are conducted by an independent qualified valuer.

### *Depreciation*

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

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

	<b>2002/03</b>	<b>2001/02</b>
	<b>Life in Years</b>	<b>Life in Years</b>
Computer hardware	<b>3 to 10</b>	3 to 5
Furniture & fittings	<b>10</b>	10
Plant	<b>10</b>	10
Office equipment	<b>5</b>	5

The aggregate amount of depreciation allocated for each class of asset during the reporting period is disclosed in Note 4C.

**(p) Intangibles***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 (Note 7B). 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 to collect data in line with the requirements of *Schedule 1*.

In accordance with AASB 1041 IGSW that had previously been revalued in 1996, was deemed to be at cost as at 1 July 2001. From 1 July 2002, Schedule 1 no longer requires the application of the recoverable amounts test in Australian Accounting Standard AAS10 *Recoverable Amount on Non-Current Assets* to the assets of agencies when the primary purpose of the asset is not the generation of net cash inflows. Schedule 1 now requires such assets, if carried on the cost basis, to be assessed for indications of impairment. The carrying amount of impaired assets must be written down to the higher of its net market value selling price or depreciated replacement cost. The software assets held by the ABS are currently written off once identified as reaching obsolescence, but have yet to be assessed under the full impairment guidelines.

*Purchased Software*

Purchased software assets are stated at cost where the asset cost more than \$1,000. Assets below this threshold are expensed at the time of purchase.

*Amortisation*

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 28 years.

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

	<b>2002/03</b>	<b>2001/02</b>
	<b><u>Life in Years</u></b>	<b><u>Life in Years</u></b>
Computer software – proprietary	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>
Computer software – internally generated	<b>2 to 28</b>	<b>2 to 28</b>

The aggregate amount of amortisation allocated for each class of asset during the reporting period is disclosed in Note 4C.



**(q) Historical Statistical Data**

Statistical data accumulated over many years is stored for reference purposes. While having no value for accounting purposes historical time series data plays an important part in the operations of the ABS as Australia's official statistical provider. The cost of storing and maintaining this data is treated as an operating expense.

**(r) Capital Work in Progress**

Capital work in progress represents two main asset types, software assets under development and office refurbishments including the fitout for ABS House. 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 (Note 7F). As part of the rationalisation of product delivery services physical inventory items held were reduced significantly in previous financial years. Most products are now available electronically or printed on request. The method for calculating and recording the value of these items has been reviewed and now will not be reflected in the financial statements until sold.

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 maintenance contracts, office rent, rights to childcare places at Bluebell Childcare Centre, security and subscriptions (Note 7G).

**(u) Insurance**

The ABS has insured for risks through the Government's insurable risk managed fund called 'Comcover'. Workers compensation is insured through the Government's Comcare Australia.

**(v) Taxation**

The ABS is exempt from all forms of taxation except Fringe Benefits Tax (FBT) and the Goods and Services Tax (GST). Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of GST:

- except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office; and
- except for receivables and payables

**(w) 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.

**(x) Comparative Figures**

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

**(y) 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. Associated currency gains and losses are not material.

**Note 2: Events Occurring after Reporting Date**

There have been no events occurring subsequent to balance date that would affect the Australian Bureau of Statistics Financial Statements for the financial year ended 30 June 2003.

	<b>2003</b> <b>\$'000</b>	2002 \$'000
<b>Note 3: Operating Revenues</b>		
<b><u>Note 3A: Revenues from Governments</u></b>		
Appropriations for outputs	<b>253,501</b>	354,920
Resources received free of charge	<b>90</b>	90
<b><i>Total revenues from government</i></b>	<b><u>253,591</u></b>	<b><u>355,010</u></b>
 <b><u>Note 3B: Goods and Services</u></b>		
Goods	<b>9,872</b>	4,212
Services	<b>14,735</b>	13,875
<b><i>Total sales of goods and services</i></b>	<b><u>24,607</u></b>	<b><u>18,087</u></b>
 Provision of goods to:		
Related entities	<b>7,234</b>	2,348
External entities	<b>2,638</b>	1,864
<b><i>Total sales of goods</i></b>	<b><u>9,872</u></b>	<b><u>4,212</u></b>
 Rendering of services to:		
Related entities	<b>10,798</b>	7,735
External entities	<b>3,937</b>	6,140
<b><i>Total rendering of services</i></b>	<b><u>14,735</u></b>	<b><u>13,875</u></b>
 <b><u>Note 3C: Interest Revenue</u></b>		
Interest on deposits	<b><u>378</u></b>	<b><u>793</u></b>
 <b><u>Note 3D: Net Gains from Sale of Assets</u></b>		
 Infrastructure, plant and equipment:		
Proceeds from disposal	<b>150</b>	643
Net book value of assets disposed	<b>(372)</b>	(1,398)
Write-offs	<b>-</b>	-
<b><i>Net gain / (loss) from disposal of infrastructure, plant and equipment</i></b>	<b><u>(222)</u></b>	<b><u>(755)</u></b>
 TOTAL proceeds from disposals	<b>150</b>	213
TOTAL value of assets disposed	<b><u>(372)</u></b>	<b><u>(968)</u></b>
<b><i>TOTAL net gain from disposal of assets</i></b>	<b><u>(222)</u></b>	<b><u>(755)</u></b>

## Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>Note 4: Operating Expenses</b>		
<u>Note 4A: Employee Expenses</u>		
Wages and Salary	154,977	168,147
Superannuation	24,396	24,341
Leave and other entitlements	3,468	6,381
Interviewers wages and superannuation	8,182	7,516
Census wages and superannuation	20	38,752
Separation and redundancies	(53)	4,000
Other employee expenses	1,706	2,144
<b>Total employee benefits expense</b>	<b>192,696</b>	<b>251,281</b>
Worker compensation premiums	2,027	2,286
<b>Total employee expenses</b>	<b>194,723</b>	<b>253,567</b>
Less amounts capitalised in respect of internally generated software	<b>(14,523)</b>	<b>(11,090)</b>
<b>Total employee expenses</b>	<b>180,200</b>	<b>242,477</b>

<u>Note 4B: Supplier Expenses</u>		
Goods from related entities	1,370	74
Goods from external entities	16,674	26,273
Services from related entities	3,753	6,996
Services from external entities	18,139	31,914
Operating lease rentals*	17,426	18,262
<b>Total supplier expenses</b>	<b>57,362</b>	<b>83,519</b>

\* These comprise minimum lease payments only.

Note 4C: Depreciation and Amortisation

<i>Depreciation</i>		
Other infrastructure, plant and equipment	12,392	13,097
<i>Amortisation</i>		
Intangibles – Computer Software	14,501	14,137
<b>Total depreciation and amortisation</b>	<b>26,893</b>	<b>27,234</b>

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

Leasehold improvements	1,526	1,518
Plant and equipment	12,466	13,213
Internally developed software – in use	12,901	12,503
<b>Total depreciation and amortisation</b>	<b>26,893</b>	<b>27,234</b>

No depreciation or amortisation was allocated to the carrying amounts of other assets.

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

	<b>2003</b>	2002
	<b>\$'000</b>	\$'000
<b>Note 4D: Write Down of Assets</b>		
<b>Financial assets</b>		
Bad and doubtful debts expense	(13)	57
<b>Non-financial assets</b>		
Inventory – write off on disposal	-	2,861
Hardware – write off on disposal	1,118	13
Software – write off on disposal	-	1,940
Plant & equipment – revaluation decrement	-	-
Purchased software – revaluation decrement	1	-
<b>Total write-down of assets</b>	<b>1,106</b>	<b>4,871</b>

**Note 5: Borrowing Costs Expense**

Loans	724	340
Leases	256	349
<b>Total borrowing costs expense</b>	<b>980</b>	<b>689</b>

## Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>Note 6: Financial Assets</b>		
<u>Note 6A: Cash</u>		
Cash on hand:		
Special Account	(46)	44
Departmental (other than special accounts)	12,817	22,992
<b>Total cash</b>	<b>12,771</b>	<b>23,036</b>
 <u>Note 6B: Receivables</u>		
Goods and services	2,791	6,245
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	(35)	(54)
	2,756	6,191
GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	828	289
Sundry receivables	691	87
Other receivables	-	121
Official Public Account receivable	1,300	-
<b>Total receivables (net)</b>	<b>5,575</b>	<b>6,688</b>
<i>All receivables are current assets.</i>		
 Receivables (gross) are aged as follows:		
Not overdue	5,412	6,225
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	97	473
30 to 60 days	45	13
60 to 90 days	47	25
More than 90 days	9	6
<b>Total receivables (gross)</b>	<b>5,610</b>	<b>6,742</b>
 The provision for doubtful debts is aged as follows:		
Not overdue	-	-
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	-	-
30 to 60 days	16	16
60 to 90 days	16	31
More than 90 days	3	7
<b>Total provision for doubtful debts</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>54</b>
 <u>Note 6C: Accrued Revenue</u>		
Accrued Interest	-	54
Other	266	94
<b>Total Accrued revenue</b>	<b>266</b>	<b>148</b>

<b>Note 7: Non-Financial Assets</b>	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>
	<b>\$'000</b>	<b>\$'000</b>

**Note 7A: Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment**

***Plant and equipment***

- work in progress	<b>648</b>	1,044
- at cost	<b>11,840</b>	2,910
- Accumulated depreciation	<b>(2,385)</b>	(3,251)
	<b>10,103</b>	30,703
- at 1997-00 valuation (deprival)	<b>39,623</b>	4,114
- Accumulated depreciation	<b>(33,167)</b>	(3,936)
	<b>6,456</b>	178
- at 1999-02 valuation (deprival)	-	66,375
- Accumulated depreciation	-	(45,094)
	-	21,281
- transferred in - out of cycle	<b>108</b>	3,091
- Accumulated depreciation	<b>(96)</b>	(1,959)
	<b>12</b>	1,132
- at 2002-03 valuation (fair value)	<b>24,622</b>	-
<b>Total Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment (non-current)</b>	<b>41,193</b>	53,294

All revaluations are independent and are conducted in accordance with the revaluation policy stated in Note 1 (o). In 2002-03 revaluations were conducted by an independent valuer, the Australian Valuers Office (AVO).

A revaluation decrement of \$273,758.08 was made to the revaluation reserve for Infrastructure Plant and Equipment.

**Note 7B: Intangibles**

***Computer software:***

Internally developed - in progress (non-current)	<b>6,870</b>	8,977
Internally developed - in use (non-current)	<b>132,007</b>	135,000
Purchased Software	<b>19,953</b>	-
Accumulated amortisation	<b>(82,033)</b>	(69,552)
	<b>69,927</b>	65,448
<b>Total intangibles</b>	<b>76,797</b>	74,425



Note 7C: Analysis of Property, Plant, Equipment and Intangibles

**TABLE A – Reconciliation of the opening and closing balances of property, plant and equipment and intangibles**

Item	Other IP&E \$'000	Computer Software \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
As at 1 July 2002			
Gross book value	107,535	143,977	251,512
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(54,241)	(69,552)	(123,793)
Net book value	53,294	74,425	127,719
Additions			
by purchase			
from acquisition of operations	6,458	15,749	22,207
Net revaluation increment/(decrement)	(1,549)	-	(1,549)
Depreciation/amortisation expense	(13,992)	(12,901)	(26,893)
Recoverable Amount write-downs	(892)		(892)
Write-offs	(847)	(476)	(1,323)
Disposals			
From disposal of operations	(1,279)	-	(1,279)
Other disposals	-	-	-
As at 30 June 2003			
Gross book value	76,842	158,832	235,674
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(35,649)	(82,035)	(117,684)
Net book value	41,193	76,797	117,990



Note 7D: Analysis of Property, Plant, Equipment and Intangibles

**TABLE B – Assets at valuation**

Item	Other IP&E \$'000	Computer Software \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
<b>As at 30 June 2003</b>			
Gross value	64,247	-	64,247
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(33,263)	-	(33,263)
<b>Net book value</b>	<b>30,984</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>30,984</b>
<b>As at 30 June 2002</b>			
Gross value	70,489	-	70,489
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(49,030)	-	(49,030)
Net book value	21,459	-	21,459

**TABLE C – Assets held under finance lease**

Item	Other IP&E \$'000	Computer Software \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
<b>As at 30 June 2003</b>			
Gross value	1,758	-	1,758
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(96)	-	(96)
<b>Net book value</b>	<b>1,662</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>1,662</b>
<b>As at 30 June 2002</b>			
Gross value	16,816	-	16,816
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(12,820)	-	(12,820)
Net book value	3,996	-	3,996

NB All finance leases were revalued in 2002-03. Amounts shown are revalued amounts and are also included in Table B above.

