

Annual Report **2003–04**

Australian Bureau of Statistics

ABSHOUSE



**Australian
Bureau of
Statistics**

Annual Report **2003-04**
Australian Bureau of Statistics



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Further information

For any inquiries about the content of this report, please contact:
Director, Secretariat Section, Australian Bureau of Statistics,
Locked Bag 10, Belconnen, ACT, 2616.

Telephone: 02 6252 7809 Facsimile: 02 6252 5824

Email: paul.sullivan@abs.gov.au.

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 2003–04 ABS Annual Report is located at:
<http://www.abs.gov.au>.

Acknowledgements

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Australian Statistician

The Hon. Ross Cameron, MP
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 2004.

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 that reads 'Dennis Trewin'.

Dennis Trewin
Australian Statistician

27 August 2004



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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

1 Executive Summary

Introduction

2003–04 has been a successful year for the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) in terms of extending the range and the quality of information made available to government and the community to assist informed decision making. However, the year has also been notable for some controversy regarding ABS population estimates, particularly as they relate to the Northern Territory. This issue is commented on more fully later in this report. Finally, it has been a year where the ABS has been under some resource pressure, as highlighted in the financial summary.



Dennis Trewin,
Australian Statistician.

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

- the release of *Measures of Australia's Progress, 2004* (cat. no. 1370.0) which provides a selection of statistical indicators allowing Australians to make their own assessment of whether life in Australia is improving
- the significant contribution of the ABS to Australian life being recognised by the *Bulletin* magazine through Dennis Trewin winning the society category in its Smart 100 Awards for the development and publication of *Measuring Australia's Progress*
- completion of a program of extensive community consultation on the proposed topics for inclusion in the 2006 census
- the formal launch 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
- the release, on the ABS web site, of *National Regional Profile* (cat. no. 1379.0.55.001) which provides, in a standard format, a wide range of data at the local government area level
- the development and publication of a conceptual framework for measuring social capital: *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital – An Australian Framework and Indicators* (cat. no. 1378.0)
- release, as part of the ABS Australian Census Analytic Program, of a series of publications from the 2001 census looking at different aspects of Australian society
- successful completion of the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers and publication of preliminary results in *Disability, Australia* (cat. no. 4446.0)

- release of results from the 2002 General Social Survey and 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
- the finalisation of a revised Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
- the development and conduct of an Innovation Survey in respect of 2003, with financial support from the Department of Education, Science and Training and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources
- the initial release of quarterly government finance statistics on an accrual accounting basis in *Government Finance Statistics, Australia, Quarterly, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5519.0.55.001)
- a range of activities relating to the environmental issue of water use including the conduct of a survey of water use by farmers and the release of *Water Account, Australia* (cat. no. 4610.0)
- the development of a set of experimental spatial price indexes designed to measure price levels between the state/territory capital cities
- further enhancements and improvements to the accessibility and useability of the ABS web site
- the creation of a National Statistics Training Institute aimed at providing a strategic and comprehensive approach to statistical training in the ABS, and eventually to statistical staff in other agencies
- the introduction of Computer Assisted Interviewing for the Monthly Population Survey
- successful negotiation with population survey interviewers of a new certified agreement, the *Population Survey Interviewers Certified Agreement 2003–2005*
- signing of agreements with the Indonesian and Mongolian national statistical agencies in relation to technical cooperation
- a continued and significant contribution to international statistics, and extensive technical assistance to a number of statistical agencies in the Asia-Pacific region.

These and other developments are expanded upon further below.

The past year has been particularly difficult in regard to the ABS' financial position. For the first time the ABS experienced an operating deficit. This is largely because we underestimated the increase in our long service leave liabilities. This did not affect our short term cash position which remains healthy. Nevertheless the ABS has been working to a tight budget with constraints on recruitment being in place for much of the year. The ongoing professionalism and dedication of all ABS staff which has led to such successful outcomes during 2003–04, including an increase in our statistical outputs, is greatly appreciated.

During the year Mr Rob Edwards, Deputy Australian Statistician, Economic Statistics Group, left the ABS to take up the position of Director of the International Monetary Fund's Statistics Department. Rob made a very significant contribution to the ABS over a career spanning 35 years. His efforts were recognised in the 2004 Australia Day Honours when he was awarded the Public Service Medal for 'Outstanding public service in the development of macroeconomics and contribution to international statistical standards'.

Much of the ABS' work would not be possible without 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. In spite of some adverse and misleading television coverage of ABS household survey procedures last December, it is pleasing to note that there has been no reduction in cooperation from our data providers. The ABS would once again like to convey its genuine thanks to all businesses and households that assist us in our task by providing the data we need so as to deliver a quality statistical service to policy-makers, researchers, analysts and the community at large.

Statistical Developments in 2003-04

A major statistical milestone was reached on 4 December 2003 when Australia's population reached 20 million. To mark the occasion a function was held at ABS House. Among the speakers celebrating the event at ABS House were The Treasurer, the Hon. Peter Costello, MP, and prominent demographer Professor Graeme Hugo. As well, the ABS issued '20,000,000' certificates to babies born between 3 and 5 December 2003.



Professor Graeme Hugo (left), Mr Dennis Trewin (middle) and The Treasurer, the Hon. Peter Costello, MP, celebrate Australia's population reaching 20 million.

Extending Analytical Work

The ABS continued to focus on extending its analytical capability in 2003–04 with a number of significant research projects undertaken. These included release of the 2001 census based socioeconomic indexes for areas, the production of experimental spatial price indexes for Australian capital cities, and estimating the formation of Australia's human capital. Also released in 2003–04 was a series of publications from the 2001 census as part of the Australian Census Analytic Program and examining aspects of Australian society. Releases included: *Counting the Homeless* (cat. no. 2050.0); *Indigenous Australians in the Contemporary Labour Market* (cat. no. 2052.0); *Australians' Ancestries* (cat. no. 2054.0); *The Micro-Dynamics of Change in Australian Agriculture: 1976–2001* (cat. no. 2055.0); and *Australia Online: How Australians are Using Computers and the Internet* (cat. no. 2056.0).

The Census

Concurrent with the release of these final analytical outputs from the 2001 census has been the preparations for the 2006 Census of Population and Housing which are now well progressed. The ABS began the formal process of public consultation for the 2006 census with the release, on 2 July 2003, of the *Information Paper: Census of Population and Housing, ABS Views on Content and Procedures, 2006* (cat. no. 2007.0). Readers were invited to respond to the information paper by lodging submissions, which was followed up by seminars in all states and territories. The main aim of the consultation was to ensure that the census continues to collect information on issues considered the most relevant at the time. Consultation has been finalised and a proposal incorporating the views of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council is being prepared for consideration by the government.

An integral component of the 2006 census development has been the formation of the Census Indigenous Enumeration Strategy Working Group to assist in developing strategies to ensure a complete enumeration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the 2006 census. This is reported on more fully in the special article 'Progress on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics' in Chapter 3.

Measuring Progress

In April 2004 the ABS published *Measures of Australia's Progress, 2004* (cat. no. 1370.0). It follows on from the ground breaking *Measuring Australia's Progress (MAP1)* released in 2002 and reflects the ABS view that measuring a nation's progress is one of the most important tasks that a national statistical agency can take on. As with its predecessor, the intention of *Measures of Australia's Progress*, is to provide a digestible selection of statistical indicators that measure change within different aspects of Australian life so as to allow Australians to make their own assessment of whether life in Australia is improving. The release of the

publication attracted significant positive media coverage and the ABS continues to receive very positive feedback for the initiative. In October 2003 the Australian Statistician was recognised by the Bulletin magazine in its Smart 100 awards for making a significant and positive contribution to Australian life through the development and publication by the ABS of MAP1.

Developments in Macroeconomics

Australia's national accounts are a critical output of the ABS and in 2003-04 a number of initiatives such as Quarterly Supply and Use (QSU) tables, and new measures of labour input, were introduced to further improve the quality of the national accounts. The QSU tables are used as a tool to assist in the compilation of quarterly national accounts. Their use will lead to improvements in the national accounts as they enable inconsistencies between the measures of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to be identified and investigated more systematically, and at a greater level of detail, than is possible by simply examining the aggregates. QSU tables will continue to be developed and their use may be extended in the future. A new measure of labour input was implemented — quality adjusted hours worked. This measure will provide a more accurate representation of labour input as it takes account of changes in the educational attainment and experience of the work force. During 2003-04 a number of feature articles were published in *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (cat. no. 5206.0) including the statistical treatment of the 2003 Rugby World Cup, the economic activity in the Timor Sea, and new analytical measures of income, saving and wealth. A further article was published in *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0) describing Australia's underground economy in the context of measuring GDP.

Australia's external debt liabilities were published for the first time during 2003-04 in *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (cat. no. 5302.0). The information presented meets Australia's obligations under the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard.

A number of feature articles were published on the ABS web site in conjunction with the release of *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (cat. no. 5368.0) throughout 2003-04. One particular article 'Australian Outward Foreign Affiliates Trade 2002-03' outlined preliminary results from a new Survey of Outward Foreign Affiliates Trade. Other articles published in 2003-04 included analysis of Australia's exporters and importers as well as Australia's trade with the United States of America.

The ABS has worked closely with authorities responsible for developing and administering the accounting standards that are applied by the Australian government. As part of a major review of its Government Finance Statistics (GFS), the ABS released *Australian System of Government Finance Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5514.0.55.001). The publication outlines the major changes to GFS including the move to accrual accounting. The culmination of the extensive work conducted on GFS was the first release of *Government Finance Statistics, Australia, Quarterly, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5519.0.55.001).

Spatial Price Indexes

The ABS continues to expand its analysis and activities in the measurement of prices. In response to strong user demand, a set of experimental spatial consumer price indexes were produced which are intended to measure price levels between the state and territory capital cities. This contrasts with the existing consumer price index which measures price movements for individual cities only and cannot be used to make direct comparisons of price levels between cities. Also published for the first time in 2003–04 were seasonally adjusted wage cost indexes. As well, a revised edition of *Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6461.0) was released in July 2003.

Statistical Infrastructure

In 2003–04 strategies were developed to incorporate the new business population frame based on the Australian Business Register (ABR) for the Agriculture, Mining and Manufacturing Surveys. The ABR is a whole of government register of businesses which will eventually become the main source of businesses on the ABS Business Register. The ABS is also developing a Business Longitudinal Database (BLD) using the ABR as the principle source of update for the population frame. The database will be populated with a combination of point in time and longitudinal administrative and ABS survey data. The BLD will take advantage of the input data warehouse infrastructure being developed for the storage of all ABS input business data. Seminars on the BLD project were conducted in state capitals during October 2003.

The redevelopment of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC), a core element of the framework for the integration of business statistics, was finalised in 2003–04. This is a major development and the new ANZSIC, which will more accurately reflect current economic circumstances, will be incorporated into ABS statistics commencing with the 2006 Census of Population and Housing.

Significant progress has been made in the development of geocoding infrastructure in Australia. In March 2004 the Geocoded National Address File (G-NAF) was released by the Public Sector Mapping Agencies Australia Ltd (PSMA). The G-NAF has been developed by PSMA in association with the ABS, the Australian Electoral Commission, Centrelink and Australia Post. The ABS is currently developing Mesh Blocks, a new micro level statistical geography unit for Australia, based on the G-NAF. This is reported on more fully in the Special Article — Developments in Regional Statistics.



Ms Susan Linacre, Deputy Australian Statistician (seated left) and Mr Olaf Hedberg, Independent Chairman, Public Sector Mapping Agencies Australia Ltd (seated right) at the official signing of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' Geocoded National Address File licence.

The Environment

One of the most significant emerging environmental issues is water use. The ABS held a Water Statistics Seminar early in 2004 where there was strong support for ABS activities in this area. During 2003-04 the ABS undertook a survey of water use by farmers. Results of the survey are expected to be released in 2004-05. The ABS also published a range of other information concerning water issues in 2003-04 including *Domestic Water Use, Western Australia* (cat. no. 4616.5.55.001) and *Water Account, Australia* (cat. no. 4610.0).

The publication *Energy Statistics, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4649.0.55.001), released in December 2003, presented results from the ABS Energy Survey 2001-02 conducted in conjunction with the Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics (ABARE). The survey had a better data supply and improved coverage and response rates compared with the previous survey which was conducted solely by ABARE.

Developments in Labour Statistics

The ABS introduced a number of significant improvements to labour force statistics with the release of the February 2004 issue of *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0). From February 2004 estimates were compiled using updated population benchmarks based on results from the 2001 census. Estimates for the past five years have been revised as a result. For the first time, regional population benchmarks were used resulting in improved estimates for labour force regions.

During 2003–04 the ABS commenced a phased implementation of Computer Assisted Interviewing (CAI) in the Monthly Population Survey. Throughout the phased implementation there has been analysis undertaken to measure and ensure that the impacts (if any) on the labour force estimates are minimal. The ABS has now phased in 70 per cent of the Monthly Population Survey sample to CAI with the full phase-in to be completed in the early part of 2004–05. The use of CAI will increase interviewer productivity through improved survey field collection structures and systems and will result in more flexible and cost effective household survey data collection.

Innovation Statistics

With financial assistance from the Department of Education, Science and Training and the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources in 2003–04 the ABS developed an Innovation Survey which was conducted in respect of 2003. The purpose of the survey was to ascertain the proportion and type of businesses that are involved in innovation such as introducing new products, services and processes. The survey will also provide information on the types of innovation that are occurring and their impact on the output and productivity of businesses. Data collected will assist policy development at Australian and state levels of government and will be of interest to industry associations, businesses and research organisations. The data are being compiled in accordance with relevant Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development guidelines to facilitate international comparisons.

Developments in Social Statistics

Social capital is a topic of considerable interest to a wide range of people due to its links between individual and community wellbeing. Following extensive consultation the ABS developed a broad conceptual framework for measuring social capital. This culminated in the release of *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital — An Australian Framework and Indicators* (cat. no. 1378.0). The indicators in the framework are primarily focused on social relationships. Also released in 2003–04 was a new web-based product, *Measures of a Knowledge-based Economy and*

Society, Australia — Electronic Delivery (cat. no. 1377.0). This product presents indicators within the conceptual framework outlined in the *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0). It also provides an understanding of the role of social capital in the economy. The statistical indicators presented in this product comprise the first ABS compendium of statistics on the knowledge-based economy and society, and will be updated on the web as data become available.

Results from two major social surveys were published in 2003–04. The *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4159.0) provides a profile of the socioeconomic characteristics of Australia's adult population and presents data on a range of social dimensions of the Australian community including aspects of social attachment. Results of a similar survey of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples were published in *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2002* (NATSISS) (cat. no. 4714.0). The NATSISS has significant content overlap with the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey and the General Social Survey allowing comparisons of Indigenous circumstances both over time and with other non-Indigenous Australians.

In 2003–04 the ABS successfully completed the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. Preliminary results from the survey, which present a summary of disability prevalence in Australia, were published in *Disability, Australia* (cat. no. 4446.0).

In consultation with major stakeholders, the development of the content and methodology for the 2004–05 National Health Survey (NHS) and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey has commenced. Using information from the 2001 and 1995 NHSs, the ABS released a number of special articles during 2003–04 discussing the prevalence of a range of health conditions such as asthma, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. We are grateful to the Department of Health and Ageing who assisted with the funding of these surveys.

A major collection undertaken in 2003–04 by the ABS was the Household Income and Expenditure Survey (HIES). The HIES comprises two surveys — the Household Expenditure Survey, conducted every five years; and the Survey of Income and Housing Costs, conducted every two years. The HIES in particular is critical to the compilation of the CPI. The surveys were conducted successfully with target response rates achieved in spite of adverse and somewhat misleading media coverage in December 2003. The success of the survey reflects the acceptance by the community of the importance of this survey and the efforts and professionalism of ABS interviewers.

National Statistical Service

Progress continues on the concept of the National Statistical Service (NSS) and the development of a National Data Network. These types of initiatives were strongly supported in the 'Connecting Government' report launched by the Australian Public Service's Management Advisory Committee in April 2004. As part of its role in progressing the NSS, the ABS is cooperating with a range of organisations in an effort to increase and improve statistical output. In February 2004 the Statistician signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the South Australian Premier's Department for South Australia to become the first NSS Foundation Member. During the year a NSS handbook and web site www.nss.gov.au have been produced and are designed to assist statistical collection managers, designers and users of statistical products.

An ongoing focus of the ABS is the expansion in the use of administrative by-product data. This has been aided by an agreement with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO) on a protocol which sets out the way in which the ABS uses taxation data. One of the surveys which has recently benefited from administrative by-product data is the Retail Business Survey. The survey will utilise Business Activity Statement data provided by the ATO leading to a reduced number of businesses included in the survey.

A major initiative of the ABS in recent years has been the preparation of Information Development Plans (IDPs) which are designed to assist in identifying issues and data gaps in particular fields of statistics, and provide strategies to address the issues and gaps. One of the key features of IDPs is the collaboration with key stakeholders who can assist in identifying relevant non-ABS data. Some of the IDPs which are currently in various stages of development include tourism, crime and justice, ageing, and education and training statistics.

Legislation and Governance

In 2003–04 legislative changes were made to relevant ABS legislation through the Statistics Legislation Amendment Bill which was passed by parliament in September 2003. The changes were primarily for the purpose of rectifying deficiencies arising from amendments to the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* in 1987 and 1999 so as to put beyond any doubt the secrecy provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. The new legislation also enables the Statistician to second persons from other departmental agencies and international statistical organisations whilst ensuring that they are subject to the secrecy provisions of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*.

The ABS held two meetings of the Australian Statistical Advisory Council (ASAC) in 2003–04 and one meeting of the State Statistical Forum. 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. Some of the topics discussed which were of particular interest to ASAC were 2006 population census content, non-profit institutions, social capital and wellbeing.

Population Estimates

Last year's annual report presented a special article 'Population Estimates: Importance, Complexity and Controversy' which provided background to the process and data sources for compiling the population estimates for states and territories. It also explained the limitations of those estimates in terms of potential sources of error.

The article was timely as it was written at the time the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters was beginning its Inquiry into Representation of the Northern Territory (NT) and the Australian Capital Territory (ACT) in the House of Representatives. The Inquiry arose from the fact that based on the most recent ABS population estimates, the Northern Territory was 295 persons short of a second quota for the House of Representatives, and as a result would have their representation reduced in that House from two members to one member for the next election.

The ABS made two submissions to the Inquiry and appeared twice before the Committee. Throughout the process the ABS message regarding the population estimates for the Northern Territory was consistent i.e. they are the best available estimates given existing data sources, however, they are subject to a range of possible sources of error.

The Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters report *Territory Representation — Report of the Inquiry into Increasing the Minimum Representation for the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory in the House of Representatives* presented two recommendations for consideration by the government:

Recommendation 1

That in order to make the process of determining the representation of the Territories in the House of Representatives more transparent and certain, the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 be amended:

to require the Australian Statistician:

to include in the quarterly Estimates of Resident Population published in Australian Demographic Statistics, in addition to the estimated populations of the States, the Australian Capital Territory and the Northern Territory, estimates of the populations of the Territories of Jervis Bay, Cocos (Keeling) Islands and Christmas Island;

to require the Australian Electoral Commissioner:

on a date twelve months after the first sitting of a new House of Representatives, to take note of the latest statistics of the population of the Commonwealth, including separate statistics of the populations of each of the States and Territories of the Commonwealth, that have been published as Estimates of Resident Population in Australian Demographic Statistics; and

to require the Australian Electoral Commissioner:

to make to those statistics whatever adjustments are required by other sections of the Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918 for the purposes of making the determination, for example the Norfolk Island statistics, and to make and publish the determination including details of the adjustments and calculations involved within one month after the end of the twelfth month after the first sitting of a new House of Representatives.

Recommendation 2

The Committee recommends that in future, the Australian Statistician advise the Electoral Commissioner of the margin of error for the Territories at the time of supplying the latest statistics of the Commonwealth, and that the margin of error for the ACT and the NT be incorporated into the determination of seats for the Territories when a Territory falls short of quota. If the shortfall is within the margin of error acknowledged by the ABS, the Australian Electoral Commissioner is to use the ERP figure at the top of the margin of error to determine the Territory's entitlement.

The recommendations were accepted by the government and subsequently incorporated into the *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Representation in the House of Representatives) Bill 2004* which received Royal Assent on 20 April 2004.

The recommendations are welcomed by the ABS in that they bring greater certainty as to the role of the ABS in preparing population estimates for electoral purposes. At the same time, Recommendation 2 gives the Statistician considerable discretion inasmuch that the size of the margin of error is dependent on a number of factors over which the Statistician has control. For this reason the ABS will ensure complete transparency in the process of determining the margin of error and will issue a discussion paper for comment prior to implementation.

The ABS will also continue its efforts to further improve the quality of its population estimates. Integral to that process has been the establishment of a Census Indigenous Enumeration Strategy Working Group to assist the ABS in developing appropriate strategies to improve the accuracy of Indigenous enumeration for the 2006 census. In addition, the ABS

has established a Demographic Methods Unit to investigate improved demographic methods and data sources for population estimates and projections.

Dissemination Services

The ABS continues to provide users with statistics and related information from all its statistical collections as soon as practicable after the collection of the data.

Enhancements to the Web Site

The ABS web site remains the primary access point for the majority of users of ABS information. In 2003–04 there has been a significant increase in content and improved functionality on the ABS web site. The web site now consists of approximately 308,000 pages, an increase of almost 50 per cent on last year, and during 2003–04 the web site received over 48 million page views (an increase of 25 per cent over the previous year).

The release of the National Regional Profile on the web site enables users to freely access a wide range of ABS and non-ABS data at the local government area level. Hard copy publications are now available for purchase through the e-commerce system, and a new search engine facilitates access to ABS statistics and metadata on the web site. A major redevelopment of the ABS web site that will result in improved useability and accessibility has been under way during 2003–04, the first phase of which will be launched early in 2004–05. An email notification service has been introduced leading to improved awareness of ABS releases and contributing to an increased use of ABS electronic services. A program of market research to gauge client satisfaction with the ABS web site is in development and will be implemented during 2004–05.

Improving Access to Unit Record Data

A major enhancement to online services was the formal launch in November 2003 by Professor Sandra Harding (Chairperson of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council) 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 packages. RADL facilitates greater access by researchers to ABS data while at the same time preserving the privacy and confidentiality of respondents. Currently there are over 200 registered RADL users.



ABS officers involved in the development of the Remote Access Data Laboratory. From left Alan Wong, Donna Goodman and Carolyn Kennedy.

The release of CURFs continue to be a major focus of the ABS response to enhancing research capacity of the user community. A major milestone was reached recently with the release of the 1,000th CURF to the research community.

Dissemination Channels

The redevelopment of subscription services and the continued move towards greater use of electronic services over traditional hard copy publications has enabled the ABS to continue to provide users with timely statistical information while reducing the cost of dissemination. The ABS has successfully managed the transition of key users such as parliamentarians and the media to greater use of electronic publications during the last year. In recognition of the media's important role in informing the general public about ABS statistics and to ensure a continued high level of access to ABS data by the media, the ABS has offered complimentary media subscriptions to the AusStats service, which provides electronic access to all ABS publications and time series data.

The ABS has ensured continued public access to ABS data by further expanding the eLEP initiative which provides an increasing number of public libraries with access to ABS electronic services. A recent 'Libraries in the Online Environment' report by the Senate Reference Committee of the Environment, Communication, Information Technology and the Arts commended the ABS for its library extension program.

In 2003–04 a number of key clients such as state governments and Australian government departments have continued to make extensive use of ABS@, which enables them to access a comprehensive range of ABS statistics through their internal Intranets. The New South Wales government has recently contracted to acquire ABS@ and negotiations with a number of other state and Australian government organisations are continuing and may soon result in additional use of ABS@.

The ABS also disseminates data to the community via intermediaries. The 2003–04 year saw the engagement of a further 12 intermediaries which assist the ABS in its endeavours to maximise the use of statistics for informed decision making.

There was continued promotion of ABS products and capability in the last year. Promotion focused upon increasing the use of key products and services, such as the *Year Book Australia* (cat. no. 1301.0) and *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0), and continued promotion of census products and services, in particular CDATA 2001 and *Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia* (cat. no. 2033.0.30.001).

Statistics for Schools

There has also been continuing work with the schools' sector to increase the use of ABS data and to improve the statistical literacy of students. An expanding range of curriculum support material is being provided to schools. Since its release at the end of 2002–03, an increasing number of teachers are now using the ABS' school-specific electronic product, *Census for Schools*, in geography, mathematics and other classes. The ABS has recently commenced work to coordinate the implementation of a national CensusAtSchools initiative to coincide with the next Census of Population and Housing.

2004 Year Book

The 2004 edition of *Year Book Australia* (cat. no. 1301.0) was launched on 27 February 2004 at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies by Professor Sandra Harding. Professor Mick Dodson also spoke at the launch. The 2004 edition had Indigenous Australia as its theme, providing statistics to assist people make informed decisions about Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.



Professor Sandra Harding, Chairperson, Australian Statistics Advisory Council, and Professor Mick Dodson, launching the 2004 Year Book Australia.

Pricing Review

A review of ABS pricing is under way. Phase 1 of the review, assessing the alignment of existing ABS pricing policy and arrangements against the Commonwealth Guidelines on Cost Recovery, has been completed. Phase 2, which will review the prices of individual products and services is scheduled to be finalised by the end of 2004.

Human Resource Issues

Agreement Making

2003–04 has been another active year in terms of agreement making in the ABS. The *Population Survey Interviewers Certified Agreement 2002–2003*, which covers the ABS household interviewer workforce, expired on 30 June 2003, and a major task has been the development of a new agreement. The replacement agreement, the *Population Survey Interviewers Certified Agreement 2003–2005* was developed in consultation with interviewers and their representatives, in particular the Community and Public Sector Union, under section 170LK of the *Workplace Relations Act 1996*. It was voted on and accepted by a majority of interviewers on 29 August 2003 and certified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission on 10 September 2003. The consultations for the certified agreement took place in a very positive environment as evidenced by the acceptance of the agreement at the first vote.

Consultation in the ABS

The ABS has in place a number of consultative forums within the organisation so as to provide staff with the opportunity to have input to a range of issues. These include consultative committees convened in all cost centres and the overarching annual National Forum which includes representatives from all ABS consultative forums and unions. The most recent National Forum, held in March 2004, considered a range of issues including reports from the National Occupational Health and Safety Committee, a review of the progress of the Business Statistics Innovation Program, and developments with the National Statistical Training Institute (NSTI). In response to concerns that the views of younger employees in the ABS may be under-represented in other consultative forums, a Youth Forum was held on 3 May 2004. The general aim of the Youth Forum was to enable employees aged 30 years and under to express their views on their working lives in the ABS from the perspective of our younger employees. A range of issues were discussed at the Forum including training and development, skills usage, recruitment and career opportunities. Valuable input was provided into future decision making on these issues.

Learning and Development

The ABS has always regarded the development of its employees as a high priority. The ABS NSTI was created during the year to provide a strategic and comprehensive approach to statistical training in the ABS. The aim of the NSTI is for the ABS to have highly skilled, professional and confident statisticians to maintain and build on the ABS' high international and national reputation for producing quality statistical products. As part of the National Statistical Services initiative, a long term objective for the NSTI is to provide accredited statistical training to both ABS employees and those of other agencies. A national statistical training program has been developed and agreed. A statistical learning pathway was also developed to help ABS employees identify the learning and development activities which will be available to help them develop as professional statisticians.

Good progress has been made towards the development of an ABS Capability Development System, which will provide structure and rigour in the development of statistical skills and capabilities whilst ensuring ongoing development of core capabilities like communication, leadership and management skills. The system will align learning activities with expected capabilities and complement the ABS' established performance management system.

The use of new information technology tools in the last year has improved our ability to interrogate and relate different human resource datasets leading to increased rigour in analysing the ABS work force to understand what action is needed to ensure sustainability for the future. This has allowed better informed discussion on a range of human resource issues, for example, the demographic breakdown of the work force, rates of unscheduled absence, exit data, and information from new starters about expectations and performance of the ABS.

Recruitment

Work undertaken as part of the recruitment and retention strategy came to fruition during 2003–04 with the use of new branding in the graduate recruitment campaigns and job advertisements. Its objective is to present prospective applicants with an appealing but realistic image of the ABS through the use of pictures of real people and non-bureaucratic language.

Developments in Information Technology

During 2003–04 the ABS Information Technology (IT) environment continued to perform well as a productive and robust platform for ABS operations. The overall reliability of systems, and the level of end-user satisfaction, was maintained.

The roll-out of the new 'desktop' ('Desktop@ABS') with improved software management, knowledge management facilities, and the Windows XP operating system, was completed. The new desktop is more robust and manageable and the reaction of staff was very positive.

The deployment of notebooks to field interviewers and commissioning of infrastructure to support the introduction of CAI went smoothly, although some delays were encountered due to the need to ensure that the notebook security software met the requirements of the ABS.

The cost of operating the IT environment was significantly reduced during the year. Data storage, back-up and recovery facilities were significantly upgraded and UNIX server platforms were consolidated to provide extra capacity as well as reduce maintenance and operating costs.

New applications and infrastructure were developed to support the Business Statistics Innovation Program — in particular the delivery of systems for form despatch, data capture and collection management, and improvements to other aspects of business survey processing.

As with many organisations, the ABS was impacted by the Blaster Virus in late 2003 with the network having to be shut down for a short period while remediation was undertaken. As a result the ABS further strengthened its defences against virus attacks and spam. As well, the timeliness of the security patch application has been improved.

International Involvement

In 2003–04 the ABS continued its important and valued role in the international statistical community through:

- an active contribution to the international statistical activities that are important to Australia and our region
- high level membership of the international statistical community (including influencing the development of international statistical standards and indicators)
- targeted and tailored technical assistance to national statistical agencies in the Asia-Pacific region.

A specific ongoing commitment in the Asia-Pacific region is the contribution to the coordination of the World Bank International Comparison Program (ICP). The objective of the ICP is to produce purchasing power parities to enable cross-country comparison of gross domestic product and other economic aggregates. The Australian Statistician is chairman of the ICP Global Executive Board.

International Meetings

The ABS participated in a number of important international conferences in 2003–04 including the First Session of the Sub-Committee on Statistics of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific held in Bangkok in February 2004 which was chaired by the Australian Statistician. Other international meetings in which the ABS participated include the Thirty-Fifth Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission held in New York in March 2004, and a number of conferences associated with the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development and the International Labour Organisation. The ABS participated in the International Statistical Institute (ISI) session held in Germany in August 2003. Preparations are progressing well for the next biennial session of the ISI, the peak professional body for statisticians in all fields, to be hosted by the ABS and held in Sydney in April 2005. Representatives of the ABS also attended the Pacific Community Regional Meeting of Statistics held in Noumea in September 2003.

During the year the ABS conducted high level bilateral discussions with two other national statistical agencies — Statistics Sweden and Statistics New Zealand. These meetings provided opportunities for the chief executives and senior executives to pursue management and statistical issues of common concern and improve working arrangements between the agencies.

Statistical Training

The ABS provides a valuable contribution to international statistical training through the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP). For example, ABS staff members provided expert services in training courses in Thailand, China and Japan during 2003–04. The ABS is also a member of the SIAP Governing Board, and contributes senior resource persons for management meetings related to this role. In addition, the ABS provides technical assistance to those countries in the Asia-Pacific region who seek ABS advice and support, and who are high priority for the Australian government.

Technical Assistance

The ABS continued its program of technical cooperation with the Indonesian national statistical agency with a new Memorandum of Understanding signed by its Director-General and the Australian Statistician during a high level visit to the ABS in April 2004. A high level visit to the ABS in February 2004 by the Chairman of the Mongolian National Statistics Office resulted in a Memorandum of Understanding identifying areas for future cooperation. A program of assistance to Thailand to strengthen its macro-economic statistics also continued in 2003–04.

In addition to planned programs of assistance, the ABS provided advice and capacity building in response to ad hoc requests from countries in our region. This included assistance to the Bank of Thailand as well as hosting short-term traineeships for staff members from the national statistical offices of Papua New Guinea and Singapore. Other countries which sent delegations to the ABS include Thailand, Nepal and the Solomon Islands. The ABS also provided assistance to Timor L'este as the country prepares for its first population census since gaining independence.



Dr Soedarti Surbakti, Director General, Badan Pusat Statistik (Statistics Indonesia), and Mr Dennis Trewin (right) at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the statistical agencies.

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 2003–04, a financial summary of ABS outputs and price of outputs against the budgeted figures, and also provides budgeted figures for 2004–05. 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 Australian Government Budget requirements.

There was an operating deficit of \$1.649 million in 2003–04. This was a better outcome than the \$2.0 million deficit anticipated at the time of the Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements. The deficit in 2003–04 reflects unexpected results in two areas. First, leave accruals, in particular long service leave, have been higher than budgeted, and second, there have been delays in the deployment to other work programs of surplus staff arising from the implementation of the Business Statistics Innovation Program in the economic statistics area.

Table 1: Financial resources summary (\$'000)

	Budget 2003-04(a)	Actual 2003-04	Variance	Budget 2004-05(b)
Administered Expenses				
Discretionary Grants(c)	-	-	-	-
Total Administered Expenses	-	-	-	-
Price of Departmental Outputs				
Output group 1.1 — National Statistical Service				
Output group 1.1.1 — Economic statistics	141,579	148,912	-7,333	156,903
Output group 1.1.2 — Population and social statistics	128,507	123,258	5,249	129,873
Total output	270,086	272,170	-2,084	286,776
Revenue from Government appropriation	250,981	251,081	-100	269,558
Revenue from other sources	19,154	19,440	-286	17,218
Total Price of Outputs	270,135	270,521	-386	286,776
Total for Outcome 1	270,135	270,521	-386	286,776
Staff years (number)	2,825	2,743	82	2,684

(a) Budget 2003-04 — full year budget, including additional estimates. (b) Budget 2004-05 — budget prior to additional estimates. (c) The ABS does not administer any discretionary grants.

