



FORWARD WORK PROGRAM

2010-11 to 2013-14





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Preface

The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) is Australia's official national statistical agency. It provides statistics on a wide range of economic, environmental and social matters, covering government, business, community organisations and the population in general. It also has an important leadership and coordination function with respect to the statistical activities of other official bodies, both in Australia and overseas.

The ABS works with users of statistics to ensure that the statistical information it releases is relevant and timely so as to assist government and the community to make informed decisions for the Australian community.

The ABS has continued to reassess our structure and work program against the challenges that lie ahead to ensure effective and efficient delivery of our products and services, and our continued relevance within the Australian community. In 2010, the ABS has introduced a new Deputy Assistant Statistician role, the Chief Operating Officer, who has responsibility for the leadership, strategic direction and management of the organisation's corporate, technology and information collection and dissemination services.

Data integration is an emerging priority for the ABS and the wider National Statistical System as the demand for, and activities associated with linking social, economic and environmental datasets increase across Australian Governments. Strong and consistent governance, methods, policies and protocols around data integration is essential and a major advance was made during 2010 with the endorsement, by Commonwealth Portfolio Secretaries, of a set of high level principles for statistical data integration across Australian Government departments and agencies.

I am confident that our current and planned activities will enable us to balance the achievement of our shorter-term goals while laying the foundations for the organisation to play a strong, active and leading role within the National Statistical Service into the future.

This publication describes the strategic directions the ABS will pursue over the next four years, and the forward work program, which will enable the ABS to deliver statistical and associated services contributing to informed decision making in the Australian community.

Information about the full range of ABS publications and products is provided on the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>. For assistance in accessing ABS products, contact the National Information Referral Service on 1300 135 070.

Brian Pink

Australian Statistician

June 2010

GENERAL INFORMATION



Notes to This Publication

Topics @ a Glance pages

The ABS website contains Topics @ a Glance pages that bring together all published ABS statistical information relating to a specific topic or region. These pages provide links to related ABS products and non-ABS statistical information. They may also provide information about ABS collections underpinning the statistical information, and notifications of ongoing statistical matters of interest to users.

Topics @ a Glance pages can be accessed from the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>. On the home page, select from the list of Topics available in the vertical navigation bar.

Methods and standards

The ABS produces a range of products that describe the concepts, sources and methods used to compile Australia's major economic, environmental and social statistics. These products provide background information that will assist users in analysing and interpreting the statistics, and include standard classifications used in the ABS, for example, industry, occupation, commodity, country, languages, labour force and social classifications.

Methods, classifications and standards are available from the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>. On the home page, select Methods & Standards on the horizontal navigation bar.

Resources

Resource costs presented in this publication reflect estimates for the four years 2010-11 to 2013-14. These costs present a broad indication of the resources currently allocated to each program and should not be taken as an accurate basis for estimating future allocations. Therefore, comparisons across programs and with previous ABS Forward Work Program publications can be misleading.

The 2010-11 figures are full-year projections based on the agreed budget for the year. Projections for 2011-12, 2012-13 and 2013-14 are subject to change, as priorities are reviewed, and new budgets are agreed. These costs reflect all expenditure directly attributable to programs, including salaries, internally charged computing costs and administrative costs.

In addition to the forward estimates, summary information for 2009-10 is also provided. This is provided on the direct cost basis as described above, and also in full cost terms for the statistical programs. The full cost model reflects the total cost for the delivery of the statistical programs once the costs of the infrastructure and services programs, that are essential to enable delivery of the statistical programs, are allocated to the statistical programs based on estimated utilisation of these services and other overhead costs.

Percentage figures show program costs as proportions of the total annual costs.

Staff usage

Staff usage figures comprise full-time staff, and full-time equivalent figures for part-time staff. Inoperative staff are excluded. Staff usage figures are estimates for 2009-10.

Overview of the ABS

Introduction

The ABS is Australia's official national statistical agency. It was established as the Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, following enactment of the *Census and Statistics Act 1905*. The agency became the 'Australian Bureau of Statistics' in 1975 with the passing of the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*. This Act also established the role of the Australian Statistician and defined the functions of the ABS.

The role of the ABS

The ABS provides statistics on a wide range of economic, social, population and environmental matters, covering government, business and the community. It also has a legislated role to coordinate the statistical operations of official bodies and liaise with international organisations.

ABS Mission

We assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.

Census and Statistics Act 1905

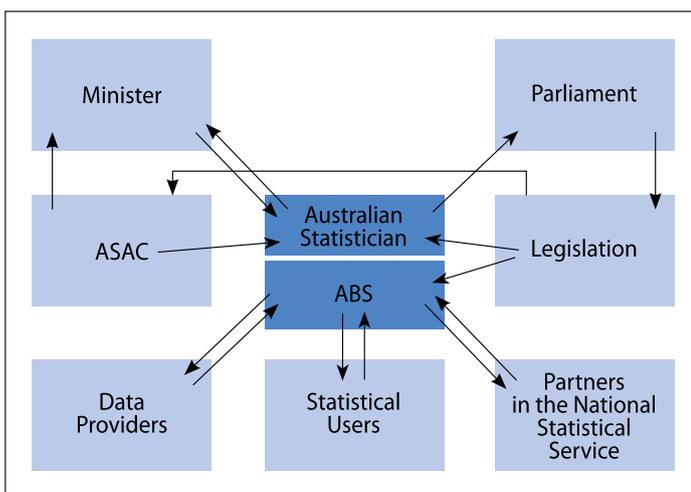
- Provides the legislative authority to undertake the Census of Population and Housing and other statistical collections
- Provides the Statistician with the power to direct a person to supply information
- Requires the ABS to publish the results of its collections
- Imposes strict secrecy provisions on officers of the ABS.

Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975

- Established and ensures the independence of both the ABS and the Australian Statistician
- Describes the functions of the ABS
- Requires ABS to advise Parliament of proposals for new collections
- Established the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)
- Requires ABS and ASAC to report to Parliament each year.

ABS Functions

- To constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian Government and Governments of the States and Territories
- To collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information on a wide range of economic and social matters
- To formulate, and ensure compliance with, statistical standards
- To ensure coordination of the statistical operations of official bodies
- To provide advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics
- To liaise with statistical agencies of other countries and international organisations.



Australian Statistics Advisory Council

Advises the Minister and Statistician on:

- the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia
- annual and longer-term priorities and programs of work that should be undertaken by the ABS
- any other matters relating to those statistical services.

Corporate governance – Key Fora

- Australian Statistics Advisory Council
- ABS Management Meetings
- Executive Leadership Group Meetings
- Senior Management Group Meetings
- Protective Security Management Committee
- Audit Committee
- Capital Strategy Committee.

ABS Strategic Management

Corporate Plan

The ABS Corporate Plan is a key part of the strategic planning process. The plan describes our working environment and outlines our mission and values. It describes the objectives the ABS will pursue to fulfil its mission over the next three to five years and the strategies we will adopt. It sets out the directions we want the ABS to take to meet our future challenges.

The statement of mission, values, objectives and related strategies in the corporate plan provides the higher level framework within which the rolling ABS forward work program has been developed, and future work programs will be developed. It provides the broad context for ensuring we use our resources effectively and efficiently.

The key components of the ABS Corporate Plan are outlined below. These provide a useful reference to operational objectives and strategies of ABS programs set out on the following pages.

Mission

We assist and encourage informed decision making, research and discussion within governments and the community, by leading a high quality, objective and responsive national statistical service.

Values

The ABS and its staff uphold the APS Values and Code of Conduct. ABS values, which are congruent with the APS values, are material to our role as an independent provider of statistical information for Australia. Our values are:

- integrity
- service
- professionalism
- relevance
- trust of providers
- access for all.

The ABS values encompass what we believe, and shape how we behave. The ABS values its staff and has obligations to them; staff in turn have obligations to the ABS.

Objectives

To achieve the ABS mission, the ABS has the following objectives:

- 1 an expanded and improved National Statistical Service
- 2 ABS services that are timely, relevant, responsive, and respected for their integrity and quality
- 3 informed and increased use of statistics
- 4 a key contributor to international statistical activities that are important to Australia or our region
- 5 an organisation that builds capability to continually improve its effectiveness
- 6 the trust and cooperation of our providers
- 7 ABS is a respected and strongly supported organisation.

How the ABS work program is determined

The Australian Statistician is responsible for determining the ABS work program. The work program must align with the ABS's mission, its legislative mandate and its values. The ABS seeks to provide a reasonable level of service across all its legislated functions.

How the ABS balances its work program

The ABS does not have the resources to undertake all of the activities that fall within its mandate and which users would ideally require.

In balancing the ABS's program of collection and other activities, the Statistician seeks to ensure that ABS's resources are used to the maximum benefit of governments and the broader community. In assessing this, the ABS takes account of the value of the information being sought, the extent to which the ABS undertaking the activity is consistent with its legislated mandate and with community expectations, and the costs that the activity would impose upon the ABS and the broader community.

In assessing the value of the information, the ABS takes account of:

- the importance of the issue from a public policy and/or community interest perspective
- the views of Australian, State and Territory Government agencies
- the depth and breadth of user interest in the wider community
- the opinions of recognised experts in the field
- the extent to which the information would impact on decision making (as judged from history or from understanding the decision making processes), and
- any international reporting obligations.

In assessing the extent to whether the ABS undertaking the proposed activity would be consistent with its legislative mandate and community expectations, the ABS takes account of:

- any specific legislative obligations on the ABS to undertake the activity
- the statistical measurability of the issue, including the ability to provide information that is 'fit for purpose'
- the extent to which other available sources of information, both other ABS and non-ABS, could be used to inform decision making
- the extent to which the ABS's independent voice of authority and the ABS power to collect information is required
- in determining the timing and frequency of the activity, the decision making time-frames and the expected rate of change in the information sought, and
- the level of community support to provide the required information.

In assessing the cost of the activity, the ABS takes account of:

- the full cost to the ABS of undertaking the collection activity
- the capacity and capability of the ABS to undertake the collection activity
- the workload and other costs imposed on providers, and
- the sensitivity of the information and the ABS's requirement to maintain the trust of providers.

How the ABS understands client needs

The ABS determines future priorities by consulting and planning with users of statistics. These consultations are a key input to decisions on the scope, content and frequency of statistical collections.

Consultation takes place through the ABS organised statistics user groups; direct discussion with Australian, State, Territory and local government agencies, academics, industry bodies, non-government and community organisations etc.; and the release of information or discussion papers inviting comment.

Consultations cover both the need for data on new or emerging topics, and the need for changes to existing data collections including discontinuing some series. Contact with consulted groups continues throughout the statistical cycle to keep them informed on progress and as a check that developments towards statistical outputs remain on track to meet survey objectives.

The overall shape of the proposed work program and estimates of resources required to deliver it are considered by the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC).

A list of user groups is provided in the appendix.

User funded activities

The ABS work program can be extended by way of user funded activities. The ABS undertakes user funded work where:

- the work is consistent with the ABS's mission, legislative mandate and values
- the work itself, or the related funding arrangements, does not 'crowd out', compromise public support for, or otherwise put at risk the core work program
- there is demonstrable value in the activity, the ABS undertaking the activity would make a difference, and the burden imposed on providers is acceptable
- the ABS has the capability and capacity to undertake the work, and
- the work is fully cost recovered.

The ABS has full control over all aspects of the work, including ownership of statistics created from it.

How the ABS Operates

Introduction

The ABS produces and disseminates statistics under the following broad programs:

- Macroeconomics and Integration Statistics
- Population, Labour, Industry and Environment Statistics
- Social Statistics.

These areas of statistics involve extensive data collection through censuses and surveys and from administrative data sources.

The statistical programs are supported by service areas, which deliver assistance and advice on statistical methods, data and metadata arrangements, information technology, client management, dissemination, human resources and other corporate services.

The ABS has a central office in Canberra and regional offices located in the eight State and Territory capitals. Regional offices are responsible for the delivery of statistical services to their State or Territory. Additionally all regional offices, apart from the ACT office, have some responsibilities for national operations for particular statistical activities.

The statistical collection process

While business and household survey programs are generally run separately, they are characterised by common statistical principles and many similar procedures. The statistical process involves a range of statistical operations, from developing specifications for statistics based on user information needs through to the delivery of data and support to clients.

The diagram below presents a typical survey cycle. It distinguishes between a core set of tasks and activities which form the three broad stages of the statistical collection process, and two overarching functions which ensure that ABS products, processes and services are of high quality and contribute to achieving corporate objectives and delivering on the ABS mission.



Functional areas undertaking statistical operations

Once statistical priorities have been set, through consultation and planning with statistics users, the ABS sets up arrangements for data collection, processing and analysis. Data collection activities include survey dispatch, data receipt and follow-up of non-response. Data may be collected directly from providers through surveys or censuses, or indirectly by accessing data collected by other organisations, particularly Australian, State and Territory administrative agencies. The processing stages of the cycle cover data entry; checking individual records for completeness, consistency and accuracy; producing aggregate survey results; checking consistency and validity of aggregated data and preparing data for public release.

The final stage of the statistical cycle covers data communication and support for decision making. A key objective for the ABS is to maximise the informed use of ABS and non-ABS statistics by increasing the visibility of, and access to, statistics, optimising the mix of dissemination channels, and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of information service delivery. To achieve this, a range of products and delivery options have been developed, with a focus on meeting the needs of ABS clients. Several areas support these activities, including market research, website publishing and development, a telephone enquiry service, delivery of customised products and working with various sectors to improve statistical literacy.

The statistical operations of each stage of the cycle are undertaken by a range of specialist areas. Other specialist areas have responsibility for achieving the broader objectives of managing quality and processes, and delivering statistical leadership. The key organisational areas and functions that are involved in the statistical collection and dissemination processes are described below.

National Statistics Centres (NSCs) provide statistical leadership, internally and externally, for each field of statistics. NSC responsibilities include: establishing and maintaining close links with key external clients and ensuring the ABS understands and satisfies their needs for data; providing leadership in the development of statistics within and outside the ABS; maintaining knowledge of current and emerging policy issues and debates, and assessing potential statistical impacts; understanding and awareness of important national and international statistics relating to these issues; and complex analytical work, which often draws on multiple information sources. NSCs also participate in the development of survey proposals and survey outputs, including dissemination strategies.

Business Statistics Centres (BSCs) are responsible for data collected from businesses. The BSCs are responsible for the specification of output requirements to meet user needs and for determining appropriate collection methodologies for their specific subject matter. BSCs undertake more complex editing functions, analysis and preparation of survey-specific commentary and articles. They are the main contact point for data users, to help users interpret survey results for regular releases of ABS statistics in their field. Other responsibilities of BSCs include: data quality assurance, including the specification of data quality requirements to the Integrated Collection Branch (see below); and the consistent application of existing or new statistical frameworks, classifications, standards and concepts.

For household surveys, **Household Survey Centres (HSCs)** project manage the survey process. HSCs manage consultation with relevant statistics users, develop survey objectives, prepare survey proposals and develop survey content. To support their data collection activities, HSCs develop and maintain survey-specific classifications and coding systems. In association with Methodology and Data Management Division, they ensure appropriate sample design and collection methodologies are developed. HSCs are responsible for quality assurance of all aspects of the survey. They develop dissemination strategies, manage the delivery of the initial publications and other outputs from each collection, and coordinate evaluation of the survey process.

The **Integration Collection Branch (ICB)** provides an integrated data collection service for the ABS across business, household and administrative data collections, including through the utilisation of a professional panel of home and office based interviewers. For business data collection, an important role of the ICB is the creation of survey frames. These are lists of Australian businesses that include details on contacts, structure and type of operations. It is from these frames that businesses are selected to participate in ABS surveys. One of the key sources of frames for economic surveys is the Australian Business Register. Population survey frames are mainly based on the dwellings recorded in the most recent Census of Population and Housing, conducted five-yearly by the ABS. Other business survey functions of ICB include: sample selection; questionnaire development and testing; questionnaire dispatch; data collection, including administrative data; basic checks for completeness of responses; non-response follow-up; handling of provider complaints; and key provider management. For household surveys, the ICB is responsible for sample generation and maintenance; interviewer recruitment, training and management; survey interviewing, data capture and coding of data collected; and provision of survey management information and performance reporting.

Supporting statistical operations

Several programs within the ABS provide the infrastructure necessary for undertaking data collection and producing official statistics. This infrastructure comprises the concepts, classifications, standards, survey methodology and information technology systems, which support the statistical process.

Methodology and Data Management Division (MDMD) has specific responsibilities for supporting the statistical collection process. MDMD provides advice on survey design, methods and on data quality through all stages of the survey cycle. The Division ensures ABS surveys are based on sound statistical principles and practices and that the statistics produced best meet survey design objectives, while maintaining data confidentiality. MDMD undertakes research on statistical methods to improve the efficiency and accuracy of ABS work, and provides leadership and support in the development, review and application of statistical classifications. The **Data Management** and Classifications program is responsible for promoting the comparability, integration and quality of ABS statistics, through the use of standard concepts, definitions, classifications and procedures. It is also responsible for the infrastructure used to hold key definitional metadata and to store statistical data from which ABS outputs are sourced.

Within MDMD, the **National Statistical Service Leadership Branch** undertakes a range of statistical leadership activities aimed at increasing the understanding and use of statistics by government, research organisations and the wider community.

The **Corporate Services Division (CSD)** is responsible for recruitment, development and retention of the workforce needed to deliver the ABS work program; for the provision of leadership in driving cultural change; and for ensuring staff have a healthy, safe and functional working environment. The functions and responsibilities of the Chief Financial Officer are also included in CSD operations.

Technology Services Division (TSD) provides ABS staff with stable, reliable, and secure information technology infrastructure, including hardware, software and network facilities. TSD maintains systems to ensure they are efficient, timely and relevant and assists other areas of the ABS to improve efficiency and effectiveness in their use of those systems. They also develop specialised software to support ABS statistical processes. The Division undertakes systems analysis and design, specialist programming services and provides advice on new and developing information technologies.

The **Office of the Statistician (OOTS)** is responsible for key corporate functions that support the Australian Statistician's administrative, statistical and strategic roles. The Office manages: relationships with key external stakeholders including the Minister, the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC) and the media; corporate communications including graphic design; corporate governance activities including compliance with legislation under which the ABS operates; ABS's international activities; organisational performance monitoring and risk management; and strategic and work program planning and budget allocation.

Governance and Legislation

Corporate governance

ABS corporate governance arrangements ensure transparency in decision making, operation and accountability by promoting strong leadership, sound management and effective planning and review processes.

The Office of the Statistician is a focal point for ABS corporate governance. It supports the effective operation of governance forums, ensures that the ABS operates within the scope of its authority and legislative basis, and manages ABS audit, review and risk management activities.

Some of the key ABS corporate governance mechanisms are described below:

- a planning cycle to ensure that the ABS work program reflects current and emerging statistical priorities of users, and is consistent with the ABS mission and overall strategic directions
- senior management committees involved in developing policies and strategies, identifying priorities and monitoring the ABS's performance
- advisory bodies and user groups, which enable the ABS to consult widely with the user community about the ABS work program
- a risk management framework to assist in identifying and managing risks at organisational, operational and project level
- an audit and review program covering different facets of ABS operations, overseen by the Audit Committee
- instructions and manuals to ensure staff have access to ABS policies and practices.

Four year planning and budgeting cycle

The four year planning and budgeting cycle clearly sets out the work program and total resources (including finances and staff) required to deliver the approved work program. This ensures a budget and planning process that is more rigorous and forward looking in a way that brings about genuine alignment between work program and the available budget. The ABS is working towards an integrated framework for business and planning which cascades from strategic priorities to divisional priorities and activities.

Capital Strategy Committee (CSC)

The Capital Strategy Committee contributes to ABS planning and budgeting processes, by ensuring ABS capital expenditure and funding are aligned with strategic directions in the longer-term. The CSC is responsible for working with the Chief Financial Officer in developing and executing an ABS capital plan that is aligned with strategic directions and approved by the ABS Management Meeting. The CSC aim to ensure the ABS has robust internal mechanisms for planning and managing capital assets and technology applications funding. The meetings are chaired by the ABS Chief Operating Officer and attended by the First Assistant Statisticians, two Regional Directors (on a rotating basis), Chief Financial Officer, and the Assistant Statistician of the Office of the Statistician with other attendees as required for particular items. CSC meet three times a year, and more frequently if required, at appropriate times in the budget cycle.

Senior management committees

An important feature of ABS corporate governance is the role played by senior management committees, which are active in developing policies and strategies, identifying ABS priorities, assessing and responding to risks and opportunities, and monitoring ABS performance.