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

Note 7E: Analysis of Property, Plant, Equipment and Intangibles

**TABLE D – Assets under construction**

Item	Other Infrastructure, Plant & Equipment \$'000	Computer Software \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
Gross value at 30 June 2003	653	6,870	7,523
Gross value at 30 June 2002	1,044	8,977	10,021

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

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	<b>2003</b>	2002
	<b>\$'000</b>	\$'000
<b><u>Note 7F: Inventories</u></b>		
Finished goods (cost)	<b>58</b>	48
Inventories held for sale	<b>58</b>	48
 Inventories not held for sale (cost)	 -	 -
<b><i>Total inventories</i></b>	<b>58</b>	48

All departmental inventories are current assets.

<b><u>Note 7G: Other Non-Financial Assets</u></b>		
<b><u>Prepayments</u></b>		
Information Technology	<b>273</b>	652
Software Licenses	<b>1,535</b>	3
Office Rent	<b>5,615</b>	4,845
Childcare Places	<b>127</b>	169
Subscriptions	<b>313</b>	-
Other	<b>971</b>	1,185
<b><i>Total Prepayments</i></b>	<b>8,834</b>	6,855

All other non-financial assets are current assets.

## Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>Note 8: Interest Bearing Liabilities</b>		
<u>Note 8A: Loans</u>		
Loans from Government	<u>11,150</u>	<u>12,201</u>
Maturity schedule for loans:		
Payable:		
Within one year	1,117	1,051
In one to five years	5,212	4,905
In more than five years	<u>4,821</u>	<u>6,245</u>
<b>Total loan liability</b>	<u>11,150</u>	<u>12,201</u>
<u>Note 8B: Leases</u>		
Finance lease commitments:		
Payable:		
Within one year	2,149	2,154
In one to five years	1,029	3,153
In more than five years	-	26
Minimum lease payments	<u>3,178</u>	<u>5,333</u>
Deduct: future finance charges	<u>(240)</u>	<u>(498)</u>
<b>Net lease liability</b>	<u>2,938</u>	<u>4,835</u>
Lease liability is represented by:		
Current	1,989	1,897
Non-current	<u>949</u>	<u>2,938</u>
<b>Net lease liability</b>	<u>2,938</u>	<u>4,835</u>

Finance leases exist in relation to certain major office equipment assets. The leases are non-cancellable and for fixed terms averaging ten years, with a maximum of ten years. The ABS guarantees the residual value of all assets leased. There are no contingent rentals

Note 8C: Other Interest Bearing Liabilities

Lease incentives	<u>383</u>	<u>735</u>
Other interest bearing liabilities are represented by:		
Current	353	353
Non-current	<u>30</u>	<u>382</u>
<b>Total other interest bearing liabilities</b>	<u>383</u>	<u>735</u>

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>Note 9: Provisions</b>		
<b>Note 9A: Employee Provisions</b>		
Salaries and wages	4,992	4,778
Leave	56,815	58,273
Superannuation	892	718
Separations and redundancies	1,224	4,232
<b>Aggregate employee entitlement liability</b>	<b>63,923</b>	<b>68,001</b>
Current	29,383	32,594
Non-current	34,540	35,407
<b>Note 9B: Surplus Lease Space</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>368</b>
Current	9	90
Non- Current	15	278
<b>Note 10: Payables</b>		
<b>Note 10A: Supplier Payables</b>		
Trade creditors	6,869	11,414
Sundry creditors	186	228
Operating lease rentals	4	84
<b>Total supplier payables</b>	<b>7,059</b>	<b>11,726</b>
<u>All payables are current liabilities</u>		
<b>Note 10B: Unearned Revenue</b>		
Receipts received in advance	3,597	5,717
<b>Total unearned revenue</b>	<b>3,597</b>	<b>5,717</b>
<u>All unearned revenue is a current liability</u>		
<b>Note 10C: Other Payables</b>		
GST payable to ATO	265	-
Other	10	3
<b>Total other payables</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>3</b>
<u>All other payables are current liabilities.</u>		

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

**Note 11: Equity****Analysis of Equity**

<b>Item</b>	<b>Accumulated Results</b>		<b>Asset Revaluation Reserves</b>		<b>Contributed Equity</b>		<b>TOTAL EQUITY</b>	
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Opening balance as at 1 July	40,973	37,101	8,685	8,617	11,250	11,250	60,908	56,968
Net surplus/deficit	6,707	10,583	-	-	-	-	6,707	10,583
Net revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	(892)	68	-	-	(892)	68
Decrease in retained surpluses on application of transitional provisions in accounting standard AASB 1041 Revaluation of Non-current Assets	(1,276)	-	(274)	-	-	-	(1,550)	-
Decrease in retained surpluses on application of accounting standard AASB 1028 Employee Benefits	(1,062)	-	-	-	-	-	(1,062)	-
<b>Transactions with owner:</b>								
Distributions to owner:								
Returns on Capital								
Dividends								
Capital Use Charge								
Returns of Capital	(6,700)	(6,711)	-	-	-	-	(6,700)	(6,711)
Returns of contributed equity	(1,266)	-	-	-	-	-	(1,266)	-
Contributions by owner:								
Appropriations (equity injections)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Restructuring	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Transfers to/(from)/between reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Closing balance as at 30 June</b>	<b>37,376</b>	<b>40,973</b>	<b>7,519</b>	<b>8,685</b>	<b>11,250</b>	<b>11,250</b>	<b>56,145</b>	<b>60,908</b>
Less: outside equity interests	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>Total equity attributable to the Commonwealth</b>	<b>37,376</b>	<b>40,973</b>	<b>7,519</b>	<b>8,685</b>	<b>11,250</b>	<b>11,250</b>	<b>56,145</b>	<b>60,908</b>



	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>Note 12: Cash Flow Reconciliation</b>		
<b>Reconciliation of cash per Statement of Financial Position to Statement of Cash Flows</b>		
Cash at year end per Statement of Cash Flows	12,771	23,036
Statement of Financial Position items comprising above cash: 'Financial Asset – Cash'	12,771	23,036
<b>Reconciliation of net surplus to net cash from operating activities:</b>		
Net surplus (deficit)	6,707	10,583
Depreciation /amortisation	26,893	27,234
Net write down of non-current assets	1,106	2,931
Loss on disposal of assets	223	2,695
Revenue from donated assets	(12)	-
(Increase) / decrease in net receivables	3,506	-
(Increase) / decrease in accrued revenues	(118)	(1,451)
(Increase) / decrease in inventories	(10)	2,554
(Increase) / decrease in prepayments	(1,979)	1,596
Increase / (decrease) in employee provisions	(5,667)	4,784
Increase / (decrease) in supplier payables	(5,347)	3,213
Increase / (decrease) in other liabilities	(2,418)	2,426
<b>Net cash from / (used by) operating activities</b>	<b>22,884</b>	<b>56,565</b>

**Note 13: Contingent Liabilities and Assets**

There have been no remote contingencies identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the financial year 2002/03.

## Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
<b>Note 14: Executive Remuneration</b>		
The number of executives who received or were due to receive remuneration of \$100,000 or more:		
\$100 000 to \$109 999	1	1
\$110 000 to \$119 999	-	3
\$120 000 to \$129 999	5	2
\$130 000 to \$139 999	10	14
\$140 000 to \$149 999	8	7
\$150 000 to \$159 999	6	2
\$160 000 to \$169 999	-	4
\$170 000 to \$179 999	5	-
\$180 000 to \$189 999	-	1
\$190 000 to \$199 999	1	-
\$200 000 to \$209 999	1	1
\$300 000 to \$309 999	1	-
\$320 000 to \$329 999	-	1

The aggregate amount of total remuneration of executives shown above. **\$5,784,604**    \$5,313,397

The aggregate amount of separation and redundancy/termination benefit payments during the year to executives shown above. **\$133,110**    Nil

Total remuneration includes the actual salary earned by SES officers, actual employer superannuation contributions and an actual cost of the non-salary component of the SES packages (e.g. provision of a car and accrued leave entitlements).

	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
	<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>
<b>Note 15: Remuneration of Auditors</b>		
Financial statement audit services are provided free of charge to the ABS.		
The fair value of the services provided was:	<u><b>90,000</b></u>	<u>90,000</u>

No other services were provided by the Auditor-General.



	<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
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**Note 16: Average Staffing Levels**

The average staffing levels for the ABS during the year, measured on a full time equivalent basis were:

<u>2,909</u>	<u>3,550</u>
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<u>2003</u>	<u>2002</u>
<u>\$</u>	<u>\$</u>

**Note 17: Act of Grace Payments, Waivers and Defective Administration Scheme**

No 'Act of Grace' payments were made during the reporting period, and there are no amounts owing as at year end.

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No waivers of amounts owing to the Commonwealth were made pursuant to subsection 34(1) of the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997.

<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
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No payments were made under the 'Defective Administration Scheme' during the reporting period.

<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
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Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

**Note 18: Financial Instruments**

Note 18A: Terms, Conditions and Accounting Policies

<b>Financial Instrument</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Accounting Policies and Methods (including recognition criteria and measurement basis)</b>	<b>Nature of Underlying Instrument (including significant terms &amp; conditions affecting the amount, timing and certainty of cash flows)</b>
<b>FINANCIAL ASSETS</b>		Financial assets are recognised when control over future economic benefits is established and the amount of the benefit can be reliably measured.	
Cash	6A	Cash is recognised at its nominal amount. Interest on cash at bank is credited to revenue as it accrues.	Monies in the ABS 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 2.0% for the year (2002: 2.0%). Interest is paid at month end.
Receivables for goods and services	6B	These receivables are recognised at the nominal amounts due less any provision for bad and doubtful debts. Collectability of debts is reviewed at balance date. Provisions are made when collection of the debt is judged to be less rather than more likely.	All receivables are with entities external to the Commonwealth. Credit terms are net 30 days (2002: 30 days).
Accrued revenue	6C	Revenue accrues and is recognised at the time the goods are provided and/or the services are performed.	As for receivables.

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

<b>Financial Instrument</b>	<b>Notes</b>	<b>Accounting Policies and Methods (including recognition criteria and measurement basis)</b>	<b>Nature of Underlying Instrument (including significant terms &amp; conditions affecting the amount, timing and certainty of cash flows)</b>
<b>FINANCIAL LIABILITIES</b>		Financial liabilities are recognised when a present obligation to another party is entered into and the amount of the liability can be reliably measured.	
Government loans	8A	The loan is carried at the balance yet to be repaid. Interest is expensed as it accrues unless it is directly attributable to a qualifying asset.	At the reporting date the ABS had a loan to the Department of Finance and Administration for 9 years with the weighted average interest rate of 6.1%.
Finance lease liabilities	8B	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 reporting date, the Department had finance leases with terms averaging three years and a maximum term of five years. The interest rate implicit in the leases averaged 6.16% (2001-02: 6.0%). The lease assets secure the lease liabilities.
Trade creditors	10A	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 or services have been received (and irrespective of having been invoiced).	All creditors are entities that are not part of the Commonwealth legal entity. Settlement is usually made net 30 days.

## Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

## Note 18B: Interest Rate Risk

Financial Instrument	Notes	Floating Interest Rate	Fixed Interest Rate Maturing In						Non-Interest Bearing			Total		Weighted Average Effective Interest Rate		
			1 Year or Less		1 to 5 Years		> 5 Years									
			2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 %	2002 %		
Financial Assets																
Cash at bank	6A	12,771	23,036	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12,771	23,036	2.0		2.0
Receivables for goods and services (gross)	6B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,791	6,245	2,791	6,245	N/a		N/a
Less: provision for doubtful debts	6B	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	(35)	(54)	(35)	(54)	N/a		N/a
Accrued Revenue	6C	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	266	148	266	148	N/a		N/a
Total		12,771	23,036	-	-	-	-	-	-	3,022	6,339	15,793	29,375			
Total Assets												145,494	164,494			

<b>Financial Liabilities</b>														
Government loans	8A	-	-	1,117	1,051	5,212	4,905	4,821	6,245	-	11,150	12,201	6.1	6.1
Finance lease liabilities	8B	-	-	1,989	1,897	949	2,913	-	-	735	2,938	5,570	6.2	6.0
Trade Creditors	10A	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6,869	6,869	11,414	N/a	N/a
<b>Total</b>		<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>3,106</b>	<b>2,948</b>	<b>6,161</b>	<b>7,818</b>	<b>4,821</b>	<b>6,245</b>	<b>6,869</b>	<b>20,957</b>	<b>29,185</b>		
<b>Total Liabilities</b>											<b>89,349</b>	<b>103,586</b>		

**Note 18C: Net Fair Values of Financial Assets and Liabilities**

		2003		2002	
	Notes	Total Carrying Amount \$'000	Aggregate Net Fair Value \$'000	Total Carrying Amount \$'000	Aggregate Net Fair Value \$'000
<b>Departmental Financial Assets</b>					
Cash at bank	6A	12,771	12,771	23,036	23,036
Receivables for goods and services (net)	6B	2,756	2,756	6,191	6,191
Accrued Revenue	6C	266	266	148	148
<i><b>Total Financial Assets</b></i>		<b>15,793</b>	<b>15,793</b>	<b>29,375</b>	<b>29,375</b>
<b>Financial Liabilities (Recognised)</b>					
Government loans	8A	11,150	11,150	12,201	12,201
Finance lease liabilities	8B	3,320	3,320	5,570	5,570
Trade Creditors	10A	6,869	6,869	11,414	11,414
<i><b>Total Financial Liabilities (Recognised)</b></i>		<b>21,339</b>	<b>21,339</b>	<b>29,185</b>	<b>29,185</b>

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

The net fair values of the finance lease and government loan liabilities are based on discounted cash flows using current interest rates for liabilities with similar risk profiles.