The ABS recorded a 25 per cent decrease in revenue raised from statistics in 2003–04. The breakdown of revenue raised from various sources is shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Revenue raised from other sources (\$'000)

	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Revenue raised from statistics			
Publications			
Subscriptions	1,110	922	682
Other	487	628	389
Other Standard Products	2,619	8,270	4,603
Information Consultancy	3,591	6,388	4,432
Statistical Consultancy	1,955	892	833
User Funded Surveys	3,737	3,441	3,083
Other Products and Services	4,587	4,066	4,738
<i>Total revenue raised from statistics</i>	<i>18,087</i>	<i>24,607</i>	<i>18,760</i>
Other revenue	1,448	1,451	680
Total	19,535	26,058	19,440

The decline in revenue during 2003–04 can be largely attributed to the significant fall in revenue from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing data. This reflects the cyclical pattern of revenue from census products, the majority of which were released at the end of June 2002. While an increase was recorded against other products and services, this gain was offset by significant decreases in revenue from other standard products (notably CDATE) and information consultancies, together with smaller decreases in publications and user funded surveys.

While the decreases are consistent with the ABS census cycle, the ABS policy of encouraging self-help facilities, the increasing data availability on our web site and the increasing use of intermediaries, they further impact on the budget flexibility available to the ABS.

Dennis Trewin
Australian Statistician

Section I

Summary of Operations

Chapter 2

How the ABS Operates

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 2003–04, 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 is pursuing the following objectives 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 Deputy Australian Statistician 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 Australian, state and territory administrative agencies, to producing statistics as a by-product of administrative systems and in so doing improve the efficiency of the organisation and reduce the reporting workload on the community. 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. The ABS provides publications to media organisations at no cost, and the principal results from ABS publications are highlighted daily in the print and electronic media. The main features of ABS publications are also made available via the ABS web site. A large core set of statistics are made available through public, technical and tertiary libraries across Australia, while members of parliament are provided complimentary access to all ABS publications. 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 2004-05 to 2006-07
- Client Service Charter
- Business Surveys Charter.

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

A wide range of additional information about the ABS, including the legislative framework and pricing policy, is available on the ABS web site.

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.

During 2003-04, the ABS finalised and implemented its Risk Management Framework and Risk Management Guidelines. 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. A program of facilitated workshops has commenced with a number of key operational areas in order to ensure that the risk assessments for these areas are applied consistently and given priority.

During the year, a fraud risk assessment and fraud control plan were completed for the ABS with the assistance of an external provider. The fraud risk assessment concluded that overall there is a low fraud risk exposure for the ABS and the number of fraud risks identified within the ABS is small when compared to other organisations of similar size, however a range of treatment strategies identified in the risk assessment and fraud control plan are being implemented to further minimise the risks. The fraud risk assessment and fraud control plan have been prepared to comply with the Commonwealth Fraud Control Guidelines.

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. The 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 consideration and advice 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. The Committee includes an experienced external, independent member (Mr Len Early). The Committee sets a work program for reviews drawing on the outcomes of risk assessments, fraud control plan, 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. The Committee meets four times a year and reports to the Executive Meetings as appropriate.

Internal audits undertaken during 2003-04 included reviews of: Computer Assisted Interviewing Infrastructure; Logical Information Technology Security; Encryption of Pre-release Main Economic Indicator Publications; Subscriptions Redevelopment; Fringe Benefits Tax; and Internal Budgeting.

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.

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: Performance Management in the Australian Public Service; Senate Order for Departmental and Agency Contracts; Audit of Superannuation Payments for Independent Contractors; and Information Technology Audit on Human Resource and Financial Systems
- 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, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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 2003–04.

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 Chairperson of ASAC is Professor Sandra Harding who is Deputy Vice Chancellor (International and Development) at the Queensland University of Technology. During 2003-04 two new appointments to ASAC were made. These were Mr George Tomlins and Dr Adam Graycar the state/territory government representatives for the Australian Capital Territory and South Australia, respectively.

More details regarding ASAC can be found in the ASAC Annual Report, which is available on the ABS web site or on request.

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 or is available on request.

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, apart from reception or defined public access areas, 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 is subject to annual accreditation by the national communications and computer security advisory authority, Defence Signals Directorate.

Security Audits

Included in the ABS strategic audit plan is 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, Australian 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 Australian government agency known to have significant business survey activity. The primary role of these liaison officers is to ensure that all Australian 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). 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.

A recent study conducted by the Australian Public Service Commission reported strong feedback from ABS staff that the ABS is an ethical organisation that upholds both the APS Values and the ABS principles.

ABS Service Charters

The ABS had two service charters operating during 2003–04.

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 or on request at any 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, immigrants, people with disabilities, unemployed people, older Australians, women and children. During 2003–04 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 2003–04 the ABS released a range of statistical publications relevant to social justice and equity. Continuing its regular contribution to this area was *Australian Social Trends, 2004* (cat. no. 4102.0), an annual publication drawing on the ABS and other official statistics to inform on social conditions and wellbeing in Australia.

The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 2003 (cat. no. 4704.0) was produced jointly with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare. *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001* (cat. no. 4713.0) and *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2002* (cat. no. 4714.0) were other significant releases with social justice and equity dimensions.

Preliminary data from the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers was released in *Disability, Australia, 2003, Preliminary* (cat. no. 4446.0). The ABS provided a consultancy service to the Office of the Status of Women providing data for their information warehouse: *Window on Women*.

The ABS also released *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia, 2000–01* (cat. no. 6523.0), which provided summary measures of income distribution across Australian households over time, and compared relative income levels between different groups within Australian society.

The 2004–05 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) was developed in 2003–04 and the field phase is expected to commence in late August 2004. The NATSIHS is a stand alone survey specifically designed to address Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health issues and will comprise a much larger sample (approximately 10,000 people) than previous Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander supplements to the National Health Survey.

Commonwealth Disability Strategy

In 1994 the Australian government introduced the Commonwealth Disability Strategy (CDS) as a planning framework to assist Australian government 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 Australian government 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 2004–05.

In addition to its role as a provider and employer, the ABS has an important function in terms of providing information about disabilities to assist informed decision making by policy advisers. The ABS has released preliminary information from the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers in *Disability, Australia* (cat. no. 4446.0). The statistics shown in the publication provide a summary of disability prevalence in Australia. 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* (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 has successfully developed and tested questions designed to identify people in need of assistance due to a severe/profound disability for possible inclusion in the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. The ABS also contributes to international discussions on the development of standards for the measurement of 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 respect of 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 progressively moving from paper to electronic products. In 2003-04 the number of printed publications released was 420, down from 558 in 2002-03.

In most procurement activities the ABS has incorporated environmental clauses as part of the tender and evaluation process.

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 2003–04 the ABS released a range of publications relevant to environmental issues. These included:

- *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (cat. no. 4602.0)
- *Water Account, Australia* (cat. no. 4610.0)
- *Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends* (cat. no. 4613.0)
- *Domestic Water Use, Western Australia* (cat. no. 4616.5.55.001)
- *Energy Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 4649.0.55.001)
- *Detailed Energy Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 4648.0.55.001)
- *Waste Management Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8698.0).

The ABS also undertook surveys on water use by farmers and local governments' expenditure on environmental matters.

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, which has led to a 25 per cent decrease in the number of printed publications between 2002–03 and 2003–04
- reducing national energy usage which enabled the ABS to be successful in meeting the Australian Greenhouse Office target of 10,000MJ or less per person by 2002–03

- heavily weighting energy ratings when making purchasing decisions for whitegoods
- where possible, using remanufactured and recycled cartridges for photocopiers, faxes and printers and recycling all ABS used printer cartridges
- consuming 'green energy' (10 per cent of energy consumed in ABS House is 'green energy')
- considering the Greenhouse Vehicle Guide (GVG) when purchasing government vehicles. Approximately 21 per cent of ABS fleet vehicles had a GVG score of 10.5 or better as at the end of the 2002-03 financial year. The ABS anticipates meeting the government target of 28 per cent of vehicles with a GVG rating better than 10 by 2005
- recycling paper in all offices and actively recycling bottles, cans and cartons in ABS Central Office
- ensuring appropriate facilities, including storage, for staff wishing to use bicycles to travel to and from work.

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

The ABS is implementing an Environmental Management System that provides 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. Energy audits will also be undertaken in long term tenancy arrangements.

Section II

Special Articles

Chapter 3

Progress on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics

3 Progress on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics

Introduction

Over the past ten years there has been a significant improvement in the range, quality and availability of statistics on Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and an increasing number of organisations have become involved in collecting, compiling and analysing Indigenous statistics. Some of the improvements involving the ABS include:

- improvements in the quality of information about Indigenous Australians from the five-yearly population census
- new ABS household surveys of the Indigenous population, including regular surveys on Indigenous health and on Indigenous wellbeing and social circumstances
- the inclusion of an Indigenous identifier in appropriate ABS household surveys, including the monthly Labour Force Survey
- the conduct of the Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey (CHINS) in both 1999 and 2001
- progressive implementation of consistent standards of Indigenous identification in administrative datasets
- improvement in the analysis and presentation of Indigenous statistics (including age standardisation, where relevant)
- improved availability of statistics through new compilations, such as Indigenous experimental population estimates and projections
- improved availability and profile for Indigenous statistics through new publications such as *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (cat. no. 4704.0) produced jointly by the ABS and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW).

However, more remains to be done. The *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage, Key Indicators Report*, auspiced by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) and released in November 2003, illustrated the breadth of Indigenous statistics that are now available. However, it also highlighted some of the data limitations in analysing the circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and in assessing Indigenous disadvantage.

This article provides an overview of recent and planned developments in the ABS work program to improve the range, quality and availability of statistics on Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. The article also notes some of the data collection developments by other organisations.

ABS Work program — overview and future developments

The ABS Indigenous statistics work program incorporates the activities of its National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics together with the ABS Indigenous survey operations and the Indigenous specific activities within wider programs of data collection, compilation and analysis. The work program broadly follows the directions set in the March 2000 ABS paper *Directions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics*. These directions were initially determined after wide consultation with stakeholders. However, ongoing consultation with key stakeholders about the program in general and about particular elements in the program has resulted in modifications being made over time. The ABS plans to update its *Directions* statement in 2005 and Indigenous organisations, peak Indigenous data groups, research institutions, and relevant Australian and state/territory government agencies will be consulted on both the updating process and the priority directions that the work program might take in future.

Census of population and housing

The five-yearly census remains the centrepiece of the ABS Indigenous statistics work program, providing the basis for estimates of the Indigenous population and a wide range of socio-economic statistics, such as housing, income, employment, education and language at all levels of geography.

The range of Indigenous specific outputs has been increasing and improving each census since 1971. Indigenous specific products from the 2001 census have included:

- Indigenous community profiles available free of charge on the ABS web site down to Indigenous area level, with more detailed geography available as charged products
- a CD-ROM release of *Australian Indigenous Geographical Classification Maps and Census Profiles* (cat. no. 4706.0.30.001)
- the publications *Population Distribution, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (cat. no. 4705.0), and *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (cat. no. 4713.0)
- a range of spreadsheet products available from the ABS web site for all publication tables together with suites of state/territory spreadsheets mirroring the national tabulations.

All censuses from 1986 onwards have been supported by a special Indigenous Enumeration Strategy (IES) aimed at improving census awareness, forms design and field procedures to facilitate effective enumeration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, particularly those living in remote areas. The 2001 census employed about 1,600 Indigenous people (over 5% of the census field staff in 2001).

The development of the 2006 IES is being guided by a census IES Working Group comprising experts from Indigenous organisations, Australian and state/territory government agencies, research organisations and practitioners in Indigenous data, field procedures and protocols. In addition to improvements in awareness activities, forms design and field procedures, the 2006 IES will include the capture of more details about Indigenous persons away from their usual residence at the time of the census. These details will assist in quality assuring the census enumeration, improving the quality of Indigenous population estimates and enabling Indigenous statistics compiled on a usual residence basis to report characteristics such as household income on a more comprehensive basis.

Indigenous household surveys

The key elements in the ABS Indigenous household survey program are: a six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey; and a six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey. Both surveys are designed to produce national and state/territory level estimates, and cover remote and non-remote areas of Australia.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS)

The 2002 NATSISS was developed following the 1998–99 review of the ABS household survey program. In addition to the wide consultation undertaken when developing the *Directions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics*, and ongoing advice from peak advisory groups such as the National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data (NAGATSIHID), survey specific advice was also sought from a reference group comprising Indigenous experts and representatives from Indigenous organisations, government agencies and academia.

Consultation for NATSISS was very extensive with information papers being sent to many organisations including a wide array of Indigenous bodies. A range of consultation meetings were held across Australia to discuss ABS proposals for the survey and seek feedback. Focus group discussions involving Indigenous Australians were used in further refining survey content, followed by survey testing in both urban and remote areas. The final content of the 2002 NATSISS had about 50 per cent overlap with the groundbreaking 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS) conducted by the ABS.

ABS fieldwork conducted in discrete Indigenous communities involved consultation with community councils and the employment of local community members as facilitators. Some Indigenous Australians were newly recruited to the permanent ABS household interviewer panel for the 2002 NATSISS, with opportunities being pursued on an ongoing basis to increase the number of Indigenous people in the survey interviewer panel.

Initial results from the 2002 NATSISS were released on 23 June 2004 in *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey* (cat. no. 4714.0). The survey products available free of charge on the ABS web site include the summary of findings and associated national and state/territory media releases; a survey reference pack containing collection forms and prompt cards, data item lists, standard errors for all national tables in the initial publication, and the parallel state/territory tables released simultaneously on the web; and explanatory and technical notes.

The initial NATSISS releases cover topics as diverse as family and culture, health, disability, education, work, income and housing, law and justice, and transport. These products are indicative of the extensive range of data available from the survey and provide some insights into the analytical potential of the survey results. Key comparisons with results from the 1994 NATSIS, and with non-Indigenous results from the 2002 General Social Survey, are footnoted to indicate whether differences are statistically significant. Relevant data items have been age standardised to facilitate more relevant comparisons with statistics for the non-Indigenous population, and the 1994 NATSIS results have been rebenchmarked to reflect the significant change in Indigenous population levels between the 1991 census-based population benchmarks used when the 1994 data were first released, and subsequent experimental Indigenous population estimates based on 1996 census results.

Further analytic and microdata products are planned for the results from the 2002 NATSISS.

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS)

The 1998–99 review of the ABS household survey program also saw the planning for the NATSIHS as a six-yearly survey to coincide with every second cycle of the three-yearly ABS National Health Survey (NHS). The introduction of a more frequent NHS and the new NATSIHS in the ABS survey program was supported through funding from the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing under a partnership agreement with the ABS.

As with the 2002 NATSISS, the development of the NATSIHS is guided not only by advice from NAGATSIHID, but also with the advice and assistance of the NATSIHS reference group comprising Indigenous experts and representatives from Indigenous organisations, government agencies and academia.

This health survey will also employ Indigenous facilitators in Indigenous communities, and there has been consultation with Indigenous community councils and health services in the communities to gain support and assistance with the conduct of the surveys.

Development of the 2004–05 NATSIHS has been completed and the survey will be enumerated between August 2004 and July 2005. The 2004–05

NATSIHS has significant content overlap with both the 2004–05 NHS and the Indigenous oversample to the 2001 NHS, as well as a new module on social and emotional wellbeing (adult respondents only) and expanded content in oral health, kidney disease and discrimination.

The development of the social and emotional wellbeing module for the 2004–05 NATSIHS was undertaken in partnership with both the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation and AIHW. This successful collaboration was a short term development to address a high priority need for information in this area of Indigenous health, pending completion of longer term research into the most appropriate instruments and collection methods that should be used to gain population measures for this health priority.

Other ABS household surveys

The ABS Survey of Education and Training and the monthly Labour Force Survey (LFS) both incorporate an Indigenous identifier to enable Indigenous results to be produced. The four-yearly Survey of Education and Training has, from 1993, produced a range of statistics regarding Indigenous education and training participation and completion. Up until March 2001 the LFS captured Indigenous status in just one month of the year. Since then the identifier has been included in every monthly LFS collection, increasing the sample size from which to compile results and spreading the measures of employment across the year, so improving the quality of the national as well as the state and territory Indigenous estimates. The experimental results for 2002 and 2003 are expected to be released in early 2005. Other ABS social surveys, such as the General Social Survey and NHS, also include the Indigenous identifier to enable non-Indigenous results to be compiled for comparison with data for the Indigenous population collected in the NATSISS and NATSIHS.

Administrative data

Data from government administrative collections are an important source of information about program performance and about the circumstances of the people interacting with service providers. However the quality of the information about Indigenous Australians derived from these collections depends, in part, on the quality of the identification of Indigenous people in those systems. The ABS is working with relevant agencies through multilateral processes, such as the National Indigenous Housing Information Implementation Committee, to improve the standards for, and quality of, information derived from the various administrative systems.

Several years ago the ABS introduced its Indigenous Administrative Data Project (IADP) to target improvements in a range of administrative datasets by working bilaterally with agencies and others in each jurisdiction. The cooperation of state and territory agencies, and their

enthusiasm to engage with the ABS project and extend its reach have been instrumental in progress to date.

The IADP focused initially on births and deaths registrations and hospital separations with resulting improvements in the completeness of Indigenous data from these systems. More recently the project has widened in scope to include work with a range of agencies on a number of other important datasets to encourage and facilitate the implementation of the ABS standard Indigenous identifier. As well, the IADP is providing advice on data collection practices and processes utilised by collection agencies. For example, the ABS is currently in negotiation with various police and courts jurisdictions with a view to achieving standard Indigenous identification across all police jurisdictions. Significant progress is also being made with courts administrations in various jurisdictions.

Demography

The ABS Demography program maintains a strong focus on, and commitment to, improving the availability and quality of Indigenous population estimates and projections, and vitals statistics. While the range and quality of both the population and vitals statistics have improved over the past decade, in part due to efforts to improve the source data (for example through the IADP) and in part through improving methodologies, further work is required to better meet key user needs. The ABS continues to work with the AIHW and other expert advisers, including representatives from NAGATSIHID, on Indigenous mortality data developments, and in particular on assessing whether Indigenous mortality trend data can be produced from currently available information.

Thematic publications

In addition to the collection-specific publications, such as from the ABS census and household survey programs, a range of thematic and analytic products are being produced which either focus on or include analyses of the circumstances of Indigenous Australians. An important flagship product to highlight key statistics and issues in Indigenous health and welfare is the joint ABS/AIHW publication *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (cat. no. 4704.0). Other ABS flagship publications such as *Measures of Australia's Progress* (cat. no. 1370.0) and *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0) address contemporary social and public policy issues relevant to the circumstances of Indigenous Australians. The 2004 issue of *Year Book Australia* (cat. no. 1301.0), launched on 27 February 2004 at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, included a range of Indigenous articles.

Other Indigenous collections

In addition to the ABS census and surveys program, the ABS has collaborated with other agencies to develop, conduct and/or output results from Indigenous data collections. Principal among these has been the CHINS, conducted by the ABS on behalf of the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission, and with funding support from them, to provide critical information about housing stock and infrastructure adequacy in discrete Indigenous communities. CHINS was conducted in 1999, and again in 2001 when it was enumerated in conjunction with the 2001 census.

The Australian Government Department of Family and Community Services (FaCS) is currently developing a Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children (LSIC). The ABS is represented on the LSIC Steering Committee and is working with the FaCS LSIC project team on issues in Indigenous survey design and data collection relevant to LSIC. The ABS is also consulting with the LSIC project team about planned visits to Indigenous communities for ABS survey activity (including pilot tests and dress rehearsals) to minimise the impact of such collections on communities participating in both LSIC and ABS data collection activities.

The ABS provided consultancy services and advice for the design and conduct of the recently completed Telethon Institute of Child Health Research (ICHR) Western Australia Aboriginal Child Health Survey (WAACHS). The ABS is also collaborating with ICHR on a range of analytic outputs from the WAACHS. The ABS has also assisted the National Centre for Vocational Education and Research with the design and methodology for its 2004 Survey of Indigenous Vocational Education and Training Students.

Community engagement

In 2004–05 the ABS will be implementing an initiative seeking to further improve the way we work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on data reporting and feedback. Following the investigation of similar initiatives in Canada, United States of America and New Zealand, the ABS is enhancing its Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy by recruiting state/territory based Indigenous engagement managers to:

- provide an ongoing communication channel with communities (both discrete communities and community groups)
- engage in Indigenous enumeration in the census, in ABS Indigenous surveys and, for discrete communities, in the ABS Monthly Population Survey
- undertake consultation and follow-up in regard to business surveys

- provide a 'mentor' in ABS regional offices for Indigenous staff, such as Indigenous cadets or Indigenous people recruited to the ABS permanent household interviewer panel or as census collectors
- undertake a dissemination role, returning appropriate information to communities and Indigenous organisations in their preferred format and in ways which support the use of statistics for their own purposes.

The strategy also provides resources to develop more appropriate material to support Indigenous communities and organisations to access and use statistical information.

Priorities in data development

The ABS seeks ongoing advice on its Indigenous statistics work program through many channels including the Australian Statistics Advisory Council, peak groups such as NAGATSIHID, and from survey specific reference groups. The updating of ABS' *Directions in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics* in 2005 will provide for a focused consultation process to review ABS priorities in this field of statistics.

One recent report that focused on information gaps in this field of statistics was the COAG *Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage, Key Indicators Report*, which highlighted ten broad priorities for data development. These priorities are being assessed and in many cases are already addressed by developments in the ABS Indigenous statistics work program. For example, in the priority area of disability, data on the prevalence of disability within the adult (aged 15 years and older) Indigenous population, including whether the person has a disability or long-term health condition resulting in a profound or severe core activity restriction, and the type of disability (sight, hearing, speech, physical, or intellectual) have been released from the 2002 NATSISS. It is anticipated similar information would be included in future survey cycles. The ABS is also currently assessing the possibility of including a disability topic in the 2006 census. If disability is included it will provide a rich dataset for the analysis of disability within the Indigenous population across geography and in comparison with measures for the general population.

The COAG report also called for better income, education and employment data for the Indigenous population. The ABS Indigenous statistics work program has focused on providing these data from improvements in the census, and from its new Indigenous specific surveys either recently completed or being developed, and from the inclusion of the Indigenous identifier in its LFS and education and training survey. The recently released 2002 NATSISS results included details relating to employment and unemployment, Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP), barriers to employment, discouraged job seekers, and employment support services. The basic splits of employment by CDEP/non-CDEP, long-term/other unemployment (and the related totals), and

persons not in the labour force, were age standardised for comparison of the NATSISS results with those for the non-Indigenous population.

The COAG report seeks greater consistency between the definitions used in reporting water and sewerage services for the general population, and those adopted in the CHINS. If asked to undertake another CHINS collection, the ABS would work with relevant stakeholders in designing CHINS to achieve consistency with other datasets where practicable.

Conclusion

The continuing need for better and more detailed information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians is well understood. The ABS work program has responded to this need, and is looking to its engagement strategies to provide information in ways that support Indigenous communities to participate more effectively in informed decision making. However, the burden that the information collection processes impose on the Indigenous population is noted as being already well beyond the reporting load being borne by the general community. The current and planned ABS Indigenous collection activities are designed to manage that load on Indigenous people, Indigenous communities and organisations, and to date cooperation with ABS Indigenous data collection has been very good.

The increasing 'direct' Indigenous data collection activity now being planned by other government agencies will also require careful coordination with ABS activities so as to avoid duplication of effort and to manage the burden on Indigenous peoples and their communities. The ABS will continue to look for ways to collaborate with other agencies proposing to collect information, and will continue to encourage coordinated and/or integrated approaches to communities.

Section II

Special Articles

Chapter 4 Developments in Regional Statistics

4 Developments in Regional Statistics

Introduction

In the 1999–2000 ABS Annual Report a special article was presented on *Servicing Regional Data Requirements*. The article described the increasing demand for statistical information on regional issues and set out a number of ABS initiatives to service these needs. These initiatives included:

- creating more frequent regional indicators
- providing new measures relevant to regional analysis. At that time there was particular emphasis on developing measures of income distribution in regions
- providing statistical databases to allow for the measurement of the differential impacts and outcomes of government policies in regions
- increasing access to regional statistics through publications, profiles and other services.

This article provides an update of the various initiatives in regional statistics including the provision of new statistics, new services to increase access to regional statistics and advances in statistical geography to assist regional analysis. This article also discusses the development of an Information Development Plan for regional and rural statistics which is aimed at better understanding and prioritising the requirements for regional data, identifying new sources of regional information, and developing partnerships with other data suppliers to be able to meet the identified needs.

Policy context

Regional issues continue to be high on the policy agenda for all levels of government. However the policy issues confronting, and in turn the information needs of, the different levels of government vary considerably.

At the national level the Australian Government's policy for regional Australia is articulated in its 2001 statement *Stronger Regions: A Stronger Australia*. The emphasis of the policy is on creating partnerships between government and communities which foster the development of self-reliant regions. This policy framework is built around four goals:

- Strengthening regional economic and social opportunities
- Sustaining our productive natural resources and environment
- Delivering better regional services

- Adjusting to economic, technological and government-induced change.

The policy framework encompasses management of the social and economic impact of structural change on communities; managing the social issues faced by regional communities and building their skills to cope with these; the improvement of business and investment to facilitate local economic growth and employment while being mindful of sustaining the environment; and the efficient and equitable delivery of regional services. A major policy theme underlying these goals is that of building community capacity and self-reliance.

Social objectives, particularly addressing socioeconomic disadvantage, feature strongly in the policy statement. The Australian Government's stated aim is that all Australians, regardless of where they live, have an opportunity to share in the social and economic benefits and opportunities that our societies create.

Regional issues are an important policy driver at state, territory and local government levels as well. These levels of government carry a major responsibility for regional economic and infrastructure development. Planning for regions is set in the larger context of state and territory development, and regional policy statements at this level therefore tend to be dominated by economic development imperatives, although social objectives are also prominent. Another particular focus for state, territory and local government is ensuring equity of access to services such as education, health, child care, sanitation and cultural facilities for regional communities.

Major information needs for regional policy

While the policy issues confronting the different levels of government are diverse, the major data requirements can be grouped within a number of broad themes derived from the policy concerns:

Economic	indicators of the changing economic performance of regions over time. Data would include industry and business performance data, and employment/unemployment data etc.
Wellbeing	indicators of social outcomes within regional communities. Data would include employment/unemployment, health, and household income data etc.
Target groups	indicators of disadvantage for particular population groups such as Indigenous, youth, aged, single parents
Social capital	indicators of community social interaction
Environment	natural resource management and environmental degradation

In addition to these themes there are a number of specific information needs required by the different levels of government. In terms of equitable access to services, the issue of demand for, and access to, services in regions is important for local and state and territory governments, while equitable access to information communications technology for regional Australians is a particular focus for the Australian Government.

Information needs are not necessarily discrete but are often concerned with understanding the connections and interactions between the various themes. In general, the response of the ABS has been to improve data quality and availability at a broad level so that the data are capable of supporting and informing a number of inter-related information needs.

Recent ABS initiatives in regional statistics

Rural and Regional Statistics Information Development Plan

The ABS has commenced work on an Information Development Plan (IDP) for rural and regional statistics. An IDP is a framework that scopes the field of statistics in a given subject area no matter what their source, and which seeks to formally identify priorities for statistical development, and agree on roles in undertaking this development. The development of the Rural and Regional Statistics IDP involves consideration of the following questions:

- What is the extent and nature of current data demand?
- What is the extent and nature of current data supply?
- What are the resultant statistical data gaps and development priorities?
- Who should take responsibility for specific priorities?

In making recommendations for future statistical development, the IDP will incorporate an assessment of the overall feasibility of addressing specific information requirements and will take into account the priorities for new information identified from consultations held with stakeholder groups across Australia.

As a first step in the development of an IDP, the ABS has, in close consultation with the key stakeholders across the three tiers of government, produced a Rural and Regional Information Model. This describes the various ways in which a region may be defined and discusses in detail the nature and extent of current data demand and supply.

A strong degree of collaboration among data providers is a key factor in the development and subsequent implementation of the full IDP. While the ABS has, and will continue to have, a major role in the provision of regional data, it is recognised that other data providers have an important role to play, and indeed in some cases may be best placed to lead statistical development in a particular area. It is planned therefore that the

recommendations made in the IDP will be developed and implemented collaboratively across agencies involved in the research and dissemination of regional data.

Providing new information on regions

In order to meet the significant data needs which have been identified, a number of projects have been undertaken to make new data sources available. While the majority of information collected by the ABS has traditionally been from surveys and censuses, for regional analysis the greatest improvements in the range of information available has come from administrative sources. These are the large datasets maintained by government departments as a function of carrying out their administrative responsibilities.

Obtaining information on the economic performance of regions is challenging as sources of industry data at regional level are scarce. By using Australian Taxation Office (ATO) business income tax data however, experimental estimates of business activity for regions (such as statistical divisions) have been produced. Standard tables include information such as the number of small businesses, expenses and profits, and a number of other business expense ratios. These regional business estimates have been welcomed by researchers as they inform to some degree, the state of business activity in regions. It is hoped to improve and continue this series using ATO Business Activity Statement data in future.

ABS regional employment estimates provide state and territory government agencies with important information on regional activity. The greatest needs of these agencies are for data to monitor the level of regional economic activity, to assist regional development, and the creation and monitoring of employment policies and programs. A criticism of current employment estimates however, has been that the regional information available from the Labour Force Survey has not been of sufficient quality to sustain meaningful regional analyses. Recognising this concern the ABS has introduced regional benchmarking as a way of improving the survey estimates.

With regard to providing information on regional wellbeing, and in particular understanding levels and sources of income in regions, the ABS has produced a range of statistics based on aggregated individual tax data sourced from the ATO. Estimates of income for wage and salary earners for different occupation groups at the statistical local area level have been published. This valuable series, which is now part of regular ABS output, provides a new measure of variations in wage and salaries and occupations across regions and over time. The ABS is currently developing regional estimates of total income using government cash benefits data sourced from the Department of Family and Community Services to add to the ATO information.

Social capital is a concept which can be measured in a variety of ways, particularly at the regional level. The ABS recently produced *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital — An Australian Framework and Indicators* (cat. no. 1378.0) which will assist considerably in formalising and standardising measures of social capital. This is a growing area of research in regional studies, believed to be a critical element in the ability of regional communities to overcome challenges and a significant contributor to regional resilience.

To statistically support local regional policy at the state and territory government level, each ABS regional office maintains a unit dedicated to identifying, improving and disseminating the range of small area data relevant to their respective state or territory. The main focus of these units has been on the exploitation of the administrative holdings of government agencies. To date these projects have enabled the ABS to access a considerable range of administrative data much of which is now in the public domain through ABS outputs. These new data sources are made available through publications such as *regional profiles* and other products.

With respect to environmental issues, the ABS is currently examining the feasibility of producing regional information on natural resource management in the agricultural sector through the use of area based or land parcel surveying. This approach, if adopted, would allow for information to be produced for particular regions such as water catchments. Recently the ABS conducted a land management and salinity survey and a survey of water use by farmers as part of its agriculture statistics program. Results of the salinity survey were released for priority regions identified by the National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality. Results of the survey of water use are yet to be published, however it is anticipated that they will be available at the statistical division level.

National Regional Profile — Making Regional Data Available and Accessible

The production of *regional profiles* for the states and territories was one of the first strategies used by the ABS to make regional indicator data available more frequently, using both ABS and non-ABS data sources. While these outputs have the flexibility to provide a reasonable statistical picture of specified regions, and remain in high demand, they are not developed in a consistent way across the whole country, and are somewhat different in the data items available from region to region. They do not enable a national comparison of regions on a consistent basis; an important requirement for many analyses of policy and program outcomes.

To facilitate such comparisons, and make small area data more accessible, the ABS released the *National Regional Profile* (cat. no. 1379.0.55.001) in 2004. The National Regional Profile (NRP) is an online

suite of regional indicators available on the ABS web site. The profile provides data for a single year for standard Australian geographical regions, down to the statistical local area level.

In its initial deployment, the NRP contains regional indicators that are readily available for the whole of Australia such as population and other demographic variables, some headline economic indicators and, where possible, a selection of social and environmental data items. The intention is to update these indicators on an annual basis, continuing to include both ABS data and selected data sourced from external agencies.

Users of the NRP are able to select regions of interest using a pick-list or an interactive 'drill-down' map facility on the web site. For each area selected a fixed format report is provided comprising the available regional indicators. The NRP is now able to facilitate the consistent quantitative measurement, evaluation and comparison of the performance of regions.

It is anticipated that over time the NRP will be further enhanced and expanded with growth in the suite of indicators available. Future development of the NRP may also involve:

- the inclusion of time-series data allowing users to monitor changes in particular variables over time
- the incorporation of selected state and territory specific data (such as administrative data available only for selected jurisdictions)
- functionality to allow users to build their own regional profiles (from a pick-list of indicators and areas).

In addition to the NRP, regional data from the Census of Population and Housing has also been made more accessible. Basic Community Profiles (BCPs) from the 2001 census were made available (free of charge) via the ABS web site for the first time. For the 2006 census it is planned to enhance this service to allow clients to more easily specify the data and the geography of interest, and to enable clients to transfer data to their own Geographical Information Systems (GIS). In the interim, access to the NRP and BCPs is now available from the same web page.

Together, the new BCP and NRP facilities are able to provide a comprehensive set of social and economic indicators for standard geographical regions.

Developments in statistical geography

To enable regional analysis it is essential to have appropriate area classifications that align with user needs. In this regard the ABS has made significant progress on a number of fronts.

Remoteness Classification

In 2001 the ABS introduced a new structure in its Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) — the Remoteness Structure. The Remoteness Structure is based on the Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia (ARIA) developed by the then Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care and the National Centre for Social Applications of GIS. ARIA measures the remoteness of a point based on the physical road distance to the nearest Urban Centre (ASGC 1996) in each of a number of classes. The Remoteness Structure includes all Collection Districts (CDs), and therefore in aggregate, covers the whole of Australia.