The major senior management committees are as follows:

ABS Management Meetings

The Management Meetings play a major role in determining ABS strategic directions, priorities and resource allocations. These meetings are chaired by the Australian Statistician and attended by the Deputy Australian Statisticians and First Assistant Statisticians, the Regional Directors, Chief Financial Officer and the Assistant Statistician of the Office of the Statistician. The Management Meeting is held twice a year, and supports the development of ABS strategic directions, considers planning and budgeting issues, and discusses issues of corporate importance.

Executive Leadership Group Meetings (ELG)

The Executive Leadership Group Meetings are held fortnightly and provide strategic oversight of the ABS and determine ABS policy. It ensures that proper attention is given to strategic issues that affect the future of the organisation, including giving high-level focus to the National Statistical Service and strategic client engagement. The ELG Meetings are chaired by the Australian Statistician and the other members are the Deputy Australian Statisticians.

Senior Management Group Meetings (SMG)

Senior Management Group Meetings are held weekly to provide tactical management oversight of the ABS's operations and to advise the ELG on strategic and policy issues. It ensures the ABS is a well-run organisation with well formulated work programs that are reviewed appropriately and with proper consideration of cross-cutting issues. It will also address other issues including, information resource management, publishing and dissemination, human resources and accountability issues. SMG Meetings are chaired by the ABS Chief Operating Officer and attended by the First Assistant Statisticians, two Regional Directors (on a rotating basis), Chief Financial Officer, the Assistant Statistician of the Office of the Statistician, and the Assistant Statistician of the Human Resources Branch with other attendees as required for particular items. Approximately four times a year the ELG and the SMG meet jointly to discuss strategic and policy issues and to review a set of Key Performance Indicators that have been defined to measure the main areas of organisational performance.

Protective Security Management Committee

The ABS maintains a comprehensive security framework, overseen by a Protective Security Management Committee chaired by the Chief Operating Officer. This security framework ensures that both physical and computer security are maintained. The committee is a key means of ensuring that the ABS meets its legal requirement not to divulge identifiable information and to make sure that there is policy to meet the security and privacy related requirements of legislation including the *Financial Management and Accountability Act 1997*, *Census and Statistics Act 1905*, *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975*, *Privacy Act 1988* and *Crimes Act 1914*.

Audit, review and risk management

Risk Management Framework

The ABS has a robust Risk Management Framework, which provides the basis for identifying, assessing and mitigating risks at all levels within the organisation. The framework is set out in the ABS's Risk Management Strategy. The strategy and framework undergo continuous review, based on feedback from many sources including internal audits, external risk reviews, better practice guides, and the outcomes of the annual Comcover Risk Management Benchmarking exercise.

Since 2008-09, there has been a strong focus on the integration of risk identification and prioritisation within the ABS business planning cycle. In developing business plans, managers at all levels are expected to identify key risks to their work programs. Significant risks identified at section level are elevated or integrated into business plans at the Branch and Division level to provide a more comprehensive and consistent picture of the ABS risk profile.

On an annual basis, the ABS reviews and identifies strategic risks that have the potential to significantly impact on the organisation. These are known as enterprise risks. The key benefit of this annual review is the strengthening of risk identification and analysis through a coordinated examination of organisational threats. For each of the enterprise risks, members of the ABS Executive have been designated as Risk Owners, treatment strategies have been determined, and the Risk Owners have been allocated responsibility for monitoring their implementation. This approach provides clear ownership of risk mitigation responsibilities and the opportunity for the Executive to review the success of risk mitigation.

Audit Committee

The ABS Audit Committee provides assurance to the Australian Statistician that: a comprehensive control framework is in place and is working effectively for all business systems; the operation and management of ABS systems are sufficiently adequate to ensure the ABS complies with all its legislative and other obligations; and externally published information generated by these systems conforms with legislative and other obligations. The Committee identifies significant issues of concern or non-compliance. The ABS Audit Committee is chaired by a Deputy Australian Statistician, and comprises of four other ABS officers chosen for their personal qualities, experience and skills including their ability to demonstrate independence on matters before the Committee. The Committee includes two experienced external members. The Audit Committee meets four times a year and reports to the executive meetings as appropriate.

Authority and legislation

The principal legislation determining the functions and responsibilities of the ABS is contained in the *Australian Bureau of Statistics Act 1975* (ABS Act) and the *Census and Statistics Act 1905* (C&S Act).

The functions of the ABS are defined in section 6 of the ABS Act as follows:

- (a) to constitute the central statistical authority for the Australian government and, by arrangements with the governments of the states, provide statistical services for those governments
- (b) to collect, compile, analyse and disseminate statistics and related information
- (c) to ensure coordination of the operations of official bodies in the collection, compilation and dissemination of statistics and related information, with particular regard to:
 - (i) the avoidance of duplication in the collection by official bodies of information for statistical purposes
 - (ii) the attainment of compatibility between, and the integration of, statistics compiled by official bodies, and
 - (iii) the maximum possible utilization, for statistical purposes, of information, and means of collection of information, available to official bodies
- (d) to formulate, and ensure compliance with, standards for the carrying out by official bodies of operations for statistical purposes
- (e) to provide advice and assistance to official bodies in relation to statistics, and
- (f) to provide liaison between Australia, on the one hand, and other countries and international organisations, on the other hand, in relation to statistical matters.

The ABS Act also established the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC). The functions of ASAC are to advise the Minister and the Statistician in relation to:

- (a) the improvement, extension and coordination of statistical services provided for public purposes in Australia
- (b) annual and longer-term priorities and programs of work that should be adopted in relation to major aspects of the provision of those statistical services, and
- (c) any other matters relating generally to those statistical services.

All State and Territory Governments are represented on ASAC. The other Council members are chosen to represent a broad cross-section of perspectives, covering government, business, academic and community interests.

The C&S Act provides the Statistician with the authority to conduct statistical collections and, when necessary, to direct a person to provide statistical information. The Act imposes on the ABS obligations to publish and disseminate compilations and analyses of statistical information, and to maintain the confidentiality of information collected under the Act.

The ABS Act requires that the Statistician prepares, for presentation to Parliament, an annual report on the operations of the Bureau. The ABS Act also requires that ASAC prepares, and submits to the Minister for presentation to Parliament, a report relating to the matters connected with the operation of the Act.

Under the *Statistics (Arrangements with States) Act 1956*, Commonwealth and State statistical services have been integrated since 1958 (since 1924 for Tasmania). Although not covered by legislation, similar arrangements apply in both territories. There is regular consultation with State and Territory Governments on statistical priorities.

Products and Services

Statistical releases

ABS releases comprise monthly, quarterly, annual, biennial and less frequent as well as irregular publications and products. In each year, there are over 700 statistical releases. The full range of publications and products are available through the ABS website and a small number of publications are available in paper format.

Electronic products and data services

The ABS's principal means of releasing statistical information is through the ABS website. The ABS's electronic services include:

- the ABS website <http://www.abs.gov.au>, which provides free access to the full range of electronic publications and ABS statistics, as well as news, media releases, directories, technical material and information about the ABS
- Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs), which are compiled from ABS surveys and released on CD-ROM for analysis by researchers
- the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL), which provides access to more detailed data than can be made available on CD-ROM for analysis of ABS data by researchers, while ensuring the confidentiality of individual survey respondents
- international trade services, which provide detailed, customised trade data on both an ad hoc and regular subscription basis
- database products, which provide large volumes of detailed statistical data such as Census 2006 data packs, CData Online and Census Table Builder (similar products will also be released for the 2011 Census of Population and Housing)
- a free email notification service providing details of, and access to, ABS daily releases in subject areas nominated by clients
- a Really Simple Syndication (RSS) news feed allowing subscribers to access ABS statistical headlines from their desktop.

Statistical Literacy Program

The ABS Statistical Literacy Program provides leadership and coordination for the development and delivery of activities and strategies for improving the statistical literacy outcomes of Australians. The Program develops initiatives and uses innovative approaches to build awareness about the range of statistics available; promote recognition of the importance and relevance of statistics for informed decision making; and develop the statistical skills and knowledge of key target groups within the community.

The program focuses on building statistical literacy amongst five key target groups, including: school students; tertiary students (including university students, and teachers/lecturers); opinion leaders (including journalists); decision makers (including Members of Parliaments and staff from agencies in all levels of government); and the general community (including small business owners and community groups). Specific strategies are also developed for advancing the statistical literacy of Indigenous Australians across the five target groups.

The Statistical Literacy Program develops and implements activities and strategies to assist these groups to access, understand, analyse and communicate statistical information based on the content and context of their statistical literacy needs. The development of these skills are vital for understanding the complex social, economic and environmental dimensions of an issue and transforming statistics into usable information for informed decisions.

National Information and Referral Service (NIRS)

The National Information and Referral Service (NIRS) is the main professional entry point to the ABS for basic telephone, email, and facsimile enquiries from clients. The NIRS also provides a referral service to clients, referring inquiries that cannot be met by the NIRS or self-help facilities to other parts of the ABS for servicing. Contact details for NIRS are listed on page 17.

Information and Statistical Consultancy Services

More detailed statistics than those initially released on the website are available on request. Requests for additional statistical data or analysis/enhanced data presentation are met through the Information Consultancy Service which is provided on a cost recovery basis.

The Statistical Consultancy Service provides assistance to government departments and statutory authorities in areas such as survey design, questionnaire design, sampling techniques and data analysis.

User funded surveys

The ABS conducts user funded surveys that are consistent with its role as a national statistical agency. Survey results are publicly disseminated, not just made available to the client providing the funding.

Other services

The ABS provides a number of specialised cost-recovered services to meet the specific needs of clients, including:

- ABS employees who are outposted to other government agencies to support strategic engagement between the ABS and those agencies, as well as outpostings on a project basis to provide advice on statistical issues
- seminars and training on statistical issues.

Dissemination and Pricing Policy

Policy and principles

The Australian Government Cost Recovery Guidelines stipulate that a basic set of information products and services, funded by the taxpayer, should be provided to the community free of charge as 'public goods' and other information, products and services beyond the basic information set should be cost recovered. Consistent with this policy, the ABS dissemination principles ensure that:

- all users, including the general community, have free and easy access to a basic set of official statistics
- where it is cost effective to do so, the costs of producing and providing information products and services that are additional to the basic set of official statistics are recovered from the users of these additional products.

Objectives

The objectives of the ABS charging policy are to:

- reduce the need for the general taxpayer to bear those elements of the cost of the statistical service which have a specific and identifiable value to particular users
- rationalise use of ABS products and services
- enable the demand for ABS products and services to be used as an indicator of how ABS resources should be used.

Community service obligation

The ABS fulfils the community service obligation for statistics by:

- including all published ABS information in the basic set, which is available for access on the ABS website, free of charge
- providing limited consultancy services to the media and parliamentarians, free of charge
- providing a range of self-service statistical literacy resources via the ABS website, free of charge
- offering a National Information and Referral Service.

Approaches to cost recovery

Products in the basic set may be provided in alternative formats on request by the user. Pricing is based on the marginal costs incurred in producing them in these formats, for example, the costs to the ABS to print and despatch a hard copy of materials to users, or access to Confidential Unit Record Files (CURFs).

For products beyond the basic set, such as customised extraction of data, pricing is based on incremental (or avoidable) costs. The ABS may also price a limited range of products on a commercial basis. This occurs where such products and services compete, or may compete, with similar products provided by others.

From 1 July 2010, licence fees for the distribution of ABS data are no longer charged in the majority of cases. Unless otherwise noted, most of the ABS's free, subscription and customised data outputs (except CURFs) are covered by Creative Commons licensing which eliminates the need for distribution licences.

Contacts

For information about the Forward Work Program

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For information about the Australian Statistics Advisory Council (ASAC)

Gillian Nicoll
Secretariat, ASAC
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Belconnen ACT 2616
Telephone (02) 6252 5533
Email: gillian.nicoll@abs.gov.au
For access to the ABS website
<http://www.abs.gov.au>

For statistical information

National Information and Referral Service
Telephone: 1300 135 070
Facsimile: 1300 135 211
Email: client.services@abs.gov.au
Mail: Client Services, ABS
GPO Box 796
Sydney NSW 2001

For general information

Central Office, Canberra

Telephone: 02 6252 5000
Facsimile: 02 6252 5566
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Belconnen ACT 2616
Counter: ABS House
45 Benjamin Way, Belconnen

New South Wales Office

Telephone: 02 9268 4111
Facsimile: 02 9268 4138
Mail: GPO Box 796
Sydney NSW 2001
Counter: 5th Floor, St Andrew's House
Sydney Square, Sydney

Victorian Office

Telephone: 03 9615 7000
Facsimile: 03 9615 7387
Mail: GPO Box 2796Y
Melbourne Vic. 3001
Counter: South Tower,
485 LaTrobe Street, Melbourne

Queensland Office

Telephone: 07 3222 6022
Facsimile: 07 3222 6250
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Brisbane Qld 4001
Counter:
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Telephone: 08 8237 7555
Facsimile: 08 8237 7366
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Counter: 9th Floor, ANZ House
11 Waymouth Street, Adelaide

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Perth WA 6842
Counter: Level 15, Exchange Plaza
Sherwood Court, Perth

Tasmanian Office

Telephone: 03 6222 5999
Facsimile: 03 6222 5824
Mail: GPO Box 66
Hobart Tas. 7001
Counter: Ground Floor
200 Collins Street, Hobart

Northern Territory Office

Telephone: 08 8943 2100
Facsimile: 08 8943 2138
Mail: GPO Box 3796
Darwin NT 0801
Counter: 3rd Floor, Civitas Building
22 Harry Chan Avenue, Darwin

Australian Capital Territory Office

Telephone: 02 6252 8900
Facsimile: 02 6252 5112
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Belconnen ACT 2616
Counter: ABS House
45 Benjamin Way, Belconnen

Top Structure

Australian Statistician



Brian Pink

Deputy Australian Statisticians



Ian Ewing
Macroeconomics
and Integration



Denis Farrell
Population, Labour,
Industry and Environment
Statistics



Trevor Sutton
Social Statistics



Peter Harper
Chief Operating Officer

First Assistant Statisticians



Michael Davies
Macroeconomics
and Integration



Paul Williams
Population, Labour,
Industry and Environment
Statistics



Garth Bode
Social Statistics



Siu-Ming Tam
Integrated Collection
and Dissemination
Services



Frank Yu
Methodology and
Data Management



Jenine Borowik
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Regional Directors



Paul Mahoney
South Australia



Michael Tindall
Western Australia



Adrian Bugg
Tasmania



Chris Libreri
New South Wales



Stephen Collett
Australian Capital
Territory



Andrew Henderson
Victoria



Tom Joseph
Northern Territory



Andrea Lanyon
Queensland

Assistant Statisticians



Bruce Hockman
National Accounts



Bernard Williams
International Accounts
and Financial Statistics



Judy Henson
Prices



Jason Russo
Economic Analysis
and Reporting



Paul Lowe
Population Census



Graeme Brown
Industry and
Environment Statistics



Jill Charker
Labour and
Demography Statistics



Bob McColl
Social Conditions
Statistics



Paul Jelfs
Health Information



Ian Crettenden
Indigenous, Education
and Cultural Statistics



Gemma Van Halderen
Social Data Integration
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Lane Masterton
Integrated Collection



Donna Nicholson
Customer Services



Shiji Zhao
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Jeanette Cotterill
National Statistical
Service Leadership



Paul Schubert
Statistical Services



Michael Beahan
Data Management and
Classifications



Chris Duffy
Technology Strategy
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Duncan Young
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Infrastructure



Rochelle Thorne
Technology Applications



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Vince Lazzaro
Human Resources



Michael Belcher
Financial Management



Susan Linacre
Special Projects



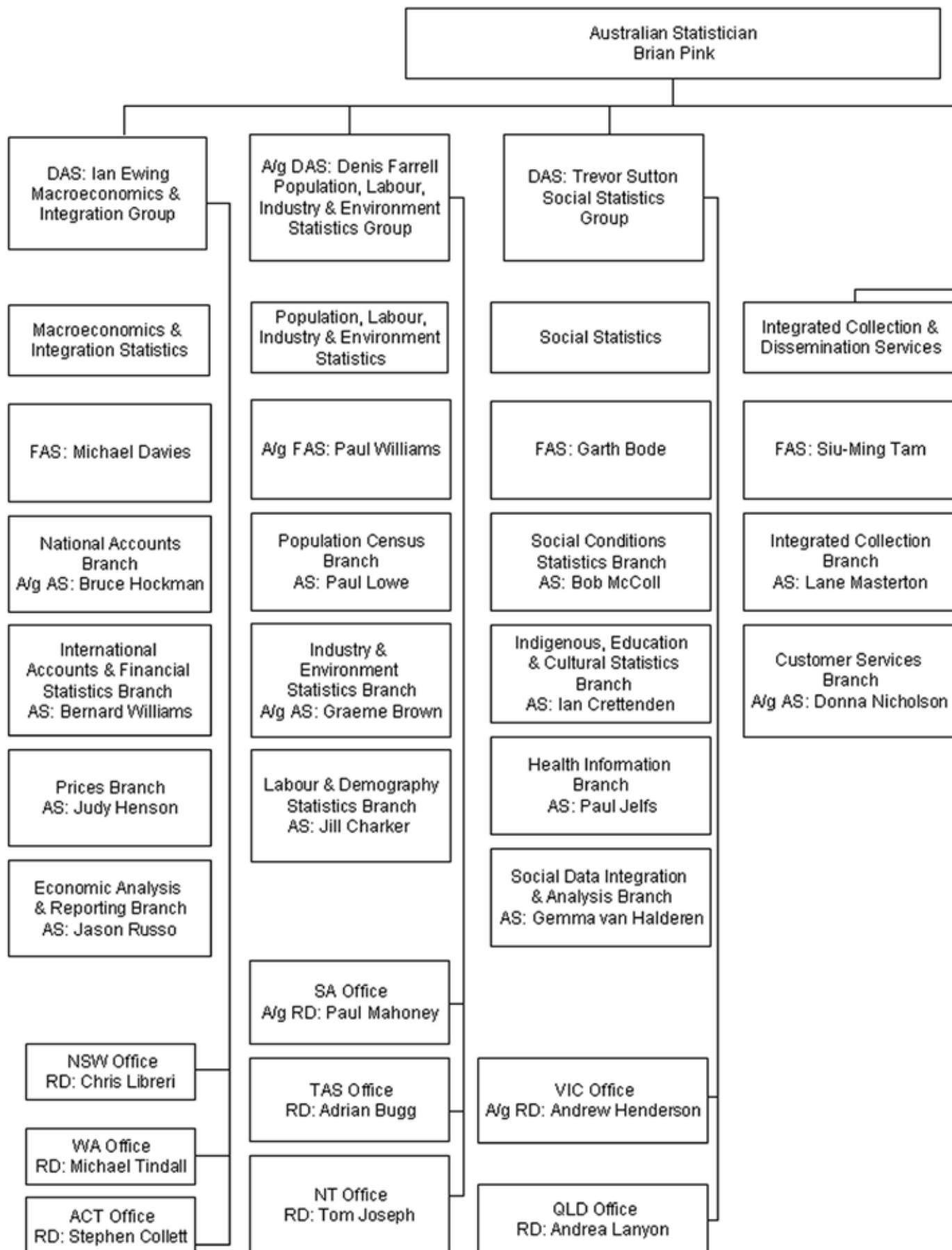
Marilyn Henden
Corporate Services
Improvement Program