The net fair values for trade creditors are approximated by their carrying amounts.

The net fair value of the indemnity given is taken to be nil as the likelihood of any part of it being called upon is regarded as remote.

**Note 18D: Credit Risk Exposures**

The ABS's maximum exposures to credit risk at reporting date in relation to each class of recognised financial assets is the carrying amount of those assets as indicated in the Statement of Financial Position.

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

All figures for credit risk referred to do not take into account the value of any collateral or other security.

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

**Note 19: Appropriations**Cash Basis Acquittal of Appropriations from Acts 1 and 3

Particulars	Departmental Outputs	Total
<b>Year ended 30 June 2003</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Balance carried from previous year	23,303,134	23,303,134
Appropriation for reporting period (Act 1)	253,104,000	253,104,000
Appropriation for reporting period (Act 3)	397,000	397,000
Refunds credited (FMA s 30)		
GST credits (FMA s 30A)	3,726,864	3,726,864
Prior year adjustments (1998-99) <sup>1</sup>	220,913	220,913
Annotiations to 'net appropriations' (FMA s31)	30,394,627	30,394,627
Available for payments	311,146,538	311,146,538
Payments made	(296,512,610)	(296,512,610)
Appropriations credited to Special Accounts		
<b>Balance carried to next year</b>	<b>14,633,928</b>	<b>14,633,928</b>
<i>Represented by:</i>		
Cash	12,771,043	12,771,043
Add: Appropriations receivable	-	-
Add: Receivables – Goods and services – GST receivable from customers	828,146	828,146
Add: Return of contributed equity	1,300,000	1,300,000
Less: Other payables – Net GST payable to the ATO	(265,261)	(265,261)
<b>Total</b>	<b>14,633,928</b>	<b>14,633,928</b>



**Note 19: Appropriations**

Cash Basis Accrual of Appropriations from Acts 1 and 3

FMA = Financial Management & Accountability Act 1997

Act 1 = Appropriations Act (No. 1) 2002-2003

Act 3 = Appropriations Act (No. 3) 2002-2003

There were no savings offered up during the year and there have been no savings offered up in previous years that are still ongoing.

1 In the 1998-99 financial statements the opening bank balance was incorrectly omitted from the sum available for payments. This entry corrects that error.

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

Particulars	Departmental Outputs	Total
<b>Year ended 30 June 2002</b>	\$	\$
Balance carried from previous year	3,251,261	3,251,261
Total annual appropriation	354,920,000	354,920,000
Adjustments and annotations to appropriations	31,007,593	31,007,593
Transfers to/from other agencies (FMA s32)	-	-
Administered appropriation lapsed	-	-
Available for payments	389,187,854	389,178,854
Payments made during the year	(365,875,720)	(365,875,720)
Appropriations credited to special accounts	-	-
Balance carried to the next year	23,303,134	23,303,134
<i>Represented by:</i>		
Cash	22,815,332	22,815,332
Add: Appropriations receivable	-	-
Add: Receivables – Goods and Services – GST receivable from customers	-	-
Add: Investment in term deposit	-	-
Add: Receivables – Net GST receivable from the ATO	487,802	487,802
Less: Payable – Suppliers – GST portion	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>23,303,134</b>	<b>23,303,134</b>



Note 19B: Cash Basis Accittal of Appropriations from Acts 2 and 4

Particulars	Non-operating		Total
	Equity	Loans	
	\$	\$	\$
<b>Year ended 30 June 2003</b>			
Balance carried from previous year	11,250,000	-	11,250,000
Appropriation for reporting period (Act 2)	-	-	-
Prior year adjustment (2001-02) <sup>1</sup>	(11,250,000)		(11,250,000)
Available for payments	-	-	-
Payments made	-	-	-
<b>Balance carried to next year</b>	-	-	-
<i>Represented by:</i>			
Cash			
Appropriations receivable			
<b>Total</b>			

Act 2 = Appropriations Act (No. 2) 2002-2003

There were no savings offered up during the year and there have been no savings offered up in previous years that are still ongoing.

In the financial statements for 2000-01 the carry forward balance was reduced to nil when the funding was offset against capital expenditure in that year. In 2001-02 an opening balance of \$11,250,000 was carried forward in error. The balance should have been zero. This error has been reversed in the 2002-03 financial statements.

## Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

Particulars	Non-operating		Total
	Equity \$	Loans \$	
<b>Year ended 30 June 2002</b>			
Balance carried from previous year	11,250,000	-	11,250,000
Total annual appropriation	-	13,200,000	13,200,000
Available for payments	11,250,000	13,200,000	24,450,000
Payments made during the year	-	(13,200,000)	(13,200,000)
Balance carried to the next year	11,250,000	-	11,250,000
<i>Represented by:</i>			
Appropriations receivable	-	-	-
<b>Total</b>	-	-	-

**Note 20: Assets Held in Trust**

**Comcare Trust Account**

*Purpose* - moneys held in trust and advanced to the Australian Bureau of Statistics by COMCARE for the purpose of distributing compensation payments made in accordance with the *Safety Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1998*.

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Balance carried forward from previous year	<b>30,000</b>	30,000
Receipts during the year	<b>619,477</b>	661,751
Available for payments	<b>649,477</b>	691,751
Payments made	<b>619,477</b>	661,751
<b><i>Balance carried forward to next year</i></b>	<b><u>30,000</u></b>	<b><u>30,000</u></b>

**Trust Fund Other Trust Money**

*Purpose* – For the receipt of monies temporarily held on trust or otherwise for the benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth.

Legal authority Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997  
Section 20.

	<b>2003</b>	<b>2002</b>
	<b>\$</b>	<b>\$</b>
Balance carried forward from previous year	<b>13,535</b>	15,846
Receipts during the year	<b>6,236</b>	1,630
Available for payments	<b>19,771</b>	17,476
Payments made	<b>3,832</b>	3,941
<b><i>Balance carried forward to next year</i></b>	<b><u>15,939</u></b>	<b><u>13,535</u></b>

Notes to and Forming Part of the Financial Statements

**Note 21: Reporting of Outcomes****Note 21A: Net Cost of Outcome Delivery**

	Outcome 1		Total	
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
Departmental expenses	272,942	363,962	272,942	363,962
<b>Total expenses</b>	<b>272,942</b>	<b>363,962</b>	<b>272,942</b>	<b>363,962</b>
<i>Costs recovered from provision of goods and services to the non-government sector</i>				
Departmental	6,575	8,004	6,575	8,004
<b>Total costs recovered</b>	<b>6,575</b>	<b>8,004</b>	<b>6,575</b>	<b>8,004</b>
<i>Other external revenues</i>				
Departmental				
Interest on cash deposits	378	793	378	793
Revenue from disposal of assets	150	213	150	213
Reversals of previous asset write-downs	-	-	-	-
Other	923	442	923	442
Goods and Services Revenue from Related Entities	18,032	10,083	18,032	10,083
<b>Total Departmental</b>	<b>19,483</b>	<b>11,531</b>	<b>19,483</b>	<b>11,531</b>
<b>Total other external revenues</b>	<b>19,483</b>	<b>11,531</b>	<b>19,483</b>	<b>11,531</b>
<b>Net cost/(contribution) of outcome</b>	<b>246,884</b>	<b>344,427</b>	<b>246,884</b>	<b>344,427</b>

Outcome 1 is described in Note 1 (a) Net costs shown include intra-government costs that are eliminated in calculating the actual Budget outcome.

The Capital Usage Charge is not included in any of the outcomes as it is not an operating expense in end-of-year financial reports. Refer to Outcome 1 Resourcing Table on page 33.

Note 21B: Major Classes of Departmental Revenues and Expenses by Output Groups and Outputs

Outcome 1	Output Group 1.1		Outcome 1 Total	
	Output 1.1.1			
	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2002 \$'000
<b>Departmental expenses</b>				
Employees	180,200	242,477	180,200	242,477
Suppliers	57,362	83,519	57,362	83,519
Depreciation and amortisation	26,893	27,234	26,893	27,234
Other expenses	8,487	10,043	8,487	10,043
<b>Total departmental expenses</b>	<b>272,942</b>	<b>363,273</b>	<b>272,942</b>	<b>363,273</b>
<b>Funded by:</b>				
Revenues from government	253,591	355,010	253,591	355,010
Sale of goods and services	24,607	18,087	24,607	18,087
Other non-taxation revenues	1,451	1,448	1,451	1,448
<b>Total departmental revenues</b>	<b>279,649</b>	<b>374,545</b>	<b>279,649</b>	<b>374,545</b>

Outcome 1 is described in Note 1 (a) Net costs shown include intra-government costs that are eliminated in calculating the actual Budget outcome.

The Capital Usage Charge is not included in any of the outcomes as it is not an operating expense in end-of-year financial reports.

# **SECTION VI**

## **APPENDIXES**

# PROGRAM STRUCTURE

## Appendix 1

### ABS PROGRAM STRUCTURE, 2002–03

	<i>Program components</i>
Economic Statistics Output(a)	National Accounts International Accounts International Trade Financial Accounts Public Sector Accounts Prices Business Indicators Economy Wide Statistics Business Demography Science and Technology Agriculture Mining Manufacturing Construction Transport Service Industries Tourism Environment Statistical Consultancy Statistical Coordination Australian Economic Indicators Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre State and Territory Statistical Services
Population and Social Statistics Output(a)	Census of Population and Housing Demography Labour and Education Statistics Social Conditions Statistics Health and Community Statistics Geography

For footnote see end of table.

...continued



ABS PROGRAM STRUCTURE, 2002–03 — *continued*

	<i>Program components</i>
Corporate and Statistical Support	Mathematical Statistics Business Register Business Methods Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis Economic Statistics Standards Population Statistics Standards Population Surveys Dissemination Marketing and Public Affairs Client Services Library Services Information Technology Bureau Technology Application Data Management Technology Research Business Income Tax Data Economic Statistics Data Centre Executive People Management Financial Resources Corporate Planning and Secretariat Property and Facilities Management International Relations Economic Statistics Group Support Population Statistics Group Support Methodology Division Business Office Information Management Business Infrastructure Technology Services Division Support Corporate Services Division Support

(a) The outputs of the ABS are generated using inputs from both the corporate and statistical 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.