The purpose of the Remoteness Structure is to classify CDs which share common characteristics of remoteness into broad geographical areas called Remoteness Areas. There are six Remoteness Areas in the structure:

- Major Cities of Australia
- Inner Regional Australia
- Outer Regional Australia
- Remote Australia
- Very Remote Australia
- Migratory

The Remoteness Structure is now used for the production of standard ABS statistical output from population censuses and some ABS surveys. For the purposes of regional analysis, the Remoteness Structure has provided an additional framework on which to study regional characteristics. It is most suited to the analyses of changing patterns in the development and performance of broad regions across Australia.

Geocoding

Maximum geographical flexibility in the analysis of statistical data can be achieved with the use of geocoded data, that is, data linked to specific point locations on the earth's surface by latitude and longitude. Geocoding data offers users the means to define custom geographic regions on the basis of a spatial framework, which in contrast to frameworks based on administrative boundaries, will not be subject to change over time.

The power of geocoding lies in the fact that once a statistical unit has been allocated a latitude and longitude it can be coded to any geographic classification but, at the same time, remain independent of standard classifications. Records from surveys and censuses can be coded in this way, but in addition, records from administrative systems can also be geocoded. This greatly increases the value of administrative data for regional analysis as it allows the unambiguous allocation of records to areas.

In support of agencies and researchers wishing to take advantage of geocoding, Public Sector Mapping Agencies Australia Ltd released the Geocoded National Address File (G-NAF) in the first quarter of 2004. G-NAF uses the resources of a number of purpose-built address datasets to build a definitive address list for Australia that spatially codes these addresses. In addition, most of the major custodians of administrative data will be licensed users of G-NAF.

While geocoding provides significant flexibility in regional analysis, this flexibility has implications for the protection of individual or business confidentiality. For this reason the ABS will not use geocoding as the principal means of disseminating regional data. Instead, a new spatial unit known as the Mesh Block will be the basis of ABS dissemination of small area data, principally from the Census of Population and Housing, using G-NAF infrastructure as an enabling technology.

Mesh Blocks

The application of flexible geography to enhance regional analysis will be significantly improved by the introduction of Mesh Blocks at the 2006 census. The ABS released *Information Paper: Mesh Blocks* (cat. no. 1209.0) in March 2004 seeking public comment on the Mesh Block initiative. The paper proposes that Mesh Blocks, about one-fifth the size of the current CD, will become the basic building block of all statistical, political and administrative geography in Australia. To maintain confidentiality, significant limits will exist on the availability of data for individual Mesh Blocks. Mesh Blocks can, however, be aggregated within the limits imposed by confidentiality to form customised regions best suited to the needs of the individual user or analysis. The ABS will support Mesh Blocks with a comprehensive geographical coding infrastructure based on the G-NAF.

The critical success factor for Mesh Blocks is the extent to which they are embraced not only by users of statistics, but also by those responsible for administrative and operational boundaries within their own jurisdictions. If Mesh Blocks are widely adopted within administrative systems, the potential utility of administrative data holdings to inform regional analysis is greatly enhanced. While Mesh Blocks will inevitably require some compromise and will not be perfect for all applications, the design features must make them as suitable as possible for the maximum range of applications.

Standard outputs from the 2006 census will be based on the current geography, that is CDs, but after the 2006 census, experimental data will be available based on Mesh Blocks. For the 2011 census, Mesh Blocks will become the standard building block of the ASGC and CDs will be replaced by a new output unit, similar in size to a CD, but designed specifically for data output. Only very basic census data, such as number of dwellings and population counts, would be published at the Mesh Block level, but the full range of census data will be available for combinations of Mesh Blocks.

It is likely that statistics from other collections which are closely linked to location, such as the Agriculture Census, could also be aggregated to Mesh Blocks.

In the meantime the ASGC continues to be maintained and enhanced. A key issue at present is the current trend towards local government amalgamations in some states, which has the potential to cause a break in the statistical time series, particularly where such changes involve the splitting of existing local government areas. In such cases it is often not possible to accurately allocate historical data to the respective parts of a local government area.

Conclusion

Since the last special article on regional statistics in the 1999–2000 Annual Report there has been, as evidenced above, a number of significant advances in increasing the volume, and improving the availability of regional information.

The ABS views the finalisation of the Information Development Plan as being a key element in providing the framework for further developing the range and quality of regional statistics. Integral to the Information Development Plan will be the identification of new sources of regional information. By its nature regional statistics are data intensive, and increasingly administrative data of government agencies at all levels, as opposed to ABS data collections, will be the source of regional information. In that context the role of the ABS will be to develop partnerships with, and assist, other data suppliers to make their information available. The ABS developments in respect of area classifications, geocoding, and Mesh Blocks, and their adoption by other data suppliers, will be the key to ensuring a consistent and flexible approach to the coding and presentation of regional information. Similarly, the ABS views the *National Regional Profile* as an excellent vehicle for the delivery of regional information, from any source, in a consistent and readily accessible means.

Section II

Special Articles

Special Articles in Earlier
Annual Reports

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, pages 7 to 11, supplemented by Appendix 5)

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

Dissemination of Statistics by the ABS (1985–86, pages 9 to 14)

ABS Corporate Plan (1986–87, Chapter 2)

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

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

Statistics and Privacy (1987–88, Chapter 3)

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

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

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

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

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

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

Security of ABS Data Holdings (1992–93, Chapter 3)

Reducing Respondent Load (1992–93, Chapter 2)

The 1996 Census of Population and Housing (1993–94, Chapter 2)

Retirement of Mr Ian Castles, AO, Australian Statistician, 1986–1994 (1994–95, Chapter 1)

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (1994–95, Chapter 2)

Developments in the Australian National Accounts (1995–96, Chapter 2)

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)

Access to ABS Microdata: Issues and Developments (2002–03, Chapter 3)

Population Estimates: Importance, Complexity and Controversy (2002–03, Chapter 4)

Section III

Performance Information

Chapter 5

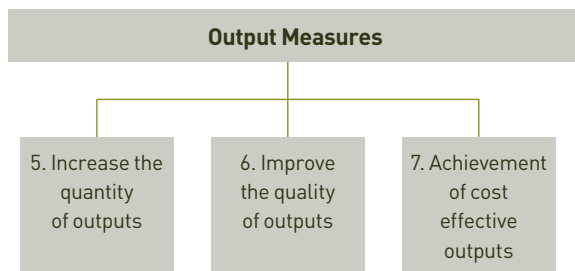
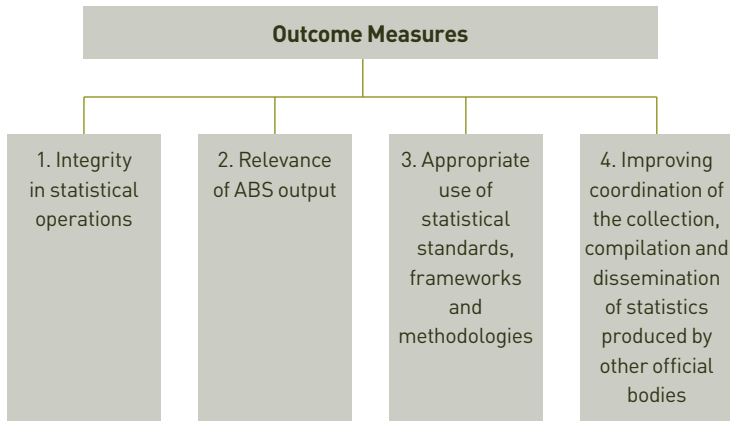
Performance Information

5 Performance Information

This Chapter outlines the performance of the ABS in 2003–04, in terms of its outcomes and outputs as specified in the 2003–04 Portfolio Budget Statements as presented to parliament in May 2003.

ABS OUTCOME

Informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community based on the provision of a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service



OUTCOME MEASURES

1. Integrity in Statistical Operations

Performance Measures

1.1 An objective statistical service, as demonstrated by:

- **Release of reliable/accurate statistics**
- **Open statistical process**
- **Trust and cooperation of providers**

ABS data, analysis, and interpretations are objective, and the ABS always publishes its statistics 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.

1.1 An objective statistical service, as demonstrated by:

- **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, extent of revisions, 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 and relatively minor revisions. During 2003–04 there was a marginal decline in the timeliness of ABS quarterly main economic indicators.

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 at the Statistical Clearing House web site www.sch.gov.au.

Open statistical process

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

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

- State Statistical Forum
- 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 2004–05 to 2006–07, 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.

The ABS is open about the methods used in producing statistics. ABS' Methodology Division is responsible for providing specialist services to meet new and ongoing demands in statistics. One of its key roles is establishing standards and advising statistical areas on appropriate statistical methods and being the ABS' conscience on the quality of statistical outputs. Supporting the work of the Methodology Division is the Methodology Advisory Committee (MAC) consisting of professional statisticians external to the ABS. MAC meets twice-yearly and provides a forum for peer review of statistical developments in the ABS. Some of the issues considered by MAC in 2003–04 include:

- modelling small area estimates of disability
- statistical matching techniques for the 2001 National Health Survey and the 1998–99 Household Expenditure Survey
- statistical issues associated with producing a longitudinal dataset of businesses
- assessment of risk for unit record file disclosure.

Information about new statistical standards, frameworks, concepts, sources and methodologies is regularly published 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.

Some specific examples of the open statistical processes in 2003–04 include:

- meeting with representatives of state and territory governments at the first Population Estimates Technical Workshop in October 2003. The purpose of this now annual meeting is to explain and discuss methodological issues surrounding the compilation of population estimates as required for the purposes of *A New Tax System (Commonwealth-State Financial Relations) Act 1999*. The establishment of the workshop was an outcome of a previous State Statistical Forum meeting.
- release of *General Social Survey: Data Reference Package – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4159.0.55.001), and *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey: Data Reference Package – Electronic Publication* (cat. no. 4714.0.55.002), which both presented a wide range of information about the collection methodology associated with the respective surveys. The data reference packages contain copies of questionnaires, interviewer’s instructions, prompt cards and other material used in the collection of information. They also contain relative standard error tables for the national publication tables.
- the extensive and open consultation process in considering the topics for inclusion in the 2006 census. It included publication of ABS views on contents, submissions from the public and organisations, seminars in each capital city and consultation with specialist advisory committees.

Ongoing ABS research work is often published in professional papers and/or presented to conferences in Australia and abroad. The papers are also generally available from the ABS web site. 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 2003–04 is provided at Appendix 16. Some of the topics presented at conferences include:

- *Alternative measures of income and saving* — presented to the Conference of Economists
- *Experimental price indexes for financial services* — presented to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Meeting on Consumer Price Indices
- *Measures of labour underutilisation* — presented to the 5th Path to Full Employment Conference/10th National Conference on Unemployment
- *Measures of Australia’s Progress* — presented to the Globalisation, Families and Work Conference
- *Use of administrative data in Australian retail trade statistics* — presented to the Joint Statistical Meeting of the American Statistical Association.

The ABS continues to advertise all scheduled release dates for publications up to twelve months in advance. Daily press and media releases inform users of publications being released each day. This information is also available on the 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. As part of its internal audit program, the ABS regularly 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 most recent audit report, issued in April 2004, confirmed that users of confidentialised unit record files are complying with the conditions specified in the undertakings.

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 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 2003-04 through a range of methods such as increasing the use of administrative data. More information on provider load is detailed under Performance Measure 7.4. Initiatives such as providing a range of relevant census outputs to all small-medium businesses included in ABS collections have been successful in the past as a means of maintaining the goodwill between the ABS and its data providers.

Each year over 100,000 businesses are selected in ABS economic surveys. In 2003-04, a total of 397 businesses wrote to the ABS concerning reporting workload issues. This was down from the 427 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 2003–04, one complainant asked the Complaints Review Officer to review their initial complaint. The complaint was thoroughly investigated and ABS officers subsequently met with representatives of the company involved to discuss their concerns. The matter was resolved amicably and the complainant was appreciative of the process and the final outcome.

Table 1: Complaints from data providers

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Number of complaints	748	550	427	397

In relation to its household survey program the ABS continues to have the trust and cooperation of the public and as a result is able to achieve high response rates (see Performance Measure 6.3). This was in spite of the Household Income and Expenditure Survey being the subject of a negative, and inaccurate, media report in December 2003. While the report received widespread coverage it had little impact on ABS response rates, including the Household Income and Expenditure Survey.

The ABS continues to enjoy a positive relationship with the Office of the Federal Privacy Commissioner. The Australian Statistician and Deputy Australian Statistician met with the Privacy Commissioner in 2004. The meeting agreed that the continued transparency of ABS' work was important.

2. Relevance of ABS Output

Performance Measures

2.1 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**

2.2 Openness of planning process

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 able to relate to other data. To support this, they are placed in an appropriate

statistical framework such as the System of National Accounts. The ABS also provides analyses and explanations to help the interpretation of its statistics.

2.1 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 Australian, state and territory government 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 ASAC identifying major social, economic, and environmental issues of policy significance over the coming three to five years.

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 (SSF) 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, however, the SSF has a narrower focus with the emphasis being on the issues which directly affect the state/territory governments.

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

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

- water issues — the ABS released *Water Account, Australia* (cat. no. 4610.0) and conducted a survey of water use by farmers, results of which will be published in 2004–05
- obesity — the ABS has released a range of information outlining Australia's participation in sport and physical activities
- health — a number of special articles were released discussing the prevalence of a range of health conditions such as asthma, diabetes and cardiovascular disease. In addition, a number of publications were released covering topics such as breastfeeding, mental health, and private health insurance in Australia
- disability — preliminary results have been released from the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. The ABS has also successfully tested a question designed to identify people in need of assistance due to a severe/profound disability for possible inclusion in the 2006 Census of Population and Housing
- prices — responding to strong user demand, the ABS has developed a set of experimental spatial price indexes which are designed to measure price levels between the state/territory capital cities; the ABS is also currently looking at ways of improving the timeliness of the House Price Index
- innovation and biotechnology — the ABS has developed and conducted an Innovation Survey in respect of 2003 and is currently developing a strategy for collecting a range of biotechnology statistics. The Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources and the Department of Education, Science and Training contributed to the cost of developing and running the Innovation Survey.
- tourism — following the release of the Tourism White Paper the ABS has been working on expanding the range of tourism statistics. In consultation with government, industry and the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism, the ABS is in the process of developing a suite of indicators of overall tourism performance.

An important component of the ABS output strategy has been the release of Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) to enable users to undertake more detailed analysis of data. The release in November 2003 of the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) has further extended the availability of ABS data for use by policy makers and researchers.

In 2003–04 the ABS released 212 CURFs, up from the 170 released in 2002–03. There were 226 registered users from 39 organisations approved to access RADL as at 30 June 2004.



Mr Richard Bridge, Department of Education, Science and Training, and Ms Bronwyn Driscoll, Assistant Statistician, Integration, Coordination and Innovation Branch at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for the development of the 2003 Innovation Survey.

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
- complimentary media subscriptions to the AusStats service which provides electronic access to all ABS publications and time series data, 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.

Free access to ABS data is also provided through media releases, media enquiries, and via the distribution of ABS reports to media offices and to members of parliament.

Accesses to ABS statistical information increased further during 2003–04. This is particularly evident in the use of the ABS web site and the web site based AusStats subscription service. The 25 per cent increase in web site accesses and the almost 50 per cent increase in the number of downloads from Ausstats in 2003–04 follow on from a substantial increase in previous years and reflects, in part, the expanding range of data available on the web site. Users of ABS data have been assisted by the recent implementation of an email notification service. The service, which allows users to be notified as soon as nominated ABS publications are released, had over 2,600 subscribers as at 30 June 2004.

The 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 eLEP, is an example of ABS' innovative service provision and the roll out of eLEP has continued at a very pleasing rate over the last financial year. The success of the LEP was reiterated in a report into *Libraries in the Online Environment* by the Senate Reference Committee of the Environment, Communication, Information Technology and the Arts which stated that the LEP "...was warmly regarded by all".

Subscribers to ABS@ remain at ten although at 30 June 2004 the New South Wales, Western Australian and Tasmanian governments are all well advanced in their consideration of this facility. 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.

Over the past three years there has been a significant drop in the number of publication subscribers. The main reason is that the ABS has reduced the number of publications to which clients may subscribe with many

subscribers electing to access ABS information through eLEP, AusStats and the ABS' e-commerce system, while others avail themselves of the increasing amount of information becoming available via the ABS web site.

The ABS is undertaking a number of other projects aimed at expanding the use of ABS data while also taking a more active role in determining ways to improve the statistical literacy of students. These include working with the schools' sector to expand the range of curriculum support material provided and agreeing to coordinate the implementation of a national 'CensusAtSchools' initiative to coincide with the next Census of Population and Housing.

Table 2: Accesses to selected dissemination services

	Type of Access	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Web site	Accesses	20,946,456	27,659,711	38,712,367	48,383,816
AusStats	Downloads	225,585	355,810	655,782	948,956
ABS@a	Subscribers	7	8	10	10
Internet Inquiry Service	Emails	7,625	15,636	20,036	21,136
National Information & Referral Service	Calls completed	120,165	119,020	100,197	85,556
Publications(b)	Subscribers	11,045	9,654	6,257	4,063
Dial-a-Statistic-1900	Calls	15,465	8,452	7,853	6,354
CPI Infoline	Calls	9,182	7,333	8,363	7,982
Library Extension Program	Libraries	516	515	515	519
Secondary Providers	Number	69	65	(c)107	(d)140

(a) Relates to total number of organisations using the service (including some state and territory governments) at 30 June. (b) Numbers as at 30 June. (c) Includes 38 secondary distributors who include ABS data on their non-charging web sites. (d) Includes 54 secondary distributors who include ABS data on their non-charging web sites.

Table 3 below shows the level of media reporting (by medium) over recent years. Since 2000–01, reporting about the ABS and its statistics on radio, television and the Internet, and in newspapers and magazines, has increased significantly. This increase is predominantly attributed to the conduct of the 2001 Census of Population and Housing and the ongoing release of census datasets and increased coverage of population matters, such as Australia’s population reaching 20,000,000 on 4 December 2003. The ABS changed monitoring methods for the newspaper and magazine placements during 2003–04 and therefore the figure for this item is not directly comparable to previous years.

Table 3: Media reporting, by placement

Year	Radio, television and Internet news placements	Newspaper and magazine placements	News releases issued
2000–01	4,800	9,300	383
2001–02	7,088	11,138	156
2002–03	6,774	13,580	168
2003–04	12,642	(a)10,431	193

(a) The ABS engaged a new media monitoring service for Newspaper and Magazine placements in 2003–04. As a result the information is not directly comparable with earlier years.

The Australian media has rapidly increased its use of AusStats, especially since 2002 when it was decided to provide complimentary access to the media for the purposes of reporting. As shown in Table 4, usage of AusStats by media more than doubled between 2002–03 and 2003–04. Targeted marketing and ongoing training programs were also introduced and have boosted usage.

Table 4: AusStats usage by media (files downloaded)

Year	Publications	Time series spreadsheets	Census	Data cubes	Total
2000–01	5	564	–	3	572
2001–02	494	390	72	51	1,007
2002–03	2,034	1,721	1,339	167	5,261
2003–04	3,668	4,741	1,748	460	10,617

2.2: 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, Australian and state government agencies, academics, business organisations, unions, community groups.

These include:

- Economic Statistics User Group
- Tourism Statistics Consultative Group
- Children and Youth Statistics Advisory Group
- Innovation Survey Technical Reference Group
- Personal Safety Survey Advisory Group
- National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data
- International Trade in Services User Group
- Time Use Survey Advisory Group
- Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport Research Group.

In addition, as part of the consultations surrounding the development of 2006 Census of Population and Housing content, the ABS has established groups to advise on such topics as disability and ethnicity, as well as the Indigenous enumeration strategy.

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.

3. Appropriate use of statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies

Performance Measures

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

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

A key function of the ABS is to ensure appropriate use of statistical standards, frameworks and methodologies. The ABS' role in respect of statistical standards and providing advice and assistance in relation to statistics is detailed in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* as a specific function of the ABS.

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 Australian and state government agencies to adopt these standards, frameworks and methodologies in their statistical activities.

Activities and achievements during 2003–04 included:

- the provision to the Australian Taxation Office of the first phase of a new automatic coding package for use in the coding of businesses on the Australian Business Register according to their industrial activity
- completion of a revised industry classification, the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification 2006, in consultation with key Australian and state government bodies, and other stakeholders
- circulation to stakeholders of a consultation draft for a new Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations which will replace the Australian Standard Classification of Occupation (Second Edition) in 2006
- development of a framework for definitional metadata relating to ABS economic data that is consistent with an international standard for metadata (ISO 11179)

- development of statistical frameworks, classifications, data items and survey instruments to collect natural resource management data from farmers, other land managers, water users and water providers
- publication of a revised *Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6461.0) and *Australian System of Government Finance Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5514.0.55.001)
- release of an updated *Framework for Australian Tourism Statistics – Electronic Delivery, 2003* (cat. no. 9502.0.55.001)
- development of a framework for the collection and presentation of information on business entries and exits series
- provision of statistical support to the Department of Transport and Regional Services on the design and population of a regional evaluation framework for assessing the status of regions
- release of a new web-based product *Measures of a Knowledge-based Economy and Society, Australia – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1377.0) in September 2003. This product presents indicators within the conceptual framework outlined in the *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society – An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0)
- provision of guidelines to assist the Council of Rural Lands Protection Boards in the collection of livestock data
- contribution to work on harmonising government finance statistics standards and Australian Accounting Standards
- development of a 'satellite account' framework for sport and recreation statistics to support better integration of that field of statistics with the national accounts
- development of a supply-use framework and operating system for use in improving the coherence of the components of gross domestic product in the quarterly national accounts
- development of a Dictionary of Standards for Education and Training Statistics, a joint initiative of the Department of Education, Science and Training, the Australian National Training Authority, all state and territory education and training departments, and the ABS
- release of *Information Paper: Sexual Assault Information Development Framework* (cat. no. 4518.0)
- release of *Information Paper: Measuring Crime Victimization, Australia: The Impact of Different Collection Methodologies* (cat. no. 4522.0.55.001) which discusses the different levels of crime reported via various collection methodologies and the reasons for those differences.

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

The ABS continues to be 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 2003–04 included contributions to:

- international work on developing the new 'Resolution concerning consumer price indices' adopted by the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians
- the drafting of new international manuals on Consumer Price Indices and Producer Price Indices
- the implementation of the International Comparison Program particularly in the Asia-Pacific region
- the revision of the international standards for national accounts (System of National Accounts 1993)
- the updating of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Balance of Payments Manual through involvement with appropriate technical expert groups, established by the IMF Committee on Balance of Payments Statistics. This included the presentation of issues papers at the Balance of Payments Technical Experts Group and the Direct Investment Technical Experts Group
- the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) review of the Oslo Manual on innovation statistics, due for release by late 2005.

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:

- an Innovation Survey conducted in respect of 2003 and compiled in accordance with relevant OECD guidelines
- Australia's external debt liabilities classified and presented to meet Australia's obligations under the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard
- better alignment of Labour Force Survey estimates with international standards commencing with the February 2004 survey
- preparation for an Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey as part of an international round of surveys being coordinated by the OECD. Agreement has been reached between the ABS, the Department of Education, Science and Training and the Department of Employment and Workplace Relations to jointly fund the survey, proposed for 2006.

The ABS also provides assistance to statistical agencies in developing nations in implementing the latest international standards. Assistance in 2003-04 included:

- the provision of expert services in training courses in Thailand, China and Japan through the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
- a program of technical cooperation with the Indonesian national statistical agency (BPS). An updated Memorandum of Understanding was signed by the Director-General of BPS and the Australian Statistician during a visit to the ABS in April 2004
- commencement of a program of assistance to help the Mongolian Statistical Office strengthen its legislation and corporate governance
- continuation of a second phase (30 months) of assistance to Thailand to strengthen its macro-economic statistics
- hosting short-term traineeships for staff members from the national statistical offices of Papua New Guinea and Singapore
- expert advice and training to Timor L'este (formerly East Timor) in preparation for its first population census since gaining independence
- other technical assistance to a number of countries including Thailand, Viet Nam, Nepal, the Solomon Islands and other countries in the Asia-Pacific region.



Mr Dennis Trewin, Australian Statistician (seated left), and Mr Byambatseren Pandii, Chairman of the Mongolian Statistical Office (seated right) at the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding for ongoing cooperation between the statistical agencies.

ABS officers held prominent positions in a number of international groups concerned with development of standards during 2003–04. These included:

- Mr Dennis Trewin, Australian Statistician, as Chairperson of the Sub-Committee on Statistics of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific
- Mr Dennis Trewin, Australian Statistician, as Chairperson of the International Comparison Program Global Executive Board
- Ms Susan Linacre, Deputy Australian Statistician, Population Statistics Group, as Chair of the Programme Coordinating Committee for the 54th Session of the International Statistical Institute (Berlin, August 2003)
- From September 2003, Mr Rob Edwards, Deputy Australian Statistician, Economic Statistics Group, as Vice President of the International Association for Official Statistics. This position was previously held by Dr Siu-Ming Tam, First Assistant Statistician, Information Management Division.

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

Performance Measures

4.1 Statistical Clearing House activity

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

4.3 Identifying, storing and disseminating statistics from other official bodies

Under section 6(c) of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, a key function for the ABS is to 'ensure coordination of the operations of official bodies in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information'. It achieves this by managing the reporting load placed on businesses by Australian government agencies, and through the development of the National Statistical Service which aims to deliver the statistics required by key users, no matter what the source.

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 Australian government 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 2004, for the 2003-04 financial year, is presented in the table below. Of the 120 completed reviews, all but four have resulted in approval to proceed. However, SCH intervention has also resulted in 81 instances of improved survey design and/or reduced provider load.

Table 5: Statistical Clearing House — status of review for statistical collections, 2003-04

	Completed	In progress
ABS	33	4
Other	87	7
Total	120	11

For 2003-04, the annualised load imposed on providers by non-ABS surveys reviewed by the SCH has been estimated at 41,572 hours, which represents less than 10 per cent of the total load imposed by the ABS. The annualised load for non-ABS surveys has increased by more than 10 per cent since 2002-03 despite a fall in the number of reviews completed by the SCH. One of the reasons for this is because of the large number of surveys reviewed in 2002-03. As the annualised load refers to the total number of surveys in the field with SCH approval, there is a lagged impact relating to one-off surveys approved in the latter part of 2002-03.

Table 6: Statistical Clearing House — completed reviews of statistical collections

Year	ABS	Other	Total
2000-01	40	70	110
2001-02	38	77	115
2002-03	52	117	169
2003-04	33	87	120

The SCH's Australian Government Business Surveys Register (available on the Internet at 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 809 surveys are currently disseminated on the SCH web site.

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

The ABS continued in 2003–04 to develop 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 Australian and state government 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.

As part of the NSS, the ABS is developing a National Data Network (NDN) which seeks to increase the availability and accessibility of information. The NDN will create shared facilities and protocols for accessing data through a central web site with agency/sector nodes. Data supply approaches will be consistent and facilities will be in place to ensure secrecy and confidentiality. The NDN, which grew from the work of the Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth, provides an opportunity for the ABS to progress the NSS via an initiative that already has the support of a number of government agencies.



Mr Warren McCann, Chief Executive, South Australian Department of the Premier and Cabinet (left), and Mr Dennis Trewin at the signing of the agreement for South Australia to become a National Statistical Service Foundation Member.

A milestone in the development of the NSS occurred when South Australia became the first jurisdiction to become an NSS Foundation Member. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the ABS and the South Australian Department of the Premier and Cabinet in February 2004. The ABS is also actively working with the Queensland state government to ensure broad acceptance of the NSS principles and commitment to the NDN.

Other activities/achievements in the development of the NSS in 2003-04 included the release of the NSS web site www.nss.gov.au, and the production of the NSS Key Principles and Handbook. The NSS Key Principles provide a framework for agencies to use when designing data collections and systems, looking at the requirements of management information systems, and in considering the evaluation of programs. The NSS Handbook, which incorporates the Key Principles, provides detailed information covering the statistical cycle from planning statistical activities to disseminating and evaluating statistical information and is available at the NSS web site.

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. A number of IDPs are currently under way addressing statistical topics such as tourism, manufacturing, crime and justice, children and youth, and ageing.

Another of the ways the ABS achieves its objective of providing leadership is by outposting statistical officers to state/territory and Australian 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 38 ABS officers were outposted to Australian and state/territory government agencies during 2003-04. The majority of these outpostings were long term.

Table 7: Government organisations with ABS outposted officers, 2003-04

	Long term	Short term
Australian	11	1
State/territory	13	12
Total	24	13

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

- a project with the Victorian government investigating the viability of Medicare as a source for intrastate migration
- assessment of the South Australian Department of Education and Children's Services' data holdings
- assessment of the availability and quality of data reporting on Indigenous deaths in Victoria and the Northern Territory
- assessment of the quality of disability, housing and community services data in the Australian Capital Territory
- review and assessment of the Western Australia Department of Justice court proceedings and recorded crime data.

Some of the key achievements in assisting Australian 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:

- collaboration with state/territory agencies to improve the comparability and consistency of certain administrative data by incorporating data elements based on ABS standards in the National Health Data Dictionary and the National Community Services Data Dictionary
- completion of a Rural and Regional Information Model as a prelude to the development of a rural and regional IDP
- development of a whole of government IDP for the Australian Capital Territory
- assistance to the Commonwealth Grants Commission regarding the use of mining data in the process for allocating funding to states and territories
- provision of statistical support to the Department of Transport and Regional Services on the design and population of a regional evaluation framework for assessing the status of regions
- development of a rural communities indicator for estimating regional distributions from ABS surveys
- the production of a 'triple bottom line' report and indicators for 'State Strategic Plan — Creating Opportunity' for South Australia
- development of a Domestic Water Use Survey for Western Australian and a Domestic Water and Energy Use Survey for South Australia

- reporting on regional labour markets, including workforce trends, labour force data and skills profiles for the Northern Territory
- conducting seminars and training programs aimed at improving statistical practices in the Australian government
- provision of methodological advice to the Australian National Audit Office on sample design and estimation for the Financial Delegations Audit
- provision of methodological advice to the Australian National Audit Office and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs on estimating the number of persons who overstay visas
- provision of advice on sampling and estimation methodology to the Australian Valuation Office in regards to the valuation of the National Library of Australia holdings, and to the Australian Electoral Commission for measuring the accuracy of the Australian Electoral Roll
- assistance to the Australian Institute of Criminology regarding the sample design and calculation of estimates for the National Farm Crime Survey.

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. Examples during 2003-04 included:

- the finalisation of a protocol, in conjunction with the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), which sets out the way in which the ABS uses taxation data
- the publication *State and Regional Indicators, Victoria* (cat. no. 1367.2) is released in electronic version each quarter. The publication disseminates a number of indicators which are sourced from a range of non-ABS organisations, as well as many which originate from ABS surveys. In addition, updates of *Regional Statistics* (cat. no. 1362.1-8 series) were published in 2003-04 for New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory. The publications bring together data from a large range of sources for areas of the states/territories
- the ABS published the fourth edition of *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 2003* (cat. no. 4704.0) in August 2003. The publication was produced jointly with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare and provides a unique overview of the health and welfare of Australia's Indigenous population. The report draws on the extensive surveys and censuses conducted by the ABS and the range of data held by the Australian

Institute of Health and Welfare which together cover population statistics, housing and infrastructure, community services and housing assistance, health status, death and sickness, and the availability, resourcing and use of services.



*Professor Ted Wilkes and Professor Fiona Stanley at the launch of *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples**

The *Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB), Australia* (cat. no. 1353.0), continues to provide clients with access to a broad range of information about Australia's regions. The IRDB contains over 18,000 data items of which over 3,000 are sourced from 34 non-ABS statistical series provided by 13 different Australian and state/territory government agencies. Each yearly release includes updates to the economic, social and demographic data. The IRDB on CD-ROM has now been supplemented by the National Regional Profile available from the ABS web site. In the future, dissemination of regional statistics will increasingly be via web-based media.

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:

- government finance statistics
- superannuation related statistics
- education and training statistics
- transport statistics
- culture and leisure statistics
- prices statistics
- energy statistics.

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. The five National Centres that have been established cover:

- 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*.

In addition to the National Statistical Centres the ABS has established National Statistics Units on Ageing and on Children and Youth. The creation of these units in 2002 and 2003, respectively, was in recognition of the increasing policy focus and discussion at Australian and state/territory levels, and the need for a central unit to identify the range of data sources and disseminate statistics about these specific population groups.

OUTPUT MEASURES

5. Increase the quantity of output

Performance Measure

5.1 Increase the range of statistics disseminated

5.2 Innovative outputs

During 2003-04 the ABS continued to increase its outputs by increasing the range of statistics disseminated and producing new and innovative products.

5.1 Increase the range of statistics disseminated

The following table, which details ABS printed and electronic publication releases by subject matter and frequency for 2001-02 to 2003-04, presents some crude indicators of the volume of outputs by the ABS. The total number of publications released in 2003-04 was 727, of which 307 were published in electronic format only. The main reasons for the decrease in the number of releases in 2003-04 were the reduction in census related publications and the reduction in state specific publications now that state data are increasingly incorporated in the national releases.

Table 8: ABS releases(a) classified by subject matter, year and frequency (number)

Subject Matter/Year	Annual	Quarterly	Monthly	Other	Total
Economic and Finance Releases					
2001-02	13	54	60	8	135
2002-03	23	58	86	3	170
2003-04	9	40	61	11	121
Industry Releases					
2001-02	27	123	80	29	259
2002-03	17	123	75	20	235
2003-04	15	91	70	27	203
Population and Migration Releases					
2001-02	21	5	14	27	67
2002-03	46	4	18	99	167
2003-04	35	4	18	56	113
Labour Releases					
2001-02	5	45	60	13	123
2002-03	9	42	69	12	132
2003-04	6	41	52	12	111
Social Analysis Releases					
2001-02	12	4	-	12	28
2002-03	14	4	-	27	45
2003-04	13	4	-	64	81
Other General Releases					
2001-02	36	19	79	116	250
2002-03	31	24	42	15	112
2003-04	34	19	36	9	98
Total					
2001-02	114	250	293	205	862
2002-03	140	255	290	176	861
2003-04	112	199	237	179	727

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

Note: Releases in 2002-03 have been revised to include products delivered electronically.

