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# DISCOVER

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## FROM THE AUSTRALIAN STATISTICIAN

**Being Australia's official statistical organisation,** the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is committed to assisting and encouraging informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments, business and the community.

As the newly appointed Australian Statistician, I encourage Australians to consider the vitally important role that official statistics play in our society. While use by government is obviously very important it is also true that access to official statistics provides businesses and citizens with a window on the work and performance of government itself. Official statistics show the scale of government activity in every area of public policy, allowing the impact of public policies and actions to be assessed.

They also provide a strategic, but in my opinion - underutilised, resource for businesses and the wider community in more general planning and research activities. One of my goals at ABS will be to improve that level of use.

As an organisation, ABS strives to remain relevant to national needs by collecting the right sort of data, processing it to world leading standards and delivering information solutions to our many clients. In doing this we strive at all times to minimise the burden on the Australian community; by using existing data wherever possible to satisfy new needs

and, where this isn't possible, by using sophisticated methodologies to reduce sample sizes and the time taken to participate in our surveys.

We are deeply committed to encouraging access to our statistics. Our website [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) presents ABS data free-of-charge and is one of the most popular government sites in Australia. We also maintain a National Information and Referral Service (telephone number 1300 135 070) to assist members of the public to access our data. More complex data requests can make use of the Customised Data Consultancy which provides expert help on a cost-recovery basis.

The highlight of 2007 for the Australian Bureau of Statistics will be the release of the data collected last year in the 2006 Census of Population and Housing. This will provide a wealth of new information for our community and governments as they seek solutions to challenges at both the national and local levels. I encourage you to stay up-to-date with the release details via our website.

Remember, the ABS is well placed to help you take the right steps - with the right information - to make informed decisions.

Please don't hesitate to contact the ABS if you think we can help.



Brian Pink  
May 2007



The ABS provides statistics on a wide range of economic and social matters, serving government, business and the population in general. Statistics on the ABS website can be accessed free of charge.

ABS HOUSE

## ABS IN BRIEF

The **Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS)** is Australia's national statistical agency. Our mission is to assist and encourage informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.

The ABS has a key central role in expanding and improving the range of statistics available on the performance of our economy, the well-being of our population, the condition of our environment and the challenges faced by regional and rural communities.

This not only involves the ABS collecting, compiling, analysing and disseminating a wide range of statistics itself, but also working with other federal, state and local government agencies to help them do likewise with the vast array of data they collect during the course of administrative processes.

### We:

- maintain a high quality website with a wide range of freely available statistics
- design and conduct the five yearly national Census of Population and Housing
- design and conduct complex surveys from which national economic indicators are derived, such as the Household Expenditure Survey and the Economic Activity Survey
- analyse and release the data collected to provide meaningful and high quality statistics which are widely used by governments, businesses and the media
- provide statistical consulting, modelling, analysis, training and support.



Each year there are more than 10 000 newspaper and magazine articles and a similar number of radio, television and internet news stories about the statistics released by ABS.

## ABS IN THE MEDIA

The ABS is a valuable source of news stories and objective information that can be used to inform and interest the public. It is drawn on extensively by both national and international media.

The headline news stories that typically follow the release of important and well-known statistics (such as unemployment or inflation) are the most obvious examples of the ABS in the media. The population and social statistics published by the ABS are also well received by journalists because they are a rich source of stories about Australians' lives and their environment.

The media also show a keen interest in the Population Census, about how it is run and the information it provides.

Follow the **Media Releases** link at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) for more information.

# www.abs.gov.au

download statistics free

## DISCOVER [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

All statistics on [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) can be accessed and downloaded free of charge. The ABS website contains over 365,000 pages and is updated daily at 11:30 am AEST. This means you can access a wide range of new product releases each day. You can also scan the latest headlines, find up-to-date information about services the ABS provides and read the most recent ABS media releases just by visiting our homepage.

The ABS website is the primary access point for the majority of users of ABS information. It contains ABS publications and statistics released since 1994. Its pages are accessed about 1.5 million times each week, or 78 million times per year.

### FREE STATISTICS ONLINE

Visit [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) for:

- statistics - search for products by catalogue number, release date, topic or title
- all products released since 1994
- Census information - a new and exciting range of products including QuickStats, StatMaps, Census Tables and Community Profiles
- information about the ABS
- schedule of future releases
- registering to be notified of the latest ABS releases
- career information
- teaching resources for educators
- statistics training and more.

