

Australian Bureau of Statistics
Regulator Performance Framework
Assessment Report, 2019–20

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. Specifically:

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 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 2019-20 financial year and reflects that the ABS achieved an overall rating of **GOOD**.

ABS transformation

The ABS' five-year business transformation program concluded on 30 June 2020. The program was designed to address significant risks to the production of critical official statistics, and improve outcomes for data providers and statistical users through enhanced services that minimise provider burden.

The transformation has enabled the ABS to engage better with partners and data providers and develop more responsive solutions, making best use of current and emerging technologies. It has made it possible for the ABS to move to a modern way of collecting data, facilitate a user-centred approach to sharing information with the public, and provided a base from which to further modernise ABS systems and processes. The transformation program also made possible many of the innovations introduced in the ABS statistical response to the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020.

ABS Forward Work Program

The ABS undertakes consultation on its Forward Work Program annually, to ensure the work program is relevant and of maximum value to a broad range of users. The work program also incorporates consideration of new data collection methods and existing data sources, before collections are undertaken.

While the ABS did not anticipate any significant changes to the statistical work program in 2019-20, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 did necessitate changes to ensure the ABS could support Government's response through the provision of a wide range of relevant and timely information. In addition to publishing new statistics, the ABS made several changes to the statistical work program due to the COVID-19 pandemic, including:

- Suspending face-to-face household interviewing. The household surveys and field operations were adapted to focus on telephone and web data collection and/or deferred household surveys that required interviewers.
- Revising the work program to reduce reporting required by businesses, while meeting critical information needs about business activity, changes in the economy, and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Consulting and agreeing with key stakeholders to pause elements of the statistical work program to deliver pandemic-critical economic and social statistics.
- Reviewing and updating methods, in consultation with the statistical community, to maintain the quality and reliability of statistics, including treatment of policies related to the pandemic at source, seasonal adjustment, and trend estimates.
- Exploring alternative data sources to supplement existing data, such as de-identified transactions data from major banks and using scanner data from major supermarket outlets, to inform official estimates.

2021 Census for Population and Housing

Preparations for the 2021 Census have stepped up as it moves into the operational phase of the five-year cycle. The three key objectives for the 2021 Census are:

- Smooth running: *The Census experience is easy, simple and secure.*
- Strong support: *Governments, businesses and the community have confidence in the Census and there is a high level of community participation.*
- High-quality data: *Census data is high-quality and widely used to inform on areas of importance to Australia.*

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

The ABS has taken a user-centred design approach to ensure the community has crucial input into how the Census operates. It has also partnered with external experts to deliver key Census services to meet contemporary community expectations. The ABS is working with the public and community organisations to ensure everyone in Australia can easily participate in the 2021 Census.




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.

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 official collections such as the Census.

High level summary and conclusion for 2019-20


This section provides a high-level summary and rating of performance against the six KPIs, as well as an overall rating for the 2019-20 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.


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 2019-20 is **GOOD** .

The next section of this report will provide a detailed analysis of each KPI for the 2019-20 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 2019-20

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
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>1. Functions undertaken by the Centre of Excellence for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (CoEATSIS).</p> <p>2. ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Managers and Officers contact list on the ABS website.</p> <p>3. The ABS Round Table on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics meets at least annually.</p> <p>4. Ongoing engagement is aligned with the ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Strategy that facilitates and governs ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait engagement resources.</p>	<p>1. CoEATSIS, including the Engagement Managers Unit, has been consistently engaged across the states and territories, with a focus on enduring relationships.</p> <p>2. The ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement Managers and Officers contact list was maintained in 2019-20.</p> <p>3. The ABS Round Table on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Statistics met twice during 2019-20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 September 2019 • 25 May 2020 <p>4. Considerable consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples on upcoming 2021-23 Intergenerational Health and Mental Health Study was conducted in 2019-20 using a combination of workshops, webinars, information paper and online survey.</p>
Evidence 1.1.2	Evidence source	Outcome
Accessible and transparent process available for survey respondents to seek exemption from a survey	1. Survey Participant Information published on the ABS website is: up to date, meets Government	1. The ABS has maintained accessible and transparent processes for survey respondents to seek an exemption. Refer to the