The other volume indicator is information on the ABS web site. In contrast to the reduction in publications, the number of web pages at the ABS web site has increased by over 50% in 2003-04 from 195,000 pages to 308,000 pages.

However, the above are crude volume measures, and the extent to which the ABS has extended the range of statistics disseminated is best demonstrated by the large range of new publications or products released during 2003-04. These included:

- *Household and Family Estimates, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3236.0.55.001), provides estimates and projections of Australia's households, families and living arrangements from 2001 to 2026. The projections are based on assumptions about changing living type arrangements of the population.
- *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey* (cat. no. 4714.0), which presents summary results from the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (formerly the Indigenous Social Survey), and brings together a wide range of information about the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population in Australia. Some time series information, as well as information at a state/territory level, is also provided.
- *Foreign Ownership of Australian Exporters and Importers — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5496.0.55.001), presents experimental estimates of the value of exports and imports of goods and services by foreign owned businesses in Australia. Details are available for the country of ownership, numbers of foreign owned traders, commodities traded, and the value of trade between foreign owned businesses in Australia and the country of their foreign parent.
- *Government Finance Statistics, Australia, Quarterly, Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5519.0.55.001), is a new quarterly publication that provides users and economic commentators with a better understanding of the behaviour of key government aggregates in the quarterly national accounts.
- *National Regional Profile — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1379.0.55.001), presents a statistical summary of key economic and social information for various levels of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification. It includes data from a variety of non-ABS sources as well as data from various ABS censuses and surveys. The Profile is available for statistical local areas, local government areas, statistical subdivisions, statistical divisions and states and territories.
- *ACT and Region ... A Statistical Atlas* (cat. no. 1381.8), presents colour maps of key population, family and housing characteristics of Canberra. The data represents all statistical local areas (suburbs) of Canberra and the surrounding region.

- *Census of Population and Housing: Australia's Youth* (cat. no. 2059.0), contains 2001 census data on a cross-section of topics for persons aged 15 to 24 years. Topics include — population, mobility, living arrangements, Internet and computer usage, education, working life and cultural diversity. Also included are some state/territory analysis, as well as sub-state data. The format is a mix of tables, commentary, graphs and maps.
- *Deaths From External Causes, Australia* (cat. no. 3320.0), presents an overview of deaths from external causes of injury in Australia. It investigates injuries experienced by special populations at risk from injury. Differentials in injury death rates by remoteness categories as well as by state/territory are presented.
- *Drug-induced Deaths, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3321.0.55.001), provides updated information about drug-induced deaths for the period 1991–2001. In particular, changes in drug-induced death rates between 1999 and 2001 are analysed. Information is presented by age, sex, state and whether the death was accidental or of suicidal intent.
- *Short-term Visitor Arrival Estimates, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3401.0.55.001), contains modelled estimates of short-term visitor arrivals to Australia based on passport transactions for the current month and passenger card disaggregations from earlier months.
- *South Australia's Baby Boomers: A Profile — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4149.4.55.001), presents a range of information relating to South Australia's baby boomers. Includes chapters on demographics, cultural diversity, family, housing, education and work, health and community life.
- *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (cat. no. 4159.0), provides results of the first General Social Survey, which focuses on the relationships between characteristics from different areas of social concern, rather than in depth information about a particular field. Topics include health, housing, education, work, income, financial stress, broad assets and liabilities, transport, family and community, and crime.
- *Domestic Water Use, Western Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4616.5.55.001), presents data on water-using appliances and the water-use behaviour of households in Western Australia.
- *Detailed Energy Statistics, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4648.0.55.001), contains information on energy use across the non-household sectors of the domestic Australian economy. Energy use data are available at a national and state level; supply data is available at a national level.

- *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. nos 4713.0-8.55.001), provides around 50 tables of information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians based on the 2001 census. These tables complement the information presented in the national hard copy report *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (cat. no. 4713.0). A similar electronic publication is released for each state/territory.
- *National Health Survey: Mental Health, Australia* (cat. no. 4811.0), provides information on the mental health of Australians, collected in the ABS 2001 National Health Survey (NHS). It includes information on self-reported long-term mental and behavioural problems, use of medication for mental wellbeing, levels of psychological distress, role limitations due to emotional problems, and a quality of life measure.
- *National Health Survey: Private Health Insurance, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4815.0.55.001), provides national statistics about the types and levels of private health insurance cover held by Australians, cross classified with demographic characteristics, self-assessed health status, health-related actions, hospital admissions and selected long-term conditions.
- *Health Risk Factors, Australia* (cat. no. 4812.0), presents findings from the 2001 NHS in relation to several behavioural risk factors (smoking, physical activity, body mass, inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption and alcohol consumption) as well as biomedical risk factors (high cholesterol and high blood pressure).
- *Breastfeeding in Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4810.0.55.001), provides information on the level and trends in breastfeeding in Australia using data collected from the 2001 NHS, with some time series comparisons from the 1995 NHS.
- *Asthma in Australia: A Snapshot — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4819.0.55.001), provides a brief overview of the differentials in prevalence, asthma management and quality of life of people with current and long-term asthma, using data from the 2001 ABS NHS.
- *Diabetes in Australia: A Snapshot — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4820.0.55.001), presents a brief summary of the differentials in prevalence, risk factors, actions taken after diagnosis of diabetes mellitus, and resultant conditions from diabetes mellitus, using data from the 2001 ABS NHS.
- *Community Preparedness for Emergencies, NSW* (cat. no. 4818.1), provides data for households in New South Wales relating to preparedness for emergencies such as fire, floods or storms. Includes information about the presence of safety features such as smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and fire blankets, and other indicators of preparedness. Also included are data on household experience of emergencies.

- *Regional Wage and Salary Earner Statistics, Australia — Electronic Publication* (cat. no. 5673.0.55.001), provides estimates of the total number of wage and salary earners and their characteristics for various levels of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification, including statistical local areas and local government areas, in each state/territory of Australia, for the year 2000–01.
- *Agricultural State Profile — Electronic Delivery* (cat. nos 7123.1-7.55.001), presents an overview of the agricultural industry in all states/territories. The publication includes farm numbers, agricultural production and the state's agricultural contribution to the economy. Some data are provided at the statistical division level.
- *Household Telephone Connections, Queensland* (cat. no. 8159.3), provides information on persons in households who have mobile phones, the number of telephone connections per household, the type of connections (such as phone, fax, Internet), and the number of telephone connections listed in the residential White Pages.
- *Bicycle Usage, Queensland* (cat. no. 9215.3), provides information about bicycle ownership and use in the Queensland population. It includes estimates of the number of bicycles per household; the number of people who have cycled in the last 12 months; and the frequency and reasons for cycling.

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. The research undertaken included:

- an online web site survey to collect demographic and behavioural information on, and expectations of, visitors to the ABS web site. To evaluate the ongoing web improvement efforts further surveys are currently being planned
- an analysis of the ABS' Information Consultancy client base to assist in improving the service to clients
- extensive regional office consultation with state governments to determine their priority statistical needs

A major innovation during 2003–04 was the introduction of the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) which enabled the release to users of more detailed confidentialised unit record files. Some of the releases using the RADL were:

- *Census of Population and Housing: Household Sample File (Expanded Data File) — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 2037.0.55.001)
- *Time Use Survey, Confidentialised Unit Record File via Remote Access Data Laboratory — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4152.0.55.001)

- *Crime and Safety Survey: Expanded Confidentialised Unit Record File — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4509.0.55.002)
- *National Health Survey (Indigenous): Expanded Confidentialised Unit Record File — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4715.0.55.001)

Some of the other innovative outputs released by the ABS in 2003–04 included:

- *Occasional Paper: Perspectives on Women's Employment in Regional Australia, 2001 Census — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1380.0.55.001), provides an insight into the different employment conditions experienced by women in regional Australia by examining characteristics such as age, employment status, income, qualifications, occupation and industry of employment.
- *Occasional Paper: Health Risk Factors — a Guide to Time Series Comparability from the National Health Survey, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4826.0.55.001), presents results on health risk factors such as alcohol consumption, tobacco smoking, exercise level, and body mass index which are measured in the three NHSs (1989/90, 1995, and 2001). In some cases, the ability to compare health risk factors over time may be affected. This paper is designed to assist data users to compare health risk factors over the three NHSs.
- *Information Paper: Mesh Blocks* (cat. no. 1209.0). The ABS proposes to introduce a new micro-level geography into the Australian Standard Geographical Classification in 2006. Mesh Blocks are intended to become a new building block of statistical and administrative geography. This Position Paper summarises the findings of an expert panel which advised the ABS on the ideal design criteria for Mesh Blocks, and sought feedback on the Mesh Block concept.
- *Working Papers in Econometrics and Applied Statistics: No 2004/1 Measuring the Stock of Human Capital for Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1351.0.55.001), provides experimental measures of the stock of human capital for Australia employing a lifetime labour income approach. Using the full Australian census data for 1981, 1986, 1991, 1996 and 2001, this study provides five snapshots of age-earnings profiles for four categories of educational attainment for both men and women over this twenty year period.
- *Measures of a Knowledge-based Economy and Society, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1377.0), is a web-based compendium of statistics on the knowledge-based economy and society. The structure of the product is based on the framework proposed in the ABS publication *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0).
- *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital — An Australian Framework and Indicators* (cat. no. 1378.0), presents a descriptive framework for the measurement of social capital, together with a

proposed set of indicators, background and definitional material. The framework and indicators shown will be the basis for ABS work in the analysis of existing data sources and in future collection work.

- *Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Area's (SEIFA), Australia — Technical Paper — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 2039.0.55.001), describes the decision tree used for selecting variables representing disadvantage; describes the validation used for SEIFA 2001; outlines some of the issues to consider when using SEIFA; and discusses some of the characteristics of SEIFA 2001.
- A range of specially commissioned analyses using the 2001 census. These included:
 - *Australian Census Analytic Program: Counting the Homeless* (cat. no. 2050.0),
 - *Australian Census Analytic Program: Indigenous Australians in the Contemporary Labour Market* (cat. no. 2052.0)
 - *Australian Census Analytic Program: Indigenous Australians in the Contemporary Labour Market* (cat. no. 2052.0)
 - *Australian Census Analytic Program: Australians' Ancestries* (cat. no. 2054.0),
 - *Australian Census Analytic Program: The Micro-Dynamics of Change in Australian Agriculture: 1976–2001* (cat. no. 2055.0),
 - *Australian Census Analytic Program: Australia Online: How Australians are Using Computers and the Internet* (cat. no. 2056.0)
- *Demography Working Paper: 2004/1, Review of Interstate Migration Method — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3106.0.55.001), which discusses and reviews the methodology used in deriving estimates of interstate migration for the purposes of compiling state/territory population estimates.
- *Information Paper: Multiple Cause of Death Analysis — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 3319.0.55.001), investigates the potential of Multiple Cause of Death data by analysing several important associated causes of death. These include ischaemic heart disease and diabetes, and suicide and substance use.
- *Information Paper: Sexual Assault Information Development Framework* (cat. no. 4518.0), contains an information development framework for data relating to sexual assault. It provides a conceptual framework, lists data currently available, identifies gaps in data and conclusions about developing information to meet the priority needs.
- *Information Paper: Measuring Crime Victimization, Australia: The Impact of Different Collection Methodologies — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 4522.0.55.001), examines the effects of the different methodologies that are used in the collection of information on crime victimisation.

- *Australian National Accounts: Tailored Tourism Satellite Accounts – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5249.0.55.001), is tailored for client requests relating to the Tourism Satellite Accounts provided electronically to clients.
- *Information Paper: Foreign Direct Investment Data Collection: Overcoming Hurdles and Obstacles in FDI Measurement and Collection – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5370.0.55.001), provides information collected and disseminated by the ABS as part of the compilation of a full set of Balance of Payments and International Investment Position accounts. This paper describes the broad framework within which international investment data are collected and compiled in Australia and covers some of the more detailed definitions and interpretations of foreign direct investment, differentiates direct from portfolio investment, and provides an interpretation of some of the terms and definitions in the international standards.
- *Economic Activity of Foreign Owned Businesses in Australia, 2000-01* (cat. no. 5494.0). While traditional balance of payments statistics provide data on the level of foreign investment in Australia in terms of both debt and equity, they do not compile statistics on indicators of economic activity such as employment, business income, expenses, etc. The ABS undertook a study examining the feasibility of synthesising these data by matching data from the regular Economic Activity Survey with data from the Survey of International Investment and information sourced from Internet searches. This Information Paper summarises the results of this experimental exercise.
- *Australian System of Government Finance Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5514.0.55.001), provides a detailed account of the concepts underlying government finance statistics, the sources of data employed and the methods used to compile the statistics.
- *Information Paper: Forthcoming Changes to Labour Force Statistics* (cat. no. 6292.0), contains details on the implementation of concurrent seasonal adjustment and the normal five-yearly rebenchmarking of the Labour Force Survey and improvements to regional labour force estimates by introducing regional population benchmarks.
- *Framework for Australian Tourism Statistics – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 9502.0.55.001), provides guidelines which encourage consistency and compatibility in the collection and publication of tourism statistics in Australia. It provides a 'common language' for all users and collectors of tourism statistics.

6. Improve the quality of outputs

Performance Measures

6.1 Achieve or exceed timeliness, statistical reliability, response rates and accuracy objectives:

- **Timeliness**
- **Statistical reliability**
- **Response rates**
- **Accuracy**

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

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

The quality of ABS outputs is critical to ensuring informed decision-making. The ABS measures the quality of its outputs with reference to their timeliness, statistical reliability, collection response rates and accuracy.

6.1 Achieve or exceed timeliness, statistical reliability, response rates and accuracy objectives:

- **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 pre-announced release dates and make improvements, where possible, to the timeliness achieved. Table 9 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 for MEI statistics has increased slightly in 2003–04. This reflected the introduction of some new publications into the MEI group rather than any decline in timeliness of ongoing MEI publications. The average release time for other general issues (quarterly) has also increased from last year and is primarily due to an increase in elapsed days to release more comprehensive tourist accommodation

small area data. However there was an improvement in the release time for other general issues (monthly), due to some publications now being released in electronic format only.

Although not included in the table below the annual *Government Finance Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 5512.0) publication released in April 2004 was the earliest published in terms of elapsed days since the introduction of accrual accounting for government finance statistics.

Table 9: Time between end of reference period and release of data (average number of elapsed days)

Year	Main economic indicator statistics		Other general releases	
	Monthly	Quarterly	Monthly	Quarterly
2000-01	29	45	33	75
2001-02	29	51	34	78
2002-03	28	49	33	74
2003-04	29	51	26	85

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.

In the February 2004 issue of *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0) the ABS introduced a number of improvements to its labour force statistics. From this issue estimates are compiled using updated population benchmarks based on results from the 2001 census. Estimates for the past five years have been revised as a result.

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 continue to show that revisions to quarterly GDP in recent years remain relatively small (mean absolute revision). The zero result in the mean revision figures since 1999-2000 denotes that the revisions to quarterly GDP over each particular year are offsetting.

Although the revisions to quarterly GDP are quite small, efforts to further improve the estimates are ongoing. In 2003–04 Quarterly Supply and Use (QSU) tables were introduced to assist in the compilation of the quarterly national accounts. The QSU tables will lead to improvements in the national accounts as they enable inconsistencies between the measures of GDP to be identified and investigated more systematically, and at a greater level of detail, than is possible by simply examining the aggregates. This in turn should lead to less revision as published estimates are subject to the confines of the supply-use framework.

Table 10: Revisions to gross domestic product, percentage change(a)

Year	Difference between first estimate and estimate one year later	
	Mean absolute revision % points	Mean revision % points
1998–99	0.2	0.1
1999–2000	0.1	0
2000–01	0.2	0
2001–02	0.2	0
2002–03(b)	0.2	0

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

Table 11 shows the revisions to the quarterly current account deficit averaged over the financial year for 1998–99 to 2002–03. 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 table shows a decreasing trend in the revisions to the quarterly current account deficit since 1999–2000. The smaller the revision the more reliable the estimates are likely to be. Although the latest mean absolute revision is considered very good at two per cent, earlier years' figures of around five per cent were also considered acceptable. Between 1998–99 and 1999–2000, as the mean revision percentages indicate, the revisions were largely offsetting. Since 2000–01 the revisions to the quarterly current account deficit have been mainly in the same direction.

Table 11: Revisions to current account deficit, level estimates(a)

Year	Difference between first estimate and estimate one year later	
	Mean absolute revision %	Mean revision %
1998-99	4.0	-0.2
1999-2000	5.4	0.3
2000-01	4.3	-1.2
2001-02	3.1	-2.9
2002-03(b)	2.0	-2.0

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

Response rates

The ABS has consistently had very high response rates. Past international benchmarking studies have shown these response rates compare very 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 12 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 2003-04 are not yet final. However, past experience has shown that these figures either remain stable or may rise as 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 91 per cent, but the businesses that have responded may comprise 96 per cent of the total employment in the industry.

Table 12: Response rates for selected economic indicators

Survey	Target	2002-03	2003-04
	Response Rate (%)	Actual Response Rate (%) (a)	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	98
<i>Retail Trade, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8501.0)	95	96	95
<i>Australian Industry</i> (cat. no. 8155.0) (b)(c)	85	(d)85	(d)91
<i>Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5625.0)	80	89	89
<i>Business Indicators, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5676.0)	80	88	87
<i>Building Activity, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8752.0)	95	96	96
<i>Manufacturing Industry, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8221.0) (b)	90	89	(d)91

(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. The publication is expected to be released in December 2004. (d) Response rates were not finalised as at the end of June 2004.

The response rates for selected social surveys are listed in Table 13 below. The Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers (published in *Disability, Australia* (cat. no. 4446.0)) had a response rate of 89 per cent, which was higher than the target response rate and the response rate achieved for the same survey conducted in 1998. Results from the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey were released in 2003-04. The response rate for the survey was 81 per cent which, although lower than the target response rate, was considered acceptable. The response rate was also lower than the similar survey — National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey — conducted in 1994, however this survey had a slightly different sample coverage.

Table 13: Response rates for selected social surveys

Survey	Target	Previous Survey	2003-04
	Response Rate (%)	Actual Response Rate (%)	Actual Response Rate (%)
<i>Disability, Australia</i> (cat. no. 4446.0) (a)	84	84	89
<i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey</i> (cat. no. 4714.0) (b)	85	90	81

(a) The publication *Disability, Australia* (cat. no. 4446.0) presents preliminary results from the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. The survey was previously conducted in 1998. (b) The previous survey conducted in 1994 was the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS). The sample for the 1994 NATSIS covered adults and children plus some selections from non-private dwellings whereas the 2002 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey was designed to cover persons aged 15 plus and in private dwellings only.

Accuracy

While all ABS outputs maintain high levels of accuracy in all tables, graphs and text, two types of error are possible in estimates based on 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 2004 was 561,700. The calculated standard error for this estimate was 9,100. The standard error is then used to interpret the level estimate. For example:

- i. there are approximately two chances in three that the real number of unemployed persons falls within the range of 552,600 to 570,800 (i.e. 561,700 plus or minus 9,100)
- ii. there are approximately 19 chances in 20 that the real number of unemployed persons falls within the range of 543,500 to 579,900 (i.e. 561,700 plus or minus 18,200).

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 (RSEs). 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 14: Range of relative standard errors for selected economic indicators(a)

Survey	Key Aggregate	2002-03 Relative Standard Error (%)	2003-04 Relative Standard Error (%)
<i>Labour Force, Australia</i> (cat. no. 6202.0)	Unemployed Persons in Australia	1.5	1.6
<i>Retail Trade, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8501.0)	Total Retail Turnover in Australia	0.9	0.9
<i>Australian Industry</i> (cat. no. 8155.0) (b) (d)	Total income (all industries)	0.6	0.6
<i>Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5625.0)	Actual new capital expenditure, Australia	1.7	1.3
<i>Business Indicators, Australia</i> (cat. no. 5676.0)	Company gross operating profit	1.1	1.1
<i>Building Activity, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8752.0)	Value of work done	0.7	0.7
<i>Manufacturing Industry, Australia</i> (cat. no. 8221.0) (b) (c)	Sales and services income	1.1	0.6

(a) Where the survey is more frequent than annual the relative standard error is an average over the year for the available periods. (b) The relative standard errors refer to surveys conducted in the year listed, but for which the reference period is one year prior. (c) Both figures are preliminary. (d) At the time of publishing the relative standard errors for Australian Industry were not finalised.

Table 15: Range of relative standard errors for selected social surveys

Survey	Key Aggregate	Previous Survey Relative Standard Error (%)	2003-04 Relative Standard Error (%)
<i>Disability, Australia</i> [cat. no. 4446.0] (a)	No of persons with a disability	0.5	1.2
<i>National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey</i> [cat. no. 4714.0] (b)	Identifies with clan, tribal or language group	3.1	2.4

(a) The publication *Disability, Australia* [cat. no. 4446.0] presents preliminary results from the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers. The survey was previously conducted in 1998. Note there was a different standard error estimation method used between the 1998 and 2003 survey. For this reason the relative standard errors are not directly comparable. (b) The previous survey conducted in 1994 was the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey.

Improvements have been made to the way in which users are informed on the accuracy of data presented in ABS economic publications. The improvements are outlined in the feature article 'Expanding the Use of Indicators of Sampling Error in ABS Economic Statistics Publications' which was published in the August 2003 issue of *Australian Economic Indicators* [cat. no. 1350.0]. Essentially a new annotation has been created to be applied to estimates within publication tables to give an indication of the RSEs. Previously there were two annotations '*' and '**' which indicate RSEs between 25 and 50 per cent and greater than 50 per cent, respectively. The new annotation '^' is unique to tables in economic statistics publications and is intended to alert users to estimates which have an RSE between 10 and 25 per cent.

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

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

Outlines of ABS statistical reviews

The ABS reviews its statistical collections regularly to ensure that its statistics are of good quality and continuing relevance. 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. Reviews in 2003–04 included:

- commencement of a review of the treatment of salary sacrificing and other forms of non cash employee remuneration in ABS earning statistics
- a review into the quality of the local government frames the ABS uses to select councils and other local government units for inclusion in various surveys. The outcome of the review has led to an improvement in data quality and more representative selections of local government units in ABS surveys
- an evaluation of the 2001 census development, field operations, processing and dissemination, and infrastructure was completed in 2003–04. Recommendations from the evaluation will be incorporated in the 2006 census procedures
- a number of issues and options surrounding the Survey of Motor Vehicle Use have arisen as a consequence of stakeholder comments in the process of IDP discussions. These issues will be explored in detail in a forthcoming review of the Survey of Motor Vehicle Use
- an assessment of the quality of the Geocoded National Address File and its potential for statistical applications.

Also as a result of a review completed in 2002–03 the ABS discontinued the publication of the Experimental Composite Leading Indicator of the Australian business cycle. The final update of the composite leading indicator was published in the September 2003 issue of *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0). A feature article describing the decision to cease its publication was released in the same issue.

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 are twofold. Firstly, it leads to more reliable and accurate statistics. And secondly, it may lead to reduced provider load.

The Agriculture, Mining, Manufacturing, and Economic Activity surveys benefited from the continued implementation of taxation data during 2003–04 as strategies are developed to use the Australian Business Register as the source of the population for these surveys. Progress also continued on incorporating Business Activity Statement data into the estimation and sample design of the monthly retail business survey. Both strategies are expected to lead to improvements in the statistical collections.

A new methodology has been developed and implemented for estimating net overseas migration. The new methodology takes account of changes in international travellers' actual travel behaviour from their originally stated intentions and is outlined in a technical note to the publication *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0).

A review of the Household Expenditure Survey was undertaken to identify areas for improvement in efficiency and effectiveness of the survey. These changes will be implemented over the 2003-04 and 2009-10 survey cycles. Outcomes of the review included proposals to extend Household Expenditure Survey data content, improvements to survey instrument design and editing, and increased use of automated facilities for data capture and editing.

The ABS is in the process of phasing in computer assisted interviewing to the Monthly Population Survey. Approximately 70 per cent of the sample has been phased in, with the remaining sample expected to be converted to computer assisted interviewing in early 2004-05. Business process reengineering of survey field collection structures and systems is under way and is expected to deliver substantial improvements in data quality, survey efficiency and management arrangements.

Preparations for the 2006 Census of Population and Housing are well advanced. It is proposed that census forms will be available electronically and will be able to be returned via the Internet for those who choose to use this method. Testing of the census field systems incorporating the return of the census forms by the Internet are continuing.

7. Achievement of cost effective outputs

Performance Measures

7.1 Conduct efficiency reviews and audits, and implement their recommendations

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

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

7.4 Minimise provider load

The ABS regularly reviews its statistical and non-statistical activities to ensure that it is achieving cost effective outputs. Review of statistical activities in particular, is one method of ensuring that business provider load is minimised.

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 commenced or completed during 2003–04 included the following areas:

- publishing and electronic dissemination
- marketing
- data management useability
- household interviewer pay system
- movement of sensitive material.

The main outcomes of the above reviews were improvements to operations through more efficient use of staffing resource, including the centralising of functions in a single office.

In addition to the efficiency reviews listed above, the ABS undertook a number of other reviews including a quality review of the Input Data Warehouse project and a review of the non-response follow up procedures for business surveys. 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.

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 within 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 2003-04 internal benchmarking was conducted for all areas in the Economic Statistics Group (ESG). The benchmarking exercise was conducted in respect of 2002-03 and continued to examine the financial framework stemming from organisational changes from the Business Statistics Innovation Program. The aim of this exercise was to identify areas of efficiency through cost savings and modifications in the cost structure for each area in ESG in order to provide the efficiencies necessary to meet ongoing resource constraints. Part of the improvements from the previous year's benchmarking was to collect a list of performance indicators which included response rates, imputation contributions, standard errors for key variables, costs, and provider load information. The final report for that exercise is currently being compiled.

The 2002-03 internal benchmarking exercise was reviewed in December 2003. One of the recommendations, apart from suggesting additional analysis, was to adopt a rolling program of themes within the benchmarking exercise to answer specific questions of interest (such as concentrating on editing practices for a particular year). The other recommendation was that ESG should adopt an effort recording system to improve the quality and consistency of benchmarking reporting. The first iteration of this system is presently being rolled out across ESG.

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 of achieving the best outcomes and outputs possible from its resource allocation.

Bilateral discussions were conducted in 2003-04 with Statistics Sweden and Statistics New Zealand. Both discussions proved very fruitful. Bilateral discussions with Statistics Canada are planned in 2004-05.

An international benchmarking activity was undertaken in 2003-04 to investigate comparisons of the Information Consultancy Services and the National Information Referral Service. Two other benchmarking projects covering Corporate Governance and Planning, and the National Health Survey, originally planned for 2003-04, were cancelled. The main reason for the cancellation of these two projects was resource constraints confronting the other international statistical agencies.

Comparisons of corporate services functions between other Australian government departments

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

In 2003–04 the ABS was involved in a single benchmarking activity conducted by the Australian National Audit Office — *Performance Management in the Australian Public Service*. The ABS provided input into the study in the form of survey participation and by providing comments on drafts. The final report is yet to be released.

The ABS participated in the Comcover Annual Risk Management Benchmarking Program in 2003–04. The benchmarking, which aims to gauge the progress of agencies in their risk management practices, involves the completion of an online questionnaire and the provision of supporting documentation. Results from the benchmarking are yet to be released.

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

Over the past few years the ABS has outsourced a number of key functions including:

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

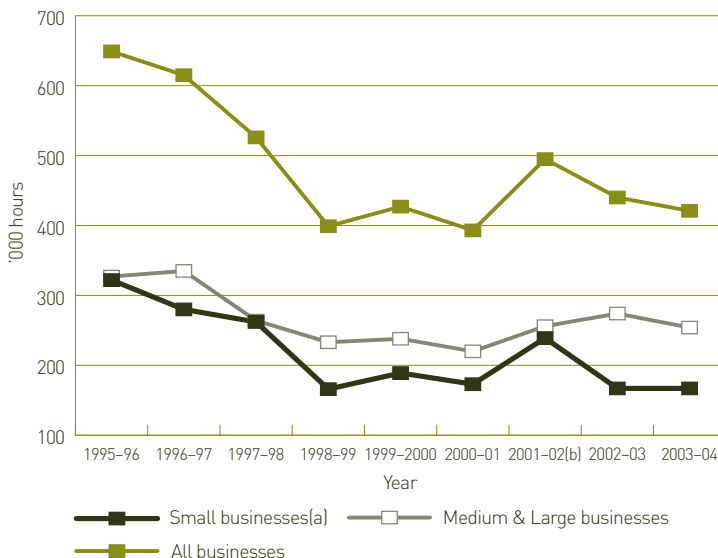
While no specific outsourcing opportunities were identified in 2003–04, the ABS will continue to investigate additional outsourcing opportunities as they arise.

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 graph shows the provider load (measured in thousands of hours taken to complete statistical forms) imposed on businesses by the ABS for 1995–96 through to 2003–04.

Figure 1: Provider load imposed on businesses by the ABS (hours '000)



(a) Defined as businesses with less than 20 employees or a derived estimate of employees of less than 20. (b) Higher provider load estimates for 2001-02 reflect the conduct of the five-yearly Agricultural Census.

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 Australian Government's 1996 Small Business Deregulation Task Force. The task force found that the ABS only accounted for about one percent of total business compliance costs. However, since 1995-96 total ABS provider load on businesses has been substantially reduced. The average total load on all businesses for the past five years has been around 435,000 hours, or 33 per cent lower than for 1995-96. For small businesses, the average total load over the past five years has been around 187,000 hours, or 42 per cent lower than in 1995-96. These decreases in total load have occurred at the same time as the number of businesses has been increasing.

One of the continuing initiatives which will lead to a reduction in provider load in the future will be the utilisation of Australian Taxation Office data, in particular the Business Activity Statement (BAS). BAS data are being used in the estimation method and sample design of the Retail Business survey. The new process will allow a reduced number of businesses to be included in the survey without any subsequent deterioration in the quality of the retail trade series.

Section IV

ABS Outputs

Chapter 6

Economic Statistics Output

6 Economic Statistics Output

Description

The Economic Statistics program responds to the statistical needs of governments and the wider community about economic activity, taking into account the public and private costs associated with collecting, processing and disseminating statistical information.

The ABS framework for economic statistics is based on the United Nations *System of National Accounts 1993* (SNA). The SNA provides a comprehensive framework for compiling economic data in a coherent and consistent manner for the purposes of economic analysis.

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

- collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of economic, environment and energy 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 2003–04 the Economic Statistics program produced 324 individual printed and electronic publication releases directly related to economic statistics. 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 2003–04.

Review of Components

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the Economic Statistics program during 2003–04.

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 Australian government economic policy agencies) to provide advice on the statistics used as input to the forecasting process.

Achievements during the year included:

- introduction of quarterly supply and use tables into the editing process for compilation of quarterly estimates of Gross Domestic Product (GDP)
- introduction of improved measures of labour input for the annual productivity measures which take into account changes in the quality of labour input

- release of a feature article in *Australian Economic Indicators* (cat. no. 1350.0) on Australia's underground economy in the context of measuring Australia's GDP
- establishment of a team to work on improved measures of economic growth in the states and territories
- publication of feature articles on 'Statistical treatment of the 2003 rugby world cup'; 'Statistical treatment of economic activity in the Timor Sea'; 'Impact of the 2003-04 farm season on Australian production'; 'Supply and use tables and the quarterly national accounts'; and 'Measuring price change in the Australian economy' in *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (cat. no. 5206.0) and 'New analytical measures of income, saving and wealth' in *Australian System of National Accounts* (cat. no. 5204.0)
- participation in and preparation of papers for a number of international working parties which have been formed to consider national accounts issues including task forces on the measurement of non-financial assets and pension funds
- provision of technical assistance to the statistical agencies of Thailand, Indonesia, Tonga, Viet Nam and Timor L'este in relation to the compilation of national accounts statistics.

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, international trade in goods and services statistics are published monthly and globalisation indicators are published periodically.

Achievements during the year included:

- the inclusion from December quarter 2003 of detailed information on Australia's international investment position in *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position* (cat. no. 5302.0) for the most recent quarter, rather than with a quarter lag
- development of a new irregular publication *Economic Activity of Foreign Owned Businesses in Australia, 2000-01* (cat. no. 5494.0), based on data from the Economic Activity Survey and the Survey of International Investment
- development of a new electronic annual publication *Foreign Ownership of Australia's Exporters and Importers, 2002-03* (cat. no. 5496.0.55.001), based on merchandise trade and international trade in services data

- coordinating Australia's response to the requirements of the International Monetary Fund's Special Data Dissemination Standard (SDDS), including the publication from June quarter 2003 of Australia's external debt liabilities classified and presented in accordance with the SDDS
- publication of the feature article 'Australian Outward Foreign Affiliates Trade, 2002–03' on the ABS web site in conjunction with the May 2004 issue of *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (cat. no. 5368.0), which presented preliminary results from the new Survey of Outward Foreign Affiliates Trade
- publication of a feature article 'Foreign Ownership of Equity' in the September quarter 2003 *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (cat. no. 5302.0) publication
- a significant contribution, through the preparation of papers and participation in international forums, to the review of international standards governing the compilation of economic accounts
- contribution to the presentation of an IMF course on Balance of Payments Statistics and International Investment Position in Singapore in June 2004.

