

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Regulator Performance Framework
Assessment Report, 2018–19

Background

As part of the Australian Government's Deregulation Agenda, the [Regulator Performance Framework \(RPF\)](#) has been developed as a means for Commonwealth regulators to evaluate, in partnership with stakeholder groups, overall regulatory performance when interacting with individuals, businesses and the community while carrying out their statutory responsibilities.

The RPF, which came into effect on 1 July 2015, principally relates to burden arising from the administration of regulation. The RPF encourages regulators to minimise their impact on those they regulate while still delivering the vital role they have been asked to perform.

To achieve the Government's commitment to reducing unnecessary or inefficient regulation, the RPF comprises six outcomes-based Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to articulate the Government's overarching expectations of regulator performance, namely:

1. Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities.
2. Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective.
3. Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed.
4. Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated.
5. Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities.
6. Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks.

In accordance with the RPF, all regulators are required to undertake an annual self-assessment of their regulatory performance against each KPI. The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), under the Treasury portfolio, is one of several regulators required to undertake this annual self-assessment.

Introduction

The ABS is Australia's national statistical agency, providing relevant, trusted and objective data, statistics and insights on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters of importance to Australia. These products support research and inform decisions being made by government, businesses, non-government organisations and the wider Australian community.

In order to produce these products, the ABS relies on the cooperation of individuals, households, businesses and governments and seeks to impose the lowest possible burden on providers.

In consultation with key stakeholders, including the Treasury and the Minister responsible for the ABS, the ABS developed performance metrics to demonstrate compliance with the government's RPF. This report covers the 2018-19 financial year and reflects that the ABS achieved an overall **GOOD** rating.

ABS transformation

During the 2018-19 year, the ABS transformation agenda has continued to embed new technologies and processes to meet the growing expectations of the public with regards to the use of public data, within constrained resources and with minimal provider burden.

This transformation will enable the ABS to continue to engage better with partners and data providers and develop more responsive solutions, making best use of current and emerging technologies.

ABS Forward Work Program

The ABS undertakes consultation on the ABS Forward Work Program annually, to ensure the ABS' work program is relevant and of maximum value to a broad range of users, as well as incorporates consideration of new data collection methods and existing data sources before collections are undertaken. The ABS is not contemplating any significant changes to the statistical work program in 2019-20.

2021 Census for Population and Housing

The ABS has published a document called '[Planning for the 2021 Census](#)' which outlines the ABS' commitment to ensuring the nation's most significant and challenging statistical collection gathers high quality data, is a cost effective process enabling easy participation, and assures the privacy of personal information.

The ABS is working with the public and community organisations to ensure everyone in Australia and its territories can easily participate in the 2021 Census. The ABS will support people through online and telephone help services, community networks and through personal assistance by our field staff where required.




A comprehensive national communication campaign is being planned for the 2021 Census to explain the value and purpose of the Census, and to ensure people in Australia know the Census is happening and how to participate. It will include advertising, media, social media, and community engagement, and will be available in languages other than English.

Administrative data can improve and expand the range of statistics provided to the Australian community, while reducing the cost to the taxpayer and burden on potential respondents to ABS collections such as the Census and there are a number of relevant examples listed in the self-assessment section.

High level summary and conclusion for 2018-19


This section provides a high level summary and rating of the ABS's performance against the six KPIs, as well as an overall rating for the 2018-19 reporting period.

The following traffic light system has been used:

	Good
	Satisfactory, but with some aspects for improvement identified
	Unsatisfactory, with significant areas for improvement identified


An overall KPI rating of 'Good' has been applied where the majority or all sub-KPIs have been rated as 'Good'.

KPI 1 – Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities.


Rating: Good  The ABS maintains active engagement with stakeholder and provider communities to ensure relevance, minimal costs and negative impacts for providers.

Whilst KPI 1 has been rated as ‘Good’, the ABS has commenced systematic improvement of all correspondence sent to data providers to simplify the approach to request data – the strategies to improve this outcome are outlined in ‘Evidence 1.3.1 comment’ on page 8.


KPI 2 – Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective.

Rating: Good  The ABS provides up to date and accessible guidance material and information, and regularly consults with affected stakeholders and providers to ensure communication remains effective and relevant, and to maintain stakeholder understanding of ABS decisions and advice.


KPI 3 – Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed.