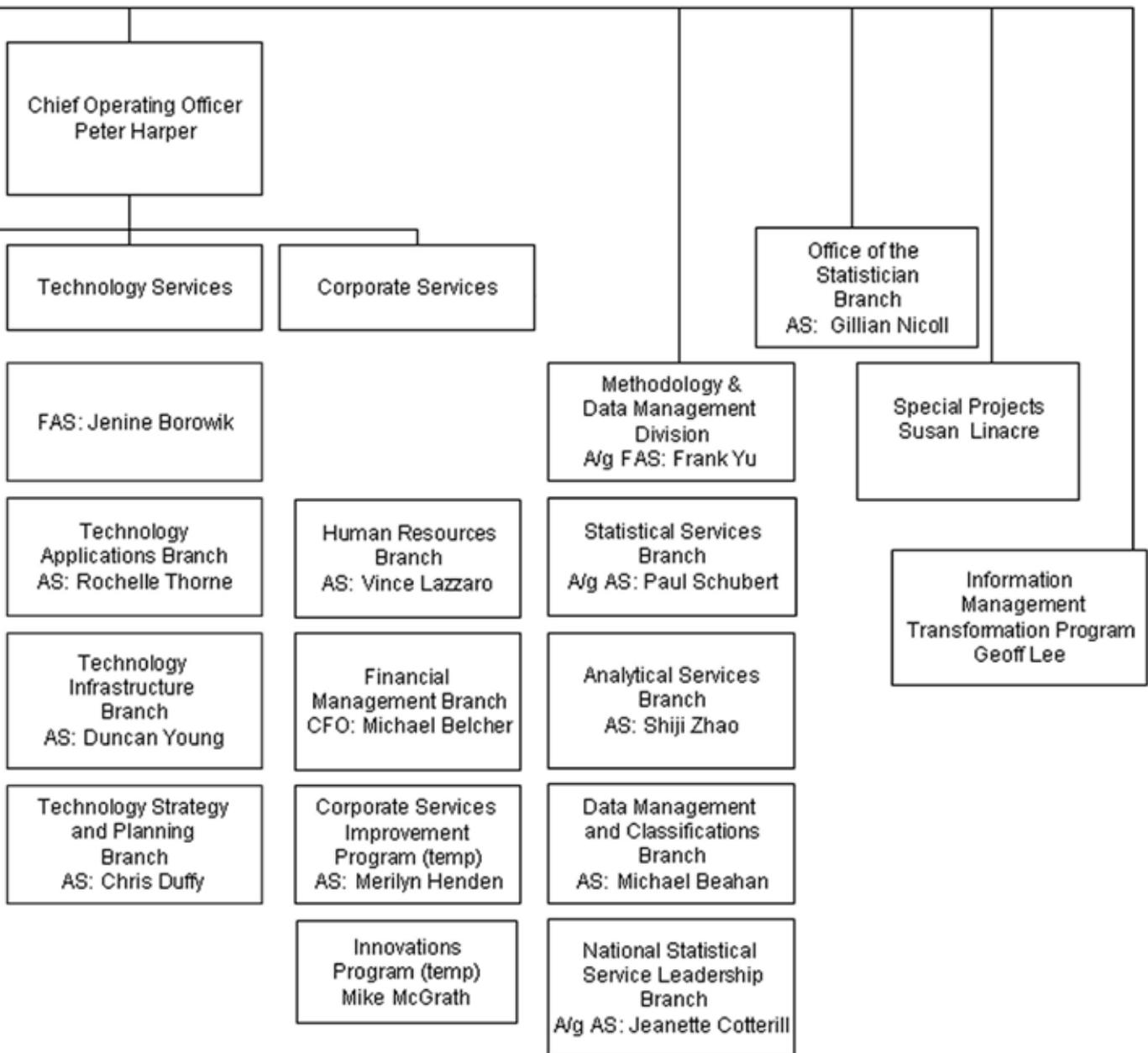


Geoff Lee
Information Management
Transformation Program



Mike McGrath
Innovations Program





ABS FORWARD WORK PROGRAM

2010-11 to 2013-14



ABS Strategic Directions

Introduction

The ABS work program is established in response to current and emerging statistical priorities of users, and in the context of the ABS mission and overall strategic directions. The statistical drivers and demands of the government and community are broad ranging and are increasing both in volume and complexity. As Australia's national statistical agency, the ABS has a responsibility to respond to these demands, within the limitations of the resources allocated to it. The ABS's statement of strategic directions therefore presents the broad objectives that the ABS has chosen to pursue, which shape its priorities and work program for the period 2010-11 to 2013-14.

Strategic Directions

- 1 Assist and encourage informed decision making through continued delivery of relevant, high quality, key official statistics.
- 2 Ensure maximum use of, and access to, official statistics, by actively building relationships and targeting specific areas to progress the National Statistical Service (NSS).
- 3 Maintain our relevance by determining our next generation of statistical requirements and securing the necessary funding to enable this to occur. This includes an investment in innovation.
- 4 Ensure long-term sustainability by developing a set of scenarios regarding the organisation of ABS work, and by determining our next generation of information management infrastructure requirements. This includes an investment in innovation.
- 5 As a key information agency, maintain our strategic knowledge base by investing in future workforce needs that will build on core capability and capacity, thereby ensuring the long-term sustainability of the ABS.
- 6 Meet provider expectations through continued standardisation and harmonisation of data collection requirements and methods across the Australian Government, including through e-data initiatives.
- 7 Ensure international statistical coherence by influencing the development and implementation of statistical standards and frameworks of relevance to our region through the implementation of the 'ABS's leadership role in international statistics' strategies.

Key priorities contributing to the ABS achieving these directions

Ensuring the success of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing

The Census of Population and Housing is the largest statistical operation undertaken by the Australian Bureau of Statistics. It aims to accurately measure the number of people in Australia on Census Night, their key characteristics, and the dwellings in which they live. The next Australian Census of Population and Housing will be held on the 9 August 2011 and will mark 100 years of national Censuses in Australia.

Ensuring the success of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing is a key priority area for the ABS. The upcoming Census will build on the success of previous Censuses. For example, householders will have the option to complete their Census form safely and simply online via the eCensus facilities or through the tradition paper Census form. A public awareness campaign will be conducted with the aim to ensure the cooperation of the public and the high quality of responses to the Census.

The ABS has four key goals for the 2011 Census of Population and Housing. These are to: improve coverage, which is the primary goal of the Census; ensure the relevance of the Census data to users and providers; use resources effectively and efficiently; and protect the privacy of the public.

Supporting COAG Measurement Issues

Through the 2009-10 Federal Budget, the Government provided \$14.2m over four years to the ABS to help implement the performance reporting framework underpinning the measurement of progress against key COAG initiatives. The ABS will develop data for a range of performance indicators specified in the National Agreements on health care, education, affordable housing, disability, skills and workforce development and Indigenous reform. It is envisaged that the ABS will also play a lead role as advisor to other agencies in respect of the quality assurance of non-ABS data being used for COAG performance reporting. Another important role for ABS official statistics will be for 'bench testing' the fitness for purpose of some COAG indicators developed from other sources. The ABS already provides such advice on sources, methods and meaning to a wide range of users and producers of statistics.

In addition to the budget measures above, the COAG meeting in July 2009 provided the ABS with a further \$34.1m towards improvement of information concerning Indigenous people. The ABS will undertake work to improve the enumeration of the Indigenous population in the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and reverse the trend of under-enumeration, particularly in problematic areas, including rural and remote areas and regional centres. To complement this work, the Census Post Enumeration Survey will be expanded to include very remote areas and discrete Indigenous communities, strengthening Indigenous population estimates.

Additional work will also be undertaken linking the 2011 Census of Population and Housing data with national mortality data to better identify the Indigenous persons in both collections. Information from this work will then be used to improve the accuracy of life expectancy estimates for Indigenous people. Work will also be undertaken in parallel to improve the linkage techniques applied to Indigenous related data. Another initiative will assist the ABS to work with the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare to assess the extent of Indigenous identification in key data sets (births, deaths, education) and make recommendations about how these collections might be improved.

Environmental Statistics Programs

Australia continues to face critical challenges in water and energy security, reducing emissions and adapting to climate change. The Government has placed a high priority on managing these challenges for Australia. However, comparatively little is known about the connections between the state, condition and price of these issues and socio-economic outcomes. Without this knowledge, it is not possible to measure change, develop, implement and evaluate policies or programs. The ABS is working closely with the community and governments to further build the fourth information pillar, that is, environment statistics, to complement the more established information bases around population, society and the economy. An essential aspect of this development work is focused around the integration of environmental statistics with Australia's economic and social statistics.

The ABS and the international statistical community are currently mainstreaming integrated environmental-economic accounting as part of national statistical systems. Environmental-economic accounts are a satellite system of the System of National Accounts, and enable the relationship between the environment and the economy to be analysed and understood. The ABS Environment Statistics program is focussing on delivering regular integrated environmental-economic accounts to provide the insight into who is using Australia's natural resources, the distribution of environmental resources across different parts of the economy, and the economic implications of environmental actions.

Modernisation of Information Management Infrastructure

The ABS has commenced the Information Management Transformation Program (IMTP) in 2010. This program, which will be undertaken in a number of phases, potentially represents the most strategic initiative in the modernisation of the information management infrastructure within the ABS to support its data management and business process standardisation strategies since the 1970s.

Our aspiration within the ABS is to have metadata driven end-to-end business processes that are conducted within a common data management framework. IMTP has an internal objective to deliver a coherent and integrated environment for the life-cycle management of our data.

More broadly, the main outcome of IMTP is for the Australian Government and the community to have access to domestic and international statistical information that is easily found and used, reliable and comparable to support evidence based policy and decision-making. To achieve this goal, the ABS needs to not only modernise its internal infrastructure but also redefine the way it communicates and disseminates data to clients.

In addition, the ABS is seeking stronger collaboration between national statistical offices on the development of the next generation of statistical infrastructure.

Demands for statistical data integration

Data integration is an emerging priority for the ABS and wider National Statistical System as the demand for, and activities associated with, linking social, economic and environmental datasets increase across Australian Governments.

There is a strong need for consistent governance, methods, policies and protocols around data integration. A major advance was made during 2010 with the endorsement, by Commonwealth Portfolio Secretaries, of a set of high level principles for statistical data integration across Australian Government departments and agencies. Developed by a Cross Portfolio Statistical Integration Committee, the principles form the basis of an Australian Government approach to facilitate linkage of social, economic and environmental data. The ABS recognises these principles as providing a generic best practice model regardless of which level of government or jurisdiction the data integration is occurring in.

The second phase of the work of the Committee is to develop a governance and institutional framework to support Australian Government statistical data integration activities. The ABS is working closely with Australian Government departments and agencies to develop a safe and effective environment that:

- realises benefits from the use of data, in a controlled and secure manner, from portfolios such as health, education, migration and family support
- minimises the risks associated with poorly managed data linkage activities on datasets of national significance such as the Census of Population and Housing, and
- maintains the trust of the broader community in the collection and use of an individuals data.

A key priority is to engage States and Territories to encourage and develop a safe and effective environment for statistical data integration activities across all jurisdictions in Australia.

NATIONAL STATISTICAL SERVICE



National Statistical Service Leadership

Program Manager

Jeanette Cotterill
Assistant Statistician A/g
National Statistical Service
Leadership Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct costs	3.1
Full costs	6.8
% of total costs	1.9%

Staff usage
21 Staff years

Direct costs	\$m
2010-11	3.5
2011-12	3.8
2012-13	3.4
2013-14	3.4

References

National Statistical Service
www.nss.gov.au
Select Statistical Clearing
House

Objectives

The National Statistical Service Leadership program provides a focal point within the ABS for strategies aimed at strengthening and extending the National Statistical Service (NSS). The program will identify opportunities to work in partnership with other organisations to expand and improve the quality and value of their statistical services. This role is consistent with the ABS's legislated responsibilities as Australia's central statistical authority.

Within the ABS, the program serves as a catalyst, coordinator and evaluator of specified NSS activities, particularly those which cut across ABS program areas or involve cross jurisdictional developments.

Externally, the program provides leadership and support to policy and research professionals by delivering best practice statistical guides and tools to assist in their statistical activities. It also supports inter-agency committees associated with developing the NSS.

The program also maintains and develops the Australian Government Statistical Clearing House, which seeks to reduce the load on businesses and to ensure the quality of those business surveys is sufficient to provide the information needed.

The principal clients of the National Statistical Service Leadership program are producers and users of statistical information both within the ABS and in other Australian, State, Territory and local government organisations. The targeted outcomes of this program are: more and better quality data for policy and research; improved, and more widely available statistical infrastructure and services; and increased capability of producers and users of statistics.

Outputs

The program has the following outputs:

- policy and strategies for the ongoing development of the NSS
- best practice materials and tools for collection, compilation, analysis and dissemination of survey and administrative by-product data
- NSS communication, which includes newsletters, seminars, presentations to training courses, management of the NatStats 2010 Conference and participation in other relevant conferences, particularly those that relate to information sharing across government agencies and jurisdictions
- secretariat services to the NSS Board and the Australian Government Statistical Forum, and participation in interdepartmental committees
- administration and delivery of the Australian Government Statistical Clearing House service, which provides a detailed assessment, suggestions for improvement, and formal approval of business surveys run by Australian Government agencies
- participation in cross agency and cross government initiatives to improve statistical sharing and use. Examples include data.australia.gov.au, the Australian National Data Service and the Commonwealth Spatial Data Integration Pilot Project.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- manage the conduct of a survey that will measure community trust in ABS Statistics – due August 2010
- support the Council of Australian Governments indicator reporting process by deploying the Data Quality Online Tool – due August 2010
- host the NatStats 2010 Conference in Sydney in September - The aims of the Conference are to: raise the profile, understanding and commitment to developing national statistics; provide an opportunity for engagement on key policy issues; and build stronger relationships between information providers, policy makers and opinion leaders – due September 2010
- undertake a scoping study on the development of a Statistical Clearing House to include household surveys conducted by Australian Government agencies – due June 2011
- investigate the key issues around the development of a statistical and information policy for Australia – due June 2011
- promote the use of Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) standards to underpin exchanging statistical data between agencies and investigate integration of SDMX and geospatial standards – due June 2012
- promote the development of policy and strategies for the NSS across government agencies and jurisdictions – ongoing
- support the development of statistical skills and capabilities for producers and users of official statistics – ongoing.

Program Manager

Gemma Van Halderen
Assistant Statistician
Social Data Integration
and Analysis Branch

ABS Statistical Data Integration

Objectives

The ABS Statistical Data Integration program provides a focal point within the ABS for strong and consistent governance, methods, policies and protocols around statistical data integration.

Statistical data integration involves integrating data from different sources to provide new datasets for statistical and research purposes. The potential insights possible from bringing together data relating to individuals, in a controlled, secure and transparent manner, are immense. However, poorly managed data linkage activities also could significantly impact on community trust and the National Statistical System (for example, the Census of Population and Housing, other ABS collection activities, and administrative data collection activities undertaken by governments). The focus of the ABS Statistical Data Integration program is therefore on balancing the gains and the risks in a cooperative, productive and transparent manner compliant with all relevant legislation.

In recognition of the strong but not exclusive focus to date on combining data from portfolios such as health, education, migration and family support, the program is managed within the Social Statistics Group.

The principal clients of the Statistical Data Integration program are data custodians and data users both within the ABS and in other Australian, State, Territory and local government organisations, researchers and the community. The targeted outcomes of this program are a safe and effective environment for statistical data integration activities within Australia.

Outputs

The program has the following outputs:

- policy and strategies for statistical data integration activities
- best practice materials and tools for statistical data integration activities
- communication, which includes seminars and presentations, participation in relevant conferences (particularly those that relate to information sharing across governments, the research sector and the community), and participation in meetings (particularly those across portfolios within governments)
- secretariat services to the Cross Portfolio Statistical Integration Steering Group and Working Group.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- contribute to the development of a framework for statistical data integration using Commonwealth data, in particular the principles, governance and institutional arrangements for a safe and effective environment for statistical data integration activities – due December 2010
- undertake a study of community level understanding of statistical data integration and attitudes to ABS involvement in data integration – due December 2011
- engage at senior levels with key stakeholders, including the Population Health Research Network, the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and Sax Institute, as data linkage units and capabilities are developed, to build a safe and effective environment for statistical data integration across all jurisdictions in Australia – ongoing
- engage States and Territories to encourage and help develop a safe and effective environment for statistical data integration across all jurisdictions in Australia – ongoing
- stay abreast of international best practice for statistical integration activities, including data linkage, in order to influence Australian deliberations – ongoing
- identify key enduring datasets which have the potential to deliver significant statistical outputs, and engage with the custodians of those datasets to identify opportunities for their use in statistical data integration projects – ongoing
- develop and improve understanding of various terms related to identifiability including the difference between de-identifying and confidentialising, and why it matters – ongoing
- support confidentialising data and providing safe access to microdata to support research and statistical outputs – ongoing
- improve the understanding of issues around different levels of data linking accuracy – ongoing.

STATISTICAL PROGRAMS



National Accounts

Program Manager

Bruce Hockman
Assistant Statistician A/g
National Accounts Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	9.7
Full costs	18.1
% of total costs	5.1%
Staff usage	
89 Staff years	

Direct Costs

	\$m
2010-11	9.7
2011-12	7.9
2012-13	7.7
2013-14	7.7

References

Topics @ a Glance page
www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy, then
National Accounts

Under National Statistics
select National Accounts

Other references

*Australian National
Accounts: Concepts,
Sources and Methods*
ABS cat. no. 5216.0)

Objectives

The National Accounts program provides quarterly and annual data about the level of economic activity, the pattern of economic growth and the structure of the Australian and State economies within a coherent system of concepts and classifications.

The main clients of the program are Australian Government agencies (in particular the Treasury), the Reserve Bank of Australia, State Government agencies (in particular State Treasuries), international organisations such as the International Monetary Fund and the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, economic analysts in the private sector, the media and academics.

National accounts information is used to: formulate and assess government macro-economic policies, both fiscal and monetary; assist in allocating Australian Government funds to State Governments; formulate industry development policies; undertake financial and business planning; and facilitate international economic comparisons.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are the quarterly publications *Australian National Accounts: National Income, Expenditure and Product* (ABS cat. no. 5206.0) and *Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5232.0); and the annual publication *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0). Together these publications provide comprehensive measures of Australia's macro-economic performance and economic structure.

The key series relate to current price and volume measures of Australia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) broken down into its components. In the quarterly publication, most data are published in seasonally adjusted and trend terms. The publications also show estimates for the national income and capital accounts, and sector accounts such as for households and general government. Data on financial transactions, flow of funds and financial balance sheet positions are provided quarterly, and complete balance sheets for sectors and the nation are compiled annually. The annual publication also includes a range of economic data by industry as well as capital stock and productivity estimates.

Annual estimates of economic growth for each State and Territory are published separately in *Australian National Accounts: State Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5220.0). The program also produces annual Input-Output tables and an annual tourism satellite account that highlights the contribution of tourism to the Australian economy.

The release of annual Input-Output tables in *Australian National Accounts: Input-Output Tables – Electronic Publication* (ABS cat. no. 5209.0) tables began in June 2008. The ABS had previously produced the tables on an irregular basis. The tables provide a detailed articulation of the structure of economic production by detailing the flows of products into and between industries and their use for consumption, investment or export.

The program provides seminars, training courses and other information to assist economic analysts in understanding and using National Accounts statistics.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- implement in the Input-Output tables for 2007-08 the update of the international standard for the compilation of National Accounts and the revised industry classification Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC) 2006 – due November 2010
- review and improve National Accounts compilation processes and methods, in particular addressing areas highlighted by the performance of the accounts in tracking the global financial crisis and recovery – due December 2010
- as major stakeholders, contribute to the review of user requirements for financial statistics, examine the timing, frequency and content of statistical releases, examine the quality of data sources to identify components that pose a risk and improve the conceptual and methodological information available to users – first stage due December 2010
- review and update the Concepts, Sources and Methods publication to reflect the recently implemented updated international standards for macro-economic accounts – due December 2010
- contribute to international research of topics identified as needing further work during the update of the System of National Accounts, with an emphasis on the concept of income – ongoing.

International Accounts

Program Manager

Bernard Williams
Assistant Statistician
International Accounts
and Financial Statistics
Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	6.0
Full costs	12.7
% of total costs	3.6%

Staff usage
63 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	6.1
2011-12	6.2
2012-13	6.4
2013-14	6.4

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance select Economy, then: Balance of Payments; Foreign Investment and Foreign Debt; or Foreign Trade

Other references

Balance of Payments, and International Investment Position, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods (ABS cat. no. 5331.0)

International Merchandise Trade, Australia: Concepts, Sources and Methods (ABS cat. no. 5489.0)

A Guide to Australian Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Statistics (ABS cat. no. 5362.0.55.001)

Objectives

The International Accounts program provides statistics on Australia's Balance of Payments, International Investment Position and Merchandise Trade. The statistics are compiled from a range of surveys and administrative data sources with merchandise trade statistics derived from records lodged with Australian Customs and Border Protection Service.

The main users of the International Accounts data are economic and industry analysts and policy advisers in Australian Government agencies (in particular, the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Productivity Commission, Austrade and the Departments of: Foreign Affairs and Trade; Prime Minister and Cabinet; and Resources, Energy and Tourism), private sector economic analysts and dealers, academics, the media and international organisations.

The statistics are used to analyse Australia's external performance, formulate and evaluate macro-economic policy (including trade policy, trade treaties and foreign investment policy), analyse trends in income, capital flows and patterns of investment into and out of the economy, and to undertake international comparisons. The international accounts are inputs to the Australian National Accounts, providing the external transactions accounts and the external assets and liabilities components of the national balance sheet.

Outputs

The program produces a range of statistical publications, classifications and methodological information. The key statistical publication is the quarterly *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5302.0) which presents a comprehensive set of international accounts statistics including chain volume measures for trade in goods and services and seasonally adjusted data for the current account.