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 a number of feature articles on the ABS web site, concurrently with issues of *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (cat. no. 5368.0), including statistics on Australia's exporters and importers, and Australia's trade with the United States of America
- development of strategies for the implementation in 2004–05 of the Customs Cargo Management Re-engineering project and Accredited Client Program, so as to ensure the continuity and quality of Australia's international merchandise trade statistics
- preparation of a paper on the *Future Directions for International Trade in Services and Related Statistics* for the Economic Statistics User Group (ESUG), and the formation of an International Trade in Services User Group (ITSUG) to consider options for improvements to these statistics

- hosting international visitors from Viet Nam, Thailand, Papua New Guinea and Indonesia for separate discussions and training, mostly relating to international trade in services
- substantial progress on re-engineering the business processes and systems used to support the collection and processing of international merchandise trade statistics.

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.

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, the Reserve Bank of Australia and data providers for rationalised and harmonised data collection from the financial sector.

Achievements during the year included:

- backcasting financial accounts data for the period June 1988 to June 1995 from a SNA 1968 basis to a SNA 1993 basis
- quality assurance and data confrontation work on superannuation data in conjunction with the national accounts area to reconcile the respective published data series
- improvements in presentation, content and methods for lending activity statistics generally and housing finance statistics specifically.

Public Sector Accounts

The public sector accounts component provides government finance statistics for the Australian 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 (GFS) and Australian accounting standards
- completion of the Local Government Purpose Classification which will provide a framework for analysing the purpose or functions of local government financial transactions
- further standardisation of local government forms and collection methodology in cooperation with local government grants commissions and departments of local government
- release of *Australian System of Government Finance Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods – Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 5514.0.55.001)
- the first release of the quarterly electronic publication *Government Finance Statistics, Australia, Quarterly* (cat. no. 5519.0.55.001).

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 PPI include price indexes of inputs and outputs of manufacturing industry; materials used in the building industry; outputs of selected service industries; and the supply of commodities to the Australian economy in a 'stage of production' framework. The ITPI are price indexes for 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:

- release of an updated version of *Australian Consumer Price Index: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6461.0)
- release, on an ongoing basis, of seasonally adjusted and trend wage cost indexes
- production of experimental spatial price indexes, designed to measure price levels between the six state capital cities, Canberra and Darwin
- contribution to a chapter of the international CPI manual which is in the process of being published by the International Labour Organisation

- significant progress in the development of an experimental index measuring price changes for financial services acquired by households
- continued technical assistance to Thailand to develop price indexes for exports and imports, new houses and selected service industries
- provision of technical assistance to Statistics South Africa to improve their prices data collection methodology
- provision of assistance to the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank in setting up product specifications for use in the Asia/Pacific region component of 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:

- introducing in the February 2004 issue of *Retail Trade, Australia* (cat. no. 8501.0), a quarterly appendix on the contribution to the monthly retail series of net proceeds received from licensed gambling activities
- introduction of experimental seasonally adjusted estimates of sales of goods and services for selected industries, and of wages and salaries for all industries in *Business Indicators, Australia* (cat. no. 5676.0)
- finalising, in consultation with the Australian Taxation Office, a protocol which sets out the way in which the ABS uses taxation data
- substantial progress towards the introduction of an improved estimation methodology and new sample design for the monthly retail business survey. Both the estimation method and sample design utilise Business Activity Statement data provided by the Australian Taxation Office. The number of businesses included in the survey will be reduced without any deterioration in the quality of the Retail Trade series.

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:

- introduction of a new strategy to incorporate the full Australian Business Register (ABR) private sector and government trading business population into the Economic Activity Survey
- development of bridging techniques to link the new ABR based Economic Activity Survey data with the previous annual series to enable the backcasting of national accounts series and to assist external users to understand the changes introduced
- provision of advice to the Indonesian Statistics Office regarding a range of industry statistics matters.

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 *Characteristics of Small Business, Australia, 2003* (cat. no. 8127.0) which included summary data on the characteristics of small business operators and small businesses in Australia
- development of requirements for the 2004 and 2005 Surveys of Characteristics of Small Business Owners, as supplementary surveys to the June Monthly Population Surveys. The results of the 2004 survey will be published in *Characteristics of Small Business, Australia, 2004* (cat. no. 8127.0) which is due for release in early 2005
- delivering a series of seminars and user consultations around Australia on small business statistics, and plans for developing a Business Entries and Exits series and a Business Longitudinal Database. As part of the user consultations, both internal and external advisory groups, and a discussion forum on the ABS web site have been established
- development of a conceptual framework for the Business Entries and Exits series, and commenced development of experimental statistics on business entries and exits from the Australian economy for the last three financial years.

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:

- the inaugural meeting in February 2004 of the Information and Communication Technology Reference Group involving a range of external users and providers of science and technology statistics
- development, in consultation with key users, of a strategy for the collection of a range of biotechnology statistics
- establishment of a Technical Review Group consisting of users and relevant experts to advise on the development of an Innovation Survey for the 2003 reference period. Output from the survey will be released in late 2004
- creation of a new web-based product, *Measures of a Knowledge-based Economy and Society, Australia — Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 1377.0), released in September 2003. This product presents indicators within the conceptual framework outlined in the *Discussion Paper: Measuring a Knowledge-based Economy and Society — An Australian Framework* (cat. no. 1375.0). Regular updates of the web product are made as new data become available
- contribution to the development of international statistical standards for science and technology indicators: through input to the revision of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Oslo Manual on Innovation Statistics; as a member of the OECD task force on Fields of Science classification for research and development statistics; by the contribution of a paper and presentation to the OECD Ad Hoc Meeting on Biotechnology Statistics; and, input to the revision of international model questionnaires on 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 farm business and land management practices. User funding by industry associations is provided to obtain detailed information about vineyards, and for apples and pears. 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:

- completion of the first year of collection of the Survey of Stocks of Grain on Hand
- development of a coding system to allocate farms to identified geographic areas
- investigating methods of capturing and presenting data in a spatial form
- development of a strategy to use the ABR as the source of the population for agriculture collections
- release of results from a coverage survey designed to measure the impact of moving to the ABR as the source of the population for agriculture collections
- release of results from the redeveloped 2002–03 agricultural survey
- assistance in the conduct of a Pacific Workshop organised by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations
- advice to the Government Statistics Office of Viet Nam on agriculture statistics strategies.

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. Information on mineral and petroleum production is obtained from state administrative sources.

Achievements during the year included:

- assistance to the Commonwealth Grants Commission regarding the use of mining data in the process for allocating funding to states and territories
- completion of a framework which will be used to improve comparability of commodity production data across the states and territories
- introduction of a strategy to incorporate the full ABR, including non-employing businesses, into the annual Mining Survey
- development of bridging techniques to link the new ABR based annual Mining Survey data with the previous annual series to enable the backcasting of the national accounts series and to assist external users understand the changes introduced.

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:

- collection of materials used in manufacturing data via a case studies approach
- significant progress towards full user funding of sub-annual commodities collections
- introduction of a new strategy to incorporate the full ABR, including non-employing businesses, into the annual Manufacturing Survey
- development of bridging techniques to link the new ABR based annual Manufacturing Survey data with the previous annual series (commencing with 2001-02) to enable the backcasting of the national accounts series and to assist external users understand the changes introduced.

Construction

The construction component produces regular indicators of activity for the three components of construction: residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction. It also produces periodic statistics on the structure, performance and characteristics of the construction industry. The component also undertakes and publishes analytical work on an ad hoc basis which explores the relationship between construction activity and societal changes and general economic conditions and developments.

Achievements during the year included:

- conduct of the Construction Industry Survey to collect information on the structure and performance of the construction industry for the 2002–03 reference period
- release of an extended range of electronic products containing state and regional data, replacing hard copy publications
- publication of a number of feature articles in *Building Approvals, Australia* (cat. no. 8731.0) relating to construction statistics such as 'Average floor areas of new dwellings', and 'Engineering construction', as well as a number of articles focusing on individual state construction released on the ABS web site. Additionally a feature article was released in *Building Approvals, Australia* (cat. no. 8731.0) discussing the use of the revised *Functional Classification of Buildings – Website Version* (cat. no. 1268.0.55.001).

Transport

The transport component provides monthly 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. A directory of transport statistics is produced irregularly, and the program is responsible for the development and promotion of statistical frameworks and classifications.

Achievements during the year included:

- re-estimation of the Survey of Motor Vehicle Usage outputs for the 1998 and 1999 years, providing stakeholders with a time series of comparable annual data for the period 1998 to 2002
- completion of user funded rail and air freight surveys for 2001–02 and 2002–03
- participation, in industry discussions, on the development of the Transport Data Framework leading to the possible adoption of the framework as one of the first applications of the National Data Network.

Service Industries

The service industries component produces statistics on the size, structure, operations and output of a range of Australian service industries. Surveys typically cover a standard set of financial operations information together with a set of activity information tailored to each survey topic.

Achievements during the year included:

- completion of the 2001–02 round of surveys: *Private Medical Practices, Australia* (cat. no. 8685.0); *Employment Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8558.0); *Market Research Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8556.0); and, *Consultant Engineering Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8693.0)
- release of the 2002–03 publications: *Real Estate Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8663.0); *Waste Management Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8698.0); and *Hire Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8567.0)
- methodological research and user consultations for surveys of public libraries and museums, and businesses involved in accommodation, cafes and restaurants, travel agents and commercial property operators, to be conducted in respect of 2003–04. User consultations have also commenced in relation to the planned 2004–05 surveys of sport, clubs, pubs, taverns and bars and gambling
- methodological research and user consultations commencing into the conduct of the 2005–06 retail and wholesale industry surveys.

Tourism

The tourism component produces quarterly statistics on the capacity and demand for tourist accommodation in Australia. This entails the conduct of the quarterly ABS Survey of Tourist Accommodation. Other activities include the research and development of indicators of tourism performance and the development and promotion of tourism statistical frameworks and standards.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of *Tourist Accommodation, Expanded Scope Collection, Australia* (cat. no. 8635.0.55.001) to include 2003 data on caravan parks, visitor hostels, and holiday flats and units, which are only collected every three years
- conclusion of the first round of consultation on the draft Information Development Plan for tourism, including consultation with industry, government and academic representatives at the ABS Tourism Statistics Consultative Group meeting held in August 2003

- provision of input to the Tourism White Paper implementation process, which has led to the allocation of funding over four years for the continuation of the Tourism Satellite Account and an expansion to the ABS Survey of Tourist Accommodation
- research and development work on a suite of indicators of overall tourism performance in consultation with government, industry and the Cooperative Research Centre for Sustainable Tourism
- release of an updated *Framework for Australian Tourism Statistics – Electronic Delivery, 2003* (cat. no. 9502.0.55.001).

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:

- release of the following publications: *Environmental Issues: People's Views and Practices* (cat. no. 4602.0); *Water Account, Australia, 2001* (cat. no. 4610.0); *Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends* (cat. no. 4613.0); *Domestic Water Use, Western Australia* (cat. no. 4616.5.55.001); and, *Waste Management Services, Australia* (cat. no. 8698.0)
- release of information from a major survey of energy production, supply and use in Australia in the publications *Energy Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 4649.0.55.001); and, *Detailed Energy Statistics, Australia* (cat. no. 4648.0.55.001)
- conduct of a survey of water use by farmers, the results of which are expected to be published in 2004–05.

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:

- conduct of 15 training programs on best practice in collecting and using statistical information
- provision of methodological advice to the Australian National Audit Office, including assistance with the sample design and estimation for the Financial Delegations Audit

- providing methodological advice to the Australian National Audit Office and the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs about the estimation of the number of persons who overstay visas
- provision of advice on sampling methodology and estimation to the Australian Valuation Office in regards to the valuation of the National Library of Australia holdings
- providing advice to the Australian Electoral Commission on sampling and estimation methodology for measuring the accuracy of the Australian Electoral Roll
- provision of advice on sample design and data management to the Australian Public Service Commission for the annual State of the Service surveys
- assistance to the Australian Institute of Criminology with the sample design and calculation of estimates for the National Farm Crime Survey.

Statistical Coordination

The statistical coordination component aims to improve the quality of statistical information produced by official bodies in Australia, by: ensuring that the design and conduct of surveys follow good practices; improving the value of survey outputs by improving the quality of survey methods used; and improving the use of survey outputs by improving access to documentation of these outputs. A particular objective of the statistical coordination component is to ensure that the statistical reporting workload imposed on businesses by Australian government collections is kept to a minimum and where possible avoid any duplication. To achieve this, the component manages the Statistical Clearing House which is responsible for the review and approval of all surveys involving 50 or more businesses conducted by, or on behalf of, the Australian government.

Achievements during the year included:

- provision of secretariat functions for the recently established Australian Government Statistical Forum
- production of the National Statistical Service Handbook to assist statistical collection managers, designers or users of statistical products
- development of the National Statistical Service web site <http://www.nss.gov.au> to assist agencies in applying sound statistical and data management principles and practices
- completion of 120 reviews, of which 68 per cent resulted in an improvement to the survey or a reduction in respondent load

- conducting seminars on statistical methods to improve statistical practices in the Australian government
- continued improvement in networks with agencies to raise awareness of the Statistical Clearing House including the presentation of information seminars.

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 and provides a quarterly review of the economy.

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of 15 feature articles addressing a range of statistical topics and issues
- improvements to the content and presentation of the 'quarterly review of the economy'.

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) are listed under four broad topics.

Development and release of statistical products including:

- regional profiles and publications (New South Wales, Western Australia, Queensland, South Australia and the Northern Territory)
- web dissemination of a range of analytical articles on statistical topics and issues (Queensland and Western Australia)
- statistical indicators publications (Western Australia and Tasmania)
- a web based range of current and historical statistical information (Tasmania)
- a statistical atlas of the Australian Capital Territory and surrounding region (Australian Capital Territory).

Reviews and assessments of state and territory agency data holdings including:

- court proceedings, recorded crime, hospital separations and air quality data (Western Australia)
- various agency needs analyses, and assessment of Department of Education and Children's Services data holdings (South Australia)
- the availability and quality of Indigenous identification in key education datasets, and assessment of the completeness of reporting of Indigenous deaths (Northern Territory)
- assessment of the quality of disability, housing and community services data (Australian Capital Territory).

Assistance to state and territory governments with regard to strategic statistical projects including:

- completion of the 'Best Start Atlas' regarding early childhood; a workplace growth project which provided information on the net growth of workplaces by industry and by local government area; a workforce planning project which provided information on the dynamics of the current workforce; a project investigating the viability of Medicare as a source for intrastate migration; and a project investigating the housing market (owning, renting and investing) for Melbourne and Balance of Victoria (Victoria)
- undertaking a state supplementary survey on bicycle usage and household telephone connections; and in collaboration with the Office of Economic and Statistical Research (OESR), commenced a report on Queensland baby boomers which will include administrative data (Queensland)

- the conduct of a domestic water use survey, and the development of indicators to measure the health and wellbeing of children; an active ageing scorecard for seniors; improving district courts statistical outputs; development of 'A Profile of Western Australia's Seniors'; and a topic sheet on seniors' cultural diversity (Western Australia)
- the production of indicators for 'State Strategic Plan — Creating Opportunity'; school enrolment projections; production of a 'triple bottom line' report; as well as undertaking a state supplementary survey on 'domestic use of water and energy' (South Australia)
- the preparation of analyses and reports relating to population issues and policies (Tasmania)
- the collection of data to measure the value of the Indigenous visual arts and crafts industry; and reporting on regional labour markets, including workforce trends, labour force data and skills profiles (Northern Territory)
- the development of sustainability reporting (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 (NSS) including:

- completion of data quality declarations for all non-ABS data sources; overhaul of the glossary for the NSS handbook; and dissemination of 15 non-ABS data sources through quarterly electronic release of *State and Regional Indicators, Victoria* (cat. no. 1367.2) (Victoria)
- working with the Queensland state government to ensure acceptance of the NSS principles and commitment to the National Data Network culminating in the OESR, in association with Professor Fiona Stanley (Chief Executive Officer, Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth), hosting a roundtable discussion with a range of key stakeholders
- signing of an agreement with the South Australian government to apply the key principles of the NSS within the South Australian public sector (South Australia)
- continuing development and refinement of state and regional benchmarks (Tasmania)
- development of a whole of government Information Development Plan (Australian Capital Territory).

Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre

The Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre 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:

- implementation of the National Regional Profile on the ABS web site comprising headline indicators for all Australia's regions at various levels of geography and accessible through a new regional Australia icon on the web site home page
- finalisation of user consultations on the Rural and Regional Statistics Information Development Plan from which priorities for future statistical development will be determined
- provision of statistical support to the Department of Transport and Regional Services on the design and population of a regional evaluation framework for assessing the status of regions
- development of a rural communities indicator for estimating regional distributions from ABS surveys
- establishment of *Local Government and ABS*, a quarterly e-newsletter designed to assist the local government sector with small area data needs and information
- release of the publications: *Regional Wage and Salary Earner Statistics, Australia, Electronic Publication, 2000-01* (cat. no. 5673.0.55.001); and, *Characteristics of Wage and Salary Earners in Regions of Australia, 2000-01* (cat. no. 6261.0.55.001) using the remoteness structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification.

Section IV

ABS Outputs

Chapter 7

Population and Social Statistics Output

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 2003–04 the Population and Social Statistics program produced 305 individual printed and electronic publication releases directly related to population and social statistics. 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 2003–04.

Review of Components

The remainder of this chapter reviews the activities and achievements of each component of the Population and Social Statistics program during 2003–04.

Census

The census component develops and conducts the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing. The results, together with measures of the undercount, 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.

Achievements during the year included:

- release, via the Remote Access Data Laboratory, of a confidentialised one per cent sample file of 2001 census records
- release of *Census of Population and Housing: Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas (SEIFA), Australia* (cat. no. 2033.0.30.001) which is a series of indexes allowing areas to be ranked according to various socioeconomic factors
- publication of *Census of Population and Housing: Australia in Profile — A Regional Analysis* (cat. no. 2032.0), which is a five-yearly issue presenting commentary and data on a number of key social indicators from the census with the focus on regional distribution and comparisons
- publication of a series of analytical articles from the 2001 census as part of the Australian Census Analytic Program: *Counting the Homeless* (cat. no. 2050.0), *Indigenous Australians in the Contemporary Labour Market* (cat. no. 2052.0), *Australians' Ancestries* (cat. no. 2054.0), *The Micro-Dynamics of Change in Australian Agriculture: 1976–2001* (cat. no. 2055.0) and *Australia Online: How Australians are Using Computers and the Internet* (cat. no. 2056.0)
- completion of the evaluation program on the quality of 2001 census data
- completion of community consultation on the proposed topics for inclusion in the 2006 census

- development and testing of the census field systems which incorporate the return of census forms by the Internet
- development and testing of communications solutions for census field staff
- acquisition of the site for processing of the 2006 census
- commencement of development of the output strategy for the 2006 census.

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:

- development of a range of activities to mark the occasion of Australia's population reaching 20 million on 4 December 2003
- release of *Population Projections, Australia, 2002–2101* (cat. no. 3222.0) using results from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing and updated growth assumptions following expert and user consultations
- release of *Household and Family Projections, Australia, 2001–2026* (cat. no. 3236.0) using the results from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing
- conduct of the first annual Population Estimates Technical Workshop with representatives of each state and territory government to explain and discuss methodological issues with the compilation of population estimates for use under the *A New Tax System (Commonwealth-State Financial Relations) Act 1999*
- preparation of submissions, extensive explanations and background information for the Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters *Inquiry into Territory Representation in the House of Representatives* and subsequent reformatting of *Australian Demographic Statistics* (cat. no. 3101.0) consistent with provisions legislated under the *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Representation in the House of Representatives) Act 2004*

- completion of investigation work into an improved methodology for compiling experimental estimates of Indigenous mortality to be used in the compilation of *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001 to 2009* [cat. no. 3238.0]
- development and implementation of new methodology for estimating net overseas migration accounting for changes in international travellers' actual travel behaviour from stated intentions
- 2001 census re-calibration of Medicare change of address model to estimate quarterly net interstate migration statistics.

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 2003-04 included job search experience, employee earnings, employee benefits, trade union membership, underemployment, persons not in the labour force, working arrangements, and labour mobility.

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

Achievements during the year included:

- publication of feature articles in *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (cat. no. 6105.0) including: experimental volume measures of labour underutilisation; a cohort analysis of unemployment and participation; analysis of labour market transitions of teenagers; analysis of job search experience; and trade union membership
- publication of statistics on the major labour costs of employers in *Labour Costs, Australia, 2002–03* (cat. no. 6348.0.55.001)
- five-yearly revision of Labour Force Survey estimates using updated population benchmarks based on population estimates and projections from the 2001 Census of Population and Housing
- release of *Information Paper: Forthcoming Changes to Labour Force Statistics* (cat. no. 6292.0) detailing improvements to Labour Force Survey estimates through better alignment with international standards, introduction of regional population benchmarks, and improvements to seasonal adjustment processes
- progressive implementation of computer assisted interviewing into the monthly Labour Force Survey.

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:

- agreement with the Australian government, and state and territory education and training departments, for joint funding of the National Education and Training Statistics Unit for 2003–04 to 2005–06
- agreement with DEST and DEWR on the conduct of a jointly funded Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey in 2006 as part of an international round of surveys being coordinated by the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development

- development of a Dictionary of Standards for Education and Training Statistics which is a joint initiative of DEST, the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA), all state and territory education and training departments, and the ABS
- endorsement, by the Australian Education Systems Officials' Committee and ANTA Chief Executive Officers, of an Information Development Plan for education and training statistics.

Social Conditions Statistics

The social conditions statistics component provides information about aspects of 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, children with jobless parents and social security beneficiaries.

The component produces statistics from a range of social surveys in the areas of housing, income, superannuation and household expenditure. Reports are also produced, in particular *Australian Social Trends* (cat. no. 4102.0), which draw 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:

- publication of *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4159.0), which provides a profile of the socioeconomic characteristics of Australia's adult population and presents data on a range of social dimensions of the Australian community, including aspects of social attachment
- conduct, in respect of 2003-04, of the six-yearly Household Income and Expenditure Survey. The redeveloped survey collected some new information on assets and liabilities to improve both the quality of the income information collected in the survey and to enable analysis of the household distribution of wealth
- publication of *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia, 2000-01* (cat. no. 4130.0.55.001), a web-based release which provided information on housing costs (rates, mortgage and rent payments) and relates these to characteristics of occupants and dwellings such as tenure, household composition, dwelling structure, age, income and principal source of income. The publication also includes estimates of the value of dwelling for capital cities, and information on recent home buyers.

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 coordination, production and dissemination of statistics about Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 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:

- publication of *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey, 2002* (NATSISS) (cat. no. 4714.0), presenting results from the first such survey since the 1994 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Survey (NATSIS). The NATSISS surveyed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians 15 years and older including those living in discrete Indigenous communities in remote areas of Australia. The NATSISS had significant content overlap with the 1994 NATSIS so that comparisons in the circumstances of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians can be analysed over time. The content also overlapped with the 2002 General Social Survey to allow comparisons between the personal and social circumstances of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians
- publication of *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians, 2001* (cat. no. 4713.0), presenting a range of statistics for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population regarding its structure and distribution; language, religious affiliation and ancestry; education and information technology use; work; income; housing and transport; and household composition. Statistics are provided for Australia, the states and territories, and by remoteness areas to allow for analysis of the potential impact of geographical isolation on social and economic outcomes
- publication of the fourth edition of *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, 2003* (cat. no. 4704.0), produced jointly with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), and which provides a unique overview of the health and welfare of Australia's Indigenous population. The report draws on the extensive surveys and censuses conducted by the ABS and the range of data held by AIHW which together cover population statistics, housing and infrastructure, community services and housing assistance, health status, death and sickness, and the availability, resourcing and use of services.

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 aspects of social conditions in Australia and the social wellbeing of the population and 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:

- extensive consultation with the Department of Health and Ageing, the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare, and other major users of health survey data, regarding the development of the content and methodology for the 2004–05 National Health Survey
- a significant contribution to improving dissemination and understanding of national health surveys and health statistics through the release of several web-based publications and articles: *Breastfeeding in Australia, Electronic delivery* (cat. no. 4810.0.55.001); *National Health Survey: Private Health Insurance, Australia* (cat. no. 4815.0.55.001); *Health Risk Factors, Australia* (cat. no. 4812.0); *National Health Survey: Injuries, Australia* (cat. no. 4384.0); *National Health Survey: Mental Health, Australia* (cat. no. 4811.0); *Asthma in Australia: A Snapshot* (cat. no. 4819.0.55.001); *Diabetes in Australia: A Snapshot* (cat. no. 4820.0.55.001); and, *Cardiovascular Disease in Australia: A Snapshot* (cat. no. 4821.0.55.001)
- a similar contribution to mortality analysis in Australia through the release of the following publications: *Drug-induced Deaths, Australia* (cat. no. 3321.0.55.001); *Multiple Cause of Death Analysis* (cat. no. 3319.0.55.001); *Suicides: Recent Trends, Australia* (cat. no. 3309.0.55.001); and, *Deaths From External Causes, Australia* (cat. no. 3320.0)
- release of *Information Paper: Measuring Social Capital – an Australian Framework and Indicators* (cat. no. 1378.0)
- successful enumeration of the 2003 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, and the release of preliminary data in *Disability, Australia* (cat. no. 4446.0)

- successful development and testing of questions designed to identify people in need of assistance due to a severe/profound disability, for possible inclusion in the 2006 census
- contribution to international work in the development of disability statistics through assisting the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific in the provision of training on issues relating to the collection of disability statistics for countries in the Asia/Pacific region, and participation in various international forums involved in the development of international standards for the measurement of disability
- completion of the content specification phase associated with the development of the 2005 Personal Safety Survey and the 2006 Time Use Survey which involved reviewing previous surveys and ascertaining emerging needs in consultation with key users.

National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics

The National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics is responsible for leadership of national statistical activity relating to crime and justice, including crime victimisation surveys. It produces national statistics and analyses about crime and justice, including reported and unreported crime, criminal court processes and resulting sentences including custodial and community-based orders. 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:

- completion of the first draft of the national Information Development Plan (IDP) for crime and justice which identifies key crime and justice issues, the data sources available to address those issues, and suggested strategies to address data gaps and deficiencies
- release of *Information Paper: Sexual Assault Information Development Framework* (cat. no. 4518.0)
- the release of *Information Paper: Measuring Crime Victimisation, Australia: The Impact of Different Collection Methodologies* (cat. no. 4522.0.55.001) which discusses the different levels of crime reported via various collection methodologies and the reasons for those differences.

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.

In addition to regular publications and reports, and a range of consultancy projects, other achievements during the year included:

- release of an updated compendium of sport and recreation statistics – *Sport and Recreation: A Statistical Overview, Australia, 2003* (cat. no. 4156.0), with work on a similar compendium of cultural statistics in progress
- release of three publications on culture and recreation data collected in the General Social Survey: *Attendance at Selected Cultural Venues and Events, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4114.0); *Sport Attendance, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4174.0); and *Participation in Sport and Physical Activities, Australia, 2002* (cat. no. 4177.0)
- seminars undertaken in all capital cities around Australia to promote awareness and use of cultural statistics, as well as to assess data needs
- release of a report providing detailed information from past Household Expenditure Surveys: *Household Expenditure on Sports, Physical Recreation and Other Leisure, 1998–99*, as a companion to the earlier report, *Household Expenditure on Culture*, released in 2002
- preparation of a paper assessing the feasibility for establishing a Sport and Recreation Satellite Account
- publication of *Children's Participation in Cultural and Leisure Activities, Australia, April 2003* (cat. no. 4901.0).

National Ageing Statistics Unit

The National Ageing Statistics Unit was established in July 2002 to provide statistical support for policy development and research related to ageing and aged persons. The unit aims to 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:

- release of a report on characteristics of the ageing population based on 2001 census data: *Census of Population and Housing: Ageing in Australia* (cat. no. 2048.0)

- ongoing development of an IDP for ageing statistics. The IDP will identify key ageing issues, data sources and suggested strategies to address data gaps and deficiencies
- development of standards, definitions and terminologies relevant to ageing
- the production of a regular newsletter and web site theme page on ageing issues.

National Children and Youth Statistics Unit

The ABS National Children and Youth Statistics Unit (NCYSU) was created in July 2003 in response to the need for a statistical evidence base to support policy development and research related to children and youth. The primary goal of the NCYSU is to improve the body of statistics that relate to children and young people in Australia. In pursuit of this goal, the NCYSU has a leadership and coordination role in the field of children and youth statistics, which includes supporting relevant and important survey development and reporting initiatives within and outside the ABS.

Achievements during the year included:

- commencement of the development of an IDP for children and youth statistics. The IDP will highlight the priority data demands in this field of statistics, the associated supply of data, and the key data gaps and deficiencies. In turn, this will shape the direction of statistical development activities for children and youth statistics
- establishment of an advisory group on children and youth statistics to provide advice about key information requirements in the field of children and youth
- release of a thematic profile on youth in Australia, using data from the 2001 census — *Census of Population and Housing: Australia's Youth* (cat. no. 2059.0)
- development of a newsletter and web site theme page on children and youth
- improved accessibility to children and youth data sources, through enhancement of the Directory of Statistical Sources
- involvement in a range of significant statistical development activities, including Australian Research Alliance for Children and Youth initiatives, the 'Growing Up in Australia' study, and the 'A Picture of Australia's Children' project.

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 and associated products, provision of a geographic information system, geocoding, and mapping services to the ABS, and production of the Integrated Regional Data Base — an annual regional statistics CD-ROM product.

Achievements during the year included:

- release, by Public Sector Mapping Agencies Australia Ltd, of the Geocoded National Address File. This is the culmination of several years' collaboration between the ABS and its strategic partners to facilitate the development of a comprehensive national file linking each street address to a mapped point
- assessment of the quality of the Geocoded National Address File and its potential for statistical applications
- development of the conceptual basis for Mesh Blocks, a new micro level of Australian statistical geography. The *Information Paper — Mesh Blocks* (cat. no. 1209.0) was also released. Following a public consultation process, Mesh Blocks will be implemented in 2006 census outputs and in other statistical outputs where appropriate
- release of *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) — Electronic Publication* (cat. no. 1216.0), 2003 edition, incorporating, for the first time, Northern Territory community government council areas
- release of digital boundary files for the ASGC 2003 edition
- quarterly releases 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 the 2004 edition of *Integrated Regional Data Base (IRDB), Australia* (cat. no. 1353.0).

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

The financial statements comprise:

- Statement by the Australian Statistician and Chief Finance Officer;
- Statements of Financial Position, Financial Performance and Cash Flows;
- Schedules of Commitments and Contingencies; and
- Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

of the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the year ended 30 June 2004.

The Australian Statistician is responsible for the preparation and true and fair presentation of the financial statements in accordance with the Finance Minister's Orders. This includes responsibility for the maintenance of adequate accounting records and internal controls that are designed to prevent and detect fraud and error, and for the accounting policies and accounting estimates inherent in the financial statements.

Audit approach

I have conducted an independent audit in order to express an opinion to you. My audit has been conducted in accordance with the Australian National Audit Office Auditing Standards, which incorporate the Australian Auditing and Assurance Standards, in order to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the financial statements are free of material misstatement. The nature of an audit is influenced by factors such as the use of professional judgement, selective testing, the inherent limitations of internal control, and the availability of persuasive, rather than conclusive, evidence. Therefore, an audit cannot guarantee that all material misstatements have been detected.

While the effectiveness of management's internal controls over financial reporting was considered when determining the nature and extent of audit procedures, the audit was not designed to provide assurance on internal controls.

The audit did not involve an analysis of the prudence of business decisions made by the Australian Statistician or management.

GPO Box 707 CANBERRA ACT 2601
Centenary House 19 National Circuit
BARTON ACT
Phone (02) 6203 7300 Fax (02) 6203 7777

Procedures were performed to assess whether, in all material respects, the financial statements present fairly, in accordance with the Finance Minister's Orders made under the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, Accounting Standards and other mandatory financial reporting requirements in Australia, a view which is consistent with my understanding of the Australian Bureau of Statistics' performance as represented by the statements of financial performance, financial position and cash flows.

The audit opinion is formed on the basis of these procedures, which included:

- examining, on a test basis, information to provide evidence supporting the amounts and disclosures in the financial statements; and
- assessing the appropriateness of the accounting policies and disclosures used, and the reasonableness of significant accounting estimates made by the Chief Executive.

Independence

In conducting the audit, I have followed the independence requirements of the ANAO, which incorporate Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

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 applicable Accounting Standards; and
- (ii) give a true and fair view, of the matters required by 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 2004, and its financial performance and cash flows for the year then ended.

Australian National Audit Office



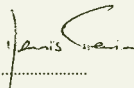
Mashelle Parrett
Executive Director

Delegate of the Auditor-General

Canberra
30 July 2004

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
STATEMENT BY THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN AND CHIEF FINANCE
OFFICER

In our opinion, the attached financial statements for the year ended 30 June 2004 are based on properly maintained financial records and 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

30 July 2004

Signed.....