Rating: Good  The ABS maintains a risk-based approach to compliance and enforcement, and remains vigilant in ensuring that this approach reflects the changing environment.


KPI 4 – Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated.


Rating: Good  The ABS makes the minimum possible requests to the Australian public and businesses, and continues to provide support by making materials available to assist survey development and advisory services.

KPI 5 – Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities.

Rating: Good  The ABS is responsive to the requests and questions of providers. The ABS continues to publish entity performance measurement results to ensure transparency to the Australian public.

KPI 6 – Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks.

Rating: Good  The ABS has cooperative and collaborative relationships with stakeholders and regularly shares intelligence with other agencies to contribute to the ongoing relevance of the regulatory framework.

The ABS’ overall self-assessment rating for 2018-19 is **GOOD** .

The next section of this report will provide a detailed analysis of each KPI for the 2018-19 RPF self-assessment. Where relevant, a KPI may conclude with a subsection that details specific areas for improvement, including any proposed enhancements to a KPI’s performance metrics.

DETAILED SELF-ASSESSMENT FOR 2018-19

KPI 1 – Regulators do not unnecessarily impede the efficient operation of regulated entities

1.1 The ABS demonstrates an understanding of the operating environment of the business, or the circumstances of individuals, selected for surveys and the current and emerging issues that affect them.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 1.1 is  'Good'.

Evidence 1.1.1	Evidence source	Outcome
<p>Resources allocated to the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in each state and territory to improve data quality and increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in the ABS' statistical processes.</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Functions undertaken by the Centre of Excellence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (CoEATSIS). 2. ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Managers and Officers contact list on the ABS website. 3. The ABS Round Table on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics meets at least annually. 4. Development of an enterprise level Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy that will facilitate and govern ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait engagement resources. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. CoEATSIS, including the Engagement Managers Unit, has been consistently engaged across the states and territories, with a focus on enduring relationships. CoEATSIS signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Indigenous Australians Agency (NIAA) in June 2019 to secure an additional engagement manager resource for 2019-20 to support the co-design of the National Health Survey (cat. no. 4364.0.55.001). 2. The ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Managers and Officers contact list was maintained in 2018-19. 3. The ABS Round Table on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Statistics met three times during 2018-19: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 22-23 August 2018 • 27-29 November 2018 • 26-27 March 2019. 4. The new ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy was endorsed by the ABS Executive Board for implementation in 2019-20, which will be monitored by the ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Reference Group.

		Flowing from the Strategy is a subsidiary Census Action Engagement Plan which will be monitored by the ABS' 2021 Census Delivery Committee.
Evidence 1.1.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Accessible and transparent process available for survey respondents to seek exemption from a survey due to specific circumstances.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Survey Participant Information published on the ABS website is: up to date, meets Government accessibility standards, and exemption information is easy to locate. 2. Formal training on exemption process provided to ABS telephone interviewers and support staff to ensure clear communication to providers. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The ABS has maintained accessible and transparent processes for survey respondents to seek an exemption. Refer to the Resolving Complaints chapter of the ABS Surveys Charter. 2. ABS telephone interviewers and support staff are formally trained in the exemption process. The training is offered at least once annually. In 2018-19, four sessions were held.
Evidence 1.1.3	Evidence source	Outcome
Environmental scanning is undertaken regularly and at a minimum, on an annual basis.	<p>Meetings of the following consultative and advisory fora will be held during 2018-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • three of the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) • at least two of the State Statistical Forum (SSF) • at least two Economic Statistics Advisory Group (ESAG) meetings • at least two Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group (PSSAG) meetings. 	<p>Environmental scanning was undertaken at the following external advisory groups which met in 2018-19:</p> <p>ASAC meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 August 2018 • 14 November 2018 • 13 March 2019 <p>SSF meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25 July 2018 • 27 March 2019 <p>ESAG meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 July 2018 • 18 March 2019 <p>PSSAG meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 19 July 2018 • 28 November 2018 • 30 May 2019.

1.2 The ABS takes action to minimise the potential for unintended negative impacts of surveys on respondents.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 1.2 is  'Good'.

