

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

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BY

AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF STATISTICS

CRIMINAL COURTS, AUSTRALIA

In July 2013, the Australian Bureau of Statistics proposes to collect information from administrative records held by state and territory courts agencies on the number and characteristics of defendants finalised in the criminal courts. The collection will continue to be undertaken annually in the future.

Information will be collected from administrative records held by courts agencies within each state and territory. Data will be submitted to the Australian Bureau of Statistics electronically by secure means.

Information will be collected on the number of defendants finalised in the criminal courts in Australia including:

- defendant characteristics (age, sex and other personal characteristics);
- the offences associated with defendants; and
- the case outcomes, including sentence types and sentence lengths where applicable, of defendants.

Where available, information about the Indigenous status of defendants will also be collected.

The principal users of the collection are:

- state and territory courts agencies;
- Commonwealth and state and territory Attorney-General's and justice departments;
- government crime and justice research institutes (such as the Australian Institute of Criminology); and
- crime and justice research centres within universities across Australia.

Statistics produced from the collection will be used to make meaningful comparisons of the number and characteristics of defendants finalised in the criminal courts across states and territories in Australia.

This will allow policy makers to assess and evaluate crime and justice related policy used throughout the states and territories and facilitate both researchers and policy makers to identify emerging trends in courts activity and respond accordingly.

Results from the collection are expected to be released on an annual basis from early 2014, with supplementary data released by the mid 2014.

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