Michael Burton
Chief Finance Officer

30 July 2004

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

for the year ended 30 June 2004

		2004	2003
	Notes	\$'000	\$'000
Revenues from ordinary activities			
Revenues from Government	4A	251,081	253,591
Goods and services	4B	18,760	24,607
Interest	4C	-	378
Revenue from sale of assets	4D	229	150
Other revenues		<u>451</u>	<u>923</u>
Revenues from ordinary activities		<u>270,521</u>	<u>279,649</u>
Expenses from ordinary activities (excluding borrowing costs expense)			
Employees	5A	187,564	180,200
Suppliers	5B	54,036	57,362
Depreciation and amortisation	5C	26,526	26,893
Write-down of assets	5D	3	1,106
Value of assets sold	4D	320	372
Other expenses		<u>2,903</u>	<u>6,029</u>
Expenses from ordinary activities (excluding borrowing costs expense)		<u>271,352</u>	<u>271,962</u>
Borrowing costs expense	6	<u>818</u>	<u>980</u>
Net surplus/(deficit) from ordinary activities	12	<u>(1,649)</u>	<u>6,707</u>
Decrease in retained surpluses on application of accounting standard AASB 1028 <i>Employee Benefits</i>	12	-	(1,062)
Decrease in retained surpluses on initial application of fair value under accounting standard AASB 1041 <i>Revaluation of Non-current Assets</i>	12	<u>-</u>	<u>(1,276)</u>
Total revenues, expenses and valuation adjustments recognised directly in equity		<u>-</u>	<u>(2,338)</u>
Total changes in equity other than those resulting from transactions with the Australian Government as owner		<u>(1,649)</u>	<u>4,369</u>

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

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

as at 30 June 2004

	Notes	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
ASSETS			
Financial assets			
Cash	7A	12,755	12,771
Receivables	7B	4,746	5,575
Accrued Revenue	7C	495	266
Total financial assets		17,996	18,612
Non-financial assets			
Infrastructure, plant and equipment	8A,C	37,091	41,193
Inventories	8D	42	58
Intangibles	8B,C	80,196	76,797
Other non-financial assets	8E	7,989	8,834
Total non-financial assets		125,318	126,882
Total Assets		143,314	145,494
LIABILITIES			
Interest bearing liabilities			
Loans	9A	10,033	11,150
Leases	9B	949	2,938
Other interest bearing liabilities	9C	30	383
Total interest bearing liabilities		11,012	14,471
Provisions			
Employees	10A	67,392	63,923
Other provisions	10B	19	24
Total provisions		67,411	63,947
Payables			
Suppliers	11A	5,592	7,059
Unearned Revenue	11B	4,353	3,597
Other payables	11C	203	275
Total payables		10,148	10,931
Total Liabilities		88,571	89,349
NET ASSETS		54,743	56,145
EQUITY			
Contributed equity	12	11,497	11,250
Reserves	12	7,519	7,519
Retained surpluses	12	35,727	37,376
TOTAL EQUITY	12	54,743	56,145
Current assets		26,027	27,504
Non-current assets		117,287	117,990
Current liabilities		43,652	43,782
Non-current liabilities		44,919	45,567

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 2004

	2004	2003
Notes	\$'000	\$'000
OPERATING ACTIVITIES		
Cash received		
Goods and services	20,274	26,758
Appropriations	250,981	253,501
Interest	-	432
GST received from ATO	5,923	5,726
GST Receipts from Customers	1,833	2,340
Total cash received	279,011	288,757
Cash used		
Employees	(183,813)	(185,181)
Suppliers	(57,462)	(69,784)
Borrowing costs	(818)	(980)
GST Payments to Suppliers	(5,911)	(6,554)
GST paid to ATO	(1,897)	(2,074)
Return to Official Public Account (excess cash balance)	-	(1,300)
Total cash used	(249,901)	(265,873)
Net cash from operating activities	13 29,110	22,884
INVESTING ACTIVITIES		
Cash received		
Proceeds from sales of property, plant and equipment	229	337
Total cash received	229	337
Cash used		
Purchase of property, plant and equipment	(8,797)	(6,470)
Purchase of intangibles	(17,346)	(15,749)
Total cash used	(26,143)	(22,219)
Net cash used by investing activities	(25,914)	(21,882)
FINANCING ACTIVITIES		
Cash received		
Appropriations – contributed equity	247	-
Total cash received	247	-
Cash used		
Repayment of debt	(1,117)	(1,051)
Repayment of Lease Liability	(1,989)	(1,898)
Repayment of other interest bearing liabilities	(353)	(352)
Capital use charge paid	-	(6,700)
Return interest to Official Public Account	-	(1,266)
Total cash used	(3,459)	(11,267)
Net cash used by financing activities	(3,212)	(11,267)
Net decrease in cash held	(16)	(10,265)
Cash at the beginning of the reporting period	12,771	23,036
Cash at the end of the reporting period	7A 12,755	12,771

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

**AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS
SCHEDULE OF COMMITMENTS**

as at 30 June 2004

	2004	2003
	\$'000	\$'000
BY TYPE		
Capital commitments		
Infrastructure, plant and equipment ¹	<u>1,045</u>	445
Total capital commitments	1,045	445
Other Commitments		
Operating leases ²	257,486	263,428
Other commitments	<u>16,978</u>	7,567
Total other commitments	274,464	270,995
Commitments receivable	<u>(24,134)</u>	(22,640)
Net commitments	<u>251,375</u>	<u>248,800</u>
BY MATURITY		
Capital commitments		
One year or less	<u>1,045</u>	446
Total capital commitments by maturity	1,045	446
Operating lease commitments		
One year or less	22,054	23,431
From one to five years	93,146	88,120
Over five years	<u>142,286</u>	151,877
Total operating lease commitments by maturity	257,486	263,428
Other commitments		
One year or less	8,132	7,566
From one to five years	5,539	-
Over five years	<u>3,307</u>	-
Total other commitments by maturity	16,978	7,566
Commitments Receivable	<u>(24,134)</u>	(22,640)
Net commitments by maturity	<u>251,375</u>	<u>248,800</u>

NB: Commitments are GST inclusive where relevant.

¹ Plant and equipment commitments are primarily contracts for purchases of furniture and fittings for new building fitout.

² 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 2004

	2004	2003
	\$'000	\$'000
Contingent liabilities		
Claims for damages/costs ¹	5,650	6,341
Claims for damages/costs ²	-	30
Total contingent liabilities	5,650	6,371

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 Statement of Financial Position 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 at 30 June 2003. No claims remain outstanding as at 30 June 2004.

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 Note 14: Contingent Liabilities and Assets.

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 2004

Note

- 1 Summary of Significant Accounting Policies
- 2 Adoption of AASB Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards from 2005-2006
- 3 Events Occurring after Reporting Date
- 4 Operating Revenues
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- 6 Borrowing Costs Expense
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- 9 Interest Bearing Liabilities
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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.

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.

(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 Orders (Financial Statements for reporting periods ending on or after 30 June 2004)*;
- 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 which, as noted, are at valuation. Except where stated, no allowance is made for the effect of changing prices on the results or the financial position.

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. However, assets and liabilities arising under agreements equally proportionately unperformed are not recognised unless required by an Accounting Standard.

Liabilities and assets, that are unrecognised, are reported in the Schedule of Commitments and the Schedule of Contingencies (other than unquantifiable or remote contingencies, which are reported at Note 14).

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.

(c) Changes in Accounting Policy

The accounting policies used in the preparation of these financial statements are consistent with those used in 2002-03.

Property plant and equipment assets are being revalued progressively as explained in Note 1(o).

(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 4A "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.

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.

In 2003-2004 the ABS did not require or receive administered appropriations.

Resources Received Free of Charge

Services received free of charge are recognised as revenue when and only when a fair value can be reliably determined and the services would have been purchased if they had not been donated (Note 4A). Use of those resources is recognised as an expense.

Contributions of assets at no cost of acquisition or for nominal considerations are recognised as revenue 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.

Due to changes in the Agency Banking Incentive Scheme the ABS no longer earns interest from its 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 11B).

(f) Transactions with the Government as Owner

Equity Injections

Amounts appropriated which are designated as 'equity injections' for a year (less any savings offered up in Portfolio Additional Estimates Statements) are recognised directly in Contributed Equity in that year.

(g) Employee Benefits

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

Liabilities for wages and salaries (including non-monetary benefits) and annual leave are measured at their nominal amounts. Other employee benefits expected to be settled within 12 months of the reporting date are also measured at their nominal amounts.

The nominal amount is calculated with regard to the rates expected to be paid on settlement of the liability.

All other employee benefit liabilities are measured as the present value of the estimated future cash outflows to be made in respect of services provided by employees up to the reporting date.

Leave

The liability for employee benefits 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 leave liabilities are calculated on the basis of employees' remuneration, including the Agency's employer superannuation contribution rates to the extent that the leave is likely to be taken during service rather than paid out on termination.

The liability for long service leave has been determined by reference to an actuarial assessment of our Long Service leave liability. The estimate of the present value of the liability takes into account attrition rates and pay increases through promotion and inflation.

For 2003-2004 there has been no change to the assumptions used that would cause a material movement to the present value of the long service leave 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 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.

The ABS has developed a detailed formal plan for the terminations and has offered severance packages to employees on a voluntary basis.

Superannuation

Staff of the ABS are members of the Commonwealth Superannuation Scheme and the Public Sector Superannuation Scheme. The liability for their superannuation benefits is recognised in the financial statements of the Australian Government and is settled by the Australian Government in due course. The ABS makes employer contributions to the Australian Government at rates determined by an actuary to be sufficient to meet the cost to the Government of the superannuation entitlements of the ABS's employees. The liability for superannuation recognised as at 30 June represents outstanding contributions for the final fortnight of the year.

(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.

(j) Cash

Cash means notes and coins held, and any deposits held at call with a bank or financial institution. Cash is recognised at its nominal amount.

(k) Receivables

A provision is made for any doubtful debts based on a review of all outstanding accounts as at year end (refer Note 7B). 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 7C).

(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 of 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 (PP & E)

Asset Recognition Threshold

Non-current assets that have a limited useful life (depreciable assets) are stated at cost, except as indicated in Note 8. 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

Infrastructure, plant and equipment are carried at valuation. 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*. The ABS still has IT hardware recorded as deprival valuation and cost. At 30 June 2005 these assets will be recorded at fair value.

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 of this change in policy relates to those assets recognised at fair value for the first time in the current period where the measurement basis for fair value is different to that previously used for deprival value. The financial effect of the change is given by the difference between the fair values obtained for these assets in the current period and the deprival-based values recognised at the end of the previous period. The financial effect by class is as follows:

<i>Asset Class</i>	<i>Increment / (Decrement to asset class)</i>	<i>Contra Account</i>
Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment	2004: (nil) 2003: (\$1,275,628)	Accumulated results

Total financial effect for 2002-03 was to decrease the carrying amount of IP&E by \$1,549,386, decrease revaluation reserves by \$273,758 and decrease accumulated results by \$1,275,628.

Frequency

The 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.

In 2004/05 all IT hardware will be revalued using the fair value basis.

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 property plant and equipment assets are written-off to their estimated residual values over their estimated useful lives to the ABS using, in all cases, the straight-line method of depreciation. Leasehold improvements are depreciated on a straight-line basis over the lesser of the estimated useful life of the improvements or the unexpired period of the lease.

	2004	2003
	<u>Life in Years</u>	<u>Life in Years</u>
Computer hardware	3 to 10	3 to 10
Furniture & fittings	10	10
Plant	10	10
Office equipment	5	5

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

(p) Impairment of Non-Current Assets

Non-current assets carried at up to date fair value at the reporting date are not subject to impairment testing.

The non-current assets carried at cost or deprival value, which are not held to generate net cash inflows, have been assessed for indications of impairment. Where indications of impairment exist, the carrying amount of the asset is compared to the higher of its net selling price and depreciated replacement cost and is written down to that value if greater.

(q) 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 8B). 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:

	2004	2003
	<u>Life in Years</u>	<u>Life in Years</u>
Computer software – proprietary	5	5
Computer software – internally generated	2 to 28	2 to 28

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

(r) 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.

(s) 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.

(t) Inventories

Inventories comprise items held for resale which are considered significant and are valued at the lower of cost and net realisable value (Note 8D). 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 have been expensed at the time of purchase.

(u) 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 8E).

(v) 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.

(w) 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
- for receivables and payables.

(x) Rounding

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

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

(y) Comparative Figures

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

(z) Foreign Currency

Transactions denominated in a foreign currency are converted at the exchange rate at the date of the transaction. Foreign currency receivables and payables are translated at the exchange rates current as at balance date. Associated currency gains and losses are not material.

Note 2: Adoption of AASB Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards from 2005-2006.

The Australian Accounting Standards Board has issued replacement Australian Accounting Standards to apply from 2005-2006. The new standards are the AASB Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRSs) which are issued by the International Accounting Standards Board. The new standards cannot be adopted early. The standards being replaced are to be withdrawn with effect from 2005-06, but continue to apply in the meantime.

The purpose of issuing AASB Equivalents to IFRSs is to enable Australian entities reporting under the *Corporations Act 2001* to be able to more readily access overseas capital markets by preparing their financial reports according to accounting standards more widely used overseas.

For-profit entities complying fully with the AASB Equivalents will be able to make an explicit and unreserved statement of compliance with IFRSs and well as with the AASB Equivalents.

It is expected that the Finance Minister will continue to require compliance with the Accounting Standards issued by the AASB, including the AASB Equivalents to IFRSs, in his Orders for the preparation of Agency financial statements for 2005-06 and beyond.

The AASB Equivalents contain certain additional provisions which will apply to not-for-profit entities, including Australian Government agencies. Some of these provisions are in conflict with the IFRSs and therefore ABS will only be able to assert compliance with the AASB Equivalents to IFRSs.

Existing AASB standards that have no IFRS equivalent will continue to apply, including in particular AAS 29 *Financial Reporting by Government Departments*.

Accounting Standard AASB 1047 *Disclosing the impact of Adopting Australian Equivalents to IFRSs* requires that the financial statements for 2003-04 disclose:

- an explanation of how the transition to the AASB Equivalents is being managed; and
- a narrative explanation of the key differences in accounting policies arising from the transition.

The purpose of this Note is to make these disclosures.

Management of the transition to AASB Equivalents to IFRSs

The ABS has taken the following steps for the preparation towards the implementation of AASB Equivalents:

- The ABS's Audit Committee is tasked with oversight of the transition to and implementation of the AASB Equivalents to IFRSs. The Chief Finance Officer is formally responsible for the project and reports to the Audit Committee on progress.
- The plan requires the following key steps to be undertaken and sets deadlines for their achievement:
 - Identification of all major accounting policy differences between current AASB standards and the AASB Equivalents to IFRSs progressively to 30 June 2004.
 - Identification of systems changes necessary to be able to report under the AASB Equivalents, including those necessary to enable capture of data under both sets of rules for 2004-05, and the testing and implementation of those changes.
 - Preparation of a transitional balance sheet as at 1 July 2004, under AASB Equivalents, within three months of 30 June 2004.
 - Preparation of a AASB Equivalent balance sheet at the same time as the 30 June 2005 statements are prepared.
 - Meeting reporting deadlines set by Finance for 2005-06 balance sheet under AASB Equivalent Standards.
- The plan also addresses the risks to successful achievement of the above objectives and includes strategies to keep implementation on track to meet deadlines.
- To date, all major accounting and disclosure differences and system changes have been identified. The changes are expected to be implemented by 30 September 2004

Major changes in accounting policy

Changes in accounting policies under AASB Equivalents are applied retrospectively i.e. as if the new policy had always applied. This rule means that a balance sheet prepared under the AASB Equivalents must be made as at 1 July 2004, except as permitted in particular circumstances by AASB 1 *First-time Adoption of Australian Equivalents to International Financial Reporting Standards*. This will enable the 2005-06 financial statements to report comparatives under the AASB Equivalents also.

Changes to major accounting policies are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Property plant and equipment

It is expected that the Finance Minister's Orders will require property plant and equipment assets carried at valuation in 2003-04 to be measured at up-to-date fair value from 2005-06. This differs from the accounting policies currently in place for these assets which, up to and including 2003-04, have been revalued progressively over a 3-year cycle and which currently include assets at cost (for purchases since the commencement of a cycle) and at deprival value (which will differ from their fair value to the extent that they have been measured at depreciated replacement cost when a relevant market selling price is available).

However, it is important to note that the Finance Minister requires these assets to be measured at up-to-date fair values as at 30 June 2005. Those assets not at fair value as at 1 July 2004 will have fair values estimated for them as at that date. These values will be reflected in the transitional Statement of Financial Position at 1 July 2004 when this is used to provide opening equity balances for the comparative figures in the 2005/06 financial statements.

Intangible Assets

The ABS currently recognises internally-developed software assets on the cost basis. The carrying amounts include amounts that were originally measured at deprival valuation and subsequently deemed to be cost under transitional provisions available on the introduction of AAS 38 *Revaluation of Non-current Assets* in 2000-01 and AASB 1041 of the same title in 2001-02.

The AASB Equivalent on Intangibles does not permit intangibles to be measured at valuation unless there is an active market for the intangible. The ABS's internally-developed software is specific to the needs to the Agency and is not traded. The ABS does not have any intangibles measured at valuation.

Impairment of Non-Current Assets

The ABS's policy on impairment of non-current assets is at note 1(p). Under the new AASB Equivalent Standard, these assets will be subject to assessment for impairment and, if there are indications of impairment, measurement of any impairment. (Impairment measurement must also be done, irrespective of any indications of impairment, for intangible assets not yet available for use). The impairment test is that the carrying amount of an asset must not exceed the greater of (a) its fair value less costs to sell and (b) its value in use. 'Value in use' is depreciated replacement cost, for assets which would be replaced if the ABS were deprived of them.

The most significant changes are that, for the Agency's assets, where there is indication of impairment assets carried at up-to-date fair value, may be required to be written down if costs to sell are significant.

Inventory

The ABS recognises inventory not held for sale at cost, except where no longer required, in which case net realisable value is applied. The new AASB Equivalent standard will require inventory held for distribution for no consideration or at a nominal amount to be carried at the lower of cost or current replacement cost.

Employee Benefits

The provision for long service leave is measured at the present value of estimated future cash outflows using market yields as at the reporting date on national government bonds.

Under the new AASB Equivalent standard, the same discount rate will be used as it has been determined by the AASB that there is no deep market in high quality corporate bonds in Australia.

Note 3: 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 2004.

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

	2004	2003
	<u>\$'000</u>	<u>\$'000</u>
Note 4: Operating Revenues		
<u>Note 4A: Revenues from Government</u>		
Appropriations for outputs	250,981	253,501
Resources received free of charge	100	90
Total revenues from government	<u>251,081</u>	<u>253,591</u>
 <u>Note 4B: Goods and Services</u>		
Goods	5,632	9,872
Services	13,128	14,735
Total sales of goods and services	<u>18,760</u>	<u>24,607</u>
 Provision of goods to:		
Related entities	4,994	7,234
External entities	638	2,638
Total sales of goods	<u>5,632</u>	<u>9,872</u>
 Rendering of services to:		
Related entities	11,640	10,798
External entities	1,488	3,937
Total rendering of services	<u>13,128</u>	<u>14,735</u>
 <u>Note 4C: Interest Revenue</u>		
Interest on deposits	-	378
 <u>Note 4D: Net Gains from Sale of Assets</u>		
 Infrastructure, plant and equipment:		
Proceeds from disposal	229	150
Net book value of assets disposed	(320)	(372)
Write-offs	-	-
Net (loss) from disposal of infrastructure, plant and equipment	<u>(91)</u>	<u>(222)</u>
TOTAL proceeds from disposals	229	150
TOTAL value of assets disposed	(320)	(372)
TOTAL net (loss) from disposal of assets	<u>(91)</u>	<u>(222)</u>

	2004	2003
	<u>\$'000</u>	<u>\$'000</u>
Note 5: Operating Expenses		
<u>Note 5A: Employee Expenses</u>		
Wages and Salary	155,382	154,977
Superannuation	27,964	24,396
Leave and other entitlements	7,836	3,468
Interviewers wages and superannuation	8,215	8,182
Census wages and superannuation	29	20
Separation and redundancies	-	(53)
Other employee expenses	1,309	1,706
Total employee benefits expense	200,735	192,696
Worker compensation premiums	2,392	2,027
Total employee expenses	203,127	194,723
Less amounts capitalised in respect of internally generated software	<u>(15,563)</u>	<u>(14,523)</u>
Total employee expenses	187,564	180,200

Note 5B: Supplier Expenses

Goods from related entities	1,178	1,370
Goods from external entities	13,920	16,674
Services from related entities	3,464	3,753
Services from external entities	18,388	18,139
Operating lease rentals*	17,086	17,426
Total supplier expenses	54,036	57,362

* These comprise minimum lease payments only.

Note 5C: Depreciation and Amortisation*(i) Depreciation*

Other infrastructure, plant and equipment	11,297	12,392
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(ii) Amortisation

Intangibles – Computer Software	15,229	14,501
Total depreciation and amortisation	26,526	26,893

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

Leasehold improvements	1,352	1,526
Plant and equipment	11,227	12,466
Internally developed software – in use	13,947	12,901
Total depreciation and amortisation	26,526	26,893

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

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

	2004	2003
	<u>\$'000</u>	<u>\$'000</u>
Note 5D: Write Down of Assets		
Financial assets		
Bad and doubtful debts expense	3	(13)
Non-financial assets		
Hardware – write off on disposal	-	1,118
Purchased software – revaluation decrement	-	1
Total write-down of assets	<u>3</u>	<u>1,106</u>

Note 6: Borrowing Costs Expense

Loans	658	724
Leases	160	256
Total borrowing costs expense	<u>818</u>	<u>980</u>

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
Note 7: Financial Assets		
<u>Note 7A: Cash</u>		
Departmental	12,755	12,771
Total cash	12,755	12,771

Under banking arrangements in place up to 1 July 2003, monies in the ABS's bank accounts were swept into the Official Public Account nightly and earned interest on the daily balance at rates based on money market call rates. Since 1 July 2003, no interest is earned on the Bureau's bank balances.

<u>Note 7B: Receivables</u>		
Goods and services	2,227	2,791
Less: Provision for doubtful debts	(35)	(35)
	<u>2,192</u>	<u>2,756</u>
GST receivable from the Australian Taxation Office	817	828
Sundry receivables	437	691
Official Public Account receivable ¹	1,300	1,300
Total receivables (net)	4,746	5,575

Receivables is represented by:

Current	4,746	5,575
Total receivables (net)	4,746	5,575

All receivables are current assets.

Credit terms are net 30 days (2003: 30 days)

Appropriations receivable undrawn are appropriations controlled by the ABS but held in the Official Public Account under the Government's just-in-time drawdown arrangements.

¹ In 2002/03 the ABS returned \$1,300,000 to the Official Public Account, which was then surplus to working cash requirements. This can be redrawn at any time.

Receivables (gross) are aged as follows:		
Not overdue	4,655	5,412
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	76	97
30 to 60 days	41	45
60 to 90 days	4	47
More than 90 days	5	9
Total receivables (gross)	4,781	5,610

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
The provision for doubtful debts is aged as follows:		
Not overdue	-	-
Overdue by:		
Less than 30 days	-	-
30 to 60 days	26	16
60 to 90 days	4	16
More than 90 days	5	3
Total provision for doubtful debts	35	35

Note 7C: Accrued Revenue

Other	495	266
Total Accrued revenue	495	266

Note 8: Non-Financial AssetsNote 8A: Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment**Plant and equipment**

- work in progress	896	648
- at cost	20,225	11,840
- Accumulated depreciation	(6,299)	(2,385)
	<u>13,926</u>	<u>9,455</u>
- at 1997-00 valuation (deprival)	34,491	39,623
- Accumulated depreciation	(32,392)	(33,167)
	<u>2,099</u>	<u>6,456</u>
- transferred in - out of cycle	108	108
- Accumulated depreciation	(101)	(96)
	<u>7</u>	<u>12</u>
- at 2002-03 valuation (fair value)	24,471	24,622
- Accumulated depreciation	(4,308)	-
	<u>20,163</u>	<u>24,622</u>
Total Infrastructure, Plant and Equipment (non-current)	37,091	41,193

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).

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

	2004	2003
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 8B: Intangibles</u>		
Computer software		
Internally developed - in progress (non-current)	7,162	6,870
ANZSCO and ANZSIC capitalisation	2,072	-
	9,234	6,870
Internally developed - in use (non-current)	128,922	132,007
Purchased Software	20,565	19,953
Accumulated amortisation	(78,525)	(82,033)
	70,962	69,927
Total intangibles	80,196	76,797

Note 8C: 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 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
Additions			
by purchase	8,797	17,346	26,143
from acquisition of operations	-	-	-
Net revaluation increment/(decrement)			
Depreciation/amortisation expense	(12,579)	(13,947)	(26,526)
Recoverable Amount write-downs	-	17,457	17,457
Recoverable Amount write-downs	-	(17,457)	(17,457)
Write-offs	(203)	-	(203)
Disposals			
From disposal of operations	-	-	-
Other disposals	(117)	-	(117)
As at 30 June 2004			
Gross book value	80,192	158,721	238,913
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(43,101)	(78,525)	(121,626)
Net book value	37,091	80,196	117,287

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

Note 8C: Analysis of Property, Plant, Equipment and Intangibles

TABLE B – Assets at valuation

Item	Other IP&E \$'000	Computer Software \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
As at 30 June 2004			
Gross value	58,962	-	58,962
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(36,700)	-	(36,700)
Net book value	22,262		22,262
As at 30 June 2003			
Gross value	64,247	-	64,247
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(33,263)	-	(33,263)
Net book value	30,984	-	30,984

TABLE C – Assets held under finance lease

Item	Other IP&E \$'000	Computer Software \$'000	TOTAL \$'000
As at 30 June 2004			
Gross value	1,735	-	1,735
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(1,011)	-	(1,011)
Net book value	724		724
As at 30 June 2003			
Gross value	1,758	-	1,758
Accumulated depreciation/amortisation	(96)	-	(96)
Net book value	1,662	-	1,662

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 8C: 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 2004	896	9,234	10,130
Gross value at 30 June 2003	653	6,870	7,523

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

	2004	2003
	\$'000	\$'000
<u>Note 8D: Inventories</u>		
Finished goods (cost)	<u>42</u>	<u>58</u>
Inventories held for sale	42	58
Inventories not held for sale (cost)	<u>-</u>	<u>-</u>
Total inventories	<u>42</u>	<u>58</u>

All departmental inventories are current assets.

Note 8E: Other Non-Financial Assets

<u>Prepayments</u>		
Information Technology	3	273
Software Licenses	964	1,535
Office Rent	5,702	5,615
Childcare Places	84	127
Subscriptions	45	313
Other	<u>1,191</u>	<u>971</u>
Total Prepayments	<u>7,989</u>	<u>8,834</u>

All other non-financial assets are current assets.

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
Note 9: Interest Bearing Liabilities		
<u>Note 9A: Loans</u>		
Loans from Government	<u>10,033</u>	<u>11,150</u>
Maturity schedule for loans: Payable:		
Within one year	1,187	1,117
In one to five years	5,539	5,212
In more than five years	<u>3,307</u>	<u>4,821</u>
Total loan liability	<u>10,033</u>	<u>11,150</u>

The loan was issued in 2001-02 and is repayable in quarterly instalments beginning in 2001-02 and ending in 2010-11. The interest rate implicit in the loan is 6.12%.

<u>Note 9B: Leases</u>		
Finance lease commitments: Payable:		
Within one year	768	2,149
In one to five years	<u>262</u>	<u>1,029</u>
Minimum lease payments	1,030	3,178
Deduct: future finance charges	<u>(81)</u>	<u>(240)</u>
Net lease liability	<u>949</u>	<u>2,938</u>

Lease liability is represented by:		
Current	710	1,989
Non-current	<u>239</u>	<u>949</u>
Net lease liability	<u>949</u>	<u>2,938</u>

(ii) Lease fitout incentive movement		
Balance at 1 July	2,938	6,641
Repaid during the year	<u>(1,989)</u>	<u>(3,703)</u>
Total Lease Fitout Incentive Liability	<u>949</u>	<u>2,938</u>

Finance leases exist in relation to certain major office equipment assets. All leases are non cancellable and for fixed terms of ten years. The interest rate implicit in the leases averaged 6.16% (2003: 6.16%). The lease assets secure the lease liabilities. The ABS guarantees the residual value of all assets leased. There are no contingent rentals.

<u>Note 9C: Other Interest Bearing Liabilities</u>		
Lease incentives	<u>30</u>	<u>383</u>
Other interest bearing liabilities are represented by:		
Current	30	353
Non-current	<u>-</u>	<u>30</u>
Total other interest bearing liabilities	<u>30</u>	<u>383</u>

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
Note 10: Provisions		
<u>Note 10A: Employee Provisions</u>		
Salaries and wages	6,204	4,992
Leave	59,426	56,815
Superannuation	1,085	892
Separations and redundancies	677	1,224
Aggregate employee entitlement liability	67,392	63,923
Workers compensation	-	-
Aggregate employee benefit liability and related on-costs	67,392	63,923
Current	31,571	29,383
Non-current	35,821	34,540

Note 10B: Other

Surplus Lease Space	19	24
<i>Surplus Lease Space is represented by:</i>		
Current	6	9
Non- Current	13	15
Total Surplus Lease Space	19	24
Balance as at 1 July	24	
Reduction due to sacrifice of economic benefits made during the period	(5)	
Balance as at 30 June	19	

Note 11: Payables

Note 11A: Supplier Payables

Trade creditors	5,562	6,869
Sundry creditors	30	186
Operating lease rentals	-	4
Total supplier payables	5,592	7,059

Supplier payables are represented by:

Current	5,592	7,059
Non-current	-	-
Total supplier payables	5,592	7,059

Settlement is usually made net 30 days.

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

	2004	2003
	<u>\$'000</u>	<u>\$'000</u>
<u>Note 11B: Unearned Revenue</u>		
Receipts received in advance	4,353	3,597
Total unearned revenue	<u>4,353</u>	<u>3,597</u>

All unearned revenue is a current liability.

<u>Note 11C: Other Payables</u>		
GST payable to ATO	202	265
Other	<u>1</u>	<u>10</u>
Total other payables	<u>203</u>	<u>275</u>

All other payables are current liabilities.

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

Note 12: Equity**Analysis of Equity**

Item	Accumulated Results		Asset Revaluation Reserves		Contributed Equity		TOTAL EQUITY	
	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
Opening balance as at 1 July	37,376	40,973	7,519	8,685	11,250	11,250	56,145	60,908
Net surplus/deficit	(1,649)	6,707	-	-	-	-	(1,649)	6,707
Net revaluation increment/(decrement)	-	-	-	(892)	-	-	-	(892)
Decrease in retained surpluses on application of transitional provisions in accounting standard AASB 1041	-	(1,276)	-	(274)	-	-	-	(1,550)
Decrease in retained surpluses on application of accounting standard AASB 1028 Employee Benefits	-	(1,062)	-	-	-	-	-	(1,062)
Transactions with owner:								
Distributions to owner:								
Returns on Capital								
Dividends								
Capital Use Charge		(6,700)						(6,700)
Returns of Capital								
Restructuring								
Returns of contributed equity		(1,266)						(1,266)
Contributions by owner:								
Appropriations (equity injections)					247		247	
Transfers to/(from)/between reserves								
Closing balance as at 30 June	35,727	37,376	7,519	7,519	11,497	11,250	54,743	56,145

	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
Note 13: Cash Flow Reconciliation		
Reconciliation of cash per Statement of Financial Position to Statement of Cash Flows		
Cash at year end per Statement of Cash Flows	12,755	12,771
Statement of Financial Position items comprising above cash: 'Financial Asset – Cash'	12,755	12,771
Reconciliation of net surplus to net cash from operating activities:		
Net surplus/(deficit)	(1,649)	6,707
Depreciation /amortisation	26,526	26,893
Net write down of non-current assets	-	1,106
Loss on disposal of assets	91	223
Revenue from donated assets	-	(12)
(Increase) / decrease in net receivables	829	3,506
(Increase) / decrease in accrued revenues	(229)	(118)
Increase / (decrease) in unearned revenue	756	(2,120)
(Increase) / decrease in inventories	16	(10)
(Increase) / decrease in prepayments	845	(1,979)
Increase / (decrease) in employee provisions	3,469	(5,667)
Increase / (decrease) in supplier payables	(1,467)	(5,347)
Increase / (decrease) in other liabilities	(72)	(570)
Increase / (decrease) in other provisions	(5)	272
Net cash from / (used by) operating activities	29,110	22,884

Note 14: Contingent Liabilities and Assets*Quantifiable Contingencies*

The Schedule of Contingencies reports a contingent liability as at 30 June 2004 in respect of a number of leases with make good clauses in them of \$5,605,000 (2003: \$6,341,000). New leases are being negotiated without a make good provision.

Unquantifiable Contingencies

There have been no unquantifiable contingencies identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the financial year 2003/04 (2003: Nil).

Remote Contingencies

There have been no remote contingencies identified by the Australian Bureau of Statistics for the financial year 2003/04 (2003: Nil).

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
Note 15: Executive Remuneration		
The number of executives who received or were due to receive remuneration of \$100,000 or more:		
\$100 000 to \$109 999	-	1
\$110 000 to \$119 999	-	-
\$120 000 to \$129 999	-	5
\$130 000 to \$139 999	4	10
\$140 000 to \$149 999	4	8
\$150 000 to \$159 999	8	6
\$160 000 to \$169 999	6	-
\$170 000 to \$179 999	3	5
\$180 000 to \$189 999	2	-
\$190 000 to \$199 999	2	1
\$200 000 to \$209 999	1	1
\$210 000 to \$219 999	1	0
\$230 000 to \$239 999	1	0
\$300 000 to \$309 999	-	1
\$310 000 to \$319 999	1	-

The aggregate amount of total remuneration of executives shown above. **\$5,593,352** \$5,784,604

The aggregate amount of separation and redundancy/termination benefit payments during the year to executives shown above. **\$85,612** \$133,110

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>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
	\$	\$
Note 16: Remuneration of Auditors		

Financial statement audit services are provided free of charge to the ABS.

The fair value of the services provided was: **100,000** 90,000

No other services were provided by the Auditor-General.