### HAVE YOUR SAY

The ABS website is constantly evolving to meet your online needs! We regularly ask our online clients for feedback about the site. As a result the website is continuously being upgraded to meet users requirements. This means a design which is easy for you to use and navigate at the click of your mouse.



Want to know when statistics that interest you are released?  
Register at [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au) for our free email notification  
service and follow the link from the home page





## STATISTICAL THEMES

The ABS provides a comprehensive statistical service relevant to Australia. This service provides timely, accurate and objective statistics for use by government, industry and the community. ABS statistics can be found under the following themes:

- **Economy**
- **Environment and energy**
- **Industry**
- **People**
- **Regional**

### **ECONOMY**

The ABS collects, compiles and disseminates data on all major economic fields. Government and industry use this economic data to understand trends in the Australian economy, identify drivers of economic growth, evaluate economic performance and for the formulation and assessment of economic policy.

### **ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY**

A program of environmental statistics was implemented by the ABS in 1991 focusing on compiling, analysing and publishing a wide range of topics for use by the government, industry and the community. It has grown in response to an increasing demand for information linking the relationship between social, environmental and economic statistics. The ABS has adopted a long-term perspective to enable a time series to develop that will assist informed decision-making.

## INDUSTRY

A broad cross-section of Australian industry data is collected on topics including agriculture, construction, transport, tourism and the services industry. New statistical concepts have been developed to measure the changes between consumer and business behaviour and reaction in response to the growth in the global economy which has caused rapid expansion of products and services for consumers and businesses.

## PEOPLE

The Census of Population and Housing held every five years is the principle source of information about Australia's population. It is instrumental in identifying trends in the Australian population, such as the role of migration in population growth and issues concerning an ageing population. Population statistics measure the size, growth, composition, geographical distribution and components suggesting change.

They also provide background discussion on a wide range of issues concerning the community.

## REGIONAL

Australia is a highly urbanised country with about 85% of its population living around 50 km from the coast but demand for rural and regional data is increasing as the government focuses on issues in those areas. The development of mesh blocks enables this improvement of data about regional areas. Combined with a standard coding referencing file, the data is easily integrated between organisations, leading to improved government policy formulation and service delivery."



## WE CAN HELP YOU FIND THE ANSWERS

**Do you need assistance to find** what you are looking for? Speak to an ABS consultant who has experience across a range of statistical information to help you get the answers you need.

Our consultants will either answer your enquiry over the phone or can explain the material available on the ABS website and in many public libraries.

This telephone service operates Monday to Friday from 8.30 am to 5.00 pm in all Australian time zones.

## CUSTOMISED DATA SERVICE

For your more complex enquiries, we can provide a range of additional data on a fee-for-service basis.

Our customised consulting service gives you in-depth access to all ABS statistics for your detailed demographic, social, health, environmental, international trade and economic information needs.

Our consultants are experienced with all types of information requests. With offices in every state and territory, we will help you identify what statistical information is available, how relevant it is to your request and what else may be able to assist with your business needs.

### We can:

- provide tailored reports with tables, commentary, graphs and maps highlighting the characteristics you are interested in
- produce customised demographic data for projections and planning purposes
- provide the very latest data, historical data or long time series.

**CALL 1300 135 070 AND SPEAK TO A CONSULTANT TODAY.**

Information tailored to your needs,  
time frame and budget

## UP-TO-DATE DETAILS ON EXPORTS AND IMPORTS

If you are looking for market development opportunities in Australia or overseas, ABS International Trade data should be at the core of your research no matter what your industry.

Our International Trade Service is a charged service which can provide you with timely, regular reports on Australia's exports and imports for the commodities of interest to you. Subscription reports, delivered by email, can be provided at monthly, quarterly or annual intervals.

Call **1300 135 070** or email  
[client.services@abs.gov.au](mailto:client.services@abs.gov.au).



## EXPERT SURVEY ADVICE

Our statisticians have many years of **experience**, and internationally recognised expertise in survey design and data analysis. They can assist public sector clients with the analysis and use of ABS data.

**Other services are also available to official public sector bodies, including:**

- **survey and sample design**
- **data analysis and modelling**
- **methodological reviews.**

### **Thinking of conducting your own survey?**

Take advantage of our reputation for integrity and confidentiality, and let us do the work for you. The Statistical Survey Service caters for the specific survey needs and requirements of government agencies and some other organisations.

For more information call **1300 135 070** or email [client.services@abs.gov.au](mailto:client.services@abs.gov.au).

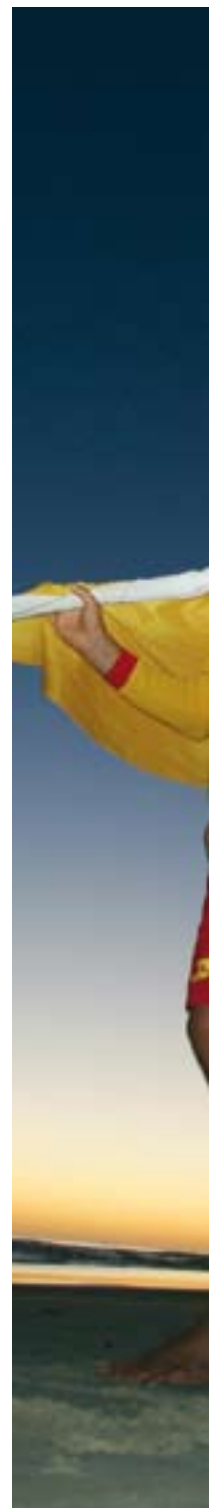
## STATISTICAL TRAINING

Through the **National Statistical Training Institute**, the ABS offers a range of training courses for anyone wishing to develop their statistical skills. Programs are available for beginners or those at a more advanced level. These programs cover skills used in developing high quality statistical collections, in statistical analysis or to help you understand and make the best use of ABS information.

**ABS training includes courses on how to:**

- **analyse data or conduct statistical analysis**
- **use data to write reports or social commentary**
- **design surveys or questionnaires**
- **use statistics in decision making or**
- **ensure their own statistics are used appropriately.**

For more information, follow the links through **Services We Provide** to **ABSTraining** from the home page of the ABS website.





## AN INSIGHT INTO THE NATION

### FLAGSHIP PUBLICATIONS

**Social and economic issues about life in Australia** are covered by a range of key publications the ABS produces.

**Year Book Australia** provides a comprehensive source of facts about Australia. The Year Book has around 30 chapters which cover Australia's economic position and social conditions, as well as topical articles.

**Measures of Australia's Progress** is a biennial publication which provides a digestible selection of statistical evidence that will allow Australians to make their own assessment of whether life in Australia is getting better. It does this by painting a picture of national progress over the past ten years, focusing on 14 headline dimensions across our economy, society and the environment. These include health, work, national income and wealth, economic hardship, the natural environment and family, community and social cohesion.

**Australian Social Trends** is released annually and offers all Australians an easy-to-understand collection of articles and key indicators about current social issues and the latest trends in our constantly changing society.

Analytical articles cover population, family and community, health, education and training, work, economic resources, housing and other areas of social concern, such as crime and the environment.

Internet users can freely access the content from our flagship publications - simply follow the links under **Key Products** on the home page of the ABS website. Hard copies of these publications can be ordered at a cost by following these links or by calling **1300 135 070**.

Keep up to date with the latest Census news and information as it's released by e-mailing [census.users@abs.gov.au](mailto:census.users@abs.gov.au) and typing "add to Census e-mail" in the subject field. You can opt out at any time.



*Fill in your Census form*



## CENSUS PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

### FREE DOWNLOADS FROM [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au)

You can now access the full range of online Census and other data from the ABS website for free!

Electronic publications (PDF and HTML based content), Census community profiles down to Collection District (CD) Level, spreadsheets and data cubes are free of charge when you download them via the Census link from [www.abs.gov.au](http://www.abs.gov.au).

You can now access Census data for free via the following online options:

**'New' QuickStats** - A quick and simple summary of key Census data relating to persons, families and dwellings.

**'New' Census Tables** - A product that provides you with Census data in a single table for a specified geographic area.

**'New' StatMaps** - A great range of thematic Census maps based on larger geographies depicting selected population, ethnicity, family, income, labour force and dwelling characteristics.

**Community Profiles** - A series of profiles providing key Census characteristics related to persons, families and dwellings, covering most topics on the Census form.

### DEVELOPMENT OF NEW 2006 CENSUS DYNAMIC PRODUCTS:

**'New' CData Online** - A sophisticated product aimed at offering users the freedom to:

- customise their own geographic areas
- combine topics of interest to create their own custom tables
- chart and thematically map the data.

**'New' Table Builder** - Aimed at experienced Census data users, this exciting product will allow you to design and populate your own tables of Census data via an interactive web interface.

**These new products will revolutionise the way in which you use/view Census data.**

### CENSUS TABLES CUSTOMISED FOR YOUR NEEDS

**Customised Census Tables** allow you to specify the combination of Census variables and geography required for your needs. Your user-defined table can be delivered in Excel or Supertable format.

Final specifications and costs will be confirmed with you by an ABS consultant before tables are processed and delivered.

For more information call **1300 135 070** or email [client.services@abs.gov.au](mailto:client.services@abs.gov.au).

## AGRICULTURAL CENSUS

**Around 190 000 businesses took part** in the Agricultural Census held in June 2006.

The Agricultural Census is Australia's biggest collection of agricultural statistics. It is conducted by the ABS every five years and collects production and related data from primary producers around the country.

The information produced from the Agricultural Census can assist people such as policy makers and industry bodies to make informed decisions about the agricultural sector.

The data from the Agricultural Census helps Australia understand changes that have occurred in the sector and measures the contribution that agriculture makes to the economy.

For more information on Agricultural releases and data, internet users can go to **Themes page - Industry** from the home page and follow the link to **Agriculture**.

For additional information call **1300 135 070** or email [client.services@abs.gov.au](mailto:client.services@abs.gov.au).



The Agricultural Census is Australia's biggest collection of agricultural statistics



Currently the CensusAtSchool project has over 2 750 schools as registered participants. For more information about the CensusAtSchool project and how to get involved, go to the CensusAtSchool pages on the ABS website.



## SERVICES FOR SCHOOLS

The Education Resources pages on the ABS website contain a wide range of free information and resources from the ABS Education Services.

### SUPPORT FOR TEACHERS

Select the **Education Resources** button on the navigation bar and follow the links to:

- **CensusAtSchool**—an online data collection and analysis project, engaging students with real data about themselves.
- an extensive range of classroom activities covering all Key Learning Areas.
- statistical resources for the classroom including activity sheets, datasets, definitions, explanations and instructions on running surveys and incorporating data into research projects.

**STATPAK Online** provides links to ABS products selected for their relevance to the curriculum.

To find out more about ABS education resources call Education Services on **1800 623 273**. In the Melbourne metro, call **(03) 9615 7041** or email [schools@abs.gov.au](mailto:schools@abs.gov.au).

## SERVICES FOR UNIVERSITIES

### ACCESS TO CONFIDENTIALISED UNIT RECORD FILES (CURFs)

The ABS has an agreement with the Australian Vice Chancellors' Committee to support academic research and teaching in Australian universities. This agreement facilitates access for participating university staff and students to CURFs for research and teaching purposes. CURFs contain detailed data from ABS surveys in the form of confidential unit records. Over seventy Basic and/or Expanded CURFs for most of the key ABS social and labour surveys have been made available to date. For more information follow the links on the ABS website to **Services We Provide** then to **Services for Universities** or email [microdata.access@abs.gov.au](mailto:microdata.access@abs.gov.au).

### REMOTE ACCESS DATA LABORATORY

The Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL) provides access to more detailed CURF data than can be provided on CD-ROM. Basic data is available on CD-ROM and via the RADL. The RADL is a secure online batch data query service available via the ABS website using SAS, SPSS and Stata® software.

For more information click on **Services We Provide** on the ABS home page, and follow the CURF link or email [radl@abs.gov.au](mailto:radl@abs.gov.au)



## SERVICES FOR LIBRARIES

### VISIT YOUR LIBRARY

The ABS supports libraries across Australia in all sectors - public, government, education and specialist (including libraries in rural and remote locations). We provide free website training and support to library staff to ensure they can help users with their information needs.

For more information or to discuss your needs with a local Information Skills Consultant, call **1300 135 070** or email [library@abs.gov.au](mailto:library@abs.gov.au).

### LICENSED DISTRIBUTORS OF ABS DATA

At the ABS we want to see our statistics widely available and widely used. We encourage the distribution of our data by Licensed Distributors. For a current list of Licensed Distributors and general conditions associated with becoming a Licensed Distributor of ABS data, follow the links from the **Services We Provide** page to the **Licensed Distributors of ABS Data** page on our website.

The ABS has adapted to many changes since 1905 when the concept of a national statistical office was first instituted. We remain a relevant and respected organisation in Australia and internationally.

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phone 1300 135 070