Evidence 1.2.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Avoidance of duplication in business collections conducted by official bodies for statistics purposes.	Methods, Standards and Classifications and Contact the ABS - Inquiry Form	The ABS provides support to minimise survey burden on businesses by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • making materials available to assist survey development • offering an optional user pays advisory service.
Evidence 1.2.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Complaint resolution performance meets ABS Surveys Charter standards.	Centralised register for all written complaints, queries and exemption requests is housed within the ABS' National Data Acquisition Centre (NDAC).	This measure has shown slight improvement compared to 2017-18. The target (as outlined in the ABS Surveys Charter) has been substantially met: 96% of written queries and complaints from businesses and households were responded to with written advice of the outcome within 28 days. See comment below table for further detail.
Evidence 1.2.3	Evidence source	Outcome
Minimisation of provider load on businesses and households selected in ABS surveys	Synchronised Sampling for business surveys and Conditional Selection method for household surveys (unpublished June 2018 Methodology Advisory Committee paper)	The Synchronised Sampling method is used by the ABS to limit the time each individual business is in sample for repeated business surveys, and to minimise the number of different ABS surveys for which the same business is selected. In 2018-19, the ABS introduced an improved household survey methodology - the Conditional Selection method - to minimise the chance that households are selected in more than one ABS survey.

Evidence 1.2.2 comment

Results for this measure show slight improvement on 2017-18. On average, the ABS responded to written queries and complaints within 12.5 days of receipt of correspondence. In 2018-19, 95% of businesses and 99% of households were sent written advice of the outcome within 28¹ days (compared to 94% and 97% respectively in 2017-18).

During 2018-19, the ABS responded to a total of 993 written queries or complaints (a reduction from 1,281 in 2017-18). This consisted of 923 requests seeking an exemption from an ABS survey (294 from businesses, 629 from households) and 70 complaints (18 from businesses, 52 from households). At times, the ABS does provide general exemptions from surveys to small businesses and temporary compassionate exemptions can be granted to business and household providers.

In 2018-19, the ABS experienced a decrease in the number of formal written queries, in part due to the regular exemption training program which was introduced to the NDAC call centre in 2017-18.

¹ The ABS Surveys Charter states the ABS will advise the outcome of complaints within 28 days.

1.3 ABS implements continuous improvement strategies to reduce the costs of compliance for survey respondents.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 1.3 is  'Good'.

Evidence 1.3.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Products, services and tools are available and improved to assist providers to meet their obligations.	Survey Participant Information on the ABS website provides detail of products, services and tools for respondents.	Improved portal for respondents providing visibility across all obligations. Increased range of options for response; digital channels introduced across all surveys (wherever possible) to complement existing methods.

Evidence 1.3.1 comment

The transition of ABS surveys to new data acquisition tools is now underway as part of [ABS Transformation](#) initiatives.

A new portal released for the use of all survey respondents in December 2018 provides an integrated view of business survey, household survey, and administrative data obligations.

Nearly all business surveys can be completed through an electronic form (e-form) via the internet. Business take up of e-forms in 2018-19 remained at 87%. E-forms are being progressively deployed to ABS household surveys in their next cycle, providing an alternative convenient option for respondents.

Administrative data submissions have improved with data providers now able to set up a secure file transfer protocol. This mode sets up an automated connection between the provider and the ABS, enabling files to be automatically transferred without manual intervention.

KPI 1 overall rating is  'Good'.

Specific areas for improvement for KPI 1

KPI 1.3 (evidence 1.3.1)

A systematic update to all correspondence sent to data providers began in mid-2019, with the goal of providing a more simplified, customer centric approach to requesting data. This project includes updates to all [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) pages under the [Survey Participant Information](#) page.

KPI 2 – Communication with regulated entities is clear, targeted and effective

2.1 The ABS provides guidance and information that is up to date, clear, accessible and concise through media appropriate to the target audience.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 2.1 is  'Good'.

Evidence 2.1.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Information is accessible and concise on the ABS website for survey participants on their frequently asked questions.	Covered by 1.1.2	Refer to 1.1.2
Evidence 2.1.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Accessible and transparent process available for respondents to seek exemption from a survey due to specific circumstances.	Covered by 1.1.2	Refer to 1.1.2
Evidence 2.1.3	Evidence source	Outcome
The ABS provides information to respondents on the importance of data being collected, why collected, and how it is used.	Survey specific information provided to respondents, both through direct correspondence and theme pages on the ABS website.	Detailed information about the purpose, objectives and main users of specific ABS surveys is available either via the ABS theme pages, in the form of guidance material produced for each survey, or by contacting the help number listed on the survey questionnaire. Example: Survey Participant Information – Agricultural Surveys .