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2003</u>
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Note 17: Average Staffing Levels

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

	<u>2,743</u>	<u>2,909</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

Financial Instrument	Notes	Accounting Policies and Methods (including recognition criteria and measurement basis)	Nature of Underlying Instrument (including significant terms & conditions affecting the amount, timing and certainty of cash flows)
FINANCIAL ASSETS			
Cash	7A	Financial assets are recognised when control over future economic benefits is established and the amount of the benefit can be reliably measured. 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.
Receivables for goods and services	7B	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 except for GST Receivables. Credit terms are net 30 days (2003: 30 days).
Accrued revenue	7C	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

Financial Instrument	Notes	Accounting Policies and Methods (including recognition criteria and measurement basis)	Nature of Underlying Instrument (including significant terms & conditions affecting the amount, timing and certainty of cash flows)
FINANCIAL LIABILITIES			
Government loans	9A	<p>Financial liabilities are recognised when a present obligation to another party is entered into and the amount of the liability can be reliably measured.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>At the reporting date the ABS had a loan to the Department of Finance and Administration for 7 years with the weighted average interest rate of 6.1%. (2003:6.1%)</p>
Finance lease liabilities	9B	<p>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.</p>	<p>At reporting date, the ABS had finance leases with terms averaging three years and a maximum term of five years. The interest rate implicit in the leases averaged 6.12% (2003: 6.16%). The lease assets secure the lease liabilities.</p>
Trade creditors	11A	<p>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).</p>	<p>All creditors are entities that are not part of the Commonwealth legal entity. Settlement is usually made net 30 days. (2003:30 days)</p>

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	
		2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	1 Year or Less	1 to 5 Years	> 5 Years	2004 \$'000		2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 %
Financial Assets												
Cash at bank	7A	-	12,771	-	-	-	-	12,755	12,771	-	-	2.0
Receivables for goods and services (gross)	7B	-	-	-	-	-	-	2,227	2,791	2,227	2,791	N/a
Accrued Revenue	7C	-	-	-	-	-	-	495	266	495	266	N/a
Total		-	12,771	-	-	-	-	15,477	15,477	15,477	15,828	
Total Assets										143,314	145,494	

Financial Liabilities												
Government loans	9A	-	1,187	1,117	5,539	5,212	3,307	4,821	-	10,033	11,150	6.1
Finance lease liabilities	9B	-	710	1,989	239	949	-	-	-	949	2,938	6.1
Other interest bearing liabilities	9C	-	30	353	-	30	-	-	-	30	383	N/a
Trade Creditors	11A	-	-	-	-	-	-	5,562	6,869	5,562	6,869	N/a
Total		-	1,927	3,459	5,778	6,191	3,307	4,821	5,562	16,574	21,340	
Total Liabilities										88,571	89,349	

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

	Notes	2004		2003	
		Total Carrying Amount \$'000	Aggregate Net Fair Value \$'000	Total Carrying Amount \$'000	Aggregate Net Fair Value \$'000
Departmental Financial Assets					
Cash at bank	7A	12,755	12,755	12,771	12,771
Receivables for goods and services (net)	7B	2,192	2,192	2,756	2,756
Accrued Revenue	7C	495	495	266	266
Total Financial Assets		15,442	15,442	15,793	15,793
Financial Liabilities (Recognised)					
Government loans	9A	10,033	10,033	11,150	11,150
Finance lease liabilities	9B	949	949	2,938	2,938
Other interest bearing liabilities	9C	30	30	383	383
Trade Creditors	11A	5,562	5,562	6,869	6,869
Total Financial Liabilities (Recognised)		16,574	16,574	21,340	21,340

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.

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
 Acquittal of Authority to Draw Cash from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (Appropriations) from Acts 1 and 3

Particulars	Departmental Outputs	Total
Year ended 30 June 2004		
Balance carried from previous year	\$ 14,633,928	\$ 14,633,928
<i>Add: estimated administered appropriation lapsed 02-03</i>		
Adjusted Balance carried for previous period		
Appropriation Act (No.1) 2003 – 2004 – basic appropriation	250,441,000	250,441,000
Appropriation Act (No.3) 2003 – 2004 – basic appropriation	540,000	540,000
Refunds credited (FMAA s30)	4,077,178	4,077,178
Appropriations to take account of recoverable GST (FMAA s30A)		
Annotations to 'net appropriations' (FMAA s31)	22,337,231	22,337,231
Adjustment of appropriations on change of entity function (FMAA s32)		
Appropriation lapsed or reduced		
Total Appropriations Available for payments	292,029,337	292,029,337
Payments made (GST inclusive)	(277,606,610)	(277,606,610)
Appropriations credited to Special Accounts		
Balance carried to next year	14,422,727	14,422,727
<i>Represented by:</i>		
Cash at bank and on hand	12,507,996	12,507,996
<i>Add: Appropriations not drawn from the OPA</i>	<i>1,300,000</i>	<i>1,300,000</i>
<i>Add: Receivables – Goods and services – GST receivable from customers</i>	<i>816,669</i>	<i>816,669</i>
<i>Add: Return of contributed equity</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Less: Payable – Suppliers-GST portion</i>	<i>(201,938)</i>	<i>(201,938)</i>
Total	14,422,727	14,422,727

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

Year ended 30 June 2004	\$	\$
<i>Reconciliation for Appropriation Acts (Nos. 1 and 3)</i>		
Paid to the entity from the OPA	250,981,000	250,981,000
<i>Add:</i> Finance Minister reduction of Appropriations in current year	-	-
<i>Add:</i> Administered Appropriation lapsed in current year	-	-
Not drawn from the OPA	-	-
Total Appropriation Acts	250,981,000	250,981,000

FMA = Financial Management & Accountability Act 1997
 Act 1 = Appropriations Act (No. 1) 2003-2004
 Act 3 = Appropriations Act (No. 3) 2003-2004

There were no savings offered up during the year and there have been no savings offered up in previous years that are still ongoing.

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
Year ended 30 June 2003		
Balance carried from previous year	\$ 23,303,134	\$ 23,303,134
Total annual appropriation – basic appropriation	253,501,000	253,501,000
GST credits (FMA s 30A)	3,726,864	3,726,864
Prior year adjustments (1998-99) ¹	220,913	220,913
Adjustments and annotations to appropriations	30,394,627	30,394,627
Available for payments	311,146,538	311,146,538
Payments made during the year	(296,512,610)	(296,512,610)
Appropriations credited to Special Accounts	-	-
Balance carried to next year	14,633,928	14,633,928
<i>Represented by:</i>		
Cash	12,771,043	12,771,043
Add: Appropriations not drawn from the OPA	-	-
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)
Total	14,633,928	14,633,928

Note 19: Appropriations

Cash Basis Acquittal 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

Note 19B: Acquittal of Authority to Draw Cash from the Consolidated Revenue Fund (Appropriations) from Acts 2 and 4

Particulars	Non-operating		Total
	Equity	Loans	
Year ended 30 June 2004	\$	\$	\$
Balance carried from previous year	-	-	-
Appropriation for reporting period (Act 4)	247,000	-	247,000
Available for payments	247,000	-	247,000
Payments made (GST Inclusive)	-	-	-
Balance carried to next year	247,000	-	247,000
<i>Represented by:</i>			
Cash	247,000	-	247,000
Appropriations not drawn from OPA	-	-	-
Total	247,000	-	247,000
Reconciliation for Appropriation Acts (Nos. 2 and 4)			
Paid to the entity from OPA	247,000	-	247,000
Not drawn from the OPA	-	-	-
Total Appropriation Acts	247,000	-	247,000
Act 4 = Appropriations Act (No. 2) 2003-2004			

There were no savings offered up during the year and there have been no savings offered up in previous years that are still ongoing.

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

Particulars	Non-operating		Total
	Equity	Loans	
Year ended 30 June 2003			
Balance carried from previous year	\$ 11,250,000	\$ -	\$ 11,250,000
Total annual appropriation	-	-	-
Prior year adjustments (2001-2002) ¹	(11,250,000)	-	(11,250,000)
Available for payments	-	-	-
Payments made during the year	-	-	-
Balance carried to the next year	-	-	-
<i>Represented by:</i>			
Appropriations not drawn from the OPA	-	-	-
Total	-	-	-

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.

¹ 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.

Note 20: Trust Account**Comcare Trust Account**

This account holds monies 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*. Where ABS makes payments against accrued sick leave entitlements pending determination of an employee's claim, permission is obtained in writing from each individual to allow ABS to recover the payments from the monies in the account.

	2004	2003
	\$	\$
Balance carried forward from previous year	30,000	30,000
Receipts during the year	779,708	619,477
Available for payments	809,708	649,477
Payments made	779,708	619,477
Balance carried forward to next year	30,000	30,000

Note 21: Special Accounts**Trust Fund Other Trust Money**

Legal Authority: Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997 Section 20.

Purpose: For the receipt of monies temporarily held on trust or otherwise for the benefit of a person other than the Commonwealth. Any money held is thus special public money under section 16 of the FMA Act 1997.

This account is non-interest bearing.

	2004	2003
	\$	\$
Balance carried forward from previous year	15,939	13,535
Receipts during the year from customers	46,548	6,236
Available for payments	62,487	19,771
Payments made to customers	-	3,832
Balance carried forward to next year	62,487	15,939
<i>Represented by:</i>		
Cash	62,487	15,939
Total	62,847	15,939

	2004	2003
	\$	\$
Note 22: Specific Payment Disclosures		
No 'Act of Grace' payments were made during the reporting period, and there are no amounts owing as at year end.	-	-
No waivers of amounts owing to the Commonwealth were made pursuant to subsection 34(1) of <i>(the Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997.)</i>	-	-
No payments were made under the 'Defective Administration Scheme' during the reporting period.	-	-
No payments were made under s73 of the <i>Public Service Act 1999</i> during the reporting period. (2003: No payments made)	-	-

Notes to and forming part of the Financial Statements

Note 23: Reporting of Outcomes

Note 23A: Net Cost of Outcome Delivery

	Outcome 1		Total	
	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000	2004 \$'000	2003 \$'000
Departmental expenses	272,170	272,942	272,170	272,942
Total expenses	272,170	272,942	272,170	272,942
<i>Costs recovered from provision of goods and services to the non-government sector</i>				
Departmental	2,126	6,575	2,126	6,575
Total costs recovered	2,126	6,575	2,126	6,575
<i>Other external revenues</i>				
Departmental				
Interest on cash deposits	-	378	-	378
Revenue from disposal of assets	229	150	229	150
Reversals of previous asset write-downs	-	-	-	-
Other	451	923	451	923
Goods and Services Revenue from Related Entities	16,634	18,032	16,634	18,032
Total Departmental	17,314	19,483	17,314	19,483
Total other external revenues	17,314	19,483	17,314	19,483
Net cost/(contribution) of outcome	252,730	246,884	252,730	246,884

Outcome 1 is described in Note 1 (a). Net costs shown include intra-government costs that are eliminated in calculating the actual Budget outcome.

Note 23B: Major Classes of Departmental Revenues and Expenses by Output Groups and Outputs

Outcome 1	Output Group 1.1						Outcome 1 Total	
	Output Group 1.1.1			Output Group 1.1.2			2004	2003
	2004	2003	2004	2003	2004	2003	\$'000	\$'000
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
Departmental expenses								
Employees	102,615	95,169	84,949	85,031	187,564	180,200		
Suppliers	29,575	30,298	24,461	27,064	54,036	57,362		
Depreciation and amortisation	14,510	14,202	12,016	12,691	26,526	26,893		
Other expenses	2,212	4,482	1,832	4,005	4,044	8,487		
Total departmental expenses	148,912	144,151	123,258	128,791	272,170	272,942		
Funded by:								
Revenues from government	137,341	133,926	113,740	119,665	251,081	253,591		
Sale of goods and services	10,262	13,000	8,498	11,607	18,760	24,607		
Other non-taxation revenues	372	771	308	680	680	1,451		
Total departmental revenues	147,975	147,697	122,546	131,952	270,521	279,649		

Outcome 1 is described in Note 1 (a) Net costs shown include intra-government costs that are eliminated in calculating the actual Budget outcome.

Section VI

Appendixes



Appendix 1 Program Structure

ABS Program Structure, 2003–04

	Program Components
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

Program Components

Corporate and Statistical Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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
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(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.

Appendix 2 Estimates of Cost by Output and Component

Table 2.1: Estimates of cost by output and component, 2003–04 (\$'000)

Outputs	Direct Costs (A)	Allocated Costs (B)	Full Costs (A+B=C)(d)	% (a)
<i>Economic Statistic Output</i>				
National Accounts	5,200	6,482	11,681	4.8%
International Accounts	4,611	4,815	9,427	3.9%
International Trade	2,522	2,729	5,252	2.2%
Financial Accounts	1,931	2,616	4,548	1.9%
Public Sector Accounts	3,242	2,883	6,125	2.5%
Prices	11,574	13,131	24,705	10.1%
Business Indicators	3,503	2,754	6,257	2.6%
Economy Wide Statistics	2,555	3,631	6,186	2.5%
Business Demography	628	867	1,495	0.6%
Science and Technology	2,605	4,062	6,667	2.7%
Agriculture	3,530	2,729	6,260	2.6%
Mining	430	1,543	1,973	0.8%
Manufacturing	2,495	7,701	10,196	4.2%
Construction	3,257	3,205	6,462	2.7%
Transport	1,702	1,388	3,090	1.3%
Service Industries	4,151	7,597	11,748	4.8%
Tourism	722	1,182	1,904	0.8%
Environment	1,968	3,618	5,585	2.3%
Statistical Consultancy	475	704	1,179	0.5%
Statistical Coordination	1,313	2,156	3,469	1.4%
Australian Economic Indicators	239	2,256	2,495	1.0%
State and Territory Statistical Services	6,317	3,933	10,250	4.2%
Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre	1,126	833	1,959	0.8%
Total Economic Statistics Output	66,096	82,815	148,912	61.1%

Outputs	Direct Costs (A)	Allocated Costs (B)	Full Costs (A+B=C)(d)	% (a)
<i>Population and Social Statistics Output</i>				
Census of Population and Housing (a)	10,823	17,648	28,471	n.a
Demography	3,790	4,817	8,607	3.5%
Labour and Education Statistics	8,731	26,187	34,918	14.3%
Social Conditions Statistics	6,139	13,116	19,255	7.9%
Health and Community Statistics	8,142	17,653	25,795	10.6%
Geography	2,126	4,086	6,212	2.5%
Total Population and Social Statistics Output	39,751	83,508	123,258	38.9%
Total ABS Outputs excluding Census (a)	95,024	148,675	243,699	100.0%
Total ABS Output	105,847	166,323	272,170	-
<i>Corporate and Statistical Support</i>				
Mathematical Statistics	5,710	-5,710	-	-
Business Register	3,377	-3,377	-	-
Business Methods	5,293	-5,293	-	-
Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis	3,617	-3,617	-	-
Economic Statistic Standards	1,652	-1,652	-	-
Population Statistic Standards	1,427	-1,427	-	-
Population Surveys	28,981	-28,981	-	-
Dissemination	13,834	-13,834	-	-
Marketing and Public Affairs	1,869	-1,869	-	-
Client Services	2,664	-2,664	-	-
Library Services	1,860	-1,860	-	-
Information Technology Bureau (b)	444	-444	-	-

Outputs	Direct Costs (A)	Allocated Costs (B)	Full Costs (A+B=C)(d)	% (a)
Technology Applications (b)	0	0	-	-
Data Management	4,291	-4,291	-	-
Technology Research	912	-912	-	-
Business Income Tax Data	9	-9	-	-
Economic Statistics Data Centre	9,960	-9,960	-	-
Executive	6,288	-6,288	-	-
People Management (c)	17,625	-17,625	-	-
Financial Resources (c)	5,446	-5,446	-	-
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	1,632	-1,632	-	-
Property and Facilities Management (c)	33,262	-33,262	-	-
International Relations	1,031	-1,031	-	-
Economic Statistics Group Support	3,941	-3,941	-	-
Population Statistics Group Support	3,077	-3,077	-	-
Methodology Division Business Office	1,131	-1,131	-	-
Information Management Division Infrastructure	2,512	-2,512	-	-
Technology Services Division Support	1,254	-1,254	-	-
Corporate Services Division Support (c)	3,226	-3,226	-	-
Total Statistical Support	166,325	-166,325	-	-
Program Total	272,170	-	272,170	-

(a) 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. (b) The majority of costs of this component were directly charged to other programs and are not included here. (c) Includes the impact of corporately managed expense items. (d) Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Note: n.a. not applicable.

Appendix 3 Top Structure, Staff and Program Component Responsibilities

Top structure, staff and program component responsibilities — as at 30 June 2004

Top structure and staff responsibilities	Program component
AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN <i>Dennis Trewin</i>	Executive
ECONOMIC STATISTICS GROUP <i>Peter Harper</i>	Economic Statistics Group Support Environment
Economic Accounts Division <i>Paul McCarthy</i> (acting)	Public Sector Accounts Business Indicators
National Accounts Branch <i>Carl Obst</i>	National Accounts
International and Financial Accounts Branch <i>Zia Abbasi</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

Top structure and staff responsibilities	Program component
Integration, Coordination and Innovation <i>Bronwyn Driscoll</i>	Business Demography Economic Statistics Standards Business Income Tax Data Science and Technology Business Methods
Prices Branch <i>Keith Woolford</i> (acting)	Prices
POPULATION STATISTICS GROUP <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>Sally Goodspeed</i> (acting)	Health and Community Statistics
Census, Demography and Geography Branch <i>Paul Williams</i>	Census of Population and Housing Demography Geography
OTHER DIVISIONS Methodology Division <i>Geoff Lee</i>	Methodology Division Business Office Statistical Coordination
Analytical Services Branch <i>Marion McEwin</i>	Analytical Services

Top structure and staff responsibilities	Program component
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
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>Teresa Dickinson</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

Top structure and staff responsibilities Program component

REGIONAL OFFICES (a)

New South Wales

John Struik

Victoria

Vince Lazzaro

Queensland

Maelisa McNeil

Western Australia

Alan Hubbard

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.

Appendix 4 Staffing Overview

Table 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	2001-02										2002-03			2003-04		
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Total	ACT	Total		
National Accounts	55	54	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	57		
International Accounts	53	56	46	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	46		
International Trade	23	26	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	26		
Financial Accounts	26	22	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16		
Public Sector Accounts	48	37	23	-	-	6	-	1	2	-	-	-	-	32		
Prices	148	146	66	17	11	3	44	3	1	2	-	-	-	146		
Business Indicators	55	54	-	49	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	49		
Economy Wide Statistics	36	33	19	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	25		
Business Demography	3	2	7	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	7		
Science and Technology	37	34	14	-	-	-	23	-	-	-	-	-	-	37		
Agriculture	64	53	7	-	-	-	-	-	29	-	-	-	-	36		
Mining	6	5	2	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5		
Manufacturing	47	53	3	27	-	-	-	6	-	-	-	-	-	36		
Construction	46	42	1	-	6	-	-	39	-	-	-	-	-	45		
Transport	26	25	2	-	-	21	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23		

continued

Table 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	2001-02 2002-03										2003-04			
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Total		
Service Industries	69	64	16	-	29	-	-	-	-	-	-	46		
Tourism	12	10	2	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	-	8		
Environment	22	24	14	-	-	-	-	6	4	-	-	25		
Statistical Consultancy	70	73	46	5	7	2	5	8	3	-	-	76		
Statistical Coordination	4	8	10	-	-	-	-	2	1	1	-	15		
Australian Economic Indicators	3	3	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3		
Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre	10	17	-	-	1	2	-	7	2	1	1	15		
State and Territory Statistical Services	53	80	-	25	18	13	4	10	12	2	4	88		
Census of Population and Housing	755	129	79	-	2	2	1	1	-	-	1	86		
Demography	44	49	21	3	1	8	3	4	1	3	-	43		
Labour and Education Statistics	122	125	54	-	-	-	51	-	-	-	-	105		
Social Conditions Statistics	68	79	52	-	2	2	2	-	1	6	-	65		
Health and Community Statistics	80	82	39	-	17	18	5	10	-	-	-	90		
Geography	21	19	20	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	20		
Mathematical Statistics	70	73	46	5	7	2	5	8	3	-	-	76		
Business Register	49	42	5	2	22	-	-	-	6	-	-	35		
Business Methods	52	60	11	17	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	55		

continued

Table 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	2001-02		2002-03		2003-04							
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Total
Analytical Services and Time Series Analysis	40	42	38	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
Economic Statistics Standards	5	17	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18
Population Statistics Standards	18	17	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16
Population Surveys	182	185	71	27	19	22	13	17	7	5	-	181
Dissemination	139	136	55	10	20	9	10	7	4	3	3	121
Marketing and Public Affairs	26	23	13	-	-	-	5	-	-	-	-	19
Client Services	43	45	4	24	9	-	-	-	-	-	-	38
Library Services	21	21	11	3	2	1	-	1	-	-	-	19
Information Technology Bureau	256	238	167	7	9	7	4	7	9	1	-	212
Technology Application	198	212	159	8	6	11	10	10	11	1	-	215
Data Management	11	12	14	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	14
Technology Research	4	5	2	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	3
Business Income Tax Data	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
Economic Statistics Data Centre	4	42	73	27	-	4	-	-	-	-	-	104
Executive	45	45	1	9	7	7	5	5	5	5	2	47
People Management	117	112	84	13	7	6	7	4	4	2	-	127
Financial Resources	29	23	11	2	4	1	2	-	-	1	-	21

continued

Table 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	2001-02 2002-03										2003-04		
	Total	Total	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	Total	
Corporate Planning and Secretariat	13	13	13	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	13	
Property and Facilities Management	69	58	25	5	9	4	3	4	4	2	-	56	
International Relations	4	5	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	
Economic Statistics Group Support	55	32	17	-	-	-	7	-	-	-	-	25	
Population Statistics Group Support	34	22	24	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	24	
Methodology Division Business Office	13	12	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	
Information Management Business Infrastructure	11	13	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	
Technology Services Division Support	10	11	10	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	
Corporate Services Division Support	16	21	11	-	1	8	1	1	-	-	-	23	
Total operative staff	3,551	2,944	1,575	295	242	163	211	161	107	35	11	2,800	
Paid inoperative staff (c)	81	93	60	6	12	4	6	9	1	3	1	102	
Total staff	3,632	3,037	1,635	301	254	167	217	170	108	38	12	2,902	

(a) Comprises both full time and part time staff at their full time equivalent. Excludes unpaid inoperative staff. (b) Figures for 2001-02 and 2002-03 have been revised to reflect changes to the program structure for 2003-04. 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.

Table 4.2a: Number of male ABS staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*: by location and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a)

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC (b)	Total
2002											
Total staff	885	168	151	91	121	100	89	16	7	392	2,020
2003											
Total staff (r)	908	173	146	92	111	92	70	12	7	-	1,611
2004											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Australian Statistician	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Senior Executive Service	22	1	1	1	1	1	1	-	-	-	28
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	95	6	6	3	7	5	4	-	-	-	126
Executive Officer Level 1	198	19	19	10	11	9	9	4	3	-	282
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	279	29	26	18	27	29	19	3	2	-	432
APS Level 5	112	29	35	13	20	11	9	4	-	-	233
APS Level 4	86	45	38	12	16	18	12	1	1	-	229
APS Level 3	29	16	11	12	23	5	3	-	-	-	99

continued

Table 4.2a: Number of male ABS staff employed under the Public Service Act 1999: by location and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a)

— continued

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	DPC (b)	Total
APS Level 2	9	7	2	2	10	2	-	1	1	-	34
APS Graduate	12	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	12
APS Level 1	1	5	-	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	11
APS Cadet	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	847	157	138	73	118	80	57	13	7	-	1,490
Unpaid inoperative staff	34	1	4	4	4	2	1	-	-	-	50
Total staff	881	158	142	77	122	82	58	13	7	-	1,540

(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. (b) Number of staff employed at the Data Processing Centre [DPC] for the 2001 population census.

(r) Revised.

Table 4.2b: Number of female ABS staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*: by location and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a)

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC (b)	Total
2002											
Total staff	811	158	155	119	123	90	72	36	7	278	1,849
2003											
Total staff (r)	844	155	139	107	118	96	47	31	7	-	1,544
2004											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Australian Statistician	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senior Executive Service	8	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	9
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	40	2	3	4	1	2	-	1	1	-	54
Executive Officer Level 1	149	6	15	7	8	7	2	3	-	-	197
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	217	20	29	15	11	8	11	9	1	-	321
APS Level 5	154	30	27	16	24	22	9	6	2	-	290
APS Level 4	125	40	23	15	23	16	10	5	1	-	258
APS Level 3	71	16	10	27	23	10	5	3	-	-	165

continued

Table 4.2b: Number of female ABS staff employed under the Public Service Act 1999: by location and classification, at 30 June (headcount) (a)

— continued

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	DPC (b)	Total
APS Level 2	14	12	2	2	7	10	2	-	-	-	49
APS Graduate	17	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	18
APS Level 1	-	11	6	6	13	1	3	-	-	-	40
APS Cadet	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	796	137	115	93	110	76	42	29	5	-	1403
Unpaid inoperative staff	55	5	12	5	4	2	1	2	-	-	86
Total staff	851	142	127	98	114	78	43	31	5	-	1489

(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. (b) Number of staff employed at the Data Processing Centre [DPC] for the 2001 population census.

(r) Revised.

Table 4.2c: Total number of ABS staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*: by location and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a)

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic.	Qld	WA	SA	Tas.	NT	ACT	DPC (b)	Total
2002											
Total staff	1696	326	306	210	244	190	161	52	14	670	3,869
2003											
Total staff (r)	1752	328	285	199	229	188	117	43	14		3,155
2004											
Operative and paid inoperative staff											
Australian Statistician	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
Senior Executive Service	30	1	1	2	1	1	1	-	-	-	37
Executive Officer											
Executive Officer Level 2	135	8	9	7	8	7	4	1	1	-	180
Executive Officer Level 1	347	25	34	17	19	16	11	7	3	-	479
Australian Public Service											
APS Level 6	496	49	55	33	38	37	30	12	3	-	753
APS Level 5	266	59	62	29	44	33	18	10	2	-	523
APS Level 4	211	85	61	27	39	34	22	6	2	-	487
APS Level 3	100	32	21	39	46	15	8	3	-	-	264

continued

Table 4.2c: Total number of ABS staff employed under the Public Service Act 1999, by location and classification, at 30 June (headcount) (a)

— continued

Year and classification	CO	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	NT	ACT	DPC (b)	Total
APS Level 2	23	19	4	4	17	12	2	1	1	—	83
APS Graduate	29	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	30
APS Level 1	1	16	6	8	16	1	3	—	—	—	51
APS Cadet	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	5
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1,643	294	253	166	228	156	99	42	12	—	2,893
Unpaid inoperative staff	89	6	16	9	8	4	2	2	—	—	136
Total staff	1,732	300	269	175	236	160	101	44	12	—	3,029

(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. (b) Number of staff employed at the Data Processing Centre [DPC] for the 2001 population census.

(r) Revised.

Table 4.3a: Number of full time ABS staff employed under the Public Service Act 1999: by gender and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a)
— continued

Year and classification	Ongoing			Non-Ongoing			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
APS Level 3	66	87	153	16	18	34	82	105	187
APS Level 2	14	19	33	13	24	37	27	43	70
APS Graduate	12	18	30	-	-	-	12	18	30
APS Level 1	1	4	5	5	3	8	6	7	13
APS Cadet	3	2	5	-	-	-	3	2	5
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1,370	1,043	2,413	48	50	98	1,418	1,093	2,511
Unpaid inoperative staff	48	59	107	-	-	-	48	59	107
Total staff	1,418	1,102	2,520	48	50	98	1,466	1,152	2,618

(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.

Table 4.3b: Number of part time ABS staff employed under the *Public Service Act 1999*, by gender and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a)

Year and classification	Ongoing		Non-Ongoing		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2002						
Total staff	52	277	13	27	65	304
2003						
Total staff (r)	45	262	15	19	60	281
2004						
Operative and paid inoperative staff						
Australian Statistician	-	-	-	-	-	-
Senior Executive Service	-	-	-	-	-	-
Executive Officer						
Executive Officer Level 2	3	9	2	-	2	5
Executive Officer Level 1	7	42	49	-	7	42
Australian Public Service						
APS Level 6	16	68	84	1	17	68
APS Level 5	7	50	57	-	1	7
APS Level 4	6	40	46	1	2	41

continued

Table 4.3b: Number of part time ABS staff employed under the Public Service Act 1999, by gender and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a)
 — continued

Year and classification	Ongoing			Non-Ongoing			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
APS Level 3	6	35	41	11	25	36	17	60	77
APS Level 2	-	5	5	7	1	8	7	6	13
APS Graduate	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
APS Level 1	2	22	24	3	11	14	5	33	38
APS Cadet	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	47	271	318	25	39	64	72	310	382
Unpaid inoperative staff	2	27	29	-	-	-	2	27	29
Total staff	49	298	347	25	39	64	74	337	411

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.

Table 4.3c: Total number of ABS staff employed under the Public Service Act 1999: by gender and classification, at 30 June (headcount)(a) — continued

Year and classification	Ongoing			Non-Ongoing			Total		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
APS Level 3	72	122	194	27	43	70	99	165	264
APS Level 2	14	24	38	20	25	45	34	49	83
APS Graduate	12	18	30	-	-	-	12	18	30
APS Level 1	3	26	29	8	14	22	11	40	51
APS Cadet	3	2	5	-	-	-	3	2	5
Total operative and paid inoperative staff	1,417	1,314	2,731	73	89	162	1,490	1,403	2,893
Unpaid inoperative staff	50	86	136	-	-	-	50	86	136
Total staff	1,467	1,400	2,867	73	89	162	1,540	1,489	3,029

(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.

Table 4.4: Representation of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) groups: ongoing ABS staff at 30 June 2004(a)

Level	Number of ongoing staff and percentage of total ongoing staff							EEO Coverage
	Total Ongoing Staff	Women	NESB1	NESB2	ATSI	PWD	EEO Coverage	
Australian Public Service Level 1 and equivalent classifications	34	28	-	-	1	3	23	
%	-	82.4	-	-	2.9	8.8	67.6	
Australian Public Service Level 2 and equivalent classifications	40	26	5	6	1	5	38	
%	-	65.0	12.5	15.0	2.5	12.5	95.0	
Australian Public Service Level 3 and equivalent classifications	240	151	22	25	4	9	235	
%	-	62.9	9.2	10.4	1.7	3.8	97.9	
Australian Public Service Level 4 and equivalent classifications	502	271	60	58	4	17	494	
%	-	54.0	12.0	11.6	0.8	3.4	98.4	
Australian Public Service Level 5 and equivalent classifications	550	310	53	56	4	10	544	
%	-	56.4	9.6	10.2	0.7	1.8	98.9	
Australian Public Service Level 6 and equivalent classifications	780	338	89	52	1	25	767	
%	-	43.3	11.4	6.7	0.1	3.2	98.3	
Executive Level 1 and equivalent classifications	495	207	41	31	-	18	487	
%	-	41.8	8.3	6.3	-	3.6	98.4	

continued

Table 4.4: Representation of Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) groups: ongoing ABS staff at 30 June 2004(a) — continued

Level	Number of ongoing staff and percentage of total ongoing staff							EEO Coverage
	Total Ongoing Staff	Women	NESB1	NESB2	ATSI	PWD	EEO	
Executive Level 2 and equivalent classifications	185	59	14	9	-	5	183	
%	-	31.9	7.6	4.9	-	2.7	98.9	
Senior Executive Service	41	10	2	1	-	3	41	
%	-	24.4	4.9	2.4	-	7.3	100.0	
Total	2,867	1,400	286	238	15	95	2,812	
% of total ongoing staff	-	48.8	10.0	8.3	0.5	3.3	98.1	

(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.

Table 4.5: Staff engaged under the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (staff years)

Purpose	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Interviewer enumerated statistical collections (mainly household surveys)	193	211	203
Census of population and housing (including preparations for the census)	1345	3	2
Total	1538	214	205

Table 4.6: ABS Intake and separations of ongoing staff 2003–04(a) (number)

Method of Intake and type of separation	SES	Non SES	Total
Intake			
Engagement — National Graduate Recruitment Campaign	–	70	70
Engagement — Other	1	54	55
Movement from outside the ABS	–	23	23
Total intake	1	147	148
Separations			
Movement to outside the ABS	1	65	66
Resignation	3	147	150
Death	–	2	2
Dismissal	–	5	5
Retirement — Invalidity	–	3	3
Retirement — Age 55–59 years	1	13	14
Retirement — Age 60–64 years	–	4	4
Retirement — Age 65 years and over	–	6	6
Retirement — Other(b)	–	51	51
Total separations	5	296	301

(a) Excludes non-ongoing inward and outward movements. (b) Includes staff retired under section 29 and section 30 of the *Public Service Act 1999*.

Table 4.7: Number of ABS Senior Executive Service (SES) staff by SES level, gender and location at 30 June(a)

Year and location	SES Level			Gender		Total
	1	2	3	Male	Female	
2002 Total	25	6	1	27	5	32
2003 Total	26	6	2	28	6	34
2004						
Australian Capital Territory	21	5	2	21	7	28
New South Wales	1	-	-	1	-	1
Victoria	1	-	-	1	-	1
Queensland	-	-	-	-	-	-
South Australia	1	-	-	1	-	1
Western Australia	1	-	-	1	-	1
Tasmania	1	-	-	1	-	1
Northern Territory	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total	26	0	0	26	0	33

(a) Includes only operative, substantive SES officers, but excludes the Australian Statistician, who is a statutory office holder appointed under the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*.

Table 4.8: ABS staff training(a)

	Total ABS operative staff(b)	Attendance days	Average training days
2001-02	(c)3,550	14,911	4
2002-03	2,909	14,797	5
2003-04	2,800	10,431	4

(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.

There were no large scale or organisational-wide training initiatives undertaken in 2003-04. This, combined with the falling staff numbers, has resulted in lower training figures. Training courses continue to be reduced in size due to more rigorous training needs analysis, and in response to client needs. Major redevelopment activities both in statistical and non-statistical training have continued throughout the

year, and a number of new courses have been added to the curriculum. Learning and Development staff have expanded their range of services to include business consultancy. This approach has also seen less reliance on training solutions and a more diverse range of approaches to performance improvement being implemented.