## ESTIMATES OF COST BY OUTPUT AND COMPONENT **Appendix 2**

### ESTIMATES OF COST BY OUTPUT AND COMPONENT, 2002-03 (\$'000)

	<i>Direct Costs</i>	<i>Allocated Costs</i>	<i>Full Costs</i>	
<i>Outputs</i>	(A)	(B)	(A+B=C)	%(b)
Economic Statistics Output				
National Accounts	4 600	6 035	10 635	4.5
International Accounts	4 920	5 568	10 488	4.4
International Trade	2 285	3 936	6 221	2.6
Financial Accounts	2 250	2 658	4 908	2.1
Public Sector Accounts	3 179	2 942	6 121	2.6
Prices(a)	10 609	12 544	23 153	9.8
Business Indicators	3 473	3 316	6 789	2.9
Economy Wide Statistics	3 220	5 593	8 813	3.7
Business Demography	213	525	738	0.3
Science and Technology	2 588	3 463	6 051	2.6
Agriculture	4 223	4 606	8 829	3.7
Mining	428	1 084	1 512	0.6
Manufacturing	3 253	3 178	6 431	2.7
Construction	2 830	3 628	6 458	2.7
Transport	1 767	1 441	3 208	1.4
Service Industries	4 922	8 632	13 554	5.7
Tourism	697	1 289	1 986	0.8
Environment	1 797	2 434	4 231	1.8
Statistical Consultancy	496	586	1 082	0.5
Statistical Coordination	742	1 210	1 952	0.8
Australian Economic Indicators	212	606	818	0.3
State and Territory Statistical Services(a)	5 418	2 772	8 190	3.5
Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre(a)	1 122	861	1 983	0.8
<i>Total Economic Statistics Output</i>	<i>65 244</i>	<i>78 907</i>	<i>144 151</i>	<i>61.1</i>
Population and Social Statistics Output				
Census of Population and Housing(b)	20 950	16 192	37 142	n.a.
Demography	3 458	3 561	7 019	3.0
Labour and Education Statistics(a)	9 617	29 470	39 087	16.6
Social Conditions Statistics(a)	7 053	15 502	22 555	9.6
Health and Community Statistics(a)	6 946	12 065	19 011	8.1
Geography	1 679	2 298	3 977	1.7
<i>Total Population and Social Statistics Output</i>	<i>49 704</i>	<i>79 088</i>	<i>128 792</i>	<i>38.9</i>
<i>Total ABS Outputs excluding Census(b)</i>	<i>93 997</i>	<i>141 803</i>	<i>235 800</i>	<i>100.0</i>
<i>Total ABS Outputs</i>	<i>114 947</i>	<i>157 995</i>	<i>272 942</i>	<i>—</i>

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

**ESTIMATES OF COST BY OUTPUT AND COMPONENT, 2002–03 (\$'000) — continued**

	Direct Costs	Allocated Costs	Full Costs	
Outputs	(A)	(B)	(A+B=C)	%(b)
Corporate and Statistical Support				
Mathematical Statistics	5 170	-5 170	—	—
Business Register	4 957	-4 957	—	—
Business Methods	5 212	-5 212	—	—
Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis	3 472	-3 472	—	—
Economic Statistics Standards	1 571	-1 571	—	—
Population Statistics Standards	1 313	-1 313	—	—
Population Surveys	27 251	-27 251	—	—
Dissemination	14 605	-14 605	—	—
Marketing and Public Affairs	2 237	-2 237	—	—
Client Services	2 901	-2 901	—	—
Library Services	1 909	-1 909	—	—
Information Technology Bureau(c)	20	-20	—	—
Technology Application(c)	748	-748	—	—
Data Management	2 792	-2 792	—	—
Technology Research	1 145	-1 145	—	—
Business Income Tax Data(a)	308	-308	—	—
Economic Statistics Data Centre(a)	4 147	-4 147	—	—
Executive	5 921	-5 921	—	—
People Management(a)(d)	18 194	-18 194	—	—
Financial Resources(a)(d)	4 071	-4 071	—	—
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	1 816	-1 816	—	—
Property and Facilities Management(d)	32 806	-32 806	—	—
International Relations	1 067	-1 067	—	—
Economic Statistics Group Support	4 820	-4 820	—	—
Population Statistics Group Support	2 577	-2 577	—	—
Methodology Division Business Office	1 031	-1 031	—	—
Information Management Business Infrastructure	2 148	-2 148	—	—
Technology Services Division Support	1 245	-1 245	—	—
Corporate Services Division Support(d)	2 537	-2 537	—	—
<i>Total Statistical Support</i>	<i>157 995</i>	<i>-157 995</i>	<i>—</i>	<i>—</i>
<b>Program total</b>	<b>272 942</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>272 942</b>	<b>—</b>

(a) The change to the program structure between Prices and Labour Statistics in 2001–02 has resulted in an increase in allocated costs for Prices and a decrease in allocated costs for Labour Statistics. Rural and Regional Statistics is a new category this year — last year this was included with State and Territorial Statistical Services. With business statistics re-engineering in the ABS some functions such as forms handling, which were previously undertaken by individual programs, are now undertaken under the one program — Economic Statistics Data Centre. Business Income Tax Data was included as part of SPEED output in 2001–02, other components of SPEED are now reported under Economic Statistics Group Support. People Management includes some components which were reported under Financial Resources last year. In 2002–03 there has been some structural changes between Social Conditions Statistics and Health and Community Statistics, and the inclusion of new budgetary units in Social Conditions Statistics. (b) The cost of the Census of Population and Housing 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 Census of Population and Housing has been excluded from the calculation of percentages. (c) The majority of costs of this component were directly charged to other programs and are not included here. (d) Includes the impact of corporately managed expense items.

Note: n.a. not applicable.

# TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES

## Appendix 3

### TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES — as at 30 June 2003

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program component</i>
<b>AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN</b>	
<i>Dennis Trewin</i>	Executive
<b>ECONOMIC STATISTICS GROUP</b>	
<i>Rob Edwards</i>	Economic Statistics Group Support Environment
Economic Accounts Division	
<i>Peter Harper</i>	Public Sector Accounts Business Indicators
National Accounts Branch	
<i>Carl Obst</i>	National Accounts
International and Financial Accounts Branch	
<i>Ivan King</i>	International Accounts International Trade Financial Accounts
Economic Statistics Data Centre Branch	
<i>Robin Slater</i>	Economic Statistics Data Centre Business Register
Industry Statistics Branch	
<i>Denis Farrell</i>	Economy Wide Statistics Service Industries Transport Tourism Construction Mining Manufacturing Agriculture
Integration and New Economy Branch	
<i>Bronwyn Driscoll</i>	Business Demography Economic Statistics Standards Business Income Tax Data Science and Technology Business Methods
Prices Branch	
<i>Paul McCarthy</i>	Prices

...continued

**TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES**— as at 30 June 2003 — *continued*

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program component</i>
<b>POPULATION STATISTICS GROUP</b>	
<i>Susan Linacre</i>	Population Statistics Group Support Population Statistics Standards
Social and Labour Division <i>Barbara Dunlop</i>	Social and Labour Division Support
Labour and Education Branch <i>Garth Bode</i>	Labour and Education Statistics
Social Conditions Statistics Branch <i>Bob McColl</i>	Social Conditions Statistics
Health and Community Statistics Branch <i>Alan Mackay</i>	Health and Community Statistics
Census, Demography and Geography Branch <i>Paul Williams</i>	Census of Population and Housing Demography Geography
<b>OTHER DIVISIONS</b>	
Methodology Division <i>Geoff Lee</i>	Methodology Division Business Office Statistical Coordination
Analytical Services Branch <i>Ken Tallis</i>	Analytical Services
Statistical Services Branch <i>Frank Yu</i>	Mathematical Statistics Statistical Consultancy Australian Economic Indicators Time Series Analysis
Information Management Division <i>Siu-Ming Tam</i>	Information Management Business Infrastructure Marketing and Public Affairs
Information Services Branch <i>Dick Crockett</i>	Dissemination Client Services
Data Management Branch <i>Graeme Oakley</i>	Data Management Library Services
Population Surveys Branch <i>Ian Brodie-Reed</i>	Population Surveys
Technology Services Division <i>Jonathan Palmer</i>	Technology Services Division Support
Technology Infrastructure Branch <i>Chris Duffy</i>	Information Technology Bureau

...continued

**TOP STRUCTURE, STAFF AND PROGRAM COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

— as at 30 June 2003 — *continued*

<i>Top structure and staff responsibilities</i>	<i>Program component</i>
Technology Application Branch <i>Jenine Borowik</i>	Technology Application
Technology Research Branch <i>Bryan Fitzpatrick</i>	Technology Research
Corporate Services Division <i>Graeme Hope</i>	Corporate Services Division Support Financial Resources
Policy Secretariat Branch <i>Marion McEwin</i>	Corporate Planning and Secretariat International Relations
Business Strategies Branch <i>Greg Bray</i>	People Management
Business Operations Branch <i>Kerrie Duff</i>	Property and Facilities Management

**REGIONAL OFFICES(a)**

New South Wales  
*John Struik*

Victoria  
*Vince Lazzaro*

Queensland  
*Brian Doyle*

Western Australia  
*Colin Nagle*

South Australia  
*Ian Crettenden*

Tasmania  
*Steve Matheson*

Northern Territory  
*Robyn Elliott*

Australian Capital Territory  
*Tracy Stewart*

(a) Includes the State and Territory Statistical Services component and the Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre component.

# STAFFING OVERVIEW

## Appendix 4

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

Program components	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03										
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
National Accounts	59	55	54	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	54
International Accounts	52	53	56	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	56
International Trade	25	23	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	26
Financial Accounts	27	26	18	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22
Public Sector Accounts	55	48	24	—	2	6	—	2	2	—	—	—	37
Prices	118	105	57	26	11	3	4	3	1	2	—	—	107
Business Indicators	53	55	—	54	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	54
Economy Wide Statistics	39	36	33	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	33
Business Demography	4	3	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Science and Technology	35	37	16	—	7	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	34
Agriculture	46	64	8	—	—	—	—	—	45	—	—	—	53
Mining	11	8	2	3	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	6
Manufacturing	51	47	2	44	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	53
Construction	46	46	1	—	—	—	—	41	—	—	—	—	42
Transport	48	30	2	—	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	25
Service Industries	81	69	25	—	35	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	64
Tourism	16	12	3	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Environment	18	22	18	—	1	—	—	2	3	—	—	—	24
Statistical Consultancy	11	8	1	—	2	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	7
Statistical Coordination	5	4	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	8
Australian Economic Indicators	4	3	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre	—	10	—	—	2	2	—	10	2	1	—	—	17
State and Territory Statistical Services	67	53	—	22	8	13	3	13	12	3	6	—	80

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued



**4.1 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	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03										
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
Census of Population and Housing	188	755	76	—	—	2	1	3	1	—	1	46	129
Demography	45	44	22	3	1	11	2	4	2	2	—	—	49
Labour and Education Statistics	167	166	59	—	1	—	104	—	—	—	—	—	165
Social Conditions Statistics	52	55	5	—	26	2	2	11	1	11	—	—	58
Health and Community Statistics	111	107	95	—	—	17	4	—	—	—	—	—	117
Geography	28	21	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	19
Mathematical Statistics	69	65	46	5	6	2	4	4	3	—	—	—	68
Business Register	59	49	4	3	27	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	42
Business Methods	71	60	18	18	24	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	60
Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis	35	40	42	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	42
Economic Statistics Standards	20	19	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17
Population Statistics Standards	23	18	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	17
Population Surveys	201	182	61	29	21	25	14	19	8	8	—	—	185
Dissemination	68	67	47	—	13	2	—	2	1	—	—	—	65
Marketing and Public Affairs	35	26	16	1	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	23
Client Services	128	115	22	38	21	7	13	6	4	3	2	—	116
Library Services	22	21	13	2	3	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	21
Information Technology Bureau	238	256	193	7	8	10	4	7	8	1	—	—	238
Technology Application	210	198	152	8	7	10	11	10	13	1	—	—	212
Data Management	13	11	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	12
Technology Research	6	4	3	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	5
Business Income Tax Data	2	4	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Economic Statistics Data Centre	5	4	31	9	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	42

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

**4.1 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	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03										
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
Executive	47	45	1	9	7	6	5	6	4	5	2	—	45
People Management	145	145	93	14	7	7	6	6	4	2	—	—	139
Financial Resources	36	29	12	2	4	1	1	1	—	1	—	—	23
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	14	13	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Property and Facilities Management	75	69	30	5	11	4	2	3	3	2	—	—	58
International Relations	3	4	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5
Economic Statistics Group Support	59	55	18	—	6	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	32
Population Statistics Group Support	39	34	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22
Methodology Division Business Office	4	7	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	7
Information Management Business Infrastructure	12	11	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	13
Technology Services Division Support	12	10	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	11
Corporate Services Division Support	19	16	10	—	—	7	2	2	—	—	1	—	21
Total Operative Staff	3 139	3 550	1 567	306	261	175	207	166	125	42	12	46	2 909
Paid Inoperative Staff (c)	84	81	53	7	7	5	10	4	2	3	1	1	93
<b>Total Staff</b>	<b>3 223</b>	<b>3 631</b>	<b>1 620</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>217</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>3 002</b>

(a) Comprises full time staff and part time staff at their full time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. (b) Figures for 2000–01 and 2001–02 have been revised to reflect changes to the program structure for 2002–03. This ensures comparability across all years. (c) Includes staff on periods of leave greater than 12 weeks, for example, staff on long service leave and annual leave.

