

MAKING SENSE OF THE CENSUS



What is the Census?

Held every 5 years, the Census is a detailed count of everyone in Australia, visitor and resident, young and old, on a given night, and of the houses in which they live.

Census questions range from marriage status, family size and occupation to languages spoken, country of birth and ancestry.

The vital information that's gathered in the Census helps the country to plan for the future.

The 2016 Census will take place on August 9.

It's your moment to pause, and play a role in shaping the future of Australia.

Why have a Census?

The Census helps Australians to understand who we are, where we live and how we're changing.

By covering a wide range of information, collected from the country as a whole, the Census provides the single most accurate snapshot of Australia.

Census data is the foundation for population estimates of each state, territory and local government area. These are used to set electoral boundaries and for the distribution of government funds like GST revenue.

In short, Census data is used by individuals, organisations and government to make informed decisions on policy and planning issues that impact the lives of all Australians.

Changes to the Census

The 2016 Census will count close to 10 million households and approximately 24 million people in Australia on Census night.

In 2016 we're planning for more than 65% of households to complete the Census online, delivering a Census that's cheaper, easier and more environmentally friendly.

This Census will be far more cost effective, saving taxpayers more than \$100 million.



**OUR MOMENT TO
PAUSE AND MAKE
A DIFFERENCE.**

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Changes to the Census (continued)

In August 2016, most households will receive a letter with a unique Census Login, and instructions on how to complete the Census online. Look out for yours.

Paper forms will still be available to households that require them, and can be requested through a dedicated paper form request line. Each paper form will be delivered with a reply paid envelope.

Reminder letters will be sent to every household that hasn't responded to the Census, followed by a visit from Census Field Officers to ensure that every household is counted.

The ABS will provide extra help to people living in remote locations, people with a disability or language difficulties, and people experiencing homelessness.

Privacy and confidentiality

The ABS takes privacy very seriously, and ensures that your confidentiality is protected.

Census data is stored in highly secure environments, protected by physical and information technology security measures that are regularly audited and upgraded.

No one working with Census data is able to view personal information at the same time as other Census responses.

The Census and Statistics Act 1905 ensures that Census data is never released in an identifiable form, or released to any court, tribunal or any other agency. This will not change.

Other government agencies, private agencies and direct marketing companies will not have access to personal information that you provide on the Census form. This is protected by law.

The 2016 Census is not asking for any additional personal information not provided in the previous Census.

Once Census data has been collected and processed, the ABS removes names and addresses from other personal and household information, and it will never be recombined.

The ABS will retain names and addresses collected in the Census in order to enable a richer and more dynamic statistical picture of Australia, through the combination of Census data with other survey and administrative data.

Names and addresses will be destroyed four years after collection, in August 2020 or earlier, once there's no longer any community benefit from their retention.



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