Certified Agreement and Australian Workplace Agreement (AWA) Details

Number of Senior Executive Service (SES) staff covered by an AWA at 30 June 2004 — 39

Number of non-SES staff covered by an AWA at 30 June 2004 — 205

Number of ABS staff covered by the *ABS Certified Agreement 2003–2006* at 30 June 2004 — 2,784

Number of interviewers covered by the *ABS Interviewers Certified Agreement 2003–2005* at 30 June 2004 — 540

Table 4.9: Salary ranges available by classification as at 30 June 2004

Classification	Minimum \$	Maximum \$
Australian Public Service (APS)		
APS1 (Adult)	29,626	32,589
APS2	33,530	36,883
APS3	38,188	42,007
APS4	42,564	46,820
APS5	47,475	52,222
APS6	53,472	58,819
Executive Officer Level (EL)		
EL1	66,090	72,699
EL2	79,060	90,128
Senior Executive Service (SES)		
SES Band 1	102,415	n.a.
SES Band 2	124,905	n.a.
SES Band 3	149,543	n.a.

(a) APS1 to EL1 salary range took effect from 3 July 2003, EL2 salary range from 9 October 2003 and SES Band 1 to SES Band 3 salary range from 1 January 2004.

n.a. not applicable

Description of the ABS Salary System

As a result of the *ABS Certified Agreement 2003–2006* the salary arrangements for ABS employees were simplified during 2003–04. For the 2003–04 financial year there were two components to employees' salary increases — a general increase and an increase based on performance. Both result in an increase in the employee's base salary.

The general increase was 2.8 per cent (for all employees other than those at Executive Level 2). The general increase included a productivity component. All employees whose performance was rated as 'fully effective' or 'outstanding' received the general increase together with a second component, which was a salary increase based on that performance rating. As a result of a change in the timing for salary increases for Executive Level 2 employees the general increase in 2003–04 was 1.75 per cent. In 2003–04 annual salary reviews resulted in increases being paid to APS1 to EL1 employees in July 2003, to EL2 employees in October 2003 and to SES employees in January 2004. In future years increases will be paid in July for APS1 to EL2 employees and January for SES employees.

During 2003–04, the maximum of the APS1 to EL2 salary ranges were increased by the general salary increase. The minimum of each range was increased by a larger amount in order to collapse the range between minimum and maximum salary points. This has resulted in salary ranges of 10 per cent from minimum to maximum for APS1 to EL1 employees and 14 per cent for EL2 employees. The old ranges were 15 per cent and 21 per cent respectively. The minimum salary point for SES employees was increased by 2.8 per cent — the general salary increase.

The table below provides information in regard to the performance pay component only of the salary increases paid in 2003–04.

Table 4.10: Performance pay by level

Level	Number	Aggregate (\$)	Average (\$)
Australian Public Service (APS)			
APS1	73	32,817	450
APS2	55	27,550	501
APS3	356	218,545	614
APS4	517	398,562	771
APS5	535	465,160	869
APS6	737	706,038	958
Executive Officer Level (EL)			
EL1	448	663,494	1,481
EL2	123	102,699	835
Senior Executive Service (SES)			
SES1	26	57,377	2,207
SES2 and 3	8	27,372	3,422
Total	2,878	2,699,614	

In addition to increases in base salary APS1 to EL2 employees at or within 1 per cent of the top of their salary range, and rated as outstanding, receive up to 1 per cent (0.75 per cent for EL2 employees for 2003–04 only) of their current salary paid as a one off bonus, with a minimum payment of \$500. During the 2003–04 financial year the total amount paid in bonus payments was \$56,716 to 108 employees.

Reward and Recognition

The ABS operates a Reward and Recognition Scheme to recognise exceptional one-off achievements by individuals and workgroups. Rewards may be made in the form of certificates, hospitality (such as workgroup lunches), prepaid vouchers and cash bonuses. Total ABS expenditure for the scheme in 2003–04 was \$153,247.

Appendix 5 Occupational Health and Safety

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 2003–04, 34 employees were selected/elected and trained as Health and Safety Representatives (HSRs) under the *Occupational Health and Safety (Commonwealth Employment) Act 1991*.

There were 44 notifiable accidents reported to Comcare for the period.

Investigations

In April 2004 Comcare reviewed ABS compliance with a planned investigation of the New South Wales office conducted in September 2001. Strategies have been introduced to address the three matters which were identified as outstanding actions in the review.

Accidents

There were 511 accidents and incidents at the ABS in 2003–04 compared with 462 in 2002–03. In 2003–04 the ABS undertook activities, such as awareness training for managers, specifically aimed at increasing the level of OHS awareness and compliance across all cost centres. Table 5.1 details the broad injury categories for the periods 2002–03 and 2003–04.

Table 5.1: Reported accidents and incidents (number)

	2002-03	2003-04
Motor vehicle/journey related accidents	89	80
Sporting events resulting in an accident and/or injury	22	27
Back injuries	5	27
Overuse injuries	46	52
Psychological injuries	9	11
Slips, trips and falls	83	79
Sprains and strains	26	36
Other work-based incidents and accidents	182	199
Total	462	511

Rehabilitation

The ABS institutes early intervention and rehabilitation in compensable and non compensable cases. A national training program was held in November 2003 to extend this focus to include sustainable return to work plans. The outcome of this is an increase of successfully closed cases. Table 5.2 details a comparison for the periods 2002-03 and 2003-04.

Table 5.2: Rehabilitation case management (number)

	2002-03	2003-04
Compensation claims submitted	125	132
Compensation claims closed(a)	62	165
Return to work plans(b)	20	51
Non compensable (fitness) cases(a)	110	121
Non compensable (fitness) cases closed(a)	87	83

(a) Comprises cases carried over from the previous year, and new cases.

(b) Plans commenced during this reporting period only.

Comcare Premiums

Comcare has provided notification that the ABS workers' compensation premium for 2004-05 has been set at 1.78 per cent of total salary (including GST). Table 5.3 provides details of the ABS and the agency pool average premium rate.

Table 5.3: Comcare workers' compensation premium rate (% of wage and salary expenditure)

	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04	2004-05
ABS	1.00	1.15	1.50	1.78
Agency pool average	1.00	1.13	1.43	1.67

Achievements

Measures taken to ensure the health, safety and welfare of employees during 2003-04 included:

- the creation of a new unit dedicated to achieving performance in health and safety management on a national basis
- the development of the National OHS Policy and Agreement. This policy and agreement provides the framework for progressing OHS in the ABS, including appropriate procedures and instructions
- establishment of a systems compliance group to examine all existing and new software packages from an OHS perspective
- the continued promotion of health and fitness across all offices.

The ABS received an award in recognition of its achievements in the category of Leadership — Injury Prevention and Management at the Safety, Rehabilitation and Compensation Commission's Safety Awards presentation in July 2003. This award was presented for the work undertaken in setting up and operating the ABS Census Data Processing Centre.

Appendix 6 Commonwealth Disability Strategy

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 between 2002 and 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 with differing layouts, 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 Australian Public Service (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 Disability Action Plan (currently being finalised).

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.

Disability Action Plan

The main purpose of the 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.

The drafting of the Disability Action Plan is nearing finalisation and will be released later in 2004. Hard copies of the Disability Action Plan and the DAPCheck (a checklist from the Disability Action Plan) will be distributed to all staff. An electronic copy will also be available on the ABS Intranet. Information sessions and newpoint articles will be provided to ensure all staff are aware of the Plan and their responsibilities in relation to it.

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 into 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 and to discuss and assist in implementing as appropriate, reasonable adjustment strategies with the relevant line manager.

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 activities consider the diversity needs of staff as outlined in the ABS Workplace Diversity Program and the Reasonable Workplace Adjustment Guidelines. L&D provides guidance to line managers and employees about their role and responsibilities and provide support information to employees.

In accordance with the disability strategy all training and development activities were:

- learner centred
- designed using an instructional design phase that considers the diverse needs and learning styles of our trainees
- delivered and event managed with activities that provide for the reasonable adjustment requirements of the trainees, such as specific hearing, language/translator and mobility issues
- designed to continue the work with specific components on disability and reasonable adjustment in management and leadership development 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 advisers throughout all ABS offices who provide information to staff on the options for resolving complaints. Workplace Diversity Advisers are responsible for the local implementation of national strategies in relation to workplace diversity.

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 Section

In recognition of the importance and value of its people, the ABS has established a dedicated section 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. The current plan is under review and an updated plan will be available by the end of 2004.

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 were established under the ABS Certified Agreement 2003–2006. They have worked particularly well in assisting early, effective resolution of issues.

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, however the more formal mechanisms 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.

Appendix 7 Consultancy Services

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.

The ABS classifies consultancies based on the guidelines set out in the Department of Finance and Administration's *Guidance on Identifying Consultancies for Annual Reporting Purposes, July 2004*. Essentially, contracts are classified as consultancies if the services involve the development of an intellectual output that assists with agency decision-making, and whether that output reflects the independent views of the service provider.

Purposes for which consultants were engaged in 2003–04

The purposes for which consultants were engaged by the ABS in 2003–04 have been classified into eleven main categories. These are shown in Table 7.1 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 2003–04

The total number of consultancy services engaged during 2003–04 was 63, of which 2 were let in previous financial years. The total value of these consultancy services was just below \$1 million. The total number of consultancies engaged during 2003–04 and the expenditure by main purpose of consultancy are presented in Table 7.1. Historical figures are presented in Table 7.2.

Table 7.1 Consultancy services contracts engaged by the ABS, 2003–04: Summary

Consultancy Category	Consultancies (number)	Expenditure in 2003–2004 \$
Audit	3	256,584
Information technology	15	235,828
Human resources	10	121,939
Legal	4	2,707
Management	9	51,503
Other consultancy	9	103,088
Publishing	1	1,000
Statistical	2	42,600
Training	3	19,145
ABS House	1	1,000
Property	6	122,876
Total	63	958,269

Table 7.2 Consultancy services contracts engaged by the ABS

	Consultancies (number)	Expenditure (\$)
2000–01	49	2,129,436
2001–02	44	1,172,656
2002–03	53	1,477,651
2003–04	63	958,269

Note: figures in prior years have been revised to include expenditure on Internal Audit.

Consultancies let in 2003–04 with expenditure of \$10,000 or more

Consultants engaged for consultancy services contracts let in 2003–04 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 category 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.

Table 7.3 Consultancy services contracts let in 2003-04 to the value of \$10,000 or more

	Expenditure in 2003-04 (\$)	Justification and type of tender
Audit		
Acumen Alliance Audit services	166,067	(5) (a)
Deloitte Touche Tohmatsu Audit services	84,417	(5) (a)
Information technology		
Avanade Australia Consultancy in relation to the ABS.Net development	71,405	(5) (a)
Dimension Data Australia Pty Ltd Consultancy in relation to the certification of gateway facility	20,209	(3) (a)
GHD Management Engineering Environment Professional advice in relation to the upgrade of the existing security systems in the ABS Perth Office	40,188	(5) (a)
Gibson Quai Pty Ltd Professional advice in relation to the market testing of carrier voice services	11,680	(5) (a)
Valuesourcing Provision of professional procurement advice	49,090	(5) (a)
Bearingpoint Australia Provision of professional advice	11,769	(5) (a)
Human resources		
Fellows Medlock & Associates Professional advice in relation to the development of the 2003-2006 ABS Certified Agreement	21,757	(5) (a)
Lee Hecht Harrison Professional advice in relation to career assistance program	10,000	(5) (a)
JJ Frith & Associates Development and delivery of training session	12,832	(5) (a)

	Expenditure in 2003–04 (\$)	Justification and type of tender
Value Creation Group Development and facilitation of BSIP Workshop	50,000	(5) (a)
Management		
Team Systems Pty Ltd Professional advice in relation to strategy development	20,122	(5) (a)
Results Consulting Design, facilitation and delivery of ABS Management Development Program	11,714	(5) (a)
Other		
Market Attitude Research Services Pty Ltd Undertake focus group and cognitive research regarding the 2006 Census of Population and Housing	59,101	(3) (a)
Statistical		
Rider Hunt Canberra Pty Ltd Development and production of a construction price index	41,200	(3) (a)
Property		
JG Service P/L Provision of property market advice	47,503	(1) (a)
Daschem Holdings P/L Consultancy services in relation to the development of an energy management plan	10,736	(5) (a)
Colliers International Annual national property report on ABS properties 2003–04	19,834	(1) (a)
Swayle Hynes Consulting Provision of consultancy services in relation to property management	23,368	(5) (a)

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

Table excludes standard services such as:

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

Appendix 8 Advertising and Market Research

The ABS paid a total of \$256,776 on advertising and market research in 2003–04, comprising \$232,577 for advertising and \$24,199 for direct mail costs. Expenditure on individual advertising and/or market research exceeding \$1,500 is detailed in the table below.

Table 8.1 Advertising and market research paid by, or on behalf of, the ABS, to the value of \$1,500 or more, 2003–04

Name of organisation paid	Amount \$
Advertising	
Commerce Queensland	1,546
Education Resource Guide	1,755
HMA Blaze Pty Ltd	201,729
Hobsons Australia Pty Ltd	6,545
Indigo Arch Pty Ltd	3,190
Inmedia Publishing	5,370
The Magazine Publishing Co	6,464
Market research	
No expenditure incurred for market research	
Direct mail organisations	
Canberra Envelopes	2,001
List Marketing Australia	12,887
Pirion	8,870

Appendix 9 Competitive Tendering and Contracting

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. The ABS has revised its procurement policy in accordance with the Commonwealth Procurement Guidelines and has developed comprehensive operating procedures and guidelines which have been released as the Procurement Toolkit. 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.

Appendix 10 Purchasing and Assets Management

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 Australian government's core purchasing policies and principles to ensure compliance with all relevant government policies. Comprehensive operating procedures and guidelines have been developed and released as the Procurement Toolkit.

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 three years by an independent qualified valuer and management assessment of fair value conducted annually. 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.

Appendix 11 Freedom of Information

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 are:

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 1999–2000 to 2003–04 inclusive. One request was made to the ABS under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* during 2003–04.

Table 11.1 Freedom of information activities, (number)

	1999-2000	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Requests received for					
Statistical information	-	1	-	-	1
Personal papers	-	-	-	2	-
Administrative documents	2	-	-	-	-
Total	2	1	-	2	1
Decisions made					
Access granted in full	1	-	-	-	1
Access granted in part	1	-	-	2	-
Request transferred to another agency	-	-	-	-	-
Request withdrawn	-	1	-	-	-
Access refused	-	-	-	-	-
Documents not in existence	-	-	-	-	-
Total	2	1	-	2	1
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, 2001.

Appendix 12 Inquiries by Parliamentary Committees and Reports by the Auditor General

Listed below are inquiries by Parliamentary Committees which involved the ABS during 2003–04.

Parliamentary Committees

House of Representatives Standing Committee on Science and Innovation: Report on “Riding the Innovation Wave: The Case for Increasing Business Investment in R&D”

In July 2003 the ABS provided comments to the Department of Industry, Tourism and Resources on several recommendations contained in the report which were relevant to the conduct of Innovation, and Research and Development surveys by the ABS.

The government response to the report was tabled in parliament on 1 April 2004.

Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters: Inquiry into Representation of the Australian Capital Territory and Northern Territory in the House of Representatives

In August 2003 the ABS provided a submission to the Inquiry and also appeared before the Committee. A supplementary submission was provided to the Committee in September 2003 which was followed by a further appearance before the Committee.

The Committee’s report was finalised in November 2003. The report included recommendations that amendments be made to the *Commonwealth Electoral Act 1918* to require the Statistician to advise the Electoral Commissioner of the margin of error associated with the population estimates for the Territories at the time of supplying the latest statistics. The margin of error is to be incorporated into the determination of seats when a Territory falls short of quota.

The government response to the report was tabled on 25 March 2004. The recommendations were supported by the government and the *Commonwealth Electoral Amendment (Representation in the House of Representatives) Bill 2004* received Royal Assent on 20 April 2004.

Joint Committee of Public Accounts and Audit: Management of Integrity of Electronic Information in the Commonwealth

In October 2003 information was provided to the Committee in relation to computer related security breaches.

The Committee's report was tabled in parliament on 1 April 2004.

The government response to the report is yet to be finalised.

Senate Legal and Constitutional References Committee: Inquiry into Australian Expatriates

In February 2004 the ABS provided a submission to the Committee on the extent of the Australian diaspora.

The Committee is due to report in September 2004.

Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee: Report on the Foreign Affairs and Trade White Paper — Advancing the National Interest

In March 2004 the ABS provided information to the Treasurer in relation to the government response to recommendation 4 of the report concerning the enumeration in the Australian population census of Australians living overseas.

At 30 June 2004 the government response to the report was yet to be finalised.

Reports by the Auditor General

There were no adverse reports or comments made by the Auditor General during 2003–04.

Appendix 13 Documents Tabled in Parliament

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 2003–04.

Table 13.1 Tabling — proposals for collection of information for statistical purposes, 2003–04

Date tabled(a)	Statistical collection(b)
9 September 2003	New Topics in the Monthly Population Survey: Community Preparedness for Emergencies (New South Wales) Bicycle Usage (Queensland) Household Telephone Connections (Queensland) Domestic Water Use (Western Australia)
7 October 2003	Surveys to Support Estimates of Resident Population for Local Government Areas
1 March 2004	Quarterly Survey of Government Finance Statistics
1 March 2004	Work in Selected Culture and Leisure Activities
11 May 2004	Labour Price Index Survey
15 June 2004	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey
15 June 2004	Multipurpose Household Survey
15 June 2004	New Topics in the Monthly Population Survey: Housing Motivations and Intentions (New South Wales and Queensland) Home Safety and Security (Western Australia) Domestic Use of Water and Energy (South Australia)
15 June 2004	2003–04 Service Industries Surveys
15 June 2004	Economic Activity Survey

(a) If the proposal was tabled on different dates in the two Houses of Parliament, the earlier of the two dates is shown. (b) Unless otherwise indicated by the title, the statistical collection is a national project.

Disclosure of lists of names and addresses

In accordance with clause 6 of the Statistics Determination (Statutory Rules 1983 No. 19) made under section 13 of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, details of the following disclosures of lists of names, addresses and other information to be provided to the specified Department or Authority, were tabled in both Houses of Parliament in 2003–04.

Table 13.2 Tabling — disclosure of lists of names and addresses, 2003–04

Date tabled(a)	Information released
3 December 2003	List of Agricultural Establishments for the Queensland Department of Primary Industries
10 March 2004	Lists of Agricultural Farm Businesses by the Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics
12 May 2004	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.

Appendix 14 Disclosure of Unidentified Information

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.

Table 14.1 Statistical collections — disclosure of unidentified information, 2003–04

	Survey date
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
Census 1% sample file	2001
Child care arrangements survey	1984
Child care survey	1996
Child care survey	1999
Disability, ageing and carers survey	1998
Education and training survey	1997
Education and work survey	2001
Education, training and information technology survey	2001
Forms of employment survey	1998
Household expenditure survey	1975–76
Household expenditure survey	1984

	Survey date
Household expenditure survey	1988–89
Household expenditure survey	1993–94
Household expenditure survey (second fiscal incidence study edition)	1993–94
Household expenditure survey (second fiscal incidence study edition)	1998–99
Income and housing costs and amenities survey	1990
Income and housing costs survey	1994–95
Income and housing costs survey	1995–96
Income and housing costs survey	1996–97
Income and housing costs survey	1997–98
Income and housing costs survey	1999–2000
Income and housing costs survey	2000–01
Income and housing survey	1982
Income distribution survey	1986
Labour mobility survey	1984
Labour mobility survey	1991
Labour mobility survey	1994
Monthly labour force survey	2001 (August–November)
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 health survey (Indigenous file)	2001
National survey of mental health and wellbeing of adults (2nd revised)	1997
Population survey monitor	1997 (February–November)
Time use survey	1992
Time use survey	1997
Training and education survey	1993
Voluntary work in Australia survey	2000
Women's safety survey	1996

Total number of disclosures of unidentified information under clause 7 of the Statistics Determination between 2001-02 and 2003-04 are shown in the following table.

Table 14.2 Disclosure of unidentified information, summary

Clause 7 — number of individual disclosures(a)	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Universities	132	105	156
Other	46	65	56
Total	178	170	212

(a) Does not include renewals of previously released files.

Appendix 15 Notices of Direction Issued and Prosecution Actions Approved

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.

Table 15.1: Notices of direction issued and prosecution actions approved

	2000-01	2001-02	2002-03	2003-04
Notices of direction issued				
Census of Population and Housing	-	595	-	-
Household surveys	4	13	1	-
Business censuses and surveys	36	21	23	1
Total	40	629	24	1
Prosecution actions approved^(a)				
Census of Population and Housing	-	104	-	-
Household surveys	-	2	-	-
Business censuses and surveys	5	-	1	-
Total	5	106	1	-

(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).

Appendix 16 Professional Papers by ABS Officers

Officers of the ABS prepared the following professional papers which were presented or published between 1 July 2003 and 30 June 2004.

Zia Abbasi and Paul Mahoney

Valuation of direct investment equity. Presented to the IMF/OECD Direct Investment Technical Experts Group, Paris, 15–17 June 2004.

Michael Davies

Interest on debt securities. Presented to the IMF Balance of Payments Technical Experts Group, Washington, D.C., 22–24 June 2004.

Michael Davies

A Rose by any other name: is netting consolidation? Posted to the OECD Task Force on the Measurement of Non-life Insurance Forum, July 2003.

Michael Davies and Derick Cullen

Loans valuation in the SNA: back to basics. Posted to the Treatment of Non-performing Loans Forum, International Monetary Fund, August 2003.

Michael Davies and Julie McKenzie

Reinvested earnings. Presented to the IMF/OECD Direct Investment Technical Experts Group, Paris, 15–17 June 2004.

Michael Davies, Celia Quiatchon and Boke Nkoy

Special purpose entities: issues paper. Presented to the IMF Balance of Payments Technical Experts Group Washington, D.C., 22–24 June 2004.

Michael Davies and Camille Smith

Residence of households. Presented to the IMF Balance of Payments Technical Experts Group, Washington, D.C., 22–24 June 2004.

Michael Davies and Camille Smith

Multi-territory enterprises. Presented to the IMF Balance of Payments Technical Experts Group, Washington, D.C., 22–24 June 2004.

Teresa Dickinson and Siu-Ming Tam

Measuring client servicing in the Australian Bureau of Statistics — a balanced scoreboard approach. Presented to the 54th Session of the International Statistical Institute, Berlin, 13–20 August 2003.

Tanuja Doss

Alternative measures of income and saving. Presented to the 32nd Annual Conference of Economists, Canberra, 29 September to 1 October 2003.

Denis Farrell, Allan Nicholls and Kol Toivonen

What are the priority needs for agriculture statistics and how well do our classification systems support these needs? Presented to the Conference of European Statisticians Joint UNECE/EUROSTAT/FAO/OECD Meeting on Food and Agriculture Statistics in Europe, Geneva, 2–4 July 2003.

Stephen Frost

Experimental price indexes for financial services. Presented to the ABS/SNZ Bilateral Meeting on Prices, Wellington, New Zealand, 9–11 February 2004.

Stephen Frost and Paul McCarthy

Experimental price indexes for financial services. Presented to the UNECE Meeting on Consumer Price Indices, Geneva, 4–5 December 2003.

Geoff Heffernan

SME statistics in Australia: use of administrative data to support SME statistical developments. Presented to the OECD Workshop on Improving Statistics on SMEs and Entrepreneurship, Paris, 17–19 September 2003.

Judy Henson

ABS Input Data Warehouse (IDW) implementation – business aspects: how the ABS IDW is being implemented. Presented to the Statistical Input Data Warehouse Workshop, Canberra-Murrumarang Resort, 9–14 November 2003.

Keith James, Eng Wong and Allan Nicholls

Agribusiness in Australia – what the numbers say. Presented to the Australian Agribusiness Congress, Sydney, 28 August 2003.

Harry Kroon and Rhonda de Vos

Measures of labour underutilisation. Presented to the 5th Path to Full Employment Conference/10th National Conference on Unemployment, Newcastle, 10–12 December 2003.

Alan Mackay

Mature age workers: sustaining our future labour force. Presented to An Ageless Workforce Symposium, Sydney 27 August 2003.

Marion McEwin and Dennis Trewin

Towards more service oriented NSOs. Presented to the ESCAP Subcommittee on Statistics, First Session, Bangkok, 18–20 February 2004.

Allan Nicholls

Food and agricultural statistics within National Statistics Systems: Australia – a case study. Presented to the FAO Workshop on Strengthening Food and Agricultural Statistics in Support of Food Security and Poverty Reduction in the Pacific, Nandi, Fiji, 10–13 November 2003.

Terry Rawnsley and Ken Tallis

Evolution of household wealth through the lifecycle: a synthetic wealth/income microdataset. Presented to the International Microsimulation

Conference on Population, Ageing and Health: Modelling Our Future, Canberra, Australian Capital Territory, 7–12 December 2003.

Dennis Robson

ABS Business Register Quality Management Framework. Presented to the 17th International Roundtable on Business Survey Frames, Rome, Italy, 26–31 October 2003.

Dennis Robson

Legislative framework and confidentiality of the ABS Business Register. Presented to the 17th International Roundtable on Business Survey Frames, Rome, Italy, 26–31 October 2003.

Luke Samy and Tala Talgaswatta

An analysis of factors determining capital commitments and draw downs in the formal Australian venture capital market. Presented to the 16th Australasian Banking and Finance Conference, Sydney, 17–19 December 2003.

Dennis Trewin

Impact of technologies on statistical offices. Presented to the GUS/ISI Satellite Conference, Szczecin, Poland, 8 August 2003.

Dennis Trewin

ISI Presidential address. Presented to the 54th Session of the International Statistical Institute, Berlin, Germany, 13 August 2003.

Dennis Trewin

The role of good planning in determining statistical priorities. Presented to the Tenth Meeting of the Heads of National Statistical Offices of East Asian Countries, Kyoto, Japan, 17–18 November 2003.

Dennis Trewin

Some of the current issues facing the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Presented to the Tenth Meeting of the Heads of National Statistical Offices of East Asian Countries, Kyoto, Japan, 17–18 November 2003.

Dennis Trewin

Improving knowledge of official statistics. Presented to the Statistical Days 2003 Conference, Radenci, Slovenia, 24–26 November 2003.

Dennis Trewin

Improving statistical literacy. Presented to the Statistical Days 2003 Conference, Radenci, Slovenia, 24–26 November 2003.

Dennis Trewin

Measures of Australia's progress. Presented to the Globalisation, Families and Work Conference, Brisbane, 1–2 April 2004.

Bernard Williams

Use of administrative data in Australian retail trade statistics. Presented to the Joint Statistical Meeting of the American Statistical Association, Section on Government Statistics, Session 120, San Francisco, 3–7 August 2003.

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Appendix 18 Glossary of Acronyms and Abbreviations

ABARE	Australian Bureau of Agriculture and Resource Economics
ABR	Australian Business Register
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
ACT	Australian Capital Territory
AGO	Australian Greenhouse Office
AIHW	Australian Institute of Health and Welfare
ANAO	Australian National Audit Office
ANTA	Australian National Training Authority
ANZSCO	Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations
ANZSIC	Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification
APRA	Australian Prudential Regulation Authority
APS	Australian Public Service
ARIA	Accessibility/Remoteness Index of Australia
ASAC	Australian Statistics Advisory Council
ASGC	Australian Standard Geographical Classification
ATO	Australian Taxation Office
AusStats	An online subscription service to the ABS standard product range
Aust.	Australia
AWA	Australian Workplace Agreement
BAS	Business Activity Statement
BCP	Basic Community Profile
BLD	Business Longitudinal Database
BPS	Badan Pusat Statistik (Statistics Indonesia)
BSIP	Business Statistics Innovation Program
C&S Act	<i>Commonwealth and Statistics Act 1905</i>
CAI	Computer Assisted Interviewing

cat. no.	ABS catalogue number
CD	Collection District
CDATA	CD-ROM product containing census data
CDS	Commonwealth Disability Strategy
CHINS	Community Housing and Infrastructure Needs Survey
CLIB	A free Census product available only to LEP-eligible libraries
COAG	Council of Australian Governments
CPI	Consumer Price Index
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
DPC	Data Processing Centre
eLEP	electronic Library Extension Program
ESG	Economic Statistics Group
ESUG	Economic Statistics User Group
FaCS	Department of Family and Community Services
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
FCB	Functional Classification of Buildings
FOI	Freedom of Information
Eurostat	Statistical Office of the European Communities
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geographic Information System
GFS	Government Finance Statistics
GNAF	Geocoded National Address File
GVG	Greenhouse Vehicle Guide
HIES	Household Income and Expenditure Survey
HR	Human Resource
HWS	Harassment and Workplace Support
IADP	Indigenous Administrative Data Project
ICHR	Institute of Child Health Research
ICP	International Comparison Program
IDP	Information Development Plan
IES	Indigenous Enumeration Strategy

IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRDB	Integrated Regional Data Base
ISI	International Statistical Institute
IT	Information Technology
ITPI	International Trade Price Indexes
ITSUG	International Trade in Services User Group
L&D	Learning and Development
LEP	Library Extension Program
LGA	Local Government Area
LSIC	Longitudinal Study of Indigenous Children
MAC	Methodology Advisory Committee
MAP1	Measuring Australia's Progress
MCD	Multiple Cause of Death
MEI	Main Economic Indicator
MPS	Monthly Population Survey
NAGATSIHID	National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Information and Data
NATSIHS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NATSISS	National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey
NCYSU	National Children and Youth Statistics Unit
NDN	National Data Network
NHS	National Health Survey
NSS	National Statistical Service
NSTI	National Statistical Training Institute
NSW	New South Wales
NT	Northern Territory
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OESR	Office of Economic and Statistical Research
PPI	Producer Price Indexes
PSMA	Public Sector Mapping Agencies Australia Ltd
Qld	Queensland
QSU	Quarterly Supply and Use
RADL	Remote Access Data Laboratory

RBA	Reserve Bank of Australia
RSE	Relative Standard Error
SA	South Australia
SCH	Statistical Clearing House
SDDS	Special Data Dissemination Standard
SEIFA	Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas
SES	Senior Executive Service
SIAP	Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific
SLA	Statistical Local Area
SMVU	Survey of Motor Vehicle Use
SNA	System of National Accounts
SSF	State Statistical Forum
STSS	State and Territory Statistical Services
Tas.	Tasmania
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
USA	United States of America
WA	Western Australia
WAACHS	Western Australia Aboriginal Child Health Survey
W3C	World Wide Web Consortium
WCI	Wage Cost Index

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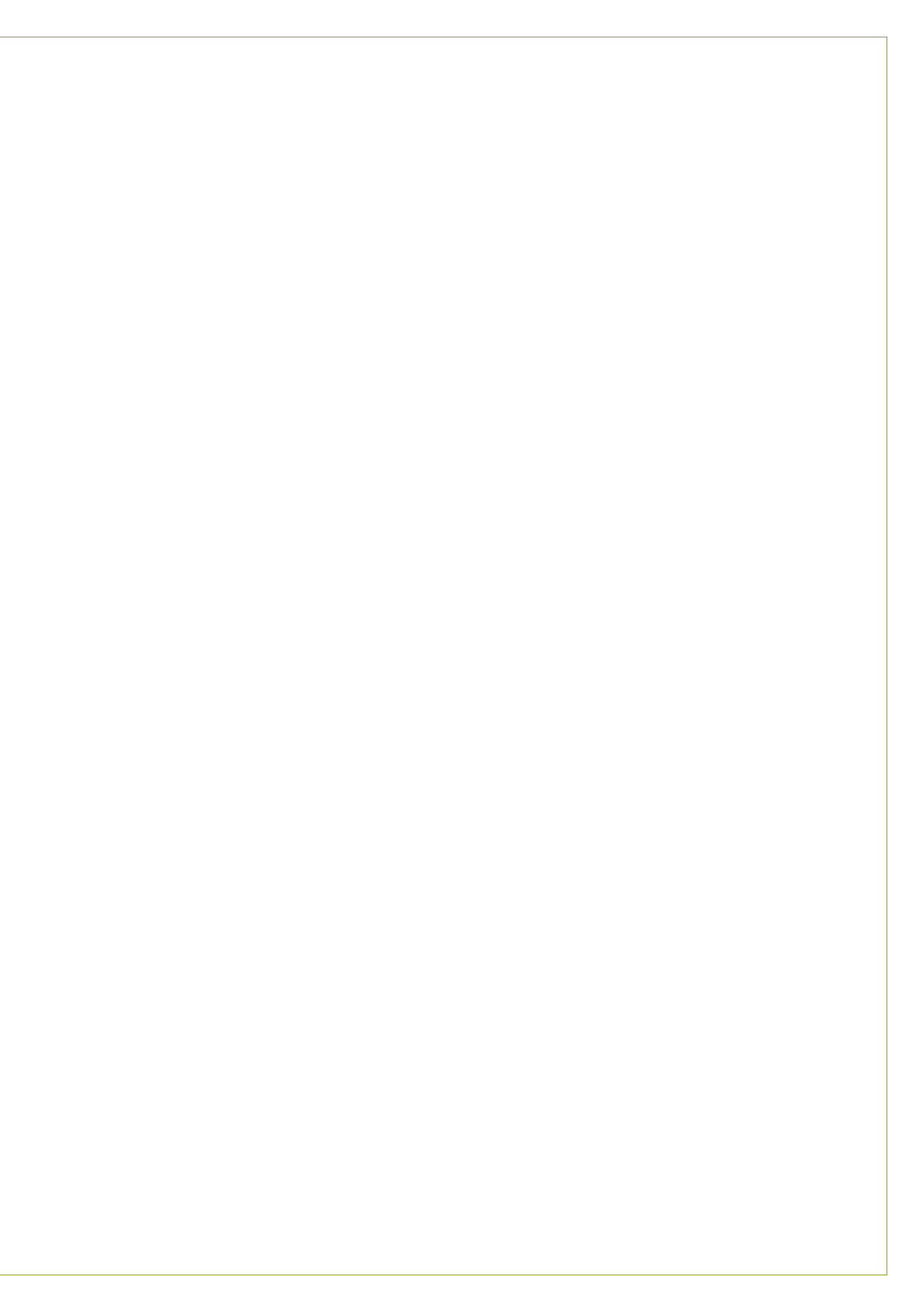
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