

**PROGRAMME 3 — AUSTRALIAN BUREAU OF
STATISTICS**

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Objective

To assist and encourage informed decision-making, research and discussion within governments and the community by providing a high-quality, user oriented and dynamic statistical service.

Table 4.1: Summary of Appropriations to the Programme and Summary of Underlying Outlays

	1997-98 Budget (i) \$'000	1997-98 Revised Approp (ii) \$'000	1997-98 Estimated Outcomes \$'000	1998-99 Budget \$'000	Variation (iii) %
ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS					
<i>Appropriation Bill No. 1</i>					
Division 671 - Australian Bureau of Statistics					
1. Running Costs	217,220	218,840	218,840	212,627	-3
Annotated Appropriations (Section 31 of the <i>FMA Act 1997</i>)	26,000	30,000	30,000	26,000	-13
	243,220	248,840	248,840	238,627	-4
2. Other Services	72	72	72	74	3
Total Appropriation Bill No. 1	243,292	248,912	248,912	238,701	-4
<i>Appropriation Bill No. 2</i>					
Division 979 - Australian Bureau of Statistics					
1. Capital Works and Services					
01. Plant and Equipment	1,456	1,456	1,456	2,210	52
Total Appropriation Bill No. 2	1,456	1,456	1,456	2,210	52
TOTAL ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS	244,748	250,368	250,368	240,911	-4
TOTAL SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	244,748	250,368	250,368	240,911	-4
Less adjustments	26,060	na	30,060	26,060	-13
TOTAL UNDERLYING OUTLAYS	218,688	na	220,308	214,851	-2
Staff years	3,250	na	3,157	3,057	-3

- (i) As presented in 1997-98 Budget documentation (May 1997 — adjusted, where necessary, to reflect underlying outlays).
(ii) 1997-98 Revised Approp figures amended to include Additional Estimates, Advance to the Minister for Finance, running cost borrowings, savings and other revisions.
(iii) Variation percentage = ((1998-99 Budget less 1997-98 Estimated Outcome)/1997-98 Estimated Outcome).

Sub-Programme 3.1 — Statistical Operations

Objective

To contribute to the statistical goals of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) by:

- providing an objective, relevant and responsive statistical service that informs and satisfies clients;
- producing reliable, timely and coherent statistics;
- maintaining good relations with providers, respecting their rights;
- continuing productivity improvements; and
- maintaining the high regard held for the ABS by decision makers and the community.

Table 4.2: How the Sub-Programme is Resourced; Reconciliation of Appropriations to the Sub-Programme and Summary of Underlying Outlays

	1997-98 Budget \$'000	1997-98 Revised Approp (ii) \$'000	1997-98 Estimated Outcomes \$'000	1998-99 Budget \$'000	Variation (iii) %
ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS					
<i>Appropriation Bill No. 1</i>					
Division 671 - Australian Bureau of Statistics					
1. Running Costs	191,250	192,870	192,940	186,897	-3
Annotated Appropriations (Section 31 of the FMA Act 1997)	25,760	29,760	29,800	25,800	-13
	217,010	222,630	222,740	212,697	-5
Total Appropriation Bill No. 1	217,010	222,630	222,740	212,697	-5
<i>Appropriation Bill No. 2</i>					
Division 979 - Australian Bureau of Statistics					
1. Capital Works and Services					
01. Plant and Equipment	1,456	1,456	1,456	2,210	52
Total Appropriation Bill No. 2	1,456	1,456	1,456	2,210	52
TOTAL ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS	218,466	224,086	224,196	214,907	-4
TOTAL SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	218,466	224,086	224,196	214,907	-4

Table 4.2: How the Sub-Programme is Resourced; Reconciliation of Appropriations to the Sub-Programme and Summary of Underlying Outlays (continued)

	1997-98 Budget (i) \$'000	1997-98 Revised Approp (ii) \$'000	1997-98 Estimated Outcomes \$'000	1998-99 Budget \$'000	Variation (iii) %
Less annotated appropriations	25,760	na	29,800	25,800	-13
Less other adjustments					
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	25,760	na	29,800	25,800	-13
TOTAL UNDERLYING OUTLAYS	192,706	na	194,396	189,107	-3
Staff years	2,920	na	2,864	2,773	-3

(i) As presented in 1997-98 Budget documentation (May 1997 — adjusted, where necessary, to reflect underlying outlays).

(ii) 1997-98 Revised Approp figures amended to include Additional Estimates, Advance to the Minister for Finance, running cost borrowings, savings and other revisions.

(iii) Variation percentage = ((1998-99 Budget less 1997-98 Estimated Outcome)/1997-98 Estimated Outcome).

Performance of the Sub-Programme in 1996-97 and 1997-98

Information on the performance of the Sub-Programme in 1996-97 is at pages 47 to 87 of the 1996-97 Annual Report of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Performance information for 1997-98 will be published in the 1997-98 Annual Report to be tabled in Parliament by 31 October 1998.

Performance Forecasts for 1998-99

Statistical Collections and Outputs

The ABS will continue to provide a relevant and responsive statistical service for clients, within the constraints of the organisation's Budget.

For economic statistics, new and expanded statistical collections and outputs during 1998-99 will include work on the development of a Quarterly Economy Wide Survey to replace the existing surveys of New Capital Expenditure, Stocks and Sales, Company Profits and the private sector component of Employment and Earnings; greater use of administrative data in statistical compilation work, particularly data from the Australian Taxation Office; continuation of the work on upgrading macro-economic statistics, including the introduction of the 13th series Consumer Price Index (CPI); and the development of tourism satellite accounts. New international standards will be introduced into the Australian national accounts from September quarter 1998.

For social and labour statistics, a variety of surveys will be developed, conducted or processed in 1998-99, including the 1998 Survey of Disability, Ageing and Carers, the 1998-99 Household Expenditure Survey, the 1999 Australian Housing Survey and the 2000 Survey of Employment Arrangements and Superannuation. The ABS will also investigate methods of constructing a Labour Cost Index by adding non-wage labour costs to the regimen of the recently developed Wage Cost Index.

The ABS will continue to work with service providers to improve the comparability of data to support the information requirements of the Review of Government Service Provision, which monitors the performance of delivery of government services by States and Territories.

Statistical Framework

The ABS will redevelop systems and processes and review practices supporting the co-ordination, production and dissemination of statistics. The ABS will re-examine the population survey system; enhance its capacity to disseminate data electronically; redevelop remaining 'legacy' computer systems and conclude work necessary to address the Year 2000 issue in computer systems; and explore increased electronic data capture, particularly from business respondents.

Statistical Clearing House

The Commonwealth Government Statistical Clearing House was funded from the 1997-98 Budget. All surveys that are conducted by or on behalf of the Commonwealth Government and that involve 50 or more businesses are subject to review and approval by the Clearing House prior to data collection. This includes ABS business surveys. Objectives of this clearance process are to reduce the load on business respondents by eliminating duplication; to ensure that survey design and operations follow good practices; and to improve the value and use of survey outputs.

During 1998-99 the Clearing House will continue to review new surveys as well as clear those ongoing Commonwealth Government surveys that have not yet been approved since it commenced operations in 1997; the Commonwealth Register of Surveys will be enhanced to enable survey managers to submit and update descriptions of their surveys directly through the Internet; and the clearance process itself will be comprehensively evaluated and the results incorporated in the Clearing House transition plan for the following year.

Sub-Programme 3.2 — Corporate Services

Objective

To assist managers to achieve ABS statistical goals through the provision of effective corporate management and of efficient and equitable administration, planning and central support services.

Table 4.2: How the Sub-Programme is Resourced; Reconciliation of Appropriations to the Sub-Programme and Summary of Underlying Outlays

	1997-98 Budget \$'000	1997-98 Revised (i) Approp (ii) \$'000	1997-98 Estimated Outcomes \$'000	1998-99 Budget \$'000	Variation (iii) %
ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS					
Appropriation Bill No. 1					
Division 671 - Australian Bureau of Statistics					
1. Running Costs	25,970	25,970	25,900	25,730	-1
Annotated Appropriations (Section 31 of the <i>FMA Act 1997</i>)	240	240	200	200	0
	26,210	26,210	26,100	25,930	-1
2. Other Services					
01. Compensation and legal expenses	72	72	72	74	3
Total Appropriation Bill No. 1	26,282	26,282	26,172	26,004	-1
Total Appropriation Bill No. 2	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL ANNUAL APPROPRIATIONS	26,282	26,282	26,172	26,004	-1
TOTAL SPECIAL APPROPRIATIONS	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL APPROPRIATIONS	26,282	26,282	26,172	26,004	-1
Less annotated appropriations	240	na	200	200	0
Less other adjustments	60	na	60	60	0
TOTAL ADJUSTMENTS	300	na	260	260	0
TOTAL UNDERLYING OUTLAYS	25,982	na	25,912	25,744	-1
Staff years	330	na	293	284	-3

(i) As presented in 1997-98 Budget documentation (May 1997 — adjusted, where necessary, to reflect underlying outlays).

(ii) 1997-98 Revised Approp figures amended to include Additional Estimates, Advance to the Minister for Finance, running cost borrowings, savings and other revisions.

(iii) Variation percentage = ((1998-99 Budget less 1997-98 Estimated Outcome)/1997-98 Estimated Outcome).

Performance of the Sub-Programme in 1996-97 and 1997-98

Information on the performance of the Sub-Programme in 1996-97 is at pages 89 to 99 of the 1996-97 Annual Report of the Australian Bureau of Statistics. Performance information for 1997-98 will be published in the 1997-98 Annual Report to be tabled in Parliament by 31 October 1998.

Performance Forecasts for 1998-99

The performance issues for this Sub-Programme are focused on the implementation of an integrated national approach to the provision of corporate services to staff in nine ABS offices to produce operational cost efficiencies. This will involve the progressive implementation of policies and work practices to streamline specific financial and human resources management functions, through a structured process of continuous improvement, consistent with public sector reforms.

These initiatives will result in efficiencies in the delivery of corporate services to staff, a more cost-effective alignment of resources with corporate priorities, greater consistency of approach in respect of policies and work practices, productivity improvements and improved management information. This will be especially important as the ABS implements the Workplace Relations Act, trials an ABS-wide performance management scheme, implements financial management improvements, including benchmarking its activities, and introducing output-based accrual budgeting and reporting.