<p>due to specific circumstances.</p>	<p>accessibility standards, and exemption information is easy to locate.</p> <p>2. Formal training on exemption process provided to ABS telephone interviewers and support staff to ensure clear communication to providers.</p>	<p>Resolving Complaints chapter of the ABS Surveys Charter.</p> <p>2. ABS telephone interviewers and support staff are formally trained in the exemption process, both in employee induction sessions and as a refresher at least once annually.</p>
<p>Evidence 1.1.3</p>	<p>Evidence source</p>	<p>Outcome</p>
<p>Environmental scanning is undertaken regularly and at a minimum, on an annual basis.</p>	<p>Meetings of the following consultative and advisory fora will be held during 2019-20:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) • State Statistical Forum (SSF) • Economic Statistics Advisory Group (ESAG) meetings • Population and Social Statistics Advisory Group (PSSAG) meetings. 	<p>Environmental scanning was undertaken at the following external advisory groups which met in 2019-20:</p> <p>ASAC meetings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 August 2019 • 13 November 2019 • 20 May 2020 <p>SSF meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30 August 2019 <p>ESAG meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12 February 2020 <p>PSSAG meeting: 28 November 2019</p> <p>SSF, ESAG, and PSSAG were dissolved at the end of 2019-20. Historically, there has been duplication of membership across ASAC and SSF, ESAG and PSSAG. In future, engagement with ASAC will provide sufficient insight into the needs and priorities of the ABS' broad range of stakeholders. Additional engagement and advisory fora on specific topics (e.g. Census, regional and agricultural statistics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander statistics) will also be undertaken.</p>

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 improvement compared to 2018-19. The target (as outlined in the ABS Surveys Charter) has been substantially met: 98% 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)	In 2019-20, the ABS continued to use the Synchronised Sampling method 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 2019-20, the ABS continued use of 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 showed improvement for the 2019-20 period. The ABS responded to written queries and complaints within 13 days of receipt of correspondence on average. In 2019-20, 98% of businesses and 99% of households were sent written advice of the outcome within 28¹ days (compared to 95% and 99% respectively in 2018-19).

During 2019-20, the ABS responded to 1,299 written queries or complaints (an increase from 993 in 2018-19). This consisted of 1,160 requests seeking an exemption from an ABS survey (154 from business, 1006 from households), 79 complaints (73 from household and 6 from business surveys) and 60 “return data to source” requests for business providers. At times, the ABS provides general exemptions from surveys to small businesses and compassionate exemptions can be granted to both business and household providers.

In 2019-20, the ABS experienced an increase in the number of exemption requests, in part due to the impact of bushfires and COVID-19, particularly in households with older respondents.

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

As part of [ABS Transformation](#) initiatives a single portal is now available to provide visibility for respondents across all their survey obligations. Household and business surveys, and admin data collections, are being progressively transitioned to a new data collection infrastructure.

The majority of business surveys can be completed through an electronic form (e-form) via the internet. Business take up of e-forms in 2019-20 remained at 87%. E-forms are being progressively deployed for ABS household surveys, and being expedited to ensure accessibility for all respondents when face-to-face interviewing is not available due to COVID-19 safety protocols.

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

Automated secure file transfer processes have improved the experience of data provision for large scale data providers. The automated connection between the provider and the ABS has enabled files to be delivered with no manual intervention required. Feedback from providers has been positive.

KPI 1 overall rating is  'Good'.

Specific areas for improvement for KPI 1

KPI 1.3 (evidence 1.3.1)

A systematic update of all correspondence sent to data providers has been undertaken over the past financial year, providing a more simplified, customer-centric approach to requesting data. This project has included updates to both household and business approach material, along with updates to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) pages under the Survey Participant Information page. The successful deployment of a Business Survey Contact page assists businesses who have been impacted by natural disaster or COVID-19 by providing an alternative, secure method of contact for affected providers. The project is on track to be completed as remaining surveys transition to the new website.

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 it is 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' 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	Covered by 1.1.3	Refer to 1.1.3

Commerce and Industry, Australian Business Economists, Australian Bankers Association, Minerals Council of Australia) for feedback prior to implementation.		
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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	Calculated from exemptions and response rate figures obtained from the ABS' National Data Acquisition Centre.	In 2019-20, there were 1,169 requests for exemptions received, which is less than the target of 0.5% of households and businesses selected for ABS surveys.