2.2 ABS considers the impact on providers and engages with industry groups and representatives of the affected stakeholders before changing policies, practices or service standards.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 2.2 is  'Good'.

Evidence 2.2.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Resources allocated to the engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in each state and territory to improve data quality and increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' participation in the ABS's statistical processes.	Covered by 1.1.1	Refer to 1.1.1
Evidence 2.2.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Proposed initiatives likely to lead to significant changes in regulator burden due to changes in policies, practices or service standards are circulated to relevant stakeholder consultation groups (including but not limited to such groups as Careers Australia, National Congress of Australia's First Peoples, Small Business Ministerial Advisory Council, Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Australian Business Economists, Australian Bankers Association, Minerals Council of Australia) for feedback prior to implementation.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Covered by 1.1.3 2. ABS Respondent Burden report 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Refer to 1.1.3 2. The ABS routinely consults with stakeholders to ensure that they are aware of and approve any changes that are made to collections. <p>In consultation with stakeholders, a number of changes to ABS surveys were undertaken in 2018-19, resulting in an increase in provider burden of \$1.63m (source: 2018-19 ABS Respondent Burden report).</p> <p>See comment below table for further information.</p>

Evidence 2.2.2 comment

Each year, the ABS and other agencies under the Treasury portfolio are required to quantify any reductions or increases in the burden placed on data providers.

Changes are reported on the basis of the period in which the decisions are made, not the period in which the changes are realised. Examples of changes that may result in burden increases or decreases include:

- the development of new surveys, survey cancellations, or merging of surveys
- increases or reductions in sample
- addition/deletion or expansion/streamlining of questions/modules etc.
- substitution with administrative data
- conversion to e-forms (where an expected change to burden has been demonstrated e.g. through cognitive testing).

In 2018-19, provider burden increased by \$1.63m (compared to a reduction of burden of \$58,000 in 2017-18). This increase in burden was due to the reinstatement of the Time Use Survey, made possible by an extra \$10.4m in funding from the Government to better understand the economic value of unpaid work. Excluding the reinstatement of the Time Use Survey, the ABS actually achieved a reduction in burden of \$79,000 during 2018-19.

2.3 ABS decisions and advice are provided in a timely manner, clearly articulating expectations and the underlying reasons for decisions.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 2.3 is  'Good'.

Evidence 2.3.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Complaint resolution performance meets ABS Surveys Charter standards.	Covered by 1.2.2	Refer to 1.2.2

KPI 2 overall rating is  'Good'.

KPI 3 – Actions undertaken by regulators are proportionate to the regulatory risk being managed

3.1 ABS applies a risk-based, proportionate approach to compliance obligations, engagement and regulatory enforcement actions.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 3.1 is  'Good'.

Evidence 3.1.1	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS methods of respondent engagement, and information available regarding obligation to respond and value of response, leads to requests for exemptions from surveys at or below 0.5% of households and businesses selected for ABS surveys.	Calculated from exemptions and response rate figures obtained from the ABS' National Data Acquisition Centre.	In 2018-19, 754 exemptions were provided representing less than the target of 0.5% of households and businesses selected for ABS surveys.

3.2 ABS preferred approach to regulatory risk is regularly assessed. Strategies, activities and enforcement actions are amended to reflect changing priorities that result from new and evolving regulatory threats, without diminishing regulatory certainty or impact.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 3.2 is  'Good'.

Evidence 3.2.1	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS surveys adopt target response rates, proportionate to regulatory risk and commensurate with fit for purpose statistics.	Commitment in ABS Surveys Charter .	In 2018-19, the ABS conducted internal reviews of response rate and sample sizes required for its surveys, leading to the implementation of reductions for some collections.
Evidence 3.2.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Accessible and transparent process available for respondents to seek exemption from a survey due to specific circumstances.	Covered by 1.1.2	Refer to 1.1.2

KPI 3 overall rating is  'Good'.

KPI 4 – Compliance and monitoring approaches are streamlined and coordinated

4.1 ABS information requests are tailored and only made when necessary to secure regulatory objectives, and only then in a way that minimises impact.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 4.1 is  'Good'.

