

# **AGEING INFORMATION DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

## **PROPOSED PROCESS**

National Ageing Statistics Unit  
Australian Bureau of Statistics

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## **1. Introduction**

1.1 The ABS has a continuing commitment to develop the range and quality of official statistical information. The ABS is committed to working collaboratively with a range of government agencies to deliver the statistics required by Australians, no matter what their source. Key components of this work include the creation of information development plans. Information development plans are living documents which map the broad issues and information needs for a given field to the available information sources, in order to determine information gaps, overlaps and deficiencies. Information development plans present priorities, and a plan for action to improve information agreed by stakeholders and assign roles and responsibilities in areas where improvement or development is required. They provide a framework for the systematic improvement, integration and use of data sources.

1.2 The ABS, in collaboration with key stakeholders, is undertaking a project that will result in an Ageing Information Development Plan (IDP). The project will explore opportunities to improve the breadth and value of currently available data in a range of ways including better use of administrative by-product data along with surveys and censuses. Developments included in the plan will be the responsibility of a range of organisations and not just the ABS.

## **2. Project vision**

2.1 The ABS has a vision of achieving two important goals through this work.

- i. An improved body of data to better match information needs in the field of ageing statistics, with an enhanced understanding of data and increased accessibility and availability of information for all to assist informed decision making.
- ii. Active collaboration and coordination between the ABS and those working in the ageing statistics field, to improve the information available to support policy development leading to better outcomes for managing and understanding an ageing population, from an economic and social perspective.

## **3. Objectives and priorities**

3.1 This project will allow better identification of the key statistical priorities relating to ageing and help promote a wider shared understanding and commitment to the priorities.

3.2 Primary objectives include:

- i. The identification of current significant issues related to ageing and

- agreement on the data implications.
- ii. The identification of information gaps and deficiencies in the existing data sets relating to ageing.
  - iii. The development of an agreed set of priorities and a framework to improve relevant ageing statistics.
  - iv. Agreement between stakeholders on the responsibilities for the various actions to improve the statistics.
  - v. An improvement in the use of existing information through mechanisms such as better sharing and access to information and wider use of standards in surveys and administrative collections.

## 4. Rationale

4.1 The National Ageing and Statistics Unit (NASU) within the ABS is well placed to take on a leadership and coordination role in developing the Ageing IDP.

4.2 It is also an opportune time for this project given the key policy directions that relate to ageing. At a national level, these include:

- i. *Intergenerational Report* This report provides a basis for considering the Commonwealth's fiscal outlook over the long term, and identifying emerging issues with an ageing population. The Intergenerational Report was released in conjunction with the 2002-03 Budget and was seen as an important step in recognising the challenges posed by an ageing population.
- ii. *National Strategy for an Ageing Australia* provides a broad framework for addressing current issues facing older people as well as preparing for future demographic changes. The document was initially developed in 2001 by the Office for an Ageing Australia, within the Commonwealth Department for Health and Ageing and with a revision in late 2004. A further purpose is to provide leadership for other sectors of the community to take action on population ageing issues within their sphere of influence. A number of principles, goals and actions are outlined in the document to guide governments, business, the community and individuals.
- iii. the Department of Treasury documents *Australia's Demographic Challenges* and *A more flexible and adaptable retirement income system* highlight issues associated with the ageing of the population. The first paper identifies three main policy areas: improving the capacity to work, better incentives for work and improving flexibility in the workplace. The second document highlights the need for people to plan and prepare for retirement, outlining a number of key initiatives and changes to the superannuation system.

- iv. the Productivity Commission draft document, *Economic Implications of an Ageing Australia*, released in November 2004, reports on a study requested by the Council of Australian Governments. The Productivity Commission were required to assess the implications of Australia's ageing population for productivity, labour force and fiscal outcomes across the three tiers of government. The study updates and builds on, the 2002 *Intergenerational Report*, to include detailed projections for the States and Territories.