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

**4.2 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											
<b>2001</b>											
Total staff	914	191	170	118	128	103	84	31	9	53	1 801
<b>2002</b>											
Total staff(r)	885	168	151	91	121	100	89	16	7	392	2 020
<b>2003</b>											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Australian Statistician	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Senior Executive Service	24	1	1	1	1	1	2	—	—	—	31
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	107	6	5	4	6	6	3	—	—	—	137
Executive Officer Level 1	202	21	18	10	10	9	10	3	3	—	286
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	280	28	30	25	24	34	19	3	2	—	445
APS Level 5	109	29	33	19	20	11	12	2	1	—	236
APS Level 4	95	42	35	11	21	19	15	2	1	—	241
APS Level 3	21	29	16	15	21	8	8	—	—	—	118
APS Level 2	10	9	1	3	7	3	1	1	—	—	35
APS Graduate	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	22
APS Level 1	1	4	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	7
APS Cadet	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	874	169	139	89	110	91	70	12	7	—	1 561
Unpaid inoperative staff	32	3	7	3	1	1	—	—	—	—	47
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>906</b>	<b>172</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1 608</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

**4.2 NUMBER OF ABS STAFF EMPLOYED UNDER THE PUBLIC SERVICE ACT 1999: BY LOCATION, GENDER AND CLASSIFICATION, AT 30 JUNE (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											
<b>2001</b>											
Total staff	816	178	177	131	125	91	60	47	11	46	1 682
<b>2002</b>											
Total staff(r)	811	158	155	119	123	90	72	36	7	278	1 849
<b>2003</b>											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Senior Executive Service	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	41	2	2	2	1	3	1	1	1	—	54
Executive Officer Level 1	134	7	17	7	8	7	1	4	—	—	185
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	212	17	29	14	13	7	10	9	1	—	312
APS Level 5	187	33	25	18	29	23	10	6	—	—	331
APS Level 4	119	40	27	16	15	19	10	6	5	—	257
APS Level 3	61	28	14	31	31	17	9	3	—	—	194
APS Level 2	15	9	1	4	5	14	1	1	—	—	50
APS Graduate	24	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	24
APS Level 1	—	15	14	9	9	4	4	—	—	—	55
APS Cadet	5	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	7
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	804	151	129	102	111	94	46	31	7	—	1 475
Unpaid inoperative staff	41	5	11	5	7	2	1	—	—	—	72
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>845</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>96</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>1 547</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

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

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC	Total
TOTAL											
<b>2001</b>											
Total staff	1 792	369	347	249	253	194	144	78	20	99	3 483
<b>2002</b>											
Total staff(r)	1 696	326	306	210	244	190	161	52	14	670	3 869
<b>2003</b>											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Australian Statistician	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Senior Executive Service	30	1	1	1	1	1	2	—	—	—	37
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	148	8	7	6	7	9	4	1	1	—	191
Executive Officer Level 1	336	28	35	17	18	16	11	7	3	—	471
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	492	45	59	39	37	41	29	12	3	—	757
APS Level 5	296	62	58	37	49	34	22	8	1	—	567
APS Level 4	214	82	62	27	36	38	25	8	6	—	498
APS Level 3	82	57	30	46	52	25	17	3	—	—	312
APS Level 2	25	18	2	7	12	17	2	2	—	—	85
APS Graduate	46	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	46
APS Level 1	1	19	14	10	9	4	4	1	—	—	62
APS Cadet	7	—	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	—	9
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 678	320	268	191	221	185	116	43	14	—	3 036
Unpaid inoperative staff	73	8	18	8	8	3	1	—	—	—	119
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>1 751</b>	<b>328</b>	<b>286</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>229</b>	<b>188</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>3 155</b>

(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 staff employed for population surveys.

(r) Revised

**4.3 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									
<b>2001</b>									
Total staff	1 621	1 247	2 868	125	116	241	1 746	1 363	3 109
<b>2002</b>									
Total staff(r)	1 545	1 194	2 739	410	351	761	1 955	1 545	3 500
<b>2003</b>									
Operative and paid inoperative staff									
Australian Statistician	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Senior Executive Service Executive Officer	31	6	37	—	—	—	31	6	37
Executive Officer Level 2	132	47	179	1	—	1	133	47	180
Executive Officer Level 1	273	149	422	2	—	2	275	149	424
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	427	248	675	1	3	4	428	251	679
APS Level 5	231	279	510	1	3	4	232	282	514
APS Level 4	225	208	433	6	9	15	231	217	448
APS Level 3	95	122	217	18	26	44	113	148	261
APS Level 2	16	25	41	11	16	27	27	41	68
APS Graduate	22	24	46	—	—	—	22	24	46
APS Level 1	4	5	9	—	—	—	4	5	9
APS Cadet	2	7	9	—	—	—	2	7	9
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 459	1 120	2 579	40	57	97	1 499	1 177	2 676
Unpaid inoperative staff	46	51	97	—	—	—	46	51	97
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>1 505</b>	<b>1 171</b>	<b>2 676</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>1 545</b>	<b>1 228</b>	<b>2 773</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

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**4.3 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									
<b>2001</b>									
Total staff	39	285	324	16	34	50	55	319	374
<b>2002</b>									
Total staff(r)	52	277	329	13	27	40	65	304	369
<b>2003</b>									
Operative and paid inoperative staff									
Executive Officer									
Executive Officer Level 2	2	6	8	2	1	3	4	7	11
Executive Officer Level 1	11	36	47	—	—	—	11	36	47
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	16	61	77	1	—	1	17	61	78
APS Level 5	4	49	53	—	—	—	4	49	53
APS Level 4	10	40	50	—	—	—	10	40	50
APS Level 3	4	40	44	1	6	7	5	46	51
APS Level 2	—	4	4	8	5	13	8	9	17
APS Level 1	1	40	41	2	10	12	3	50	53
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	48	276	324	14	22	36	62	298	360
Unpaid inoperative staff	1	20	21	—	1	1	1	21	22
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>296</b>	<b>345</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>319</b>	<b>382</b>

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued

**4.3 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									
<b>2001</b>									
Total staff	1 660	1 532	3 192	141	150	291	1 801	1 682	3 483
<b>2002</b>									
Total staff(r)	1 597	1 471	3 068	423	378	801	2 020	1 849	3 869
<b>2003</b>									
Operative and paid inoperative staff									
Australian Statistician	1	—	1	—	—	—	1	—	1
Senior Executive Service Executive Officer	31	6	37	—	—	—	31	6	37
Executive Officer Level 2	134	53	187	3	1	4	137	54	191
Executive Officer Level 1	284	185	469	2	—	2	286	185	471
Australian Public Service									
APS Level 6	443	309	752	2	3	5	445	312	757
APS Level 5	235	328	563	1	3	4	236	331	567
APS Level 4	235	248	483	6	9	15	241	257	498
APS Level 3	99	162	261	19	32	51	118	194	312
APS Level 2	16	29	45	19	21	40	35	50	85
APS Graduate	22	24	46	—	—	—	22	24	46
APS Level 1	5	45	50	2	10	12	7	55	62
APS Cadet	2	7	9	—	—	—	2	7	9
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1 507	1 396	2 903	54	79	133	1 561	1 475	3 036
Unpaid inoperative staff	47	71	118	—	1	1	47	72	119
<b>Total staff</b>	<b>1 554</b>	<b>1 467</b>	<b>3 021</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>1 608</b>	<b>1 547</b>	<b>3 155</b>

(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 staff employed for population surveys.

(r) Revised.



#### 4.4 REPRESENTATION OF EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY (EEO) GROUPS: ONGOING ABS STAFF AT 30 JUNE 2003(a)

Level	Number of ongoing staff and percentage of total ongoing staff						
	Total Ongoing Staff	Women	NESB1	NESB2	ATSI	PWD	EEO Coverage
Australian Public Service Level 1 and equivalent classifications	59	52	1	—	5	3	37
%	—	88.1	1.7	—	8.5	5.1	62.7
Australian Public Service Level 2 and equivalent classifications	46	30	5	8	2	7	45
%	—	65.2	10.9	17.4	4.3	15.2	97.8
Australian Public Service Level 3 and equivalent classifications	318	193	32	30	5	12	311
%	—	60.7	10.1	9.4	1.6	3.8	97.8
Australian Public Service Level 4 and equivalent classifications	511	263	56	57	2	17	504
%	—	51.5	11.0	11.2	0.4	3.3	98.6
Australian Public Service Level 5 and equivalent classifications	591	346	61	58	2	12	582
%	—	58.5	10.3	9.8	0.3	2.0	98.5
Australian Public Service Level 6 and equivalent classifications	778	324	90	54	1	27	771
%	—	41.6	11.6	6.9	0.1	3.5	99.1
Executive Level 1 and equivalent classifications	485	196	41	30	—	22	477
%	—	40.4	8.5	6.2	—	4.5	98.4
Executive Level 2 and equivalent classifications	192	57	15	8	—	7	190
%	—	29.7	7.8	4.2	—	3.6	99.0
Senior Executive Service	41	6	2	1	—	3	41
%	—	14.6	4.9	2.4	—	7.3	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3 021</b>	<b>1 467</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>246</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>2 958</b>
% of total ongoing staff	—	48.6	10.0	8.1	0.6	3.6	97.9

(a) Inoperative staff are included in each category.

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

#### Key

NESB1 — People with non-English speaking background, first generation.

NESB2 — People with non-English speaking background, second generation.

PWD — People with disabilities.

ATSI — Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

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

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>2000–01</i>	<i>2001–02</i>	<i>2002–03</i>
Interviewer enumerated statistical collections (mainly household surveys)	214	193	211
Census of population and housing (including preparations for the census)	61	1 345	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>275</b>	<b>1 538</b>	<b>214</b>

#### 4.6 ABS INTAKE AND SEPARATIONS OF ONGOING STAFF 2001–02(a) (number)

<i>Method of intake and type of separation</i>	<i>SES</i>	<i>Non SES</i>	<i>Total</i>
<b>Intake</b>			
Engagement—National Graduate Recruitment Campaign	—	114	114
Engagement—Other	—	133	133
Movement from outside the ABS	—	27	27
<b>Total Intake</b>	—	<b>274</b>	<b>274</b>
<b>Separations</b>			
Movement to outside the ABS	—	62	62
Resignation	3	125	128
Death	—	3	3
Dismissal	—	2	2
Retirement—Invalidity	—	6	6
Retirement—Age 55–59 years	—	19	19
Retirement—Age 60–64 years	—	7	7
Retirement—Age 65 years and over	—	3	3
Retirement—Other(b)	—	86	86
<b>Total Separations</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>316</b>

(a) Excludes non-ongoing inward and outward movements. (b) Includes staff retired under section 29 and section 30 of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

#### 4.7 NUMBER OF ABS SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE (SES) STAFF BY SALARY LEVEL, GENDER AND LOCATION AT 30 JUNE(a)

Year and location	Salary Band			Gender		
	1	2	3	Male	Female	Total
2001 Total	27	6	2	30	5	35
2002 Total	25	6	1	27	5	32
2003						
Australian Capital Territory	20	6	2	22	6	28
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
<b>Total</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>34</b>

(a) Excludes the Australian Statistician, who is a statutory office holder appointed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, as well as inoperative SES staff and non-substantive SES officers acting in SES positions.

#### 4.8 ABS STAFF TRAINING(a)

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03
Total ABS operative staff(b)	3 139	(c)3 550	2 909
Attendance days	15 731	14 911	14 797
Average training days	5	4	5

(a) Excludes on-the-job training. (b) Comprises full time and part time staff at their full time equivalent. (c) Operative staff number includes 611 Data Processing Centre non-ongoing staff who received on-the-job training as a primary source of skilling.

Learning and Development is continuing the strategy of smaller modular-based training programs in line with business needs. This has resulted in programs of shorter duration and more specific focus. Learning and Development has also considerably increased partnering efforts with line areas in instructional design, particularly of statistical training. This has resulted in very well received programs such as the recently released analytical writing suite of modules. Major efforts have been made to support both managers and staff impacted by the Business Statistics Innovation Program. Learning and Development has implemented a national business approach which is resulting in greater consistency and a more strategic focus in learning activities delivered.