Evidence 4.1.1	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS ensures surveys are appropriate and necessary by tabling proposals for the collection of information before both Houses of Parliament in accordance with Section 6 of the Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975 .	Parliament of Australia website Documents Tabled in Parliament by the ABS	Refer to Parliament of Australia website .
Evidence 4.1.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Eliminating duplication in business collections conducted by official bodies for statistics purposes.	Covered by 1.2.1	Refer to 1.2.1
Evidence 4.1.3	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS surveys adopt target response rates that reduce regulatory risk by removing the need to continually follow up difficult to contact respondents.	Covered by 1.1.2	Refer to 1.1.2

4.2 ABS frequency of information collection is minimised and coordinated with similar processes including those of other regulators so that, as far as possible, information is only requested once.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 4.2 is  'Good'.

Evidence 4.2.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Avoidance of duplication in collections conducted by official bodies for statistical purposes.	Covered by 1.2.1	Refer to 1.2.1

4.3 ABS utilises existing information to limit the reliance on requests from providers and share the information among other regulators, where possible.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 4.3 is  'Good'.

Evidence 4.3.1	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS advances data integration initiatives, thereby reducing the need for additional burden.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Documented approvals for ABS data integration proposals. 2. ABS Annual Report Chapter 4 2018-19 Annual Performance Statement, performance measures 3.2.1, 3.2.2 and 3.2.3. 3. Public Register of Data Integration Projects. 	<p>New project or amendment approvals have remained steady: 36 in 2017-18, 32 in 2018-19.</p> <p>A further 40 projects are continuing and 29 are in development, resulting in 69 projects active during 2018-19.</p> <p>Access to, and use of, Data Integration Partnership for Australia (DIPA) assets has continued to increase, with over 261 analysts accessing and analysing Multi-Agency Data Integration Project (MADIP) and Business Longitudinal Analysis Data Environment (BLADE) data through DIPA.</p> <p>In addition, 41 non-government researchers have been approved to progress research using these assets. The increase in non-government access has been facilitated largely through the release of a customised longitudinal MADIP product into the ABS secure analytics environment in June 2019.</p>

		An additional 25 researchers are currently applying to access this product.
Evidence 4.3.2	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS utilises administrative data sources to reduce burden.	<p>1. Building Approvals administrative data collection</p> <p>2. Economic Activity Survey</p> <p>3. Australian Industry Survey</p>	<p>1. Building Approvals is a monthly administrative data collection of approximately 400 permit authorities across Australia. The administrative data provided is used to produce the monthly Building Approvals, Australia (cat.no. 8731.0), as well as being used as the frame for the quarterly Building Activity, Australia (cat. no. 8752.0) and Construction Work Done, Australia (cat.no. 8755.0) publications (which are key input into the Australian National Accounts (cat. no. 5206.0)).</p> <p>2. In order to minimise the load placed on providers, the strategy for the Economic Activity Survey (EAS) is to use, as much as possible, information sourced from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO), thus reducing the size of the direct collect sample needed to maintain the range and quality of information available to users of statistical data. Data for micro non-employing businesses* in the EAS are not directly collected, rather their ATO Business Activity Statement (BAS) data is used to model employment, income and expenses which are added directly to the collected estimates to produce the statistics in the Australian Industry (cat. no. 8155.0) publication. <i>*Micro non-employing businesses have turnover less than a threshold set at the industry class level based on BAS data.</i></p> <p>3. The Australian Industry (ABS cat. no. 8155.0) 'Manufacturing industry' data cube provides finer level estimates for the Australian manufacturing industry produced using a combination of data directly</p>

	<p>4. Water utilities data collections</p> <p>5. ABS Business Register new business registrations data</p> <p>6. Jobs in Australia data collection</p> <p>7. Planning the 2021 Census Australia (cat. no. 2089.0)</p>	<p>collected in the EAS and BAS data sourced from the ATO. Where the BAS data is strongly correlated with EAS data items, this information is used to create predicted values for non-profiled businesses and small profiled businesses that were not selected in the survey, enabling finer level industry and state/territory estimates to be produced without burdening these providers.</p> <p>4. The ABS and the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) are working together to minimise the reporting burden on water utilities. Starting with the 2018-19 reference year, data for the Water Supply and Sewerage Services collection will be collected from the BoM's online Water Reporting Database for most providers. A separate collection by the ABS will only be required for water suppliers, or state administrative data providers, that do not report through the BoM database.</p> <p>5. By sourcing new business registrations and additional tax indicators through a monthly extract from the ATO, the ABS does not need to contact new businesses directly to update the ABS Business Register.</p> <p>6. Jobs in Australia (cat. no. 6160.0) provides annual data on filled jobs for more than 2,200 different regions across Australia, including employment income, age, gender and detailed industry information. Previously this level of detail was only available using data from the Census of Population and Housing. It brings together Personal Income Tax (PIT) data, Pay As You Go (PAYG) Payment Summaries, Individual Tax Returns (ITRs), and the ABS Business Longitudinal Analysis Data Environment (BLADE).</p> <p>7. The 2021 Census will use a 'signs of life' indicator using a range of</p>
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	8. Merchandise exports/BLADE	administrative sources to improve decisions on whether dwellings were occupied or not. 8. Adoption and reuse of alternative administrative exports data supplied to ABS following ATO ceasing collection of export sales activity from small businesses.
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4.4 ABS takes into account, where possible, the circumstance and operational needs of the provider.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 4.4 is  'Good'.