## 5. Key steps in the project

5.1 This project involves a number of key steps:

- i. Identifying and describing the key issues and policy concerns associated with an ageing population. Appendix A provides background to these issues in the form of a statistical summary.
- ii. Determining existing data sources and information needs. Matching existing data sources to information needs and identifying data gaps and deficiencies.
- iii. Drafting a set of priorities and a plan for action based on data gaps and deficiencies identified in the previous process. Prioritising the data needs and planning for improvement of data sources across agencies.
- iv. Drafting an Information Development Plan. The IDP, as a living document, will outline the current priorities, actions to address them, and the agencies responsible for each priority.
- v. This will provide the basis for monitoring progress and ongoing review of information development needs.

5.2 To date, through a review of available literature, consultation with stakeholders, and participation in current information activities for ageing outside the ABS, work has progressed to identify key policy issues and existing statistical frameworks and standards. Key issues relating to ageing have been documented and will be added to, using feedback from the National Ageing Statistics Unit Advisory Group (NASUAG).

5.3 Information development plans developed by other areas of the ABS were also used as a source of information and ideas, particularly those relating to cross-cutting areas of social concern such as health, education and work, as well as demographic issues. This has reduced the potential for duplication of effort in this work across the ABS. The key policy drivers have also been identified along with the main stakeholders to the project. As part of the consultation process the key policy drivers will be reconfirmed with key stakeholders to determine their currency and identify other potential drivers.

5.4 The scope of further user consultation will be considered and the project work will be promoted within and outside of the ABS through a range of mediums,

including the ABS website (and potentially the ABS National Statistical Service website), and will continue to be promoted via the Unit's regular newsletter (*Age Matters*).

5.5 An assessment has also been made of existing conceptual frameworks and standards for ageing statistics.

## 6. Timeline and project deliverables

6.1 The table below highlights the main deliverables and associated timing for this project. It should be noted that only the Information Development Plan (deliverable 4, below) is intended to be formally published under an ABS catalogue number. It will encompass elements of the background papers (deliverables 1-3, below); however, the background papers will also be separately circulated to key stakeholders when finalised. In addition, a summary of the project plan, progress and outcomes is intended to be provided to all stakeholders via the Ageing Theme page.

<i>Deliverable</i>	<i>Action/Responsibility</i>	<i>Deadline</i>
<b>1. Ageing Information Development Plan - Proposed Process</b>  Distributed to key stakeholders.	For comment at NASUAG	2 June 2005
<b>2. Key Issues in Ageing</b>  Distributed to key stakeholders.	For comment at NASUAG	2 June 2005
<b>3. Information Priorities</b>  Distribution of paper to NASU Advisory Group Members  Distributed to key stakeholders.  Consultation with key stakeholders. A series of workshops/discussion groups will be convened with Advisory Group members and key stakeholders to gain comment/feedback on the priorities and develop plans for improvement.	For discussion by NASUAG, 2 June Meeting   For discussion.	May 2005  June 2005  July - September 2005
<b>4. Information Development Plan (IDP)</b>  Prepare IDP, incorporating conceptual frameworks and key policy issues, as well as the agreed information priorities and plan  Obtain final sign-off of the plan by key stakeholders.  Publish Information Development Plan	ABS and key stakeholders  ABS and key stakeholders  ABS	October - December 2005  January - March 2006  March 2006

6.2 Each of the main deliverables is described in more detail below.

1. The Ageing Information Development Plan - Proposed Process (this document).

This project plan outlines the work to be undertaken and the rationale for it. It also notes the key agencies involved.

2. Key Issues in Ageing

A document was developed initially for the Australian Statistics Advisory Council meeting of November 2003, detailing the key issues relating to ageing. For each key issue the main questions surrounding it were identified and data sources applicable to each issue were briefly discussed. The document was circulated in December 2003 to key stakeholders. The document has been reviewed and updated to take into account current and new issues and accompanies this document.