households and businesses selected for ABS surveys.		
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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.	The ABS determines what response is needed for each survey (both household and business) to meet statistical requirements by working with stakeholders, assessing the population to be sampled, survey methods and mode of survey delivery (e.g. face to face, web, phone). It does this through the work of survey management teams, survey program governance and consultation with expert groups and stakeholders (including representatives of potential respondents). An assessment is also made of existing administrative data that may also be used to substitute for information collected through surveys.	ABS surveys provide a balanced approach to collecting high priority information, minimising respondent burden and minimising the sample size required to meet the information needs. Exemptions from the survey approach are managed in accordance with the ABS Surveys Charter.
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 2019-20, Chapter 4 2019-20 Annual Performance Statement, performance measures 2.3, 3.1, and 3.2. 3. Public Register of Data Integration Projects. 4. DIPA Board Closure report for 2019-20. 5. ABS internal Data Services Operational Project Register 6. ABS internal Data Integration Proposal (DIP) register 	<p>The 2019-20 period successfully concluded the Data Integration Partnership for Australia (DIPA).</p> <p>COVID-19 priorities delayed three of the 21 DIPA projects for 2019/20, with 18 delivered by 30 June 2020. The ABS is working with project leads to deliver delayed projects in 2020/21.</p> <p>The DIPA program enabled the ABS to further develop its key integrated data assets (MADIP and BLADE), infrastructure and services.</p> <p>The ABS is now well positioned to offer a range of data access and custom integration services from 2020-21.</p> <p>New data integration projects or amendments have increased from 32 in 2018-19; to 79 in 2019-20.</p> <p>There were an additional 81 research projects established to access existing data in 2019-20, compared to 37 during 2018-19.</p> <p>Access and use of MADIP and BLADE data integration assets has continued to increase, with 491 researchers (261 in 2018-19) across 56 organisations accessing data from these assets.</p>

		This includes 104 non-government researchers, compared to 41 in 2018-19.
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. Water utilities data collections</p> <p>3. Jobs in Australia data collection</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 inputs into the Australian National Accounts (cat. no. 5206.0)).</p> <p>2. The ABS and the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) are working together to minimise the reporting burden on water utilities. Data for the Water Supply and Sewerage Services collection is collected from the BoM's online Water Reporting Database for most providers. This approach minimises the number of touch-points between utilities and government, and streamlines government data collection from water utilities</p> <p>3. 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>4. Planning the 2021 Census Australia (cat. no. 2089.0)</p> <p>5. Merchandise exports/BLADE</p> <p>6. Sugarcane experimental regional estimates using new data sources and methods</p> <p>7. Supermarket transactions (scanner) data</p> <p>8. National Health Survey/MADIP</p>	<p>4. The 2021 Census will use a 'signs of life' indicator using a range of administrative sources to improve decisions on whether dwellings were occupied or not.</p> <p>5. Adoption and reuse of alternative administrative exports data supplied to ABS following ATO ceasing collection of export sales activity from small businesses.</p> <p>6. The ABS produced estimates for sugarcane production using a combination of existing data sources from the Sugar Cane Levy Payers Register, the Australian Sugar Milling Council and satellite crop mapping of sugarcane. No survey data was collected to produce these statistics and this work is the first practical step towards making greater use of alternative data sources to produce agriculture statistics. The positive response to this work will allow questions on sugarcane production to be removed from future agriculture surveys, reducing burden on farmers. The extra detail provided by the administrative sources allows the statistics to be produced with greater regional detail and sooner than is possible using survey data.</p> <p>7. Transactions (scanner) data refers to point-of-sale purchases from retailers. Data is provided on a weekly basis and contains millions of transactions. The data is used to produce the Consumer Price Index, Australia; Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product; Apparent Consumption of Selected Foodstuffs, Australia; and Retail Trade, Australia.</p> <p>In response to COVID-19, the ABS also used scanner data to produce Retail Trade, Australia, Preliminary.</p> <p>8. Linking the National Health Survey (NHS) with the Multi-Agency Data</p>
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		Integration Project (MADIP) means Australians selected in the National Health Survey don't need to answer questions on medication use any more. Instead, existing information from the administration of the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS) is used, as outlined in National Health Survey: Persons accessing Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme subsidised prescriptions, 2014-15 .
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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 'Methodology' section for most ABS surveys. This information is 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 2020 (Methodology)
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 is assessed through annual externally validated self-assessments against the 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, The Treasury, and the then Minister in 2015. The stakeholder group was refined ahead of the 2015-16 self-assessment process in consultation with The Treasury. The ABS 2019-20 RPF draft self-assessment was disseminated to the agreed list of stakeholders in late November 2020. Comments from stakeholders were requested by the end of November 2020.

RPF consultation summary

Comments on the ABS 2019-20 self-assessment were received from three (3) external stakeholders.

Overall, the responding stakeholders indicated that the self-assessment was an accurate, reasonable and appropriate reflection of the ABS' performance against the six KPIs, and that the overall assessment rating of 'Good' was appropriate.

One stakeholder suggested we could reduce burden on small business and family enterprise by:

- finding alternative data collection methods and integrating data collection with existing software
- improving the accessibility of survey participant information and small business resources
- explicitly including small and family business environmental scanning as part of KPI 1.1 (understanding respondents' operating environment).