**NUMBER OF STAFF COVERED BY A CERTIFIED AGREEMENT OR AN AUSTRALIAN WORKPLACE AGREEMENT (AWA), BY THE SENIOR EXECUTIVE SERVICE (SES) AND NON-SES**

Number of SES staff covered by an AWA at 30 June 2003 = 35

Number of ABS staff covered by an AWA at 30 June 2003 = 182

Number of ABS staff covered by the *ABS Certified Agreement 2001–2003* at 30 June 2003 = 2,818

Number of interviewers and non-ongoing office assistants covered by the *ABS Interviewers Certified Agreement 2002–2003* at 30 June 2003 = 599

**4.9 SALARY RANGES AVAILABLE BY CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE FROM 4 JULY 2002**

<i>Level</i>	<i>Minimum (\$)</i>	<i>Maximum (\$)</i>
APS1 — Adult	27 566	31 701
Graduate	30 467	35 673
APS2	31 199	35 878
APS3	35 533	40 863
APS4	39 605	45 545
APS5	44 174	50 800
APS6	49 140	56 511
Executive Level 1	61 114	70 281

**4.10 SALARY RANGES AVAILABLE BY CLASSIFICATION STRUCTURE FROM 2 JANUARY 2003**

<i>Level</i>	<i>Minimum (\$)</i>	<i>Maximum (\$)</i>
Executive Level 2	73 283	88 578
SES1	99 625	n.a.
SES2	121 503	n.a.
SES3	145 470	n.a.

n.a. not applicable

**DESCRIPTION OF THE ABS REMUNERATION SYSTEM**

The ABS salary system is two tiered. For 2002–03 there was a general increase of three per cent which included a component of productivity. All staff who performed capably or better received this salary increase together with a further salary increase based on their performance rating and position in their classification's salary range. Both components contributed towards a permanent increase to employees' salaries. These arrangements provided an average pay increase of 4.69 per cent across all levels in 2002–03.

The tables below provide information in respect of staff who received the additional performance based salary increase. For APS1 to EL2 staff, the total number of employees paid performance based salary increases decreased year on year, due to a higher proportion of staff being on the 80 per cent point in their classification's salary range. Under the salary system in operation in the ABS at this time, a performance based salary increase could only be paid to an employee at the 80 per cent point in their salary range, if the employee was given the highest rating of outstanding.

#### 4.11 STAFF PAID PERFORMANCE BASED SALARY INCREASES IN JULY 2002

<i>Level</i>	<i>No.</i>
APS1 — Adult	61
Graduate	40
APS2	16
APS3	253
APS4	378
APS5	502
APS6	467
Executive Level 1	408

#### 4.12 STAFF PAID PERFORMANCE BASED SALARY INCREASES IN JANUARY 2003

<i>Level</i>	<i>No.</i>
Executive Level 2	137
SES1	28
SES2 and 3	9

#### 4.13 AGGREGATED PERFORMANCE BASED SALARY INCREASES MADE TO ABS STAFF IN JULY 2002

<i>Level</i>	<i>\$</i>
APS1 — Adult	29 705
Graduate	28 462
APS2	10 373
APS3	169 856
APS4	373 953
APS5	509 023
APS6	648 530
Executive Level 1	499 183

#### 4.14 AGGREGATED PERFORMANCE BASED SALARY INCREASES MADE TO ABS STAFF IN JANUARY 2003

<i>Level</i>	<i>\$</i>
Executive Level 2	268 111
SES1	73 280
SES2 and 3	36 411

#### 4.15 AVERAGE PERFORMANCE BASED SALARY INCREASES MADE TO ABS STAFF IN JULY 2002

<i>Level</i>	<i>\$</i>
APS1 — Adult	487
Graduate	712
APS2	648
APS3	671
APS4	989
APS5	1 014
APS6	1 389
Executive Level 1	1 223

#### 4.16 AVERAGE PERFORMANCE BASED SALARY INCREASES MADE TO ABS STAFF IN JANUARY 2003

<i>Level</i>	<i>\$</i>
Executive Level 2	1 957
SES1	2 617
SES2 and 3	4 046

As prescribed by the ABS Certified Agreement 2001–2003, employees on the specified maximum for each salary range who were rated as outstanding were paid a non-superannuable bonus of \$500. In the July 2002 remuneration process 32 APS6 employees, one APS4 employee and three APS2 employees received a bonus payment, and in the January 2003 remuneration process, 13 EL2 employees received a bonus. The aggregate bonus payment for the ABS as a whole was \$24,500.

#### REWARD AND RECOGNITION

The ABS operates a reward and recognition scheme to recognise exceptional one-off achievements by individuals or workgroups. Rewards under the scheme may be in the form of certificates, hospitality (such as workgroup lunches), prepaid vouchers and cash bonuses. Total expenditure on the scheme in 2002–03 was \$84,898.

# 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 *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991* and the *Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Act 1988* are observed. A network of Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) committees is the vehicle for consultation on OHS issues affecting staff.

During 2002–03, 21 employees were selected/elected and trained as Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*.

There were 11 notifiable accidents reported to Comcare for the period.

### Investigations

Comcare conducted a planned investigation in March 2003 to assess compliance with incident notification and reporting requirements. A number of strategies have been introduced to address identified issues. Additionally, in June 2003 Comcare reviewed ABS compliance to an August 2001 planned investigation of the Queensland office. Although the report is not yet to hand, the ABS had previously instituted action to address Comcare’s 2001 recommendations.

### Accidents

There were 462 accidents and incidents at the ABS in 2002–03 compared with 459 in 2001–02. Table 5.1 details the broad injury categories for the periods 2001–02 and 2002–03.

**5.1 REPORTED ACCIDENTS AND INCIDENTS (number)**

	2001–02	2002–03
Motor vehicle/journey related accidents	103	89
Accidents as a result of sporting injuries	19	22
Back injuries	29	5
Computer related overuse injuries	40	46
Psychological injuries	9	9
Slips, trips and falls	45	83
Sprains and strains	6	26
Other work-based incidents and accidents	208	182
<b>Total</b>	<b>459</b>	<b>462</b>

## Rehabilitation

The ABS institutes early intervention and rehabilitation in compensable and non compensable cases. Table 5.2 details a comparison for the periods 2001–02 and 2002–03.

**5.2 REHABILITATION CASE MANAGEMENT (number)**

	2001–02	2002–03
Compensation claims submitted	120	125
Compensation claims closed(a)	69	62
Return to work plans	14	20
Non compensable (fitness) cases(a)	136	110
Non compensable (fitness) cases closed(a)	74	87

(a) Includes cases carried over from the previous year, and new cases.

## Comcare Premiums

Comcare has provided preliminary notification that the ABS workers' compensation premium for 2003–04 has been set at 1.68% of total salary (including GST). Table 5.3 provides details of the ABS and the agency pool average premium rate.

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

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
ABS	(a)0.72	(a)(b)1.05	(a)1.22	1.68
Agency Pool Average	0.98	(a)1.00	1.13	1.43

(a) Revised premium rate advised by Comcare on 30 May 2003. (b) Combined ABS and census rate.

## Achievements

Measures taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees during 2002–03 included:

- the ABS National Occupational Health and Safety Committee (NATOHSC) developing the ABS Occupational Health and Safety Policy and Agreement. The policy and agreement provides the framework for Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) in the ABS. NATOHSC also agreed on the ABS Risk Management Policy and Guidelines
- the ABS and Comcare forming a partnership to monitor ABS OHS systems, and to address identified shortfalls in the ABS OHS and rehabilitation strategic framework
- the ABS continuing to focus on a national strategic program for OHS and rehabilitation
- the continued promotion of health and fitness across all offices.



The ABS entered the Comcare Safety Awards for 2003 and was advised by Comcare that it has been short-listed for the Leadership Award for the work undertaken in setting up and operating the ABS Census Data Processing Centre.

It is pleasing to note that initiatives introduced by the ABS in the past two years have resulted in a downward trend in the cost of workers' compensation claims. ABS claims management performance has shown considerable improvement with the average claim cost for the 2002–03 period being some \$6,000 below the Commonwealth average. This improvement is a direct outcome of the sound early intervention and rehabilitation strategies developed and implemented by the ABS.

This Appendix provides information on the ABS' performance in implementing the Commonwealth Disability Strategy (CDS). The ABS has two roles in implementing the CDS — these are provider and employer. The performance indicators for both roles are reported against below.

### PROVIDER ROLE

Performance Indicator 1. Providers have established mechanisms for quality improvement and assurance

The ABS is committed to making its online services as accessible as possible so that no group is excluded from access to our services. We aim to meet our obligations under the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* and strive to comply with World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C's) Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0. The ABS' Online Action Plan <<http://www.abs.gov.au/actionplan>> outlines our approach to online services 2002–2004.

The ABS' web site met W3C Priority 1 Guidelines by December 2000, except for W3C guidelines 5.1 and 5.2 relating to ensuring the accessibility of tables (by using appropriate meta-tags). The web site contains many thousands of tables for data and layout, and these tables are continually being updated. For technical reasons, tables in these formats are not easily tagged. Numerous potential solutions to tagging these tables have been investigated, but at this stage none have provided a means to do it at a reasonable cost. The ABS continues to investigate how tables can be tagged to meet the W3C guidelines. In the meantime, the ABS provides a free conversion service where visually impaired users can ask for files to be converted to a suitable format. For further information see 'Information for Visually Impaired Clients' on our web site.

For the 2006 census, the ABS plans to provide an electronic method of form completion (as well as by paper). The 2006 census electronic form completion method will comply with W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines.

Performance Indicator 2. Providers have an established service charter that specifies the roles of the provider and consumer and service standards which address accessibility for people with disabilities

The ABS has a Client Service Charter which describes the relationship between the ABS and users of its products and services. The charter describes a number of dissemination methods which may assist people with disabilities. As mentioned above, the ABS provides a free conversion service where visually impaired users can ask for data files to be converted to a suitable format.

Performance Indicator 3. Complaints/grievance mechanisms, including access to external mechanisms, in place to address concerns raised about performance

The ABS' Client Service Charter outlines the complaints/grievance mechanisms which are in place to address concerns raised about the ABS' performance. The Client Service Charter can be found on the ABS web site.

## EMPLOYER ROLE

Performance Indicator 1. Employment policies, procedures and practices comply with the requirements of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992*

All ABS policies have been developed in line with the APS Values. These values concord with the principles of the *Disability Discrimination Act 1992* (DDA) in terms of eliminating discrimination, promoting equity and responding to the diverse needs of the Australian community. These values are also upheld in the ABS Corporate Plan, the ABS Workplace Diversity Program and the ABS Certified Agreement. Reviews of ABS policies, procedures and practices are undertaken as necessary and when these occur the principles of Workplace Diversity (including those of the Commonwealth Disability Strategy) will be considered.

ABS policies that have been produced specifically to comply with the DDA are the Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Guidelines and the Draft Disability Action Plan.

### *Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Guidelines*

The Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Guidelines have been used to raise awareness of disability issues in areas such as recruitment, workplace performance and learning and development.

### *Draft Disability Action Plan*

The main purpose of the Draft Disability Action Plan is to assist the ABS to provide equal opportunity and access for its staff and clients with disabilities and to identify strategies to continually improve our capacity in this regard.

One of the aims of the workplace diversity team for 2003–04 is to promote the Disability Action Plan and Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Guidelines to alert staff to the issues surrounding disability and the positive ways we can respond to these issues.

Performance Indicator 2. Recruitment information for potential job applicants is available in accessible formats on request

ABS job vacancies are advertised in the Public Service Gazette in hard copy and electronically, and on the ABS web site.

The ABS web site provides recruitment material and corporate information for potential applicants in HTML and PDF formats. If required, the same information can be provided in plain text or hard copy by contacting the contact officer.

The ABS Application Cover sheet which applicants are required to return with their applications contain provisions for requesting any additional requirements in the event of interviews such as interpreters and other aids.

Performance Indicator 3. Agency recruiters and managers apply the principle of 'reasonable adjustment'

A large amount of information is made available in the corporate manuals and workplace diversity databases on reasonable adjustment and the selection process. Selection panels are made aware of this information and the processes for putting it in to practice.

The ABS application cover sheet (part B) has an area provided to enable the ABS selection panel to seek information with regard to possible reasonable adjustment requirements for the interview situation.

When new starters commence, the Occupational Health and Safety area undertakes a workplace assessment to assess any special needs that are 'reasonably practicable' and to discuss the particular issues that may be involved in supervising an employee requiring reasonable adjustment with the supervisors/line managers of the area.

Performance Indicators 4 and 5. Training and development programs consider the needs of staff with disabilities and include information on disability issues as they relate to the content of the program

ABS Learning and Development (L&D) training and development programs consider the diversity needs of staff as outlined in the ABS Workplace Diversity Program and the Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Guidelines. L&D provides contact information to employees with a disability and guidance to line managers and employees about their role and responsibilities.

Specifically, all training and development activities are:

- learner centred
- designed using an instructional design phase that considers the diversity of needs of our trainees
- delivered and event managed with activities that consider the requirements of the trainees such as specific hearing, language/translator and mobility issues
- designed to contain specific components on disability and reasonable adjustment in management aspects of programs.