3. Information Priorities

This document will be used to drive discussion during the consultation phase on priorities for information development. The document will outline the existing data sources available, match them to the information needs and identify data gaps. A draft set of priorities will be identified and added to or refined during the consultation phase. In a collaborative approach, key stakeholders will prioritise the data needs. Plans for improvement of data sources will be developed across agencies.

4. Information Development Plan

This will bring together the conceptual frameworks around ageing, the key policy issues, and agreed information development priorities. It will present a work plan for future years agreed by key stakeholders. Key projects currently underway and the agencies responsible for progressing these projects will be described as part of this work plan.

6.3 The workplan in the IDP will need monitoring and periodically the whole IDP will need to be reviewed and updated. The NASU Advisory Group could be the primary mechanism for the ongoing monitoring of the plan and advise on review processes.

## **7. Stakeholders**

7.1 The NASU recognises that there are many stakeholders in the field of ageing. Some have roles in terms of policy development and implementation, some also have significant information holdings, while others contribute through significant research. The NASU acknowledges the roles that are played by these organisations and aims to work collaboratively with them to ensure appropriate and timely information development. A list of stakeholders to be consulted during the project is at Appendix B.

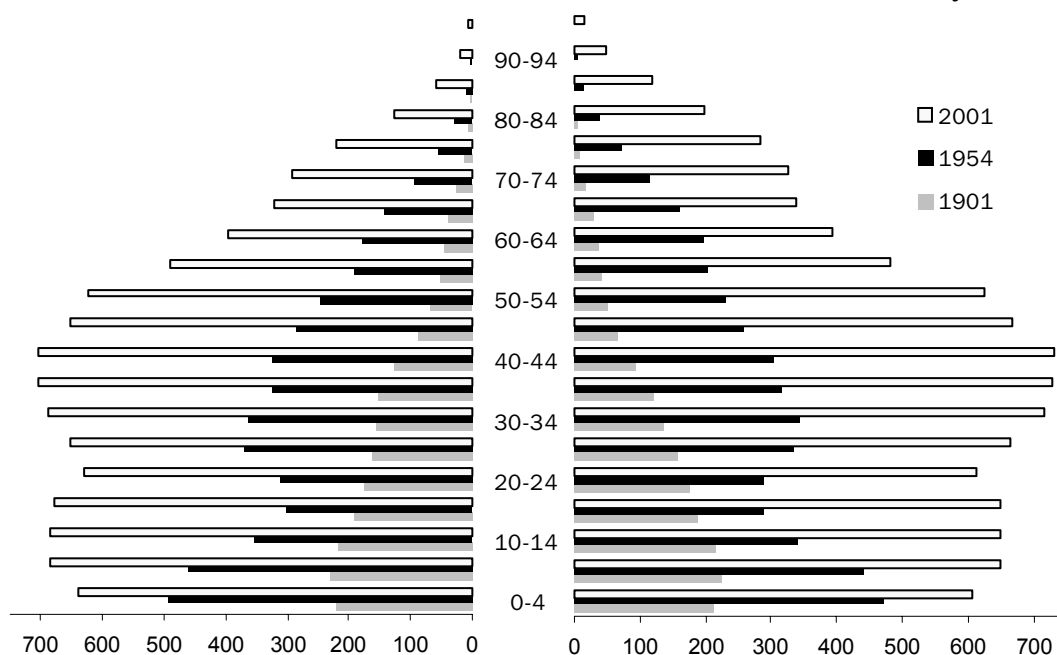


## Appendix A - Population - Statistical Summary

### Defining ageing

1. As in many developed countries, Australia's population is ageing and is projected to continue to age rapidly over the next several decades. This fact has been well documented, as have the main factors that have driven the change in the composition of the Australian population. Australia will experience an unprecedented ageing of the population in the first half of the twenty-first century resulting from the combination of the sustained decline in the birth rate that followed the post Second World War baby boom, the immigration of working age people and increasing life expectancy. Changes associated with increases in the proportion of older people in a community impact on all aspects of social and economic life.

