

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS ACT 1975: sub-section 6(3)

PROPOSAL NO. 16 OF 2014

BY

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

BUSINESS CHARACTERISTICS SURVEY

The Australian Bureau of Statistics proposes to collect information for the purpose of providing information on characteristics of Australian businesses.

The information will be collected:

- from October 2014 on an annual basis;
- from Australian businesses;
- as a sample of about 20,000 businesses;
- by mail and electronic form; and
- across Australia.

Information will be collected on a range of characteristics including:

- the number and nature of business locations;
- employment related issues;
- business age, structure, ownership and competition;
- business operations;
- the introduction of innovative products or practices; and
- the use of information technology.

The information collected will be used by the ABS in the analysis of changes to businesses over time and the impact these changes have on productivity and profitability. The survey produces key measures of innovation and information technology use within businesses.

The ABS expects to make statistical and related information from the collection available in mid-2015.

The principal users of the information the ABS produces will be:

- Department of Industry;
- Department of Communications;
- Reserve Bank of Australia;
- The Treasury; and
- Productivity Commission.

The information will be used for the purpose of analysis and policy formulation, particularly relating to business performance, innovation, productivity, the digital economy and for international comparison.

To assist in determining the feasibility of the collection and to understand and manage respondent burden the ABS:

- has considered what existing information is available;
- has consulted with key stakeholders, including; Department of Industry, Department of Communications, Reserve Bank of Australia, The Treasury and Productivity Commission;
- has conducted field testing to ensure that the required data are available and provider load has been minimised; and
- has cleared the collection through the Statistical Clearing House as approval number 01634-09.

This collection was last conducted in October 2013 and was previously tabled in Parliament as Proposal No. 39 of 2013.

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