

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

PROPOSAL NO. 3 OF 2014

BY

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

MONTHLY POPULATION SURVEY

The Australian Bureau of Statistics proposes to continue conducting the Monthly Population Survey which consists of two components, the Labour Force Survey and supplementary surveys.

The Monthly Population Survey will be conducted by a combination of face-to-face interviews, telephone interviews and self-completed electronic forms from a sample of approximately 26,000 dwellings across all states and territories.

The Labour Force Survey collects information on demographic and labour supply characteristics including labour force participation, employment, unemployment, underemployment, underutilisation, retrenchment, leave entitlements and hours worked.

The supplementary surveys collect additional information on social and economic characteristics including:

- labour mobility;
- job search experience;
- employment arrangements;
- trade union membership;
- earnings;
- marginal attachment to the labour force;
- education and work;
- the environment;
- energy use and conservation activities;
- childhood education and care;
- participation in cultural and leisure activities; and
- whether recently migrated.

The primary purpose of the surveys is to assist the analysis, evaluation, and monitoring of the economy; the labour market; and a wide range of government policies and programs relating to labour force participation. Statistics on hours worked are also used in compiling the Australian National Accounts.

A review of the Monthly Population Survey was conducted in 2011 with extensive consultation with major users including:

- The Treasury;
- The Reserve Bank of Australia;

- Fair Work Commission;
- The Productivity Commission;
- Department of Employment;
- Department of Social Services;
- state and territory government agencies;
- industry associations;
- trade unions; and
- academic researchers.

The changes resulting from the review will be implemented in 2014 and early 2015 with five separate supplementary surveys combined into two broader surveys enabling greater analysis of key labour market characteristics. As part of the transition three current supplementary surveys (Persons not in the Labour Force, Underemployed Workers and Job Search Experience) will be conducted in February 2014.

The Monthly Population Survey continues to provide high quality data based on high response rates achieved through the cooperation of Australians. Changes to the survey content to be implemented in 2014 and 2015 have been field tested to ensure that the required data are readily available and that provider load has been minimised. There has been a high level of respondent cooperation and no significant adverse respondent reaction is expected. The survey has been cleared through the Statistical Clearing House.

Results from the Labour Force Survey are published monthly in Labour Force, Australia (ABS cat. no. 6202.0) and Labour Force, Australia detailed electronic delivery (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.001); and quarterly in Labour Force, Australia, detailed quarterly (ABS cat. no. 6291.0.55.003).

Results from the supplementary surveys are published with the same frequency with which each of the supplementary surveys are conducted. This varies between 1 and 3 years.

The Labour Force and supplementary survey program commenced in 1960 and has been conducted monthly since February 1978 when it was renamed the Monthly Population Survey.

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