**AGE BY SEX DISTRIBUTION, Persons(a)(b), selected Census years**



(a) Under the Constitution at Federation, Indigenous people were not included in the Census. This changed following a referendum in 1967. Indigenous people have been included in the figures for 1971 onwards.

(b) Data for 1971 onwards excludes overseas visitors.

Source: 1901 and 1954 Censuses of the Commonwealth of Australia; 2001 Census of Population and Housing.

2. The population is ageing both numerically (the increase in the number of people aged 65 years and over), and structurally (the increase in the proportion of people aged 65 years and over). Older people comprised 4% of the population in 1901, increasing to 13% in 2001 and are projected to form between 29% and 32% of the population by 2101.

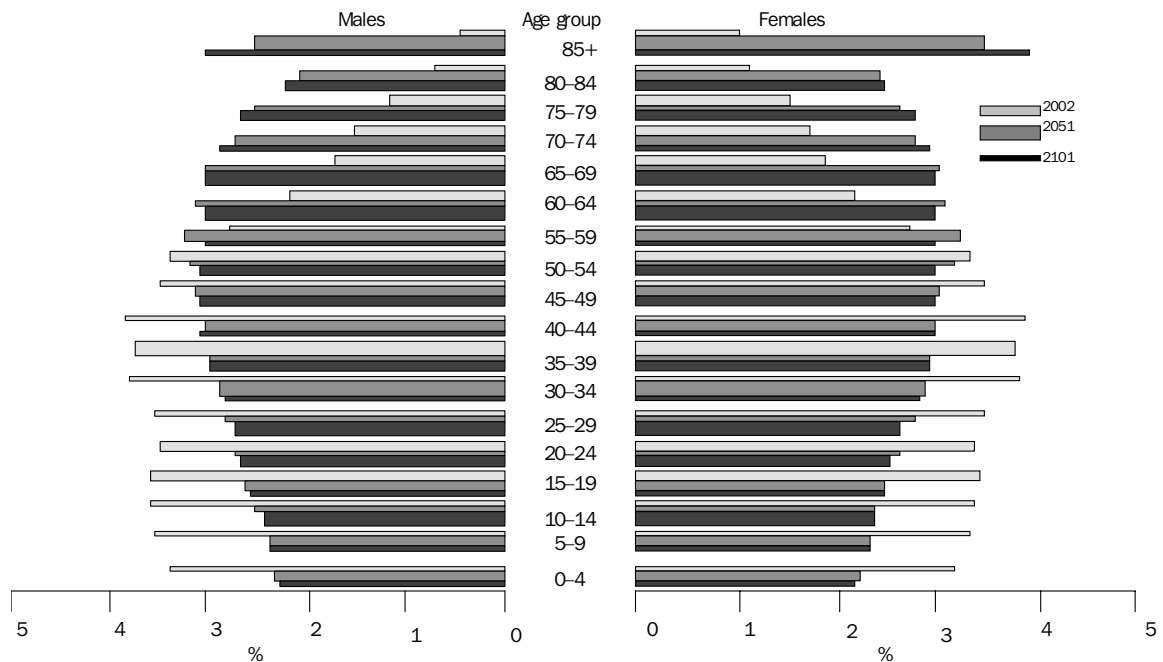
3. The median age at June 2002 of 35.9 years is projected to increase to between 40.4 years and 42.3 years in 2021 and between 46.0 years and 49.9 years in 2051.

There is less change in the second half of the projection period and by 2101 the median age is projected to be between 47.9 years and 50.5 years.

4. The ageing of the population and declining fertility affects the entire age structure of the population. The proportion of the population aged under 15 years is projected to fall from 20% (4.0 million) of the population at June 2002, to between 12%–15% (2.8 million to 4.8 million) in 2051 and 12%–15% (3.6 million to 5.5 million) in 2101. The proportion of the population aged 50 years and over will increase from 29% (5.7 million) at June 2002 to between 46%–50% (11.5 million to 14.3 million) in 2051 and 47%–51% (9.6 million to 18.0 million) in 2101.