Evidence 4.4.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Accessible and transparent process available for respondents to seek exemption from a survey due to specific circumstances.	Covered by 1.1.2	Refer to 1.1.2

KPI 4 overall rating is  'Good'.

KPI 5 – Regulators are open and transparent in their dealings with regulated entities

5.1 Regulators are open and responsive to requests from providers regarding the operation of the regulatory framework, and approaches implemented by the ABS.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 5.1 is  'Good'.

Evidence 5.1.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Complaint resolution performance meets ABS Surveys Charter standards.	Covered by 1.2.2	Refer to 1.2.2
Evidence 5.1.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Information is accessible and concise on the ABS website for survey participants on their frequently asked questions.	Covered by 1.1.2	Refer to 1.1.2

5.2 ABS performance measurement results are published in a timely manner to ensure accountability to the public.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 5.2 is  'Good'.

Evidence 5.2.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Response rates for (key) surveys published.	Details for individual survey response rates are outlined in the 'Accuracy' section of a Quality Declaration for most ABS surveys. These declarations are available on the ABS website, provided as part of the release of the published statistical product.	Target met. For example: 6202.0 – Labour Force, Australia, August 2019 (Quality Declaration)

Evidence 5.2.2	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS regulator performance framework metrics and annual result publicly available by 31 December each year.	Annual ABS Regulator Performance Framework report (including performance framework metrics) published on ABS website.	Target met.
Evidence 5.2.3	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS performance and activity is published annually.	ABS Annual Report	Target met.

KPI 5 overall rating is  'Good'.

KPI 6 – Regulators actively contribute to the continuous improvement of regulatory frameworks

6.1 ABS has cooperative and collaborative relationships with stakeholders to promote trust and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the regulatory framework.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 6.1 is  'Good'.

Evidence 6.1.1	Evidence source	Outcome
Resources allocated to engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in each state and territory to ensure cooperative and collaborative relationships with data providers and promote trust and efficiency.	Covered by 1.1.1	Refer to 1.1.1
Evidence 6.1.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Products, services and tools are available and improved to assist providers to meet their obligations.	Covered by 1.3.1	Refer to 1.3.1

6.2 ABS regularly shares feedback from stakeholders and performance information with policy departments to improve the operation of the regulatory framework and administrative processes.

Overall rating for sub-KPI 6.2 is  'Good'.

Evidence 6.2.1	Evidence source	Outcome
ABS regulator performance framework metrics and annual result publicly available by 31 December each financial year.	Covered by 5.2.2	Refer to 5.2.2

KPI 6 overall rating is  'Good'.

Attachment

The validation mechanism

'Regulator performance will be assessed through annual externally validated self-assessments against the Framework.' (Page 8 [Regulator Performance Framework](#)). This external validation is provided by a group of external stakeholders that have an interest in the ABS. The composition of the list of stakeholders was initially agreed jointly by the ABS, Treasury and the then Minister in 2015. The stakeholder group was refined ahead of the 2015-16 self-assessment process in consultation with Treasury. The ABS 2018-19 RPF draft self-assessment was disseminated to the agreed list of stakeholders in late October 2019 with the exception of one, which has ceased to exist as an organisation. Comments from stakeholders were requested by mid November 2019.

RPF consultation summary

The ABS engaged individually with each stakeholder prior to requesting comments via email.

Comments on the ABS 2018-19 self-assessment were received from four external stakeholders.

All responses concluded that the self-assessment was an accurate and reasonable reflection of the ABS' performance against the six KPIs, and that the overall assessment rating of 'Good' was appropriate.