Performance Indicator 6. Complaints/grievance mechanisms, including access to external mechanisms, in place to address issues and concerns raised by staff

The ABS has several mechanisms in place to assist all ABS employees, including those with disabilities, to resolve issues. These mechanisms include support networks to assist staff and a well defined process to resolve workplace issues internally. The ABS also provides information to employees about external appeal mechanisms.

#### *Workplace Diversity network*

The ABS has a network of Workplace Diversity (WD) advisers throughout all ABS offices who provide information to staff on the options for resolving complaints.

#### *Harassment and Workplace Support network*

The ABS has a network of Harassment and Workplace Support (HWS) contacts throughout all ABS offices who provide objective and unbiased support to people who feel they have been harassed or discriminated against. The harassment or discrimination could be due to a wide number of issues including a person's disability. HWS volunteers receive comprehensive training for this role and are supported by the ABS workplace diversity advisers.

#### *People Management Advisory Unit (PMAU)*

In recognition of the importance and value of its people, the ABS has established a dedicated unit, the PMAU, to deal with people issues, including issues of discrimination and harassment.

#### *Employee Assistance Program*

The ABS provides all employees with access to an external contracted Employee Assistance Program where confidential and professional assistance is provided for personal, family related, or work issues.

#### *ABS Workplace Diversity Program*

The ABS has a Workplace Diversity Program in place to give effect to the APS Values and the principle of equal employment opportunity in the workplace. The ABS aims to have workplace diversity principles underpinning all aspects of ABS human resource management including the resolution of workplace issues and complaints. This program is available via the ABS Intranet and in hard copy.

#### *Processes for resolving workplace issues*

In addition to more formal mechanisms set out in the *Public Service Act 1999*, the ABS has agreed internal procedures for resolving workplace issues. These procedures have been established under the ABS Certified Agreement 2001–2003. They have worked particularly well

in assisting early, effective resolution of issues and are therefore included in the ABS Certified Agreement 2003–2006.

The key aim is to sort out problems quickly, informally and as close to the workplace as possible. Employees are encouraged to use these procedures whenever possible, but the procedures are not intended to replace the more formal mechanisms which remain available under the current APS employment framework.

*Information for employees*

Information on both internal and external processes (including action under section 33 of the *Public Service Act 1999*, and disputes about matters covered by the ABS Certified Agreement) is provided to all employees via the ABS Intranet.

## CONSULTANCY SERVICES

## Appendix 7

### Policy on selection and engagement of consultants

ABS policy on selection and engagement of consultants is consistent with Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines. The ABS selects and engages consultants in a way that ensures transparency and provides 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 2002–03

The purposes for which consultants were engaged by the ABS in 2002–03 have been classified into eleven main categories. These are shown in the table below. In all categories, the predominant reasons for the use of consultancy services were the need for specialised skills and to allow efficiency and flexibility in operations by making additional personnel available.

### Total consultancies under engagement in 2002–03

The total number of consultancy services engaged during 2002–03 was 46, of which 34 were let in 2002–03. The total value of these consultancy services was approximately \$1.1 million. The number of consultancies engaged and the total expenditure, with subtotals for the main purpose for which they were engaged, during 2002–03, are shown in the following table:

#### 7.1 CONSULTANCY SERVICES CONTRACTS ENGAGED BY THE ABS, 2002–03: SUMMARY

<i>Purpose</i>	<i>Consultancies number</i>	<i>Expenditure in 2002–03 \$</i>
Audit	1	4 500
Human Resources	5	82 627
Information Technology	6	175 502
Legal Services	5	220 865
Publishing	5	47 315
Statistical	6	81 190
Training and Development	3	25 124
Marketing/Public Relations	3	116 382
Lease and Property	1	8 360
ABS House — Property	4	168 351
Other	7	172 279
<b>Total</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>1 102 495</b>

**7.2 CONSULTANCY SERVICES CONTRACTS ENGAGED BY THE ABS, 1999–2000 TO 2002–03**

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Expenditure (\$)	3 038 568	1 861 149	1 018 653	1 102 495
Consultancies (number)	59	45	40	46

Consultancies let in 2002–03 with expenditure of \$10,000 or more

Consultants engaged for consultancy services contracts let in 2002–03 with expenditure of \$10,000 or more are listed in the following table. The project for which each was engaged and the expenditure 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.

**7.3 CONSULTANCY SERVICES CONTRACTS LET IN 2002–03 TO THE VALUE OF \$10,000 OR MORE**

	Expenditure in 2002–03 \$	Justification and type of tender
<b>Human Resources</b>		
Butler, Keith Performance mentoring service consultancy	12 289	(a) (5)
Maximus International Consultancy on Cultural Survey Program	38 514	(a) (3)
Workplace Research Associates Consultancy in relation to work value studies	18 576	(a) (3)
<b>Information Technology</b>		
Altis Consulting Consultancy in relation to ABS Input Data Warehouse Project	11 250	(d) (1)
Assist Pty Ltd Consultancy for assistance to Oracle upgrade	47 300	(a) (5)
Dimension Data Consultancy for Microsoft Mentoring Services	65 266	(a) (5)
<b>Legal Services</b>		
Australian Government Solicitor Provision of legal advice	145 976	(a) (1)
Corrs Chambers Westgarth Provision of legal advice	32 394	(a) (1)
Minter Ellison Provision of legal advice	24 334	(a) (1)

For footnotes see end of table.

...continued



**7.3 CONSULTANCY SERVICES CONTRACTS LET IN 2002–03  
TO THE VALUE OF \$10,000 OR MORE — continued**

	Expenditure in 2002–03	Justification and type of tender
	\$	
<b>Publishing</b>		
von Reibnitz, Fred Editorial services for ABS History Publication	24 500	(a) (5)
McLennan, Bill Consultancy in relation to preparation of questionnaire and report	12 000	(a) (5)
<b>Statistical</b>		
Rider Hunt Services for pricing of construction for 2002 OECD Purchasing Power Parity (PPP)	11 660	(a) (3)
<b>Training and Development</b>		
Hanselling Consulting Mentoring services consultancy	24 086	(a) (5)
<b>Marketing/Public Relations</b>		
Bearcage Consultancy for provision of Census 2001 video	38 563	(a) (c) (3)
ValueMetrics Consultancy in relation to Customer Value Analysis	14 789	(a) (5)
Worthington Di Marzio Qualitative research into the client base	63 030	(a) (d) (2)
<b>Other</b>		
DASCEM Holdings Development of Environmental Management System	19 464	(a) (1)
Imhoff, Trevor Consultancy services for Census Geography work program	14 792	(a) (6)
JPW Education & Media Consultants Development of teaching materials for ABS publication	14 500	(a) (5)
Timeline Contracting Pty Ltd Building Project Management Consultancy Services	31 900	(a) (2)

**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) Public tender
- (2) Restricted tender
- (3) Request for quotation
- (4) Staged procurement process
- (5) Direct Negotiation
- (6) Verbal quotation

Excludes standard services such as:

- internal audit
- 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 8

### AMOUNTS PAID BY, OR ON BEHALF OF, THE ABS, 2002–03

<i>Name of organisation paid</i>	<i>Amount \$</i>
Advertising	
Executive Media	5 600
South Pacific Science Press	5 160
Hallmark Editions	2 980
Business News	15 967
ETN Communications — ABIE	42 350
C & G Advertising Services	1 664
Eryl Morgan Publications	2 475
WALGA (Western Australian Local Government Association)	1 030
Di Walker Design	245
Local Government Manager Magazine	3 190
Local Government In Focus Newspaper	1 650
Independence Magazine	984
Educare	550
<i>Subtotal</i>	83 845
Market Research	
Worthington Di Marzio	64 706
ValueMetrics Australia	16 484
<i>Subtotal</i>	81 190
Direct Mail Organisations	
Comstat	366
Pirion	16 497
Drake	5 020
Canberra Envelopes	3 651
Canberra Mailing	13 165
Fairfax	891
<i>Subtotal</i>	39 590
<b>Total</b>	<b>204 625</b>

## **COMPETITIVE TENDERING AND CONTRACTING**

## **Appendix 9**

The ABS conducts its contracting and related administrative arrangements in accordance with the Commonwealth procurement guidelines, whilst undertaking regular reviews to ensure that staff have both access to, and are kept informed of, these guidelines. Through observance of these policies and principles, the ABS is confident that its approach to competitive tendering and contracting has proven to be highly effective with the processes contributing to value for money procurement outcomes for the ABS. The ABS has invested considerable resources into the training and development of its key procurement staff.

All contracts meet the requirements for providing the Auditor General with access to the contractor's premises.

### Purchasing

ABS procurement activities represent an important part of its strategic focus and direction. Goods and services acquired by the ABS are purchased through a process which ensures the attainment of value for money in accordance with Commonwealth procurement guidelines. The ABS actively applies the Commonwealth's core purchasing policies and principles to ensure compliance with all relevant government policies.

### Assets management

Depreciation management forms an integral part of the ABS financial management program. In accordance with government requirements, the ABS revalues all physical fixed assets on a regular basis with formal valuations completed at least once every five years by an independent qualified valuer. Assets due for revaluation are revalued in accordance with the principles of the 'fair value basis'. Assets that have become obsolete or excess to requirements are disposed of in a manner consistent with sound disposal practices.

The ABS asset base is managed through an ORACLE Financial Information Management System with support from internally developed systems. Long-term strategic planning and judicious management has ensured that these assets have supported the organisation well in achieving its outcomes.

As part of its overall management strategy, the ABS actively manages its disposals program to ensure it receives value for money outcomes from assets that have reached the end of their economic and/or useful life.

# FREEDOM OF INFORMATION

## Appendix 11

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 2 and Appendixes 1 and 3 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
- 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 2.

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:* the ABS has a wide range of statistical publications available for sale through its bookshops. The ABS also provides free access to its key publications through ABS libraries and major public libraries and access to a vast array of census data and other statistical information through its web site.

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 1998–99 to 2002–03 inclusive. Two requests were made to the ABS under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* during 2002–03.

### 11.1 FOI ACTIVITIES, 1998–99 to 2002–03 (number)

	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Requests received for:					
Statistical information	—	—	1	—	—
Personal papers	—	—	—	—	2
Administrative documents	—	2	—	—	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2</b>
Decisions made:					
Access granted in full	—	1	—	—	—
Access granted in part	—	1	—	—	2
Request transferred to another agency	—	—	—	—	—
Request withdrawn	—	—	1	—	—
Access refused	—	—	—	—	—
Documents not in existence	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Total</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>2</b>
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, ABS House, 45 Benjamin Way, Belconnen, ACT, 2616 (Locked Bag 10, Belconnen, ACT, 2616); telephone 02 6252 5557.

#### General Information

The ABS offers an initial contact point for all information requests:

Telephone 1300 135 070

Email <client.services@abs.gov.au>

Facsimile 1300 135 211

Mail Client Services, ABS, GPO Box 796, Sydney, NSW, 1041

# INQUIRIES BY PARLIAMENTARY COMMITTEES AND REPORTS BY THE AUDITOR GENERAL

## Appendix 12

Listed below are inquiries by Parliamentary Committees which involved the ABS during 2002–03.

### Parliamentary Committees

*Senate Environment, Communications, Information Technology and the Arts Committee: Inquiry into the Role of Libraries in an Online Environment*

In August 2002, the ABS provided a submission to the Committee on the Library Extension Program.

The Committee is due to report in August 2003.

*House of Representatives Standing Committee on Ageing*

In November 2002, the ABS gave a presentation to the Committee covering basic population demographics and the range of ABS information available on ageing related issues. The National Ageing Statistics Unit subsequently provided the Committee with additional information, including publications and articles of interest.

*Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit: Management of Integrity of Electronic Information in the Commonwealth*

In December 2002, the ABS provided a submission to the Committee. The ABS also appeared before the Committee in March 2003. Further information was provided in May 2003.

*Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee: Inquiry into the Progress Towards National Reconciliation*

In May 2003, the ABS provided a briefing to the Committee. This was followed by the provision of additional information in response to questions on notice asked by the Committee.

The Committee is due to report in August 2003.

### Reports by the Auditor General

There were no adverse reports or comments made by the Auditor General during 2002–03.



## DOCUMENTS TABLED IN PARLIAMENT

## Appendix 13

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 2002–03.