5. Consequently, the age structure of the population is projected to change noticeably by 2051, with a greater concentration of people aged 50 years and over and lower proportions of young people. This distribution is also evident in 2101.

**PROJECTED POPULATION AGE STRUCTURE, As at 30 June, Series B—  
Australia**



Source: *Population Projections, Australia* (ABS. Cat. No. 3222.0)

## Appendix B – Selected list of national stakeholder agencies

1. The following list of national stakeholder agencies have been identified by NASU as the key stakeholder agencies who will be consulted during the development of the Information Development Plan. This list includes agencies that are also represented on the NASU Advisory Group (DoHA, AIHW, DFACs, Treasury). It is acknowledged that there are a great number of stakeholders in the field of ageing statistics, including government agencies, researchers and practitioners and it may not be possible/practical to include all of these stakeholders in the consultation process. During the consultation process with this project plan, key stakeholders will be asked to identify other relevant stakeholders who they feel should be involved in the consultation process.

<i>Stakeholder organisation</i>	<i>Organisation's role in the field</i>
<i>Department of Health and Ageing (DoHA)</i>	DoHA has 11 portfolio outcomes - population health and safety, access to Medicare, enhanced quality of life for older Australians, quality health care, rural health, hearing services, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, choice through private health and health investment. As well as being the main department responsible for government policy relating to ageing, it is also closely involved in several important data holdings, such as the National Hospital Morbidity Data.
<i>Department of Family and Community Services (DFaCS)</i>	DFaCS is responsible for a broad range of social policy issues affecting Australian society and the living standards of Australian families, communities and individuals. DfaCS has three key policy social outcomes; Families are Strong, Communities are Strong and Individuals Reach Their Potential. DfaCS fund the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia Survey.
<i>Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)</i>	AIHW, which was established in 1987, is Australia's national agency for health and welfare statistics and information. AIHW leads national health, housing and community services information management and data development, through the National Health Information Management Group, the National Community Services Information Management Group and the National Indigenous Housing Information Implementation Group. AIHW is responsible for key compendiums in the ageing field. The AIHW are also custodians of key administrative data sets

	and coordinate and manage their development.
<i>Department of Human Services</i>	The Department of Human Services was created in 2004 and includes the government agencies Centrelink, Health Insurance Commission, Child Support Agency, Health Services Australia, Commonwealth Rehabilitation Services and Australian Hearing.
<i>Department of Employment and Workplace Relations (DEWR)</i>	DEWR develops and implements policies and programmes that support an effectively functioning labour market, and workplaces with higher productivity and higher pay. DEWR also provides services to job seekers, employers, employees and researchers.
<i>Department of Treasury</i>	The Commonwealth Treasury focusses primarily on economic policy. The department is divided into four groups, Fiscal, Macroeconomic, Revenue and Markets. These groups are were established to meet three policy outcomes; effective government spending and taxation arrangements; sound macro-economic environment and well functioning markets. The Treasury's interests with an ageing population include retirement incomes, healthy ageing, health care as outlined in the <i>Intergenerational Report</i> .
<i>Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST)</i>	DEST develops and implements policies to ensure the continuing relevance of education, science and training to contemporary needs and the growing requirement for lifelong learning. DEST is responsible for the Higher Education Statistics Collection and schools data for non-government schools.
<i>National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER)</i>	NCVER is responsible for collecting and managing national VET and New Apprenticeship statistics, and managing national surveys of TAFE graduates and students, and employers' views of training. On behalf of the Australian National Training Authority (ANTA), NCVER coordinates and manages the National VET Research and Evaluation program (NVETRE).
<i>State and Territory Seniors Unit</i>	Each state and territory government have units responsible for ageing issues.
<i>Council of the Aged/National Seniors Partnership</i>	COTA/National Seniors is a partnerships arrangement between the Council of the Aged and National Seniors Association. It is the largest seniors organisation in Australia with over 270,000 individuals and 1000 seniors organisations under its umbrella. Membership is