Monthly information on exports and imports of goods and services, on the preferred balance of payments basis, is released in *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0). The publication includes a selection of tables showing merchandise exports and imports data on a recorded trade basis. The program produces the *Australian Harmonized Export Commodity Classification* (ABS cat. no. 1233.0). Updates to the classification, if required, are scheduled for release six monthly.

International Merchandise Imports, Australia (ABS cat. no. 5439.0) provides summary information on Australia's merchandise imports for the latest reference month, on a recorded trade basis. Very detailed merchandise trade export and import statistics classified by commodity, country of trading partner, state, industry of origin and broad economic category can be obtained from ABS Client Services.

International trade in services data by partner country and state are released annually, on a calendar year basis in *International Trade in Services by Country, by State and by Detailed Services Category, Calendar Year* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0.55.004) and financial year basis in *International Trade in Services by Country, by State and by Detailed Services Category, Financial Year* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0.55.003). Calendar year international investment position, financial account and primary income data by partner country, and international investment position and financial account data by industry for direct investment are released annually in *International Investment Position Australia: Supplementary Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 5352.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- develop and circulate to stakeholders a costed proposal to extend the merchandise trade dataset by compiling and releasing statistics on the number of containers used in the export and import of goods – due November 2010
- review and update the Balance of Payments and International Investment Position concepts, sources and methods documentation to reflect the recently implemented updated international standards for macro-economic accounts – due December 2010
- investigate and identify possible data sources for capturing manufacturing services on physical inputs owned by others in Australia's balance of payments – due March 2011
- measure the provision of services by foreign insurance and finance affiliates of Australian businesses – due June 2011
- investigate, and if feasible, improve the timeliness of trade in services information measured through the Survey of International Trade in Services – due December 2011
- contribute to the development of an updated international manual on the compilation of international merchandise trade statistics – due 2011
- revise the Australian Harmonized Export Commodity Classification and the statistical codes of the Customs Tariff to reflect the 2012 update to the international Harmonized System – due January 2012
- review commodity classifications used in the balance of payments to ensure that they remain relevant and that they are linked appropriately to international and other ABS classifications – due December 2012.

Financial Statistics

Program Manager

Bernard Williams
Assistant Statistician
International Accounts
and Financial Statistics
Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	1.9
Full costs	4.1
% of total costs	1.2%

Staff usage
19 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	1.8
2011-12	1.8
2012-13	1.8
2013-14	1.8

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy, then
Finance

Objectives

The Financial Statistics program compiles statistics on the financial assets, liabilities, borrowing and lending of financial institutions, and on the stocks and flows of finance for the sectors of the economy. The statistics are sourced from several statistical surveys and administrative data sources.

The main users of the program include the main financial policy agencies (including the Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia), and financial institutions. Industry associations, analysts and State and Territory Treasuries are also extensive users of the lending statistics.

The statistics are used for analysis of monetary policy outcomes, for monitoring the flows in the financial system, and for assessing the financial performance of the economic sectors or institutions. Housing finance commitment statistics are used as one of the indicators of consumer sentiment and, together with personal, commercial and lease finance commitment statistics, are used as forward indicators of demand in the economy.

Financial statistics are important inputs to the Australian National Accounts, predominantly the financial accounts, and accordingly, the ABS National Accounts program is a key client of the Financial Statistics program.

Outputs

The program produces the quarterly publication *Managed Funds, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5655.0), which includes statistics for cash management trusts, superannuation funds, life insurance corporations, public unit trusts, common funds, and friendly societies. Information on securitisation trusts is released quarterly in the publication *Assets and Liabilities of Australian Securitizers* (ABS cat. no. 5232.0.55.001).

The monthly publication *Housing Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5609.0) includes information on finance commitments for owner occupation and investment housing, as well as balances outstanding on housing finance loans. Finance commitments by banks and other financial institutions are covered, including whether the loans are at fixed or variable rates. The monthly *Lending Finance, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5671.0) provides statistics on commercial, personal and lease finance commitments.

The program also compiles the source data for the quarterly publication *Australian National Accounts: Financial Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5232.0), which is a component of the Australian National Accounts.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- enhance outputs for Managed Funds to incorporate new data arising from the recently implemented updated international standards for macro economic accounts – due December 2010
- in conjunction with major stakeholders, review the user requirements for financial statistics, examine the timing, frequency and content of statistical releases, examine the quality of data sources to identify components that pose a risk and improve the conceptual and methodological information available to users – first stage due December 2010
- develop concepts, sources and methods documentation for Managed Funds – due December 2012.

Further medium-term developments will be determined as recommendations arising from the review of financial statistics are costed and prioritised.

Program Manager

Judy Henson
Assistant Statistician
Prices Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost	17.6
Full costs	33.5

% of total costs 9.4%

Staff usage
155 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11	17.5
2011-12	17.1
2012-13	15.8
2013-14	15.8

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy, then
Prices

Prices

Objectives

The Prices program compiles a number of key main economic indicators – the Consumer Price Index (CPI), the House Price Index (HPI), the Wage Price Index (WPI), an annual Labour Price Index (LPI) which includes non-wage price indexes, and a range of Producer and International Trade Price Indexes (PPIs and ITPIs). The program also produces a Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Costs Index (PBLCI), and Analytical Living Cost Indexes for Selected Australian Household Types (ALCI). The program promotes, through provision of information papers, seminars and other means, a greater understanding in the community of concepts, methods and uses of price indexes.

The main clients for the program's outputs are the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Treasury, the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations (DEEWR), the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA), Australian Government and State Government agencies whose payments are indexed, economic analysts, and the general business community.

The main uses of the key prices indicators are:

- CPI is a general measure of price inflation for the household sector; for production of volume estimates of components of the Australian National Accounts; as a basis for indexing pensions, superannuation payments and government taxes and charges; as an input into salary and wage negotiations; and for indexation of government bonds and business contracts.
- HPI is a measure of price changes for established houses and for project homes; for analysis of trends in the housing market; and for production of estimates of the value of the housing stock.
- WPI/LPI is a measure of wage inflation; to inform wage setting negotiations; for production of volume estimates of components of the Australian National Accounts; and for the indexation of business contracts.
- PPIs and ITPIs are used for the production of volume estimates for components of the Australian National Accounts; as a guide to future inflationary trends; and for indexation of business contracts.
- PBLCI is a measure of the impact of changes in prices on the out-of-pocket living costs experienced by pensioners and other government benefit recipient households; and as a basis for indexing pensions and other payments to government benefit recipients.
- ALCI is a supplementary analytical series to the CPI and is used as a measure of the impact of changes in prices on the out-of-pocket living costs experienced by employee households, age pensioner households, other government benefit recipient households and self-funded retiree households.

Outputs

The main program outputs are the following quarterly publications:

- *Consumer Price Index, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6401.0) and *Average Retail Prices of Selected Items, Eight Capital Cities* (ABS cat. no. 6403.0.55.001)
- *House Price Indexes: Eight Capital Cities* (ABS cat. no. 6416.0)
- *Labour Price Index, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6345.0)
- *Producer Price Indexes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6427.0) and *International Trade Price Indexes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6457.0)
- *Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6467.0)
- *Analytical Living Costs Index for Selected Australian Household types, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6463.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- review and address any identified weaknesses in data sources and methods used in measuring changes in prices for deposit and loan facilities – due June 2010
- respond to changes to the Australian Industrial Relations system as required for the collection and processing of the LPI questionnaire – due July 2010
- improve CPI measurement of services that have complex pricing mechanisms – utilities pilot study for Canberra due September 2010 and telecommunications due October 2010
- undertake a review of the PPIs by stage of production (SOP), including reweighting on ANZSIC06 basis – due September 2011
- complete and report on the 16th series CPI review; introduce the 16th series CPI, including updated household expenditure weights, for the September quarter 2011 – due October 2011
- introduce a program of improvements to the PBLCI and ALCI, including updated household expenditure weights – from November 2011
- investigate feasibility and costs of an index for dwellings other than detached houses – due December 2011
- review the HPI, including undertaking a re-weight based on 2011 Census of Population and Housing data – due December 2013.

Public Sector Accounts

Program Manager

Bernard Williams
Assistant Statistician
International Accounts
and Financial Statistics
Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	3.0
Full costs	5.8
% of total costs	1.6%

Staff usage
30 Staff years

Direct Costs

	\$m
2010-11	3.2
2011-12	3.2
2012-13	3.2
2013-14	3.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy, then
Government Finance
Statistics

Other references

*Australian System of
Government Finance
Statistics: Concepts,
Sources and Methods*
(ABS cat. no. 5514.0)

Objectives

The Public Sector Accounts program provides Government Finance Statistics (GFS) in respect of the Australian, State and Territory Governments, their public non-financial corporations and public financial corporations, universities and local governments. The statistics are compiled predominantly from government accounting systems.

The main users of the program include various Australian Government agencies (in particular the Treasury, the Commonwealth Grants Commission, and the Departments of: Finance and Deregulation; Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; Health and Ageing; Productivity Commission), State Government agencies (in particular State Treasuries), financial market analysts and international agencies.

GFS are used to monitor the financial performance of governments and to inform on the economic impact of government activities. They are also used to assist in the distribution of Australian Government grants to State Governments.

GFS are an important input to the Australian National Accounts, providing income and expenditure estimates for the public sector. Accordingly, the ABS National Accounts program is a key client of the Public Sector Accounts program.

Outputs

The program produces a number of GFS publications each year, compiled in accordance with the International Monetary Fund's Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001.

The main publication is the annual *Government Finance Statistics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5512.0), which provides an operating statement, balance sheet and cash flow statement for the most recent year for each of the Australian, State, Territory and local governments for the general government and public non-financial corporations. Key GFS accruals measures such as the net operating balance, net lending/borrowing, and net worth are provided. A cash-based surplus/deficit is also produced.

A quarterly publication, *Government Finance Statistics, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5519.0.55.001), provides operating statements for general government and public non-financial corporations sector aggregates.

The other publications are:

- *Government Financial Estimates, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5501.0.55.001), which provides initial budget forecasts compiled by each jurisdiction on a GFS basis
- *Taxation Revenue, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5506.0), which provides revenue from taxation of the Australian Government, the State Governments and local government authorities in Australia
- *Government Finance Statistics, Education, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5518.0.55.001), which provides statistics on government expenditure in the field of education.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- contribute to the revision of the International Monetary Fund's GFS Manual and implement relevant changes – due to start in mid 2010
- develop an implementation strategy for introducing Australia's revised institutional sector classification (Standard Economic Sector Classifications of Australia 2008) – due June 2011
- in conjunction with the Treasury and/or the Department of Finance in each jurisdiction, assess the availability, quality and feasibility of compiling quarterly balance sheet data – due June 2012
- assist the Treasury and/or the Department of Finance in each jurisdiction with implementation and interpretative issues associated with the adoption of the GFS-GAAP (Generally Accepted Accounting Principles) harmonised financial reporting basis represented by the new accounting standard AASB 1049 (Whole of Government and General Government Sector Financial Reporting by Governments) – ongoing
- work with the Treasury and/or Department of Finance in each jurisdiction on the continual improvement in the quality and uniformity of Australia's GFS – ongoing.

Program Manager

Bruce Hockman
Assistant Statistician A/g
National Accounts Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	3.3
Full costs	10.6
% of total costs	3.0%

Staff usage
36 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	3.5
2011-12	3.4
2012-13	3.5
2013-14	3.5

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy, then
Business Indicators

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Industry, then Retail

Business Indicators

Objectives

The Business Indicators program is responsible for the provision of a range of sub-annual main economic indicators.

The indicators include:

- monthly statistics of turnover by selected retail industries and the takeaway food services industry
- quarterly statistics of company profits, inventories, sales and labour costs
- quarterly statistics of actual and expected new capital expenditure
- quarterly statistics of actual and expected mineral and petroleum exploration
- biannual statistics of expected mineral and petroleum expenditure.

These data are essential inputs to the compilation of quarterly and annual National Accounts and Supply-Use tables.

The main clients of the program include the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, various State and Territory departments, banks, industry associations, and other financial analysts and commentators. These clients use the statistics as partial indicators of the National Accounts and as important indicators of economic activity in their own right.

Outputs

The key statistical outputs of the program are the monthly publication *Retail Trade, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8501.0) and the quarterly publications *Private New Capital Expenditure and Expected Expenditure, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5625.0), *Mineral and Petroleum Exploration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8412.0) and *Business Indicators, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5676.0). The last provides information on sales, labour costs, company profits and inventories. Each publication contains both national and state level data and estimates in original, seasonally adjusted and trend terms. In addition, the publications with cat. nos: 8501.0; 5625.0; and 5676.0; present current price data by industry and, where appropriate, estimates are presented as chain volume measures.

The program produces detailed datasets that are available in spreadsheet form via the ABS website.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- investigate using Australian Taxation Office data to provide estimates of activity of micro-non-employers for the quarterly business indicators and new capital expenditure outputs – due June 2011
- investigate the adequacy of Retail Trade's coverage of non-traditional purchasing avenues (such as e-commerce) and, if required, options for improving the coverage – due July 2011
- improve the coherence of the Quarterly Business Indicators Survey (QBIS) and annual industry collection with National Accounts estimates – due December 2011
- investigate expanding the scope of the QBIS to include public corporations in certain industries (e.g. Water, Construction) – due December 2011
- investigate extending the collection of inventories data for a broader selection of industries – due December 2011.

Innovation and Technology

Program Manager

Michael Tindall
Regional Director
Western Australia

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	3.0
Full costs	6.2

% of total costs 1.7%

Staff usage
29 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11	4.3
2011-12	3.9
2012-13	4.3
2013-14	4.3

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance select Industry, then Innovation, Science & Technology

Objectives

The Innovation and Technology program provides data to assist the understanding of the impact of research and experimental development, innovation and new technologies on economic and social outcomes. It provides measures of the penetration and use of selected new technologies, particularly information and communication technology (ICT), within Australia, for businesses as well as households. The program also provides measures of innovation for Australian businesses. Some of these outputs relating to businesses are now an integral part of the Business Characteristics Survey, an important component of the Business Longitudinal Database which is a tool for understanding business activity and possible links to business performance and productivity.

Clients of the program include:

- Australian Government agencies including the Departments of: Broadband, Communications and the Digital Economy; Innovation, Industry, Science and Research; and Education, Employment and Workplace Relations, as well as the Productivity Commission and the Australian Communications and Media Authority;
- State and Territory Government departments; and
- Industry associations, research organisations, universities and businesses.

Statistics for expenditure on research and experimental development are important inputs to the Australian National Accounts, and accordingly, the ABS National Accounts program is a key client of the Innovation and Technology program.

Outputs

The program produces a range of statistical outputs, showing:

- production of ICT goods and services by Australian businesses and the performance of the ICT industry in Australia
- use of ICT goods and services by Australian businesses and households
- internet activity conducted through the Australian Internet Service Provider industry
- innovation activities undertaken within the Australian economy
- research and experimental development undertaken by businesses, government, universities and private non-profit organisations
- selected business characteristics data
- Business Longitudinal Database Confidentialised Unit Record File.

The program also contributes to the work of national and international agencies, through input to the review and development of statistical standards and frameworks in relevant fields of statistics. Research papers and discussion papers are made available via the ABS website.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- develop strategies for meeting information needs arising from major government policy initiatives including the National Broadband Network, *Australia's Digital Economy: Future Directions* (July 2009), *Powering Ideas, an Innovation Agenda for the 21st Century* (May 2009) and *Inspiring Australia, a National Strategy for Engagement with the Sciences* (Dec 2009) – due December 2010
- undertake a comprehensive review of existing data collection strategies in the increasingly important area of Research and Development, with a view to developing long term strategies which address existing and emerging policy needs – due December 2010
- review structure, content and design of the Business Longitudinal Database, to ensure the production of an output which adequately supports robust performance and productivity microdata analysis – due December 2010.

Business Demographics

Program Manager

Jason Russo
Assistant Statistician
Economic Analysis and
Reporting Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	2.0
Full costs	3.8

% of total costs 1.1%

Staff usage
15 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11	2.3
2011-12	2.5
2012-13	2.5
2013-14	2.5

References

Topics @ a Glance page
www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Economy, then
Business Demography

Objectives

The Business Demographics program is responsible for the provision of a range of information about the structure, characteristics and performance of businesses in the Australian economy and conceptual developments regarding business definitions and classifications. This information is part of a consistent framework for all ABS business statistics. A particular, but not exclusive, focus of the program is on providing information about small businesses.

Key external clients of the program are Australian and State Government agencies and industry associations.

Government policy analysts at all levels of government and researchers make extensive use of ABS business statistics. Business and business operator counts produced by the program are important for users in understanding the likely impact of particular policies or events. The data are used mainly to monitor the structure and performance of the business sector; and to assess the need for, and effectiveness of, policies relating to the business sector.

Outputs

The program releases an annual publication *Counts of Australian Businesses, including Entries and Exits* (ABS cat. no. 8165.0), which harmonises previously separate releases of business counts and entries and exits. This publication provides data of relevance to users interested in understanding businesses that actively trade in goods or services. A particular focus of future releases will be on providing business growth information for surviving businesses. Further enhancements will include the provision of industry data using the 2006 version of the Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification and the inclusion of additional data at state and sub-state levels.

The publication, *Counts of Australian Business Operators* (ABS cat. no. 8175.0), was first released in 2008. This sourced data from the 2006 Census of Population and Housing and the Forms of Employment Survey (a supplement to the Monthly Labour Force Survey). This publication will next be released in 2012, using data from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and the Forms of Employment Survey. Possible enhancements to this publication include providing greater information at the State level and the provision of additional small business data sourced from the Forms of Employment Survey.

These outputs, together with a range of relevant information, are available on the Business Demography Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website.

Developments

The main medium term developments in the program are to:

- progress the international comparability of business demography statistics through the OECD's Entrepreneurship Indicators Programme – due June 2011
- consider the potential for linking ABS business counts data with aggregate employment and annual turnover data, subject to data quality concerns being met – due December 2011.

Industry Statistics

Program Manager

Graeme Brown
Assistant Statistician A/g
Industry & Environment
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	12.1
Full costs	29.3

% of total costs 8.2%

Staff usage
105 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11	9.2
2011-12	9.6
2012-13	13.2
2013-14	13.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Industry, then
Manufacturing Statistics,
Mining or Service Industries
Statistics

Objectives

The Industry Statistics program provides information about the structure, financial operations, performance and production of Australian industries and construction activity. The information is used to monitor the economy and the business cycle, and support the compilation of the Australian National Accounts.

The program consists of:

- annual economy wide financial statistics, a rolling collection program (in response to specifically identified needs), modelling and analytical work covering specific industries and/or activities
- construction statistics on activity levels in residential building, non-residential building and engineering construction.

The main external program clients include: the Treasury; the Reserve Bank of Australia; the Department of: Resources, Energy and Tourism; and Innovation Industry and Science, as well as the Productivity Commission; Geoscience Australia; Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics; State and Territory agencies industry organisations/associations and financial/academic institutions.

Program outputs are widely used for economic monitoring and forecasting, as input to the Australian National Accounts and international industry statistics.

Construction statistics are used for construction industry, finance and investment sector analysis; and in estimating population change, an essential input to regional planning.

Outputs

Main program outputs include:

- the monthly publication *Building Approvals, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8731.0) and related time series spreadsheets, providing building approvals statistics which are a leading indicator of future building activity
- the annual publication *Australian Industry* (ABS cat. no. 8155.0) and related data cubes, providing national estimates of income, expenses, wages and salaries, operating profit before tax, industry value added, operating businesses, employment, and selected business performance measures at industry division and subdivision levels.

The data cubes related to Australian Industry include:

- information about Australia's mineral production based on data from State and Territory authorities
- estimates of electricity and gas production, transmission and distribution, with detailed financial estimates for the associated industries.

Regular quarterly releases are:

- *Construction Work Done, Australia, Preliminary* (ABS cat. no. 8755.0)
- *Building Activity, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8752.0)
- *Engineering Construction Activity, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8762.0)
- *Mineral and Petroleum Exploration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8412.0)
- *Mining Indicators, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8417.0)
- *Manufacturing Indicators, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8229.0).

Specific user requirements (e.g. finer dissections of industry and/or data items) are available by request.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- release Australian Industry outputs – 2009-10 due June 2011; 2010-2011 due June 2012
- redevelop Industry Statistics web-based Topics @ a Glance pages – due June 2011
- implement the new ABS geography in building surveys – due June 2011
- implement key recommendations from Building and Construction Review – due June 2012
- investigate improvements to the Building Approvals autocoder – due June 2012
- extend the depth and quality of industry statistics through business taxation and other administrative data, synthetic estimation and/or modelling techniques – ongoing.

Agriculture

Program Managers

Graeme Brown
Assistant Statistician A/g
Industry & Environment
Statistics Branch

Adrian Bugg
Regional Director
Tasmanian Office

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	3.6
Full costs	8.4

% of total costs 2.4%

Staff usage
44 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	4.8
2011-12	6.3
2012-13	4.2
2013-14	4.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance select Industry, then Agriculture for information on commodity production and economic performance

Under Topics @ a Glance select Environment and Energy for information on environmental practices

Objectives

The Agriculture program aims to satisfy the statistical needs of agricultural policy makers and other key users of agricultural statistics by providing reliable and relevant information on commodity production, economic performance, and environmental practices. The main collections include an annual agricultural survey, a five-yearly Agricultural Census, and a range of surveys covering specific aspects of agriculture and related activity.

The main clients of the program include a range of Australian and State Government agencies, industry organisations, financial institutions, academic institutions, and private sector organisations providing services to the agricultural sector.

Australian Government departments and agencies, and the State Departments of Agriculture and Natural Resources use agricultural data for formulating and monitoring policies on the various activities undertaken within the agricultural industry.

Industry organisations use agricultural data to assess the relative performance of the various industries and for the development of marketing and export strategies.

Outputs

Estimates of the structure of agricultural industries and the quantity of agricultural commodities produced each year are available from the annual commodity collection and published in *Agricultural Commodities, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7121.0).

Data related to the value of agricultural commodities are published annually in *Value of Agricultural Commodities Produced, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7503.0) and more recently the value of irrigated agricultural commodities are published in *Experimental Estimates of the Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0.55.008).

Details of the number of livestock slaughtered for human consumption and meat produced are available on a monthly basis in *Livestock and Meat, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7218.0.55.001). Details of other livestock products including poultry, meat, wool and milk are published quarterly in *Livestock Products, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7215.0).

Information about the Australian wheat industry is released monthly in *Wheat Use and Stocks, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 7307.0). This includes stocks of wheat grain, domestic use and exports, and committed future purchases for domestic use and exports.

Details of agricultural water use and management are available annually in *Water Use on Australian Farms* (ABS cat. no. 4618.0). Agricultural water use information is also included in the environmental-economic *Water Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0) which is produced every four years.

Details of agricultural land management practices are available every second year in *Land Management and Farming in Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4627.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- research methods of using business taxation data to provide financial information about components of the agricultural sector on an ongoing basis – due January 2011
- conduct the 2010-11 Agricultural Census, with an electronic reporting option available (due June 2011) and release of small area data (due June 2012)
- investigate options and methods for improved web-based dissemination of agricultural statistical outputs – due May 2012
- optimise the range, availability and usefulness of agriculture and related statistics – ongoing.

Transport

Program Manager

Graeme Brown
Assistant Statistician A/g
Industry & Environment
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	1.5
Full costs	4.1
% of total costs	1.1%

Staff usage
15 Staff years

Direct Costs

	\$m
2010-11	1.2
2011-12	1.2
2012-13	1.2
2013-14	1.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Industry, then
Transport

Objectives

The Transport program is responsible for producing statistics on transport and transport related activities and undertakes a coordination and liaison role between producers and users of transport data.

The main clients of the program are various Australian Government agencies – in particular: the Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Local Government; the Bureau of Infrastructure, Transport and Regional Economics; the Commonwealth Grants Commission; the Treasury; State and Territory Government agencies; the National Road Transport Commission; and industry and academic organisations.

Statistics from the transport collections are used to assist in policy and planning deliberations by governments and transport organisations, particularly in the areas of long term planning, the regulation of road transport operators and for accident exposure and fuel use analysis. Information about the vehicle fleet provides a measure of the stock of vehicles registered for road use at a point in time and supports the study of links between demographic change and vehicle ownership and use. Statistics on new motor vehicle sales provide an economic indicator of consumer confidence.

Outputs

The regular publications of the program are *Sales of New Motor Vehicles, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9314.0) (monthly major economic indicator), the *Survey of Motor Vehicle Use, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9208.0) (biennial), and *Motor Vehicle Census, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 9309.0) (annual).

Previous irregular publications including *Freight Movements, Australia, Summary* (ABS cat. no. 9220.0) and *Rail Freight Movements, Australia, Summary, Electronic Delivery* (ABS cat. no. 9220.0.55.001) are not scheduled to be run or released in 2010-11. The *Information paper: Experimental Estimates of Motor Vehicle Use* (ABS cat. no. 9222.0) is scheduled for review to enhance the relevance of the modelled data. It is expected that following this review, estimates for 2009 will be released in late 2010.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- change the reference periods of the Survey of Motor Vehicle Use (to align with financial year) and Motor Vehicle Census (change to January 31 snapshot date) – due January 2010
- develop a final business case for a new Australian Freight Movements Survey to be presented to the Standing Committee On Transport (SCOT) via Australian Transport Data Action Network (ATDAN) – due November 2010
- present options and recommendations to ATDAN/SCOT on matching vehicles with industry based on research completed on the NSW and Victorian registrations data – due November 2010
- provide recommendations for improving the relevance of the Survey of Motor Vehicle Use in line with user requirements and other proposed transport surveys/work program – due November 2010
- investigate administrative data sources to enhance the modelled estimates of motor vehicle use – due December 2010
- develop and finalise a business case for a Transport Satellite Account to be presented to SCOT via ATDAN – due March 2011
- support the ABS Annual Integrated Collection Business Statistics Centre in the development and implementation of surveys that support the Transport Satellite Account – ongoing to June 2011
- support the activities of the ATDAN as it progresses the Australian Transport Council's Data Action Plan, including enhancing the comparability of nationally significant datasets through harmonisation of standards and classifications – ongoing
- provide administrative support for the enhancement and maintenance of the Transport Metadata Portal – ongoing.

Tourism

Program Manager

Graeme Brown
Assistant Statistician A/g
Industry & Environment
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	1.5
Full costs	4.2

% of total costs 1.2%

Staff usage
11 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	1.2
2011-12	0.7
2012-13	0.8
2013-14	0.8

References

Topics @ a Glance page
www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Industry, then
Tourism

Other references

*Framework for Australian
Tourism Statistics* (ABS cat.
no. 9502.0.55.001)

Objectives

The Tourism program is responsible for producing regular, timely and coherent data on tourism activities. It also undertakes a coordination and liaison role between tourism statistics users and other areas of the ABS that produce tourism-related statistics. Data includes the Australian Tourism Satellite Account, overseas arrivals and departures, tourism-related exports and imports indicators, Survey of Tourist Accommodation and data collected under the Industry Statistics program. The program is also responsible for the development and maintenance of tourism frameworks, standards and concepts.

The main clients of the program are: the Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism; State and Territory tourism departments; tourism industry associations; academic and research groups; and marketing and consultancy bodies.

Tourism data are used to assist in economic analysis and policy formation relating to tourism, to measure the size and structure of tourism related industries, to allocate State Government funding to regional areas, and for local government planning and investment. The Survey of Tourist Accommodation data are an input into the policy and planning activities of government and industry, particularly in relation to tourism activity in regional areas.

Outputs

The main output of the program is the quarterly publication *Tourist Accommodation, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 8635.0). This publication provides detailed demand and supply data relating to hotels, motels and guest houses with 15 or more rooms, and serviced apartments with 15 or more units (derived from the Survey of Tourist Accommodation). With funding from the Department of Resources Energy and Tourism, the ABS has expanded the survey to include smaller establishments and other accommodation types.

The program works with the National Accounts program to produce the *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (ABS cat. no. 5249.0). The production of the account is funded by Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism.

Other outputs of the program relate to research and development work in such areas as tourism statistics frameworks and classifications.

The program also actively assists in user education relating to *Australian National Accounts: Tourism Satellite Account* (ABS cat. no. 5249.0), *Overseas Arrivals and Departures, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3401.0), *Short-term Visitor Arrival Estimates, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3401.0.55.001), tourism-related services exports and imports indicators in *International Trade in Goods and Services, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5368.0) and *Balance of Payments and International Investment Position, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 5302.0), and the tourism-related outputs issued by the Service Industries program.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- re-benchmark the Tourism Satellite Account and implement the new international standards – due June 2010
- in association with Department of Resources Energy and Tourism, develop options for collecting tourist accommodation information – due December 2010
- contribute to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation and other international bodies as they examine statistical definitions and classifications – ongoing.

Environment Statistics

Program Manager

Graeme Brown
Assistant Statistician A/g
Industry and Environment
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 1.5

Full costs 3.1

% of total costs 0.9%

Staff usage

14 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 1.0

2011-12 1.0

2012-13 1.0

2013-14 1.0

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select Environment and
Energy

Objectives

The Environment Statistics program contributes to the growing need for comprehensive and coordinated information about Australia's environment, focussing on key themes such as water, energy, land and waste management. The complex inter-relationships between the environment, society and the economy requires integrated information, which is a key focus of the program.

The program actively engages with partners to understand information needs and coordinate the development of statistics from the wide range of data available in this field. Clients of the program include:

- Commonwealth Departments of: the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry; Resources, Energy and Tourism; Climate Change and Energy Efficiency; and the Treasury
- Commonwealth Government agencies and programs such as Bureau of Rural Sciences; Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Research Economics
- State and Territory Government departments with environment or energy responsibilities
- academic/research organisations, environmental groups, businesses and individuals.

Data usage is varied and includes the formulation of policies, economic analysis, research and forecasting as well as meeting international reporting obligations.

Outputs

Program outputs range from generalist compendia and thematic publications to specialised, topic specific publications and research papers, including:

- the production of regular sets of environmental accounts implemented according to the System of Integrated Environmental and Economic Accounting (SEEA). These accounts develop an understanding of the linkages between availability, use and management of natural resources and economic activity
- working with Commonwealth, State and international agencies in the development of environment related statistical classifications, standards and conceptual frameworks
- production of biennial information on natural resource management practices at the regional level in *Land Management and Farming in Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4627.0)
- household behaviour and practice statistics relating to environmental issues in *Environmental Issues: Waste Management and Transport Use* (ABS cat. no. 4602.0.55.002) and environmental views and behaviour in *Environmental Views and Behaviour* (ABS cat. no. 4626.0.55.001)
- a regular compendium covering a range of environmental issues, *Australia's Environment: Issues and Trends* (ABS cat. no. 4613.0)
- other surveys related to environmental practices and natural resource use such as the *2008-09 Energy, Water and Environmental Management Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4660.0), and a baseline survey of *Land Management Practices in the Great Barrier Reef Catchments* (ABS cat. no. 4619.0.55.001 and 4619.0.55.002).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- undertake and publish a 2009-10 Waste Management Industry Survey – due June 2011
- engage in the development of a new international statistical framework for the System of Integrated Environmental-Economic Accounts – due Feb 2012
- undertake and publish the collection of national information on biodiversity – due 2013
- expand existing environmental accounts to increase the frequency of production and depth of detail – ongoing
- pilot the production of new environmental accounts, including land and waste accounts – ongoing.

Program Manager

Graeme Brown
Assistant Statistician A/g
Industry and Environment
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 0.7

Full costs 1.4

% of total costs 0.4%

Staff usage

7 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 0.5

2011-12 0.5

2012-13 0.5

2013-14 0.5

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Topics @ a Glance select
Environment and Energy

Energy

Objectives

The Energy program supports the integration of information about energy resources, such as supply and use, with a particular emphasis on highlighting the relationships between energy, the economy and society.

The program actively engages with partners to coordinate energy information needs and the developments of energy statistics. Clients of the program include:

- Commonwealth Departments of: Resources, Energy and Tourism; the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; Climate Change and Energy Efficiency; and the Treasury
- Commonwealth Government agencies and programs such as Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Research Economics
- State and Territory Government departments with energy responsibilities
- academic/research organisations, businesses and individuals.

Data usage is varied and includes the formulation of policies, economic analysis, research and forecasting as well as meeting international reporting obligations.

Outputs

Program outputs are focussed around products that highlight the relationships between energy supply and use, the economy and society, and engaging in statistical developments, such as

- *Energy Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4604.0)
- *Energy in Focus* (ABS cat. no. 4614.0.55.001)
- three yearly household behaviour and practice statistics relating to energy in *Environmental Issues: Energy Use and Conservation* (ABS Cat. no. 4602.0.55.001)
- contribution to the development of international standards and frameworks for energy statistics, through the compilation of the International Recommendations on Energy Statistics.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- investigate the feasibility of producing more regular and timely energy accounts – due December 2010
- engage in the international harmonisation of energy standards – due Feb 2011
- investigate and implement the production of energy statistics from data collected via the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting System – due June 2011
- implement actions arising from the review of Energy Statistics to develop and improve Australia's energy statistics in collaboration with key energy statistics stakeholders – ongoing.

Water

Program Manager

Graeme Brown
Assistant Statistician A/g
Industry and Environment
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	0.9
Full costs	1.8

% of total costs 0.5%

Staff usage
8 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	0.6
2011-12	0.6
2012-13	0.6
2013-14	0.6

References

Topics @ a Glance page
www.abs.gov.au

Topics @ a Glance select
Environment and Energy

Objectives

The Water program supports the integration of information about water resources, such as availability and use, with a particular emphasis on highlighting the relationships between water, society and the economy.

The program actively engages with partners to coordinate water information needs and the developments of water statistics. Clients of the program include:

- Commonwealth Departments and Agencies: the Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; Bureau of Rural Sciences; Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Research Economics; National Water Commission; Murray Darling Basin Authority and Bureau of Meteorology
- State and Territory Government departments with water responsibilities
- academic/research organisations, businesses and individuals.

Data usage is varied and includes the formulation of policies, economic analysis, research and forecasting as well as meeting international reporting obligations.

Outputs

Program outputs are focussed around products that highlight the relationships between water resources and the economy and society, and engaging in statistical developments, such as:

- the four yearly *Water Account, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0), the flagship of the ABS Environmental Accounts Program
- agricultural water use and management information in *Water Use on Australian Farms* (ABS cat. no. 4618.0) and *Experimental Estimates of the Gross Value of Irrigated Agricultural Production* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0.55.008)
- three yearly household behaviour and practice statistics relating to water in *Environmental Issues: Water Use and Conservation* (ABS cat. no. 4602.0.55.003)
- contribution to the development of international standards and frameworks for water statistics, such as the International Recommendations for Water Statistics and the System of Integrated Environmental Economic Accounts for Water.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- develop and release *Water Account, Australia, 2008-09* (ABS cat. no. 4610.0) – for publication in December 2010
- investigate the feasibility of producing more regular water accounts and regional water use outputs, based on the water account – due December 2010
- engagement in water information developments initiatives, particularly the development of the National Water Account, and coordination and consolidation of water information collected by state and commonwealth agencies – ongoing.

Program Manager

Dr Jill Charker
Assistant Statistician
Labour and Demography
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 2.9

Full costs 6.4

% of total costs 1.8%

Staff usage

27 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 3.0

2011-12 3.0

2012-13 2.9

2013-14 2.9

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then
Demography

Demography

Objectives

The key objective of the Demography program is to produce estimates of the recent and projected population, and analysis of the components of population growth and related demographic trends. These data are provided at the national, State, Territory, and regional level. These statistics are produced to:

- meet a range of legislative requirements that make reference to population estimates
- to assist in the formulation and monitoring of government policies, and in the planning and administration of government programs
- to enable planning and market analyses by businesses and community organisations
- to enable research and analyses by governments, businesses, academic institutions and others into the causes and consequences of population change.

Reflecting the use of population estimates for electoral and funding purposes, the main clients of the program are: Australian and state electoral commissions; Australian, State and Territory Treasuries; and Commonwealth, State and Northern Territory Grants Commissions. Within the ABS, demographic estimates and projections are the basis for population survey benchmarks. Other clients include agencies involved in issues associated with migration and multicultural affairs, local area planning, health, education, the Indigenous population, family and community services, the environment and international tourism.

Outputs

The key output is quarterly State and Territory population estimates published in *Australian Demographic Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3101.0).

The program produces estimates of the total population by age, sex, country of birth and geographical distribution; estimates of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population; and estimates of families and households. Regular statistics are also produced on births, fertility rates, deaths, life expectancy, mortality rates, overseas arrivals and departures, and internal migration. Projections of population, families and households according to specified demographic assumptions are published on a regular basis and produced for individual clients. Population benchmarks are provided for use in ABS and other population surveys. In addition to producing demographic statistics, training courses on understanding demographic data are conducted, papers relating to methods are produced and an electronic newsletter is issued.

Other major publications include: *Births, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3301.0); *Deaths, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3302.0); *Migration, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3412.0); *Regional Population Growth, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3218.0); *Population Projections, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3222.0); *Household and Family Projections, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 3236.0); and *Experimental Estimates and Projections, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS cat. no. 3238.0). In addition, an extensive range of historical data is available on the ABS website in *Australian Historical Population Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 3105.0.65.001).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- develop an enhanced 2011 Post Enumeration Survey (PES) strategy and undertake the dress rehearsal – due July 2010
- prepare and release projections of living arrangements, families and households based on the results of the 2006 Census of Population and Housing – due August 2010
- prepare experimental small area internal migration estimates using administrative data sources – due June 2011
- undertake 2011 PES following the 2011 Census of Population and Housing – due September 2011
- investigate data sources and methods for estimating sub-state net overseas migration statistics – due December 2011
- publish results from 2011 PES – due December 2011
- review and report on improvements to methods for compiling the suite of updated population estimates based on the results of the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and PES – due March 2012
- implement the new Australian Standard Geographical Standard (ASGS) for small area estimates – due June 2012
- consolidate an enhanced method for estimating Indigenous mortality using the 2011 Census of Population and Housing data as a key input to Indigenous demographic statistics – progressive releases to April 2014.

Labour

Program Manager

Dr Jill Charker
Assistant Statistician
Labour and Demography
Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	8.5
Full costs	53.8

% of total costs 15.1%

Staff usage
79 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	8.3
2011-12	6.8
2012-13	6.7
2013-14	6.7

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then Labour

Objectives

The key objectives for the Labour program are to address labour statistics priorities and be responsive to user needs by producing high quality labour statistics in a timely, efficient and effective manner. The program provides information about the structure and performance of the labour market. The program produces statistics on labour supply (such as labour force participation, unemployment, employment conditions and broader measures of labour underutilisation); labour demand (such as employee earnings, job vacancies and labour costs); and industrial relations.

Labour statistics are used extensively in the analysis, evaluation, and monitoring of: the economy; the labour market; a wide range of government policies and programs (such as those relating to employment, income support, industrial relations); and population groups of particular concern (such as women, younger persons, older persons, Indigenous people and children living in jobless households). Statistics on labour costs are also used in compiling the Australian National Accounts.

The main clients of the program are Commonwealth Government agencies (including the Treasury, the Reserve Bank of Australia, the Departments of: Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; and Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, and the Commonwealth Grants Commission), State and Territory Government agencies, industry associations, trade unions and academic researchers.

Outputs

Statistics on labour force participation, employment and unemployment are published monthly in *Labour Force, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6202.0). More detailed labour force information covering age, country of birth, family status, industry, occupation, hours of work and duration of unemployment is released on the ABS website either monthly or quarterly. Broad measures of labour underutilisation are updated quarterly. Statistics on particular aspects of the Australian labour market, including labour force experience, working arrangements, forms of employment, labour mobility, underemployment, job search experience, independent contracting, labour hire, working time arrangements, retirement and retirement intentions, barriers and incentives to labour force participation, and marginal attachment to the labour force, are published periodically.

The program produces regular statistics on earnings, employee benefits and labour costs. Statistics on average weekly earnings of employees are published quarterly in *Average Weekly Earnings, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6302.0). Distributional data on employee earnings and hours, data on occupational earnings, and data on award and agreement coverage are available every two years in *Employee Earnings and Hours, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6306.0). Data on details of major labour costs are also available. Information on the number of employees and total employee earnings for the public sector (by State and Territory, level of government and industry group) are available annually.

Statistics on job vacancies are published quarterly in *Job Vacancies, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6354.0). Data on industrial disputes, including working days lost, cause of dispute and reason work resumed, are also published quarterly in *Industrial Disputes, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6321.0.55.001).

The quarterly publication *Australian Labour Market Statistics* (ABS cat. no. 6105.0) brings together a wide range of ABS labour data covering demographic characteristics of the labour force, employment and unemployment, labour underutilisation, earnings and labour costs, industrial relations and job vacancies. It also includes feature articles on current labour market issues.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- incorporate revisions to Labour Force Survey estimates, including population revisions as a result of changes to net overseas migration, by July 2010, and revisions to historical series, by December 2010
- review the Labour Force Survey output strategy and survey design – due December 2010
- expand the Labour Force Survey aggregate hours worked series to include industry and state information – due December 2010
- undertake a review into the collection of labour employer statistics, including refreshing user needs and exploring opportunities for streamlining collection processes – commencing mid 2010
- produce new analytical measures of average weekly earnings resulting from the revised conceptual framework for statistics of employee remuneration – due June 2011
- undertake a feasibility study into the development of a longitudinal Labour Force Survey dataset – due December 2010, with the release of microdata by June 2011, if project proves feasible
- undertake further development of the measures of labour underutilisation by investigating the demand for monthly underemployment information, the development of quarterly series for the extended labour force underutilisation rate (ELFUR) and the volume (hours based) measures of labour underutilisation, and investigating the development of a volume measure of the ELFUR – implementation by June 2011, if projects prove feasible.

Economic Analysis and Reporting

Program Manager

Jason Russo
Assistant Statistician
Economic Analysis and
Reporting Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	1.7
Full costs	2.9

% of total costs 0.8%

Staff usage
14 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	1.6
2011-12	1.7
2012-13	1.7
2013-14	1.7

References

Australian Economic Indicators (ABS cat. no. 1350.0)

Experimental Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity (ABS cat. no. 5260.0.55.001; ABS cat. no. 5260.0.55.02)

Measuring the Stock of Human Capital for Australia (ABS cat. no. 1351.0.55.001)

Measuring Human Capital Flows for Australia (ABS cat. no. 1351.0.55.023)

Measuring Option Values and the Economic Benefits of Completing Secondary Education (ABS cat. no. 1352.0.55.082)

Population Ageing and Accumulation of Human Capital in Australia (ABS cat. no. 1351.0.55.022)

Measuring Returns to Post-school Education in Australia (forthcoming)

Objectives

The Economic Analysis and Reporting program was established in mid-2007. The program will expand this year to include macro-economic and price research functions, and the innovation and technology data management and coordination functions. The expanded program is designed to bring micro and macro-economic analysis functions together as part of a consolidated program of statistical research and development.

The program provides enhanced value to ABS business micro-data collections through conducting policy relevant analyses and publishing the findings of those studies. In addition, consultations are conducted with the wider analytical and public policy development community in Australia, to keep pace with evolving analytical and policy imperatives.

The program publishes market sector and industry level estimates of productivity and conducts ongoing research into the measurement and interpretation of productivity estimates. It also compiles and publishes the Australian Economic Indicator series summarising the major macro-economic aggregates for the Australian economy.

Together with the Analytical Services Branch and the Social Data Integration and Analysis Branch, the Economic Analysis and Reporting Branch develops and implements a program of research and analysis in consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

The program manages and coordinates research into macro-economic accounts and indicators, ensuring cohesion and relevance of prices, national accounts, balance of payments and financial sector statistics.

Outputs

The program publishes regular products, namely:

- annual productivity statistics presented in *Australian System of National Accounts* (ABS cat. no. 5204.0)
- *Experimental Estimates of Industry Multifactor Productivity* (ABS cat. no. 5260.0.55.002) – an annual release that presents a range of productivity estimates at the industry level
- *Australian Economic Indicators* (ABS cat. no. 1350.0) – a monthly compendium that is a convenient and comprehensive source of economic time series, including historical data. It also contains feature articles on the analysis and interpretation of data.

Additionally, the program produces research or information papers on the following areas:

- productivity measurement
- economic analysis using the Business Longitudinal Database and other microdata sets
- human capital measurement
- periodic reviews and standards upgrades for macro-economic statistics.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- review the existing methodology and assumptions for the measurement of output, capital and labour inputs in productivity measurement, to align with international best practice – current projects due mid-2010
- contribute to the OECD consortium developing human capital accounts – commence 2010
- produce a preliminary Information Development Plan for Non-Profit Institutions – due June 2010
- undertake the 16th series review of the Consumer Prices Index on behalf of the Prices Branch – due December 2010
- explore the potential for analysis of microdata (e.g. administrative data) in compiling official economic statistics commencing with an assessment of scanner data – due mid-2011
- enhance the measurement of productivity for services – health care study due mid-2011
- develop methodology, content and collection processes for producing a Retail Trade Margins Index, with the intention of compiling and publishing an agreed set of outputs in 2012-13 – commenced 2009-10, target completion for review mid-2011
- undertake research to develop measures of productivity for hard-to-measure industries – ongoing
- undertake research into quality improvements to macro-economic statistics arising from various reviews – ongoing.

Rural and Regional Statistics

Program Manager

Paul Mahoney
Regional Director A/g
South Australian Office

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	0.9
Full costs	2.0
% of total costs	0.6%

Staff usage
8 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	0.7
2011-12	1.2
2012-13	1.2
2013-14	1.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance,
select Regional

Under Regional Statistics
select National Regional
Profile

Other references

*Information Paper:
Regional Research in
Australia – the Statistical
Dimension: an Information
Development Plan for Rural
and Regional Statistics*
(ABS cat. no. 1362.0)

*National Regional
Profile* (ABS cat. no.
1379.0.55.001)

Objectives

The Rural and Regional Statistics program aims to improve the availability of regional data including data at metropolitan, non-metropolitan, urban and rural levels. Activities undertaken under the program include improving access to, and dissemination of, ABS data and data from other sources, and developing new indicators where feasible. Over the next four years a particular focus of this program will be on improving access to geospatial data and supporting key users in the transition to the new ABS standard geography (Australian Statistical Geography Standard – ASGS). Another ongoing focus is on utilising administrative data maintained by Australian, State and Territory Government agencies, where data have a location identifier with the potential to be used in presenting data geographically. The activities of the Rural and Regional Statistics program are undertaken by the Rural and Regional Statistics National Centre.

The Rural and Regional Statistics program provides leadership across the National Statistical Service. It coordinates, produces and disseminates statistics that will: assist policy analysts and researchers understand change across rural, regional and remote areas of Australia; meet the regional policy priority needs of Australian Government agencies; and meet the needs of other researchers and policy analysts interested in comparative assessment between regions in different States and Territories.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- statistical leadership to improve the access to, availability and quality of regional statistics
- the *National Regional Profile* (ABS cat. no. 1379.0.55.001) – a web-based suite of statistics for regions, including local government areas and other areas in the Main Structure of the Australian Standard Geographical Classification, containing data spanning five years and updated annually
- experimental estimates and indicators from administrative data, such as the Australian Taxation Office personal and business income tax data, and Centrelink data on income support
- *Perspectives on Regional Australia* (ABS cat. nos: 1380.0.55.001, 1380.0.55.002, and subsequent) – a series of publications analysing, at varying geographic levels, a range of topics with a particular focus on regions in Australia
- account management of the local government sector with regard to its small area information needs.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- maintain an awareness of emerging priority data needs for regional statistics via engagement with key data users – ongoing
- build extensive collaborative working arrangements with stakeholders in the regional statistics field – ongoing
- improve the dissemination of information about regional data access and availability through a Regional Statistics Newsletter, the Regional Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website, and other appropriate avenues, such as through client networks, conferences, seminars and workshops – ongoing
- lead the implementation of a strategy to improve statistical and technological infrastructure to better enable the dissemination of ABS geospatial statistics – ongoing
- engage with key custodians of regional data outside the ABS and support the provision of accessible geospatial data and quality regional statistics in accordance with ABS goals to foster a National Statistical Service. In particular, ensure that key providers of regional statistics are engaged regarding the implementation of the new ABS standard geography (ASGS) – ongoing.

Census of Population and Housing

Program Manager

Paul Lowe
Assistant Statistician
Population Census Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 25.5
Full costs 49.6

% of total costs 14.0%

Staff usage
143 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 83.4
2011-12 250.4
2012-13 26.3
2013-14 26.3

References

A wide range of reference and product information, and selected census data, are available from the ABS website

www.abs.gov.au/census

Objectives

The Census program conducts a five-yearly Census of Population and Housing. The program aims to accurately and efficiently measure the number and key characteristics of people in Australia on Census night. This provides a reliable basis to estimate the population of each State, Territory and local government area, primarily for electoral purposes (including determining the number of seats allocated to each State and Territory in the House of Representatives) and for distribution of Government funds (Goods and Services Tax revenue) to each State and Territory.

The Census of Population and Housing is the only source of detailed statistics of the numbers and characteristics of the population and its housing within small geographic areas and for small population groups, covering the whole of Australia. This information supports the planning, administration, policy development and evaluation activities of government, business and others.

Outputs

Online Products

- Census of Population and Housing data can be accessed via a range of Online tools. These include QuickStats, MapStats, Census Tables and Community Profiles. In these products Census data are displayed based upon selected location and topic of interest, and can be viewed in different formats including thematic maps or tables.
- CDATA Online: users can create their own tables on a range of topics such as age, education, housing, income, transport, religion, ethnicity, occupation and more. All Census geographies are available.
- Table Builder: users can construct their own tables via an interactive web interface, using a database containing the Census Output Record File. A range of person, family and dwelling classifications is available for users to analyse and output can be made available in tabular, graphical or map based format.

Other Products

- The Census sample files are comprehensive 1% (Basic) and 5% (Expanded) Confidentialised Unit Record Files. These files contain census characteristics for a random sample of person, family, household and dwelling variables.
- Census data packs are a CD-ROM product containing Census of Population and Housing data, down to Collection District level, and digital boundaries in generic format.
- Socio-Economic Indexes for Areas, contains indexes to allow ranking of regions/areas, providing a method of determining the level of social and economic wellbeing of that region.

Customised Data Services

- Where users' specialised information needs cannot be met by standard products, customised data services are available through ABS Information Consultancy.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- determine 2011 Census of Population and Housing product suite – due December 2010
- determine 2011 Census of Population and Housing public relations strategy – due December 2010
- finalise 2011 field operations including enumeration strategies – due December 2010
- establish data processing centre and associated systems and infrastructure including eCensus – due July 2011
- conduct the 2011 Census of Population and Housing main event – due August 2011
- release the first results from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing – due June 2012.

Health and Disability

Program Manager

Paul Jelfs
Assistant Statistician
Health Information Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	4.7
Full costs	9.3

% of total costs 2.6%

Staff usage
44 Staff years

Direct Costs

	\$m
2010-11	4.0
2011-12	4.0
2012-13	3.9
2013-14	3.9

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance select People, then Health or Disability, Ageing and Carers

Objectives

The Health and Disability program provides information about aspects of the health of Australia's population, and about health related services. This includes statistics relating to health status, disability, risk factors and impacts on sub-groups within the population.

Statistics on health and disability describe an important aspect of wellbeing, which can impact on people's capacity to participate in the labour force, and more broadly in the community. Changes in the levels of health measures, such as health conditions, risk factors, and disability, can inform both the development of interventions for prevention and care, and the need for related services over time. These statistics support the policy development, program delivery and evaluation of key government and non-government agencies involved in health, community and family services. They provide information on the impacts of programs and service provision, and can be used to assess areas of unmet need. They are heavily used in research related to health and community issues.

The main clients of the program are Australian Government agencies (including the Departments of: Health and Ageing; and Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs, as well as Centrelink; the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare; and the Australian Institute of Family Studies), State Government agencies, academic and research institutions, and social welfare organisations including those providing health and community services.

Outputs

Outputs of the program include:

- publications and analytical articles that draw from a range of social surveys in the areas of health, disability and carers. Statistical outputs are also available as special tabulations, and through access to Confidentialised Unit Record Files with varying detail released on CD-ROM, the ABS Remote Access Data Laboratory, or for analysis on-site
- information on the health status of the population and associated risk factors, presented in the *National Health Survey: Summary of Results* (ABS cat. no. 4364.0), and in electronic snapshots which focus on particular conditions, risk factors or population groups
- information on the nature and extent of disability and associated needs for care and support, as well as the impacts on carers, available in *Disability, Ageing and Carers, Australia: Summary of Findings* (ABS cat. no. 4430.0)
- results from the 2007 Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing, presented in *National Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing: Summary of Results* (ABS cat. no. 4326.0), providing information about the prevalence and impact of mental health conditions, including use of relevant services.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- analyse the results from the new 2009 Patient Experience Survey – results due July 2010
- develop the 2011-12 Patient Experience survey – due March 2011
- develop the new Australian Health Survey – enumeration from April 2011
- process and analyse the results from the 2009 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers - results due October 2010
- develop the new biennial disability survey – enumeration from 2011
- support the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) requirements for data related to health, mental health, disability and carers including the provision of advice, data and quality statements to COAG and related health committees – ongoing
- analyse aspects of health and disability using data from a range of sources – ongoing.

Education and Training

Program Manager

Ian Crettenden
Assistant Statistician
Indigenous, Education and
Cultural Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 3.1
Full costs 5.8

% of total costs 1.6%

Staff usage
24 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 2.6
2011-12 2.2
2012-13 2.2
2013-14 2.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then
Education and Training

Objectives

The Education and Training program covers the activities of the National Centre for Education and Training Statistics (NCETS), which include the development and compilation of statistics from national administrative collections and the conduct of a number of surveys relevant to learning in Australia.

Key elements of the program in this field include the expansion of the annual National Schools Statistics collection to a comprehensive whole of education system longitudinal learning database; and the regular conduct of a number of surveys related to child care, education, training and work. In partnership with other government agencies that have responsibility for education and training policies and programs, NCETS promotes greater comparability of information across the various education and training sectors and addresses issues such as standards, collaboration, efficiency and resource use across the sectors.

NCETS is closely involved in supporting information needs of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Productivity Agenda, through data development activities that will support a life cycle view of education in Australia and provide a detailed information base to underpin the COAG performance targets. The Centre plays an important role in conceptual and standards development within the education and training sector.

In addition to these activities, the ABS analyses data and provides feedback and advice to stakeholders on relevant topics and emerging issues through its representation on a wide range of committees, and through the release of research papers.

The ABS receives advice on emerging issues and priorities in education and training from its main clients, through involvement in key governance groups. The main clients of the Education and Training program are: the Ministerial Council for Education, Early Childhood Development and Youth Affairs; the Ministerial Council for Tertiary Education and Employment; the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations; State and Territory Government departments responsible for education, training and early childhood development; the National Centre for Vocational Education Research; academic and research institutions; and education providers.

Outputs

The key outputs of the program are:

- statistics from the Survey of Education and Work released in November each year, the National Schools Statistics Collection and, from 2011, data from the new National Early Childhood Education and Care Data Collection
- summary publications, Confidentialised Unit Record Files and datacubes released from regular household surveys such as the Survey of Education and Training, and the Childhood Education and Care Survey
- analytical and comparative analysis of data for the indicators relevant to COAG National Agreements
- a statistical information and dissemination service for education and training statistics; periodic snapshots on thematic issues related to learning in Australia; and the maintenance of an Education and Training Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website
- activities aimed at developing and promoting greater comparability of national classifications and standards for education and training statistics
- statistical leadership, including engaging with clients through committee representation, an ABS network of state liaison officers, and the publication of occasional research papers.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- develop and test content for the 2011 Survey of Adult Competencies – due 2011
- develop, conduct and publish results from the 2011 Childhood Education and Care Survey – due 2011
- develop and implement a new National Early Childhood Education and Care Data Collection – due 2011
- expand and enhance education and training collections, through a collaborative program of work to link data and create a longitudinal learning database, which will incorporate demographic information, with data on early childhood, school, vocational and higher education – due 2012
- develop, conduct and publish results from the 2013 Survey of Education and Training – due 2013
- further develop quality indicators of early childhood education – ongoing
- provide data and analysis to support an improved information base for indicator reporting against the COAG National Agreements and national partnerships on early childhood education, school education, and skills and workforce development – ongoing.

Crime and Justice Statistics

Program Manager

Andrew Henderson
Regional Director A/g
Victorian Office

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	2.5
Full costs	4.8

% of total costs 1.3%

Staff usage
21 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11	2.2
2011-12	2.3
2012-13	2.3
2013-14	2.3

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then Crime
and Justice

Objectives

The Crime and Justice Statistics program leads national statistical activity aimed at developing and improving the information available in this field. The program covers the activities of the National Centre for Crime and Justice Statistics, which comprises of three separate user-funded statistical units: the National Crime Statistics Unit; the National Criminal Courts Statistics Unit; and the National Corrective Services Statistics Unit. These units compile and publish national statistics on recorded crime, courts and corrections, and work to improve the quality of these collections in cooperation with statistical practitioners in the jurisdictions. Boards of Management oversee the work of each of the units. Board Members include jurisdictional representatives responsible for police services, courts administration and corrective services.

The program provides support for, and development of, statistics in broader crime and justice statistical issues such as those identified within the *Information Paper: National Information Development Plan for Crime and Justice (NIDP)* (ABS cat. no. 4520.0). This publication presents the results of consultation with a wide range of stakeholders, together with agreed priorities and a plan of action for the development of crime and justice information.

The ABS also oversees a survey program in the field of crime and justice statistics. This includes both special purpose surveys aimed at producing rates of victimisation for personal and household crimes, and information on the experience and consequences of crime; as well as more general surveys aimed at understanding the experience of crime within a broader social context.

The main clients of this program include the Australian Attorney-General's Department and the State and Territory agencies responsible for police services, courts administration and corrective services. Agencies responsible for criminal justice research and policy are also significant users of program outputs.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- indicators of the level and nature of recorded crime victimisation in Australia presented annually in *Recorded Crime – Victims, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4510.0)
- annual survey data on feelings of personal safety and victimisation information for selected personal and household offences presented in *Crime Victimization, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4530.0)
- characteristics of alleged offenders who have been proceeded against by police, including offence information, available annually from 2007-08 in *Recorded Crime – Offenders, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4519.0)
- characteristics of defendants, including information on their offences and sentences, available annually in *Criminal Courts, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4513.0)
- information from the National Prisoner Census on persons held in adult prisons, including their characteristics, sentence lengths and offences for which they are imprisoned, published annually in *Prisoners in Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4517.0)
- quarterly *Corrective Services, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4512.0), which presents information on numbers and rates of persons in custody and those serving community-based corrections orders
- outputs to promote national standards for crime and justice statistics; recent examples include revised classifications such as the Australian Standard Offence Classification and the National Offence Index, the development of a national crime recording standard for police statistics, and the family and domestic violence conceptual framework.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- conduct a feasibility study on sentence quantum as part of the criminal courts collection – due end 2012
- undertake topic development for the annual crime victimisation survey program – ongoing
- in collaboration with data providers, improve the range, quality and availability of data collected through administrative systems in police, courts and corrective services sectors with a focus on improving Indigenous identification – ongoing
- support efforts to improve information on substance use and ethnicity in relation to crime and justice, recidivism, electronic crime and family and domestic violence – ongoing.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics

Program Manager

Ian Crettenden
Assistant Statistician
Indigenous, Education and
Cultural Statistics

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 4.6
Full costs 9.6

% of total costs 2.7%

Staff usage
38 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 4.4
2011-12 4.2
2012-13 4.2
2013-14 4.2

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then
Indigenous

Objectives

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics program covers the activities of the ABS National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics (NCATSIS), the development and conduct of ABS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander surveys, and other Indigenous statistics produced by the ABS. NCATSIS has responsibility for leadership and coordination of national statistical activity about Australia's Indigenous peoples, both across the ABS and more broadly. This includes consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and working in collaboration with a broad range of external agencies to achieve relevant and appropriate information.

NCATSIS undertakes analyses of data on selected topics of major social significance in the field and, through written reports, informs users of the outcomes of these analyses. NCATSIS plays a role in data development, and implements an Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy to facilitate the return of information to Indigenous communities and organisations and maintain dialogue on data collection and use.

The key elements in the program include: the development, conduct and dissemination of results from the six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) and the six-yearly National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS); Indigenous enumeration in the five-yearly Census of Population and Housing; and production of Indigenous population and associated life-expectancy estimates following each Census. Both the NATSISS and the NATSIHS are designed to produce national and state/territory estimates for remote and non-remote areas. The main clients of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics program are Australian and State and Territory Government agencies, Indigenous communities and organisations, and academic and research institutions.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- publications and other statistical products such as *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey* (ABS cat. no. 4715.0) and *National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey* (ABS cat. no. 4714.0)
- publications and other statistical products from the Census of Population and Housing, such as *Population Characteristics, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians* (ABS cat. no. 4713.0)
- statistical research and analysis and the production of web-based reports for a range of audiences (including government, Indigenous people and their communities, researchers and the general public)
- regular national reports such as *The Health and Welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples* (ABS cat. no. 4704.0) (jointly produced by the ABS and the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare)
- statistical leadership to improve Indigenous statistics on population, mortality, health, housing, community services, education, employment, and law and justice
- provision of subject matter expertise to other areas of the ABS conducting Census and survey collections, or analysing Indigenous data
- coordinating and promoting improvements in Indigenous statistics from administrative collections.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- release statistics on the health and welfare of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples based on analysis of the 2008 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social Survey (NATSISS) – due 2010
- continue development of the 2011-12 National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey (NATSIHS) – for enumeration in 2011-12
- deliver data quality improvements for the Census of Population and Housing and key administrative data sets as agreed in the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Schedule F) – ongoing to 2013
- continue to strengthen the Indigenous Community Engagement Strategy to build stronger relationships with Indigenous communities and increase their statistical capacity by enhancing Indigenous organisation and community awareness and use of available data, and manage provider load on communities – ongoing
- support work on Indigenous statistics in the broader ABS work program including the updating of Indigenous population estimates, projections and life expectancy following each Census, output of Indigenous labour force estimates from the Labour Force Survey, and initial work on measuring Indigenous business activity – ongoing
- support a wide range of clients in accessing and analysing Indigenous statistics from the ABS and administrative collections, including those required for performance monitoring of Council of Australian Governments reform initiatives, the Report on Government Services, Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage, and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Performance Framework – ongoing.

Social Conditions

Program Manager

Bob McColl
Assistant Statistician
Social Conditions Statistics
Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	12.3
Full costs	25.8

% of total costs 7.2%

Staff usage
110 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	10.9
2011-12	11.5
2012-13	9.6
2013-14	9.6

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance select People, then: Personal, Family and Household Finances; Housing; Family and Community Statistics; Social Capital; Ageing; or Children and Youth

Objectives

The Social Conditions program provides statistical leadership and information for a broad picture of the economic and social wellbeing of the Australian population. It provides statistics from: surveys of income, expenditure, wealth, housing, superannuation, families, time use, work and family balance, volunteering and social capital; the Census of Population and Housing; the monthly population survey (including topics on families, pregnancy and employment transitions, and child care); and from collections based on registration systems (such as marriages and divorces).

The program supports the Growing up in Australia Study (Longitudinal Study of Australian Children – LSAC), in partnership with the Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs and the Australian Institute of Family Studies. The program participates in the management of the study and provides: management of the LSAC sample; design and development of data collection instruments; testing of field instruments and procedures; data collection; preparation of the data in a format that can be used by researchers; and contribution to technical reports.

The program's statistics are used to support policy development, program delivery and program evaluation of key government agencies involved in social security, taxation, housing, community and family services, and issues related to older people, children, youth, men and women.

Outputs

The program produces a range of outputs including: frameworks and standards; information development plans; statistics and associated Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs); information/technical papers; guides and analytical articles.

The main outputs of the program are:

- from the Survey of Income and Housing, and the Household Expenditure Survey, *Household Income and Income Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6523.0), *Household Expenditure Survey, Australia: Summary of Results* (ABS cat. no. 6530.0), *Household Wealth and Wealth Distribution, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6554.0), *Housing Occupancy and Costs, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0), and *Housing Mobility and Conditions, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4130.0.55.002)
- from the Survey of Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation, *Employment Arrangements, Retirement and Superannuation, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6361.0)
- from several Monthly population survey components, *Family Characteristics and Transitions, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4442.0), *Child Education and Care, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4402.0), and *Pregnancy and Employment Transitions, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4913.0)
- a profile of the socio-economic characteristics of Australia's adult population with data on a range of social dimensions of the community, published in *General Social Survey: Summary Results, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 4159.0)
- from time use surveys, *How Australians Use Their Time* (ABS cat. no. 4153.0) and *Unpaid Work and the Australian Economy* (ABS cat. no. 5240.0).

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- publish a framework for the measurement and analysis of low household consumption possibilities – due September 2010
- publish an Information Development Plan for housing statistics – due November 2010
- as chair of an international task force, lead and coordinate an update of the 'Canberra Group' Handbook on Household Income Statistics – due February 2011
- publish results from: the 2009-10 Surveys of Income and Housing and Household Expenditure Survey (both due June 2011); the 2010 General Social Survey (due August 2011); and the 2011-12 Survey of Income and Housing (due June 2013)
- publish a framework for statistics on household income, expenditure and wealth – due June 2012.

Culture and Recreation

Program Manager

Ian Crettenden
Assistant Statistician
Education, Crime and
Cultural Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 1.5
Full costs 2.7

% of total costs 0.8%

Staff usage
11 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 1.4
2011-12 1.5
2012-13 1.5
2013-14 1.5

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then
Culture and Recreation

Objectives

The Culture and Recreation program covers the activities of the ABS National Centre for Culture and Recreation Statistics (NCCRS). The NCCRS has responsibility for the leadership and coordination of national statistical activity in the fields of culture, sport and leisure. Its activities include understanding current and emerging policy issues and debates, and determining what statistics might be appropriate to inform decision making. It also provides expertise within the ABS regarding the collection of relevant data, as well as informing governments and the community about culture, sport and leisure statistics, relevant classifications and standards, and appropriate data analysis.

The main clients of the program are the Cultural Ministers Council, the Sport and Recreation Ministers Council, Australian Government agencies (including the Departments of: Health and Ageing; and the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts; as well as the Australia Council, Screen Australia, and the Australian Sports Commission), State and Territory Government departments (in both the culture and sport sectors), and industry bodies.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- statistical activities aimed at developing and promoting national standards, frameworks, classifications and definitions for culture and recreation statistics
- leading the development, coordination and specification of statistical data needs as articulated in the arts and cultural heritage Information Development Plan; ongoing liaison with data users regarding their needs; reviewing strategic directions; and advice on client research projects
- a statistical information and dissemination service for culture, sport and leisure data, including the provision of publications and reports using data from ABS collections; a Culture and Recreation Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website; and production of a regular newsletter
- a statistical service responsible for developing data collections, analysing data and releasing data on: government funding for cultural activities; participation in cultural and leisure activities by adults and children; attendance at culture and sport venues; cultural participation; and involvement in organised sport and physical activities
- compendium publications on arts and culture and on sport and physical recreation that provide statistical summaries of available data
- the provision of advice to clients, including inter-agency statistical working groups involved in the culture and sport sectors.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- develop a framework for cultural statistics – early 2011
- liaise with external researchers in the field to meet research needs as articulated in the arts and cultural heritage Information Development Plan in collaboration with the Cultural Ministers Council Statistics Working Group – ongoing
- review data needs for sport and physical recreation data, paying particular attention to the collection of high priority sport participation and exercise data. Utilise the discussion paper *Sport and Exercise; A Conceptual Model* (ABS cat. no. 4149.0) as the basis for development of future collections – ongoing
- continue to analyse culture and sport data from various ABS household surveys, including: the General Social Survey; Children's Participation in Culture and Leisure Activities; Cultural Participation; and Involvement in Organised Sport and Physical Activities – ongoing
- increase standardisation of culture and sport statistical sources by leading the development of relevant standards – ongoing
- explore options to improve the range and quality of administrative data available to the sector – ongoing
- improve the dissemination of information through the Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website, and other appropriate avenues, such as through client networks, conferences, seminars and workshops – ongoing.

Social and Progress Reporting

Program Manager

Gemma Van Halderen
Assistant Statistician
Social Data Integration and
Analysis Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	4.6
Full costs	8.2
% of total costs	2.3%
Staff usage	
35 Staff years	

Direct Costs

	\$m
2010-11	5.1
2011-12	4.9
2012-13	5.4
2013-14	5.4

References

Australian Social Trends
(ABS cat. no. 4102.0)

*Measures of Australia's
Progress* (ABS cat. no.
1370.0)

Objectives

The Social and Progress Reporting program informs government and the community about wellbeing and progress in Australia. It draws together data and analysis both from within the ABS and from a range of other sources, and produces reports covering a wide range of social and other issues. The reports include analysis of current circumstances, how circumstances have changed over time, how different groups of people have been affected, and how various factors may have accounted for observed trends. The reports provide information on the wellbeing of the population, the extent of need and disadvantage in society, contemporary social issues, the interrelationships between economic, social and environmental aspects of life, and whether life in Australia is getting better.

The program is also responsible for providing leadership and coordination relating to the conceptual organisation of social statistics including the overall social statistics framework and related conceptual models. The framework's two primary dimensions – areas of social concern and population groups – are central to ABS social statistics collection and reporting activity.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are reports that take a cross-cutting approach and bring together information on the situation of Australians across a range of areas of concern and for a variety of population groups of interest. The reports describe aspects of Australian life and how these are changing over time.

The key outputs are:

- *Australian Social Trends* (ABS cat. no. 4102.0), a quarterly flagship publication that contains articles on contemporary social issues and a range of social indicators covering major areas of social concern (such as health, work, and family and community)
- *Measures of Australia's Progress* (ABS cat. no. 1370.0), published electronically is an annual web-based product that presents a national summary of economic, social and environmental progress through indicators and descriptive text.

Other outputs include:

- seminars based on *Australian Social Trends* (ABS cat. no. 4102.0) and *Measures of Australia's Progress* (ABS cat. no. 1370.0), conducted across Australia regularly for key stakeholders
- analysis of social data sets addressing technical and social issues and contributing to the Analytical Community forward work program.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- under the guidance of the Measures of Australia's Progress (MAP) Expert Reference Group, review content to ensure the relevance of the MAP product and to more widely promote its use in the community through the development of an interactive web-based delivery mechanism to be launched at NatStats 2010 – due September 2010, and ongoing
- under the guidance of the MAP Expert Reference Group, develop the conceptual foundation for progress as the basis of the next version of the MAP product and in the context of Australia's high level involvement in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Global Project on Progress – due December 2014
- continue the quarterly publication of *Australian Social Trends* (ABS cat. no. 4102.0), ensuring that the articles and social indicators reflect current and emerging social concerns and that the delivery of the publication through the web is kept up to date and engaging for stakeholders – ongoing
- further strengthen the analytical value of the ABS's rich data holdings through research and development papers and working collaboratively with a range of internal and external stakeholders – ongoing.

Migrant Statistics

Program Manager

Ian Crettenden
Assistant Statistician
Education, Crime and
Cultural Statistics Branch

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	0.7
Full costs	1.3

% of total costs 0.4%

Staff usage
7 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	0.7
2011-12	0.7
2012-13	0.7
2013-14	0.7

References

Topics @ a Glance page

www.abs.gov.au

Under Topics @ a Glance
select People, then
Migrant & Ethnicity

Objectives

The Migrant Statistics program covers the activities of the ABS National Migrant Statistics Unit, which has focus on temporary and permanent migrant settlement within Australia. The unit provides data relevant to migrant populations, and is involved in the development and compilation of a range of survey and administrative data outputs relevant to migrants. Activities include understanding current and emerging policy issues and debates, and determining what statistics might be appropriate to inform decision making relevant to migrants and diverse ethnic groups. The program also provides expertise within the ABS regarding the collection of relevant data, as well as informing governments and the community about migrant and ethnicity statistics, relevant classifications and standards, and appropriate data analysis.

The major stakeholders of the program are the Department of Immigration and Citizenship, and the various government agencies providing services to migrant and ethnic groups, including State and Territory Governments.

Outputs

Major program outputs include:

- statistics released in the triennial *Labour Force Status and Other Characteristics of Recent Migrants, Australia* (ABS cat. no. 6250.0)
- the *Guide to Migrant Statistical Sources* (ABS cat no. 3414.0) which contains information relating to ABS and non-ABS data
- the *Migrant Data Matrices* (ABS cat. no. 3415.0) which bring together, in the one location, a range of ABS data relevant to migrants
- the *Perspectives on Migrants* (ABS cat. no. 3416.0) series which provides an analysis of data from the ABS and other sources to provide a more comprehensive picture of migrants
- a Migrant and Ethnicity Topics @ a Glance page on the ABS website
- statistical activities aimed at promoting and developing national standards such as frameworks, classifications and definitions (e.g. *Standards for Statistics on Cultural and Language Diversity*, (ABS cat. no. 1289.0))
- coordination and specification of statistical data needs through consultation with data users and establishing statistical developments to meet those needs
- coordination of ABS activity to ensure that issues relevant to migrants are taken into account in statistical development activities.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- undertake analysis of the nature and extent of migrant mobility in the period following initial arrival in Australia – late 2010
- undertake further quality assessment and analysis of the migrant component of the ABS Census Data Enhancement project – ongoing
- explore, assess and utilise the administrative data holdings of the Department of Immigration and Citizenship and undertake collaborative projects focussed on statistical development – ongoing
- explore, assess and utilise administrative data held within other government agencies – ongoing
- explore options for improved integration of ABS and other migrant data to address identified data gaps – ongoing
- seek advice from the Migrant Statistics Advisory Group about major data needs and priorities with respect to migrant and ethnicity related issues – ongoing.

Analytical Services

Program Manager

Shiji Zhao
Assistant Statistician
Analytical Services Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 2.5
Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage
21 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 2.8
2011-12 3.1
2012-13 2.9
2013-14 2.9

Objectives

The Analytical Services program develops new analytical products and provides analysis services to producers and users of social and economic data. Its major areas of focus are: time series analysis (including seasonal adjustment); the construction and interpretation of socio-economic indexes; the development of data confidentialisation methodology; and general modelling and analytical methodologies.

The provision of new and innovative analytical products (such as modelled estimates, indexes and other analyses) are an important contribution of the Analytical Services program for improving ABS processes and for influencing external policy development and decision making. Data confidentialisation methods, especially when applied to microdata files, allow researchers outside the ABS to undertake more sophisticated analyses of their own on statistical data than would otherwise be the case.

Time series in seasonally adjusted and trend form are an important input to policy formation, decision making and research in government, academia and the private sector. Government users include Commonwealth economic policy agencies (especially the Treasury and the Reserve Bank of Australia), State Treasuries, the Australian Government, State Governments, and local government service delivery agencies.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program include specialist analytical support for improving existing ABS methodology, and the development of new analytical products for potential dissemination to data users and others in the National Statistical Service. The program develops a range of analytical products including new time series, analytical frameworks, databases and models to measure socio-economic concepts. Additionally, the program undertakes ongoing methodological development work to protect the confidentiality of microdata files and tabular outputs.

The outputs of this work are disseminated via a series of *Research Papers* (ABS cat. no. 1351.0). These papers may contain analytical work in preliminary stages, in order to stimulate discussion and feedback. Time series products and analyses appear in many ABS publications on a regular basis.

The program also publishes two regular products. The *Modellers' Database* (ABS cat. no. 1364.0.15.003) is used by economists to understand and forecast short and medium-term developments in the Australian macro-economy. It was developed by the Treasury and is maintained jointly by the Treasury and the ABS. The *Treasury Model of the Australian Economy – TSP Version* (ABS cat. no. 1364.0.15.001) permits users to run forecasts and to simulate the effects of policy settings. Both are released quarterly.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are:

- apply techniques of data combining, data pooling and small area estimation to enhance ABS products – due June 2011
- enhance seasonal adjustment process for improving the quality and coherence of ABS economic statistics – due June 2011
- develop methodology to support improvements in the quality and expansion of price indexes – due June 2011
- develop and implement improved measures for the hours worked series from the Labour Force Survey – due June 2011
- investigate methodology for providing information and indicators to support the COAG performance reporting framework – due June 2012
- develop and implement methodology for the construction and analysis of socio-economic indexes from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing – due December 2012
- develop data confidentiality methods, and implement a web-based application, that will enable researchers to remotely access, process and analyse detailed data – June 2013
- develop methodology for linkage of multiple datasets and analysis of linked data to support statistical data integration – due December 2013.

INFRASTRUCTURE PROGRAMS



Geography

Program Manager

Paul Williams
First Assistant Statistician A/g
Population, Labour, Industry
& Environment Statistics
Group

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 2.7

Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage
24 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 2.8

2011-12 2.5

2012-13 2.8

2013-14 2.8

References

www.abs.gov.au

Select Methods &
Standards

Objectives

The Geography program has the following objectives:

- to set, maintain and promote statistical geography, mapping and Geographic Information System (GIS) standards for the ABS
- to improve the ABS's capability in spatial statistics by implementing appropriate GIS and geocoding technology for the collection, production and dissemination of such statistics
- provide geographic analysis, mapping and GIS support services for the ABS.

Outputs

The main outputs of the program are:

- the annual publication *Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC) – Electronic Structures* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0.15.001), the classification manual *Statistical Geography Volume 1 – Australian Standard Geographical Classification (ASGC)* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0), and digital map boundaries
- the Australian Statistical Geography Standard (ASGS), developed and implemented to replace the ASGC from July 2011
- a web portal that provides information on geographic classifications, and progress on ASGS implementation
- geographic correspondences for relating statistics on one geographic area to another
- the ABS Master Spatial Database
- geographical areas and mapping designed to support the execution of the Census of Population and Housing
- development and support of geographical products to support ABS users such as the corporate address coder and interactive spatial coder
- advice and support services, including training, to meet the mapping, address coding, GIS, geographical classification and spatial data management needs of the ABS and external clients.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- undertake a program of work for the Census including collector workload area design and provision of workload maps for Census field operations – due March 2011
- review the ASGC and develop, publish and implement a new ASGS – due July 2011
- continue to revise and publish the *Australian Standard Graphic Classification* (ABS cat. no. 1216.0) and associated digital boundaries and correspondences – due in July each year until 2011
- revise mesh block boundaries to reflect growth and changes to the topographic base mapping in preparation for the 2011 Census of Population and Housing and the Agricultural Census – ongoing
- engage with internal and external users to promote and support the transition to the new mesh block based ASGS – ongoing
- undertake spatial analysis and mapping projects in conjunction with subject matter areas – ongoing
- improve address coding systems, based on working with the Public Sector Mapping Agencies and State land agencies to improve the Geocoded National Address File and also by supplementing this data with internal address information, such as specialised dwellings – ongoing
- provide input into ABS development of corporate “spatially enabled” systems – ongoing.

Data Management and Classifications

Program Manager

Michael Beahan
Assistant Statistician
Data Management and
Classifications Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 2.4

Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage

11 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 2.3

2011-12 2.3

2012-13 2.3

2013-14 2.3

References

www.abs.gov.au

Select Methods &
Standards

Objectives

The Data Management and Classifications program provides important support functions that underpin the ABS mission. The program is responsible for promoting the comparability, integration and quality of ABS statistics, through the use of standard concepts, definitions, classifications and procedures. It is also responsible for the infrastructure used to hold key definitional metadata and to store statistical data from which ABS outputs are sourced.

The program seeks to achieve this by:

- setting and reviewing ABS policies and principles for key statistical standards and classifications, and for data and metadata management best practice
- developing, maintaining and reviewing related infrastructure
- providing leadership and support to subject matter areas on the implementation of key standards, practices and procedures
- providing advice and assistance on the application of Australian statistical and data management standards to official bodies.

Outputs

Key outputs from the programs cover the following areas:

- development and maintenance of key national standards on statistical units, concepts, definitions, questions and classifications that underpin population, social and economic statistics
- development and maintenance of key infrastructure and processes for implementing relevant standards and classifications across ABS collections
- continuity of Information Warehouse and Corporate Metadata Repository infrastructure that underpin the production of ABS statistics
- data management policies and best practice advice to subject matter areas
- data management and metadata guidelines and advice for the National Statistical Service.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- review the Australian and New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (ANZSCO) to ensure that it remains relevant by identifying emerging occupations – due June 2012
- develop the next generation of coding tools – due June 2012
- implement updates to the 2006 Australian and New Zealand Standard Industrial Classification (ANZSIC 06) to ensure that it remains relevant by identifying emerging industries – due June 2013
- support the Information Management Transformation Program in establishing standards for exchange of data within the ABS and National Statistical Service – due June 2013
- review and maintain key statistical standards and classifications for ABS population, social and economic statistics – ongoing
- promulgate relevant standards for population and economic statistics on the ABS intranet and the ABS website – ongoing
- maintain and improve autocoding facilities and computer assisted coding indexes – ongoing
- provide training and assistance to subject matter areas in the use and/or development of statistical standards and associated tools for their implementation – ongoing
- maintain and extend the ABS Information Warehouse as the central, authoritative repository for holding, managing and sourcing output data – ongoing
- re-develop, align and integrate key data and metadata management infrastructure with mainstream input processing, output production and data archiving systems as proposed in the End-to-End Metadata Management Strategy – ongoing
- design, develop and implement data and metadata management models, practices and infrastructure for the National Statistical Service – ongoing.

Integrated Collection

Program Manager

Lane Masterton
Assistant Statistician
Integrated Collections
Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 52.9

Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage
275 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 50.9

2011-12 52.3

2012-13 48.3

2013-14 48.3

References

www.abs.gov.au

*Information for Survey
Participants*

Select Survey Participant
Information

*Household/Business
Surveys Charter*

Select Survey Participant
Information, then ABS
Surveys Charter

Objectives

Integrated Collections, established in mid 2007, provides a data collection service for the ABS across business, household and administrative data collections. In doing so, it supports the ABS corporate mission and objectives by providing a high quality, timely and cost effective service while maintaining the trust and cooperation of providers through:

- developing and maintaining a skilled and committed home and office-based interviewer workforce
- developing and adopting the world's best practice in data collection
- improving and integrating ABS data collection business and systems processes
- providing support for data collection cost modelling and workforce capacity planning
- upholding the confidentiality of information provided to the ABS
- continually improving the processes and instruments to improve the interaction with providers.

Outputs

The main outputs of Integrated Collections are:

- data collection and capture capability for ABS surveys and administrative sources
- advice to subject matter areas on issues related to the collection of data from both administrative sources and ABS surveys
- survey frames for ABS surveys
- ABS survey and administrative data collection systems, procedures and instruments
- cleansed datasets, including administrative unit record data and ABS survey data.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- implement an integrated Provider Engagement Strategy to ensure enhanced cooperation from household and business providers – due Dec 2010
- integrate data collection processes across household and business based collections where effective and according to agreed Corporate directions – due June 2011
- develop and implement a new household survey sampling system based on the new Australian Standard Geographical Classification – 2012
- identify and progress processes and systems supporting data collection operations, including electronic data reporting options and modernisation of field collection technology – ongoing
- implement and administer the ABS field Interviewers Certified Agreement – ongoing
- increase the extent of administrative data acquisition undertaken by the ABS including greater use of corporate facilities – ongoing
- implement tailored instruments to better meet provider needs, and improve the efficiency of the capture of data from those forms – ongoing.

Customer Services

Program Manager

Donna Nicholson
Assistant Statistician A/g
Customer Services Branch

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 11.5

Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage

110 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 11.5

2011-12 11.5

2012-13 11.9

2013-14 11.9

Objectives

The Customer Services program supports the ABS mission by assisting business partners to effectively communicate official statistics through a wide range of high quality information products and services and communication channels.

The program's key objectives are to maximise the informed use and users of ABS statistics; optimising the mix of dissemination channels and improving the efficiency and effectiveness of statistical communication. The program seeks to utilise leading edge communication and dissemination technology and aspires to showcase 'best practice' communication of official statistics. It provides and uses market intelligence to identify and meet the statistical needs of ABS clients and customers, including governments, businesses, media, educational institutions, libraries, other private organisations and members of the community generally.

The program provides a range of information solutions for customers – from a telephone referral service, through user-pays consultancies, to supporting the complex needs of clients through improved access to, and use of, microdata. It is responsible for developing a national approach to improving statistical literacy and capability across selected areas of the Australian population.

The Customer Services program works with ABS business partners to provide many of the services and processes by which statistical releases are prepared. The program helps business partners produce web content efficiently and effectively, with minimum effort on their behalf, and provides the tools, training and processes to help achieve this. In addition, the program ensures that the presentation and usability of ABS products are enhanced by the use of relevant standards developed based on objective research.

Outputs

The main output of the program is in the provision of a range of ABS product and delivery options to clients and customers, which includes:

- the ABS website www.abs.gov.au as the primary vehicle for ABS statistical communication
- electronic publications, dynamic Census data outputs, datacubes and time series spreadsheets (all published to the ABS website)
- information consultancies, providing data tailored to customers' needs
- Confidentialised Unit Record Files (CURFs) available in CD-ROM format, via the Remote Access Data Laboratory (RADL™) or ABS Data Laboratory (ABSDDL)
- telephone information and referral services
- outreach and statistical training programs provided across Australia
- lesson plans for teachers and interactive activities for school students
- training and help in support of business partner delivery of statistical products to the web
- managing all pre-release embargo lockup arrangements.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- implement a new output data storage facility and provide interactive web services of ABS data to clients – due 2010-11
- undertake CURF pricing review – due 2010-2011
- review the Client Services Network structure so that future business strategies can be supported and will allow for greater flexibility and agility – due 2010-11
- assist with the planning and building capability for delivery of 2011 Census of Population and Housing products and services – 2010-11 and 2011-12
- work towards improved use of ABS statistics by small and medium businesses – due 2010-11
- take a lead role in an international collaborative project for shared microdata access infrastructure and increase use of ABS microdata by researchers (for CURF and new Remote Execution Environment for Microdata services) – ongoing
- continuously improve the ABS website, in particular to improve search facilities, navigation, visualisation and presentation of data – ongoing
- remediate and work towards replacement of ageing dissemination systems and website – ongoing
- increase statistical literacy among the five target groups identified by the ABS (school students, tertiary students, opinion leaders, decision makers and general community) – ongoing
- capture, understand and report evidence about information consumption needs and behaviours of the Australian community – ongoing.

Methodology

Program Manager

Paul Schubert
Assistant Statistician A/g
Statistical Services Branch
Methodology and Data
Management Division

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 9.8

Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage

75 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 8.6

2011-12 9.0

2012-13 9.1

2013-14 9.1

References

Methodology Research
Papers series

www.abs.gov.au

Select Methods &
Standards

Objectives

The Methodology program provides specialist services to meet new and ongoing demands in statistics. Much of the work has the goal of ensuring the methods underlying ABS outputs are based on sound, defensible statistical principles and are cost effective.

The program has specific responsibilities for supporting the statistical collection process. It provides advice on survey design and methods, and on data quality, through all stages of the survey cycle. It also provides leadership in developing the future methodological infrastructure of the ABS. The program also undertakes research on statistical methods to improve the efficiency and accuracy of ABS work.

Outputs

The program's main internal products include specialist support for survey design, estimation and analysis, and practices and standards for design of data collection instruments. The program applies operation research techniques to improve the cost efficiency of ABS collections. It conducts quality reviews of methods and statistical products that contribute to improvements in data quality and to reductions in the load on providers. The program supports the development of training courses on mathematical, statistical and other methodological issues for all ABS staff.

Externally, the program produces a series of *Research Papers* (ABS cat. no. 1351.0), which present the results of current research or analysis, often of an experimental nature, to encourage discussion and comment. In addition, guidelines on current best practices of statistical methodology are also produced.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- improve the methods for editing and processing of price indexes – due December 2010
- develop and implement best practices and standards for collecting survey data by web-forms and other electronic modes – due December 2010
- improve tools and procedures for managing statistical risks in collections, and assist ABS staff and agencies in the National Statistical Service to apply those tools and procedures – due June 2011
- improve cost efficiency of survey operations by applying operations research techniques – due June 2011
- improve capability for the design and testing of survey questionnaires – due June 2011
- review the methodology associated with the population and household estimates based on the 2011 Census of Population and Housing – due December 2012
- improve the methodology for the estimation of indigenous population – due June 2012
- improve the methodology for conduct and processing of Census of Population and Housing, for implementation in the 2016 Census – due June 2013
- develop sample and estimation methods for new household surveys and business surveys, and redesign/s of existing collections to improve quality and cost efficiency – due June 2013.

Corporate Services

Program Managers

Vince Lazzaro
Assistant Statistician
Human Resources Branch

Michael Belcher
Assistant Statistician
Chief Financial Officer

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 85.3

Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage
217 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 88.4

2011-12 97.1

2012-13 95.0

2013-14 95.0

Objectives

Corporate Services Division (CSD) will provide leadership and strategic support to assist the ABS to achieve its Strategic Directions through partnering with business areas in the ABS by:

- providing timely, relevant, high quality corporate services to meet the changing needs of internal and external clients
- engaging and influencing stakeholders to ensure the ABS's interests are accommodated, including in whole of government initiatives
- positioning the ABS to meet its current and future workforce needs
- substantially improving the quality of corporate infrastructure, and the quality and timeliness of management information
- leading the ABS in the areas of culture, leadership capability development, and financial and people management through the Strategic Alignment Program and the Corporate Services Improvement Program (CSIP).

Outputs

Outputs for CSD fall into the following categories: services that are delivered to ABS employees and policy advice, framework development and internal consultancy. These are provided through two organisational groups: Financial Management Branch and Human Resources Branch. Each branch operates on a national basis and provides services to all ABS offices. Some national business lines are delivered from locations other than central office. These include Pay and Entitlements, Delegations and Relocations, Management Capability and Development, Accounts Payable and Receivable Services, National Health and Safety, and Recruitment Services.

The main outputs of CSD's program are:

- a full range of services to support the Human Resources (HR) life cycle, from recruitment through to retirement
- leadership, support and guidance (including building capability) to ensure the ABS is maximising individual employees' potential
- a full range of services to support the physical working environment, including implementing changes associated with the strategic use of property and space management
- leadership and consultancy on workforce planning, budgeting, business continuity, financial reporting, financial policies and support
- maintenance and development of corporate support systems and services.

Developments

The main medium-term developments are to:

- develop and implement new Enterprise Agreements for ABS employees – due 2011
- optimise, upgrade and integrate HR and Financial Systems and associated management information – ongoing from 2010 to 2012
- embed the new CSIP national corporate services delivery model and continue to enhance client service capability and culture – ongoing
- implement the key 'ABS people plan' strategies (including those related to workforce planning, people and performance management, learning and development, leadership and general capability enhancement and cultural renewal) – ongoing
- support the business outputs of the ABS by ensuring the ongoing development and maintenance of statistical capability, leadership and business skills in the workforce – ongoing.

Technology Services

Program Manager

Jenine Borowik
First Assistant Statistician
Technology Services
Division

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 30.4

Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage
393 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 29.7

2011-12 30.7

2012-13 30.6

2013-14 30.6

Objectives

The key objectives for the Technology Services Division are to:

- ensure the ABS leverages information technology strategically to support its mission
- ensure the ABS has effective security policy and practices
- represent the ABS and build strategic relationships in the broader Information and Communication Technology (ICT), government and international statistical communities in relation to ICT and Security matters
- ensure sustainability of ICT investments and services through building and maintaining a highly capable and motivated ICT workforce.

Behind the key objectives of the Division, there are four business drivers:

- modernisation of the information management infrastructure within the ABS to support its data management and business process standardisation strategies
- ensuring statistical and business solutions are meeting current and future needs
- optimising ICT in the ABS through innovation, benchmarking and continuous improvement
- implementing, and contributing to, whole of government ICT policies and initiatives.

Outputs

The strategic directions and business drivers shape outputs across three Branches in the Division – Technology Infrastructure Branch, Technology Applications Branch and the Technology Strategy and Planning Branch. These branches support the major processes for statistical and administrative functions of the ABS, and maintain and develop the underlying technology systems and infrastructure. The main outputs of the program for the next four years are:

- an ABS ICT Strategy
- a full range of application analysis, design, programming, acquisition and commissioning services to assist improving ABS business processes
- leadership on new and developing technologies and their applicability to the ABS, including green ICT
- a reliable and secure technology infrastructure service
- an investment approach to managing the organisation's technology assets
- an effective and productive knowledge management and desktop operating environment
- a rich collaboration environment that supports the work of all staff, including virtual teams
- development and implementation of enterprise architecture strategies
- use of Whole of Government strategies for the application of technology to business processes
- an effective ICT workforce that strives to enhance the organisation's performance.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- replace the Household Survey Management system legacy software, updating to the new geography classification – progressively to 2010-11
- develop eReporting tools via web forms with a view to support the Agricultural Census – due 2011
- improve processing of Tax Data for business substitution purposes – due 2011
- enhance the International Trade in Services system – due 2011
- develop a replacement facility for the Sample Management System – due late 2011
- improve productivity through collaborative tools and modernised desktop environment – to 2012
- deliver systems and technical support for the conduct, processing and reporting of results from the 2011 Census of Population and Housing – progressively up to the release of final results in 2012-13
- develop new systems to measure expenses in pensioner households – ongoing to 2012-13
- implement the Working@ABS modernisation of the ABS Knowledge Management Environment with Web 2.0 tools – progressively to 2013
- collaboratively develop the remote execution environment for microdata – due 2013
- develop a new Prices Processing system – progressively to 2014
- enhance data access and environment security – progressively to 2014
- support a range of initiatives of the Information Management Transformation Program – ongoing
- migrate new social statistics questionnaire development tool and facilities – ongoing
- continue development of macro-editing capabilities – ongoing
- improve the ABS's ability to publish and communicate data in ways relevant to users – ongoing
- enhance remote access for productivity, emergency preparedness and field data capture – ongoing
- commence development of systems and processes for the 2016 Census of Population and Housing – ongoing.

State and Territory Statistical Services

Program Managers

Regional Directors

Resources

2009-10	\$m
Direct cost	9.6
Full costs	19.6

% of total costs 5.5%

Staff usage
114 Staff years

Direct Costs	\$m
2010-11	9.5
2011-12	9.2
2012-13	9.1
2013-14	9.1

Objectives

The State and Territory Statistical Services (STSS) program contributes to the development of well informed policy and decisions in States and Territories through statistical promotion, leadership and representation. The STSS program supports the ABS objective of an expanded and improved National Statistical Service (NSS) within each State and Territory.

The outcomes expected of the STSS program are:

- strong, collaborative relationships with State and Territory Governments
- a timely, relevant, and responsive statistical service that meets high priority State and Territory needs beyond those that can be satisfied by the ABS national programs.

As a component of the NSS:

- increased availability of good quality State and Territory and regional data from ABS and non-ABS sources that meets high priority State and Territory statistical needs, as far as possible within national standards and frameworks
- informed and increased use of State and Territory and regional data from ABS and non-ABS sources
- improved application of statistical practice and data sharing across agencies within each jurisdiction
- enhanced ABS decisions from the input of State and Territory views to ABS program reviews, research, and other specific work program activities.

Outputs

The main outputs of the STSS project are:

- State and Territory Government statistical policy/coordination committees, which facilitate collaborative strategies for improved statistical coordination within each jurisdiction
- ongoing assessment of statistical priorities for each State and Territory as an input to the ABS forward work program development
- statistical projects designed to meet high priority needs of State and Territory Governments, including undertaking household surveys on specific topics for individual jurisdictions
- in collaboration with State and Territory Governments, and as a component of the NSS, projects undertaken to improve the quality, coherence, comparability, and availability of administrative and other data held by State and Territory Government agencies
- statistical consultancy services covering a wide range of services including survey design, statistical analysis, methodological advice and assistance, and a range of statistical training and development activities
- advice and intelligence to ABS national programs on relevant State and Territory statistical needs and issues
- provision of support for the advancement of NSS objectives in the statistical environments of each State and Territory
- provision of support to State and Territory demography work programs as required.

Developments

The main medium-term developments in the program are to:

- support the promotion and engagement with State and Territory stakeholders to enable the 2011 Census of Population and Housing to produce high quality statistics – end 2011
- undertake statistical projects, including the development and processing of State and Territory household surveys – ongoing
- advance statistical work in four priority areas of joint interest to all States and Territories – local level demography, statistics on Indigenous Australians, children and youth statistics and local level economic development – ongoing
- enhance the ABS's contacts and networks with State and Territory Government agencies, including through the use of strategic outposts, and optimise feedback of relevant statistical information to and from the ABS – ongoing
- identify and evaluate the demand for, and supply of, statistical data, and in collaboration with ABS programs and State and Territory Governments, develop strategies to fill high priority gaps with particular emphasis on improving areas directly related to better informing the Council of Australian Governments priorities around Indigenous, education, youth and health measures – ongoing
- support the implementation of the NSS by providing assistance to State and Territory Governments with a focus on promoting good statistical practices and improving the quality of administrative datasets – ongoing.

Office of the Statistician

Program Manager

Gillian Nicoll
Assistant Statistician
Office of the Statistician

Resources

2009-10 \$m

Direct cost 3.7
Full costs –

% of total costs –

Staff usage
24 Staff years

Direct Costs \$m

2010-11 3.6
2011-12 3.6
2012-13 4.2
2013-14 4.2

Objectives

The Office of the Statistician (OOTS) provides sound independent strategic advice to the Australian Statistician and the ABS Executive, assists with the identification and management of key risks to the ABS, and ensures effective relationships and communication with internal and external strategic stakeholders.

Key objectives of the program are to:

- review and update legislation and policy, and ensure compliance across ABS operations
- promote and protect the ABS brand and reputation, in particular with the media and Parliament
- develop an organisational monitoring framework that provides the ABS Executive with the information required to ensure the right plans, initiatives and strategies are in place to meet strategic directions
- support a strategic approach to international engagement with national statistical organisations.

Outputs

OOTS provides a range of key corporate outputs that support the Australian Statistician's administrative, statistical and strategic roles. OOTS consists of three organisational sections: Strategic Policy and Planning, Corporate Communications, and Strategic Liaison and Risk Management.

The main outputs of the OOTS program are:

- leadership and consultancy to the ABS on policy, legislation, legal compliance (such as Freedom of Information requests and reporting), business and financial planning, risk management, and international relations
- a high quality communication service for the ABS and the Australian Statistician
- independent strategic advice to Australian Statistician and the ABS Executive through a range of activities such as the development and reporting of the organisational performance monitoring and risk management frameworks
- coordination of the ABS's assistance to other countries and the International Engagement program for the ABS
- governance and secretariat services to senior management and external forums such as the Australian Statistical Advisory Council, ABS Management Meetings and the ABS Audit Committee
- a sustainable and strategic ABS forward work program, budget and annual report.

Developments

The main medium-term developments are to:

- review the ABS governance framework – due August 2010
- develop a central repository for statistical Memoranda of Understanding for use within the ABS - due December 2010
- develop an organisational performance monitoring framework in consultation with the ABS Executive – commence reporting 2010
- update policy and legislation, and provide advice and education to ensure ABS understanding and compliance with legislation – ongoing
- continually review and implement the ABS International Engagement Strategy to ensure relevance – ongoing
- develop and implement a comprehensive internal and external communication strategy – ongoing.

APPENDIX



Appendix

Statistical User Groups

The user groups advising the ABS on its forward work program include:

National groups

Advisory Committee on Australian and International Disability Data
Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Statistics
Agriculture Statistics Forum
Analytical Community Reference Group
Australasian Mortality Data Interest Group
Australia-New Zealand Population Workshop
Australian Bureau of Statistics – Department of Industry, Tourism
and Resources High Level Liaison Committee
Australian Government Statistical Forum
Australian Health Survey Reference Group
Australian Statistics Advisory Council
Australian Transport Data Action Network
Census - Indigenous Enumeration Strategy Working Group
Childcare and Early Years Learning Survey Reference Group
Children and Youth Statistics Advisory Group
Consumer Price Index Advisory Group - 16th Series Review
Cultural Ministers' Council Statistics Working Group
Demography Statistics Advisory Group
Economic Statistics User Group
Education and Training Statistics Advisory Group
Energy Statistics Forum
Energy Statistics Steering Committee
Family Statistics Advisory Group
General Social Survey Reference Group
Household Income and Expenditure Statistics User Advisory Group
Housing Statistics User Advisory Group
Information and Communication Technology Statistics Reference Group
Innovation (incl. R&D) Statistics Reference Group
Input-Output Statistics User Group
International Trade in Services User Group
Labour Statistics Advisory Group
Longitudinal Studies Advisory Group
Measures of Australia's Progress Expert Reference Group
Methodology Advisory Committee
Migrant Statistics Advisory Group
Migrant Statistics Reference Group
Mining User Advisory Group
National Advisory Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Health Information and Data
National Ageing Statistics Advisory Group
National Community Services Information Management Group
National Corrective Services Statistics Advisory Group

National Crime Statistics Advisory Group
National Criminal Courts Statistics Advisory Group
National Disability Information Management Group
National Health Information Group Management Principal Committee
National Health Information Group Statistical Information Committee
National Health Information Standards and Statistics Committee
National Housing and Homelessness Information Management Group
Population Estimates Technical Workshop
Population Health Information Development Group
Private Hospital Statistics User Group
Productivity Measurement Reference Group
Standard Business Reporting Taxonomy Approval Committee
Standing Committee on Recreation and Sport Research Group
State Accounts User Group
Statistical Clearing House User Group
Steering Committee for the Review of Commonwealth/State Service Provision
Structural Issues in the Workforce Sub-Committee, Workforce Profile Working Group
(Community and Disability Services Ministers' Advisory Council (CDSMAC) Sub-Committee)
Survey of Adult Competencies Reference Group
Survey of Disability Ageing and Carers Advisory Group
Survey of Education and Training Reference Group
Survey of Mental Health and Wellbeing Reference Group
Time Use Survey Advisory Group
Water Statistics Forum

State and Territory Government groups

Government Agencies Statistical Committee (South Australia)
Northern Territory Statistical Liaison Committee
Queensland Statistical Table
Social Statistics Consultative Groups (Western Australia)
State Statistical Forum (all States and Territories)
Statistical Coordination and User Forum (New South Wales)
Statistical Policy Committee (Tasmania)
Statistical Policy Committee and Economic (Western Australia)
Tasmanian Statistical Advisory Committee
Victorian Statistics Advisory Forum