### 13.1 TABLING — PROPOSALS FOR COLLECTION OF INFORMATION FOR STATISTICAL PURPOSES, 2002–03

<i>Date tabled(a)</i>	<i>Statistical collection(b)</i>
19 August 2002	New Topics in the Monthly Population Survey: Domestic Water Use (New South Wales) Managing Caring Responsibilities and Paid Employment (Queensland)
19 August 2002	Supplement to the Survey of Mineral Exploration: Cost of Land Access
22 October 2002	Quarterly Business Indicators Survey
4 February 2003	Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers
4 February 2003	Survey of Home Computers and Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities
4 February 2003	Family Characteristics Survey
4 February 2003	Survey of Stocks of Grain on Hand
24 March 2003	Building Activity Survey
25 March 2003	Energy Survey
13 May 2003	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
17 June 2003	2002–03 Service Industries Surveys
17 June 2003	Construction Industry Survey
23 June 2003	Survey of Outward Foreign Affiliates Trade
25 June 2003	Agricultural and Natural Resource Management 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 1905*, 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 2002–03.

**13.2 TABLING — DISCLOSURE OF LISTS OF NAMES AND ADDRESSES, 2002–03**

<i>Date tabled(a)</i>	<i>Information released</i>
11 December 2002	Lists of Agricultural Establishments for the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics
26 March 2003	Lists of Agricultural Farm Businesses for 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 UNIDENTIFIED INFORMATION

## Appendix 14

The Statistics Determination (Statutory Rules 1983 No. 19) made by the Minister under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, provides for the disclosure, with the approval in writing of the Statistician, of specified classes of information. Clause 7 of the Determination provides for the disclosure of unidentified individual statistical records in a manner that is not likely to enable the identification of the person or organisation to which they relate.

Disclosures of unidentified information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination are shown in the following table.

### 14.1 STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS — DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIED INFORMATION, 2002–03

<i>Survey title</i>	<i>Survey date</i>
Aspects of literacy survey	1996
Australian housing survey	1994
Australian housing survey	1999
Australians' employment and unemployment patterns survey	1994–97
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
Child care survey	1999
Disability, ageing and carers survey	1993
Disability, ageing and carers survey	1998
Education and training survey	1997
Education and training experience survey	1989
Education, training and information technology survey	2001
Employment arrangements and superannuation survey	2000
Forms of employment survey	1998
Household expenditure survey	1975–76
Household expenditure survey	1984

...continued

**14.1 STATISTICAL COLLECTIONS — DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIED INFORMATION,  
2002–03 — continued**

<i>Survey title</i>	<i>Survey date</i>
Household expenditure survey	1988–89
Household expenditure survey (second fiscal incidence study edition)	1993–94
Household expenditure survey (second fiscal incidence study edition)	1998–99
Income and housing costs survey	1997–98
Income and housing costs survey	1999–2000
Labour mobility survey	1984
Labour mobility survey	1991
Labour mobility survey	1994
National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survey	1994
National health survey	1977–78
National health survey	1983
National health survey	1989–90
National health survey	1995
National health survey	2001
National nutrition survey	1995
National survey of mental health and wellbeing of adults (Western Australia)	1997
National survey of mental health and wellbeing of adults (2nd revised)	1997
Rental investors survey	1997
Time use survey	1992
Time use survey	1997
Training and education survey	1993
Voluntary work in Australia survey	2000

Total number of disclosures of unidentified information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination between 2000–01 and 2002–03 are shown in the following table.

**14.2 DISCLOSURE OF UNIDENTIFIED INFORMATION, 2000–01 to 2002–03 — SUMMARY**

<i>Clause 7 — number of individual disclosures(a)</i>	<i>2000–01</i>	<i>2001–02</i>	<i>2002–03</i>
Universities	154	132	105
Other	40	46	65
<b>Total</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>170</b>

(a) Does not include renewals of previously released files.

## NOTICES OF DIRECTION ISSUED AND PROSECUTION ACTIONS APPROVED

### Appendix 15

Under sections 10(4) and 11(2) of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, the Australian Statistician may, by notice in writing, direct a person 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.

#### 15.1 NOTICES OF DIRECTION ISSUED AND PROSECUTION ACTIONS APPROVED

Type of statistical collection	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Notices of direction issued					
Census of Population and Housing	—	—	—	595	—
Household surveys	1	—	4	13	1
Business censuses and surveys	13	6	36	21	23
<b>Total</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>24</b>
Prosecution actions approved(a)					
Census of Population and Housing	—	—	—	104	—
Household surveys	—	—	—	2	—
Business censuses and surveys	2	—	5	—	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>—</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>1</b>

(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).

## PROFESSIONAL PAPERS BY ABS OFFICERS

## Appendix 16

Officers of the ABS prepared the following professional papers which were presented or published between 1 July 2002 and 30 June 2003.

Guia Alcausin, Michael Anderson, Jonathon Khoo and Ken Tallis	<i>Scanner data in CPI research and compilation.</i> Presented to the International Association of Official Statistics — Official Statistics and the New Economy, London, 27–29 August 2002.
Catherine Andersson	<i>Development of a national office index for the ranking of offences.</i> Presented to the AIC/ABS Conference on Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods, Canberra, 24–25 March 2003.
Graham Boxsell and Richard McKenzie	<i>ABS service industries surveys: collecting data on income for detailed products.</i> Presented to the 17th Voorburg Group Meeting on Service Statistics, Nantes, 22–27 September 2002.
Joanne Butler and Richard McKenzie	<i>Development of a producer price index for other financiers.</i> Presented to the 17th Voorburg Group Meeting on Service Statistics, Nantes, 22–27 September 2002.
Anne Cartwright	<i>Managing customer relationships — the ABS experience.</i> Presented to the International Marketing and Statistical Output Database Conference, Annapolis, 3–6 September 2002.
Claire Conroy and Andrew Middleton	<i>Rural and regional statistics, ABS initiatives.</i> Presented to the 11th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, Sydney, 2–4 October 2002.
Derick Cullen and Michael Davies	<i>Corporate accounts, damned lies and statistics.</i> Presented to the Australian Conference of Economists, Adelaide, 2 October 2002.
Rob Edwards	<i>A vision for a national program of agricultural and related statistics.</i> Presented to the Workshop on the Future of Agricultural Statistics, Canberra, 7 November 2002.
Kim Farley-Larmour	<i>e-LEP — breaking new ground in partnership with libraries.</i> Presented to the NSW Country Public Libraries Association Conference, Batemans Bay, New South Wales, 24–26 July 2002.
Karen Gelb	<i>Women in prison — why is the rate of incarceration increasing?</i> Presented to the AIC/ABS Conference on Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods, Canberra, 24–25 March 2003.
Dr. Badr Hanna	<i>Exploring alternative ways to estimate population in local areas.</i> Presented to the 11th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, Sydney, 2–4 October 2002.

- Shailendra Jain *Sex differentials in mortality in Australia, 1980–82 and 1998.* Presented to the 11th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, Sydney, 2–4 October 2002.
- Alan Jenner *Population estimates for non-standard geographical areas — the small area pilot project.* Presented to the 11th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, Sydney, 2–4 October 2002.
- Ivan King *Statistics — health and wealth indicators of the nation.* Presented to the Customs Brokers and Forwarders Council of Australia Conference, Canberra, 1 November 2002.
- Chris Libreri *Evaluating differences in recorded crime statistics.* Presented to the AIC/ABS Conference on Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods, Canberra, 24–25 March 2003.
- Richard McKenzie *Quality adjustment in service industry producer price indexes.* Presented to the 17th Voorburg Group Meeting on Service Statistics, Nantes, 22–27 September 2002.
- Allan Nicholls *Country statement — Australia: agricultural statistics.* Presented to the 19th Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, Seoul, 21–25 October 2002.
- Allan Nicholls *The impact/consequences of irregular censuses — Australian experience.* Presented to the 19th Session of the Asia and Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics, Seoul, 21–25 October 2002.
- Carolyn O'Rourke and Richard McKenzie *Producer price index for computer services.* Presented to the 17th Voorburg Group Meeting on Service Statistics, Nantes, 22–27 September 2002.
- Horst Posselt *Standards and resources for statistics on economic disadvantage and income inequality in Australia.* Presented to the Fifth Meeting of the Expert Group on Poverty Statistics (Rio Group), Rio de Janeiro, 13–15 November 2002.
- Ravi Ravindiran, Terry Rawnsley and Annette Jose *A cohort analysis of unemployment and participation rates for Australia.* Presented to the 31st Conference of Economists, Adelaide, 30 September to 4 October 2002.
- Terry Rawnsley *Dynamics of repeat imprisonment: utilising prison census data.* Presented to the joint ABS/AIC Conference on Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods, Canberra, 24–25 March 2003.
- Sheridan Roberts and Liz Finlay *Measurement of Information and Communication Technology use by households and individuals: proposal for a model questionnaire.* Presented to the 17th Voorburg Group Meeting on Service Statistics, Nantes, 22–27 September 2002.

- Mike Stratton *Understanding family data — 2001 Census of Population and Housing.* Presented to the 11th Biennial Conference of the Australian Population Association, Sydney, 2–4 October 2002.
- Siu-Ming Tam and Anne Cartwright *Key developments in Australia's information services.* Presented to the International Marketing and Statistical Output Database Conference, Annapolis, 3–6 September 2002.
- Siu-Ming Tam and Gary Dunnet *Official statistics on line.* Presented to the International Marketing and Statistical Output Database Conference, Annapolis, 3–6 September 2002.
- Robert Tanton and Rene Jones *Evaluation in crime and justice: trends and methods.* Presented to Evaluation in Crime and Justice: Trends and Methods Conference, Canberra, 24–25 March 2003
- Robert Tanton and Ken Tallis *Multilevel analyses and official social surveys.* Presented to the International Sociological Association XVth World ISA Congress of Sociology, Brisbane, 7–13 July 2002.
- Dennis Trewin *Corporate governance arrangements in the Australian Bureau of Statistics.* Presented to the Consultative Seminar on Governance of National Statistical Systems, London, August 2002.
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## GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

## Appendix 18

ABS	Australian Bureau of Statistics
ABS@	information service to provide users with ready access to ABS publications and to a range of multi-dimensional datasets in electronic format
ABSDL	ABS Site Data Laboratory
ACIR	Australian Childhood Immunisation Register
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AIC	Australian Institute of Criminology
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANZSIC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
APRA	Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
APS	Australian Public Service
ASAC	Australian Statistics Advisory Council
ASGC	Australian Standard Geographical Classification
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
ATSIC	Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission
AusStats	an online subscription service to the ABS standard product range
Aust.	Australia
AWA	Australian Workplace Agreement
BSC	Business Statistics Centre
BSIP	Business Statistics Innovation Program
CAI	computer assisted interviewing
C&S Act	<i>Commonwealth and Statistics Act 1905</i>
cat. no.	ABS catalogue number
CDATA	CD-ROM product containing census data

CDS	Commonwealth Disability Strategy
CLIB	a free census product available only to LEP-eligible libraries
CO	Central Office
CPI	consumer price index
CPSU	Community and Public Sector Union
CURF	confidentialised unit record file
DDA	<i>Disability Discrimination Act 1992</i>
DEST	Department of Education, Science and Training
DEWR	Department of Employment and Workplace Relations
DOTARS	Department of Transport and Regional Services
DPC	Data Processing Centre
DSD	Defence Signals Directorate
EEO	Equal Employment Opportunity
e-LEP	electronic Library Extension Program
ERP	estimated resident population
ESCAP	Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
ESDC	Economic Statistics Data Centre
FOI	Freedom of Information
GDP	gross domestic product
GFS	Government Finance Statistics
GSS	General Social Survey
GST	Goods and Services Tax
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HWS	Harassment and Workplace Support
ICP	International Comparison Program
ICT	information and communication technology

IDP	Information Development Plan
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRDB	Integrated Regional Data Base
ISI	International Statistical Institute
ISS	Indigenous Social Survey
IT	information technology
ITPI	international trade price indexes
K10	Kessler Psychological Distress Scale — 10
LEP	Library Extension Program
L&D	learning and development
MAC	Methodology Advisory Committee
MDRP	Microdata Review Panel
MEI	main economic indicator
MPS	Monthly Population Survey
NATOHSC	National Occupational Health and Safety Committee
NATSIS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey
NHS	National Health Survey
NSC	National Statistics Centre
NSS	National Statistical Service
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OHS	occupational health and safety
PES	post-enumeration survey
PMAU	People Management Advisory Unit
PPI	producer price indexes

PPP	purchasing power parity
Qld	Queensland
RADL	Remote Access Data Laboratory
RBA	Reserve Bank of Australia
RRSNC	Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre
SA	South Australia
SCH	Statistical Clearing House
SES	Senior Executive Service
SESCA	Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia
SLA	Statistical Local Area
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SSF	State Statistical Forum
STSS	State and Territory Statistical Services
Tas.	Tasmania
UN	United Nations
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
VPN	virtual private networking
Vic.	Victoria
WA	Western Australia
W3C	World Wide Web Consortium
WCI	wage cost index
WD	workplace diversity

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