	<p>comprised of self-funded retirees, pensioners and people in the workforce.</p>
<p><i>Australasian Centre for Ageing, The University of Queensland</i></p>	<p>The Australasian Centre on Ageing (formerly the Centre for Human Ageing) was established as a University of Queensland Centre in 2001. It is a collaborative research initiative by the University of Queensland and the Seniors Interests Unit, Department of Families, Queensland. The Centre integrates and focuses research expertise in human ageing from across the university, and links it with government and community priorities, to form a world class international centre of research excellence.</p>
<p><i>The UNSW Research Centre on Ageing &amp; Retirement (RCAR)</i></p>	<p>The UNSW Research Centre on Ageing &amp; Retirement (RCAR) is a collaborative undertaking which brings together economists and actuaries, urban planners, demographers and geographers, medical scientists and community medicine experts, social policy analysts, sociologists, educationalists and performing arts academics at the University of New South Wales, Sydney. RCAR, provides the opportunity for a number of senior academics across several disciplines who have been working on issues of ageing and retirement to come together to examine the interrelatedness of so many of the issues concerning ageing and retirement.</p>
<p><i>Centre for Ageing Studies, Flinders University of South Australia</i></p>	<p>The Centre for Ageing Studies (CAS) is an organisation responsible for research, policy advice and planning in relation to population ageing. In May 1988, it was designated as a World Health Organisation (WHO) Collaborating Centre Population Ageing: Research, Education and Policy. In this role the centre has been involved in cross-national studies of the social and health aspects of ageing in more than a dozen countries in WHO's Western Pacific, South East Asian and the Eastern Mediterranean regions.</p> <p>The Centre is involved in a range of state, national and international research projects examining some of the pivotal issues confronting the older population and service providers, recently including the Australian Longitudinal Study of Ageing (ALSA), housing options, accommodation needs and the economic contribution of older</p>

	people.
<i>Ageing Well Network</i>	The ARC Ageing Well Network will provide research knowledge underpinning national goals articulated in the National Strategy for an Ageing Australia; the Prime Minister's Science, Engineering, and Innovations Council report <i>Promoting Healthy Ageing in Australia</i> ; and the national Building Ageing Research Capacities (BARC) project.
<i>Australian Association of Gerontology</i>	The Australian Association of Gerontology, established in 1964, is a multi-disciplinary association of professionals involved in the area of gerontology. Their mission is to expand the knowledge of ageing by promoting and supporting research; disseminating information; promoting and providing education; promoting informed debate; cooperating with other stakeholders; and providing leadership.
<i>National Institute of Labour Studies(NILS), Flinders University</i>	The National Institute of Labour Studies has become one of Australia's leading research centres in the broad field of social sciences. NILS areas of interest in relation to ageing include: analysis of labour market developments at national, industry, occupational and regional levels; employment, unemployment and labour mobility; and labour productivity and workplace performance.
<i>Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI)</i>	The Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) is a national research organisation, specialising in housing and urban research and policy. AHURI's mission is to make a real difference to housing and related urban outcomes throughout Australia by the creation and dissemination of knowledge in housing markets, housing policy and programs, and the urban environment in cities, towns and regions.
<i>Australian Association of Local Government</i>	The Australian Local Government Association is the national voice of local government, representing 673 councils across the country. In structure, ALGA is a federation of state and territory local government associations. To build the capacity of local government to meet the specific opportunities and challenges of an ageing population, ALGA has developed the <i>Australian Local Government Population Ageing Action Plan 2004-2008</i> . The plan is the result of a partnership between ALGA and the Australian Government

	to engage local government in a planned and coordinated national approach to population ageing issues.
<i>Centre for Social Change, Queensland University of Technology</i>	The Centre for Social Change Research was established in 2003 with its purpose to develop a research environment that promotes understanding of the drivers of social change and the implications of change for individuals, families, communities and nations. Researchers from the Centre in collaboration with researchers across QUT, developed a nation-wide survey that aims to investigate predictors of active ageing such as spirituality, health, work, learning, social, emotional well-being, and the home environment.