

Professor Sandra Harding AO  
Emeritus Professor, James Cook University  
*sandra.harding@jcu.edu.au*

17 June 2022

Dr David Gruen  
Australian Statistician  
ABS House  
45 Benjamin Way  
Belconnen ACT 2617

Dear Dr Gruen,

I am pleased to provide you with the Independent Assurance Panel's Report on the quality of the 2021 Census data.

The Panel has worked diligently to discharge our Terms of Reference. We have examined the quality of the 2021 Census data from a number of perspectives, drawing on other surveys and estimates as well as comparing the quality of these data with the quality of data from the 2016 and 2011 Censuses.

The Panel also examined the 2021 Census data having regard to the particular challenges presented by the COVID 19 pandemic, noting that much of the country was in lockdown at different stages during the Census enumeration period. Our assessment in this regard is located at Section 4 of the Report. In brief, the Panel was most impressed with the ABS's approach to delivering the Census during what was a very difficult time for many Australians.

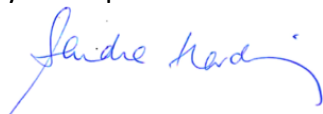
The Panel's overall conclusions are captured in Section 5 of the Report. That Section also contains some observations made by the Panel and points to some issues that you may wish to consider as the ABS works towards the 2026 Census.

I would like to thank my fellow Panel members, Ms Leanne Liddle, Professor Peter McDonald AM, Mr Peter Morrison, Mr Dennis Trewin AO and Mr Stephen Walters, for their professionalism, diligence and commitment to undertaking our work.

On behalf of the Panel, I would like to warmly acknowledge the many ABS staff who aided the Panel by providing further information and data as our analyses proceeded, and express our gratitude to the Secretariat, Sue Taylor, Kate Bond, Catherine Thomas, Roslyn Harvie, Sally Walker and Peta Darby, for their tireless support and hard work. In all cases, our requests and queries were met with good grace, and no request for data or information went unheeded or unfulfilled.

Finally, many thanks to you for giving the Panel the opportunity to undertake this important task. It has been our privilege to be involved.

I know I speak for all Panel members when I wish you and all at the Australian Bureau of Statistics well for your important work.



Professor Sandra Harding AO  
Chair, Independent